

Special Education

from a Rural and Urban
Perspective

Jim Kowalkowski and Stacy Dym

March 26, 2019



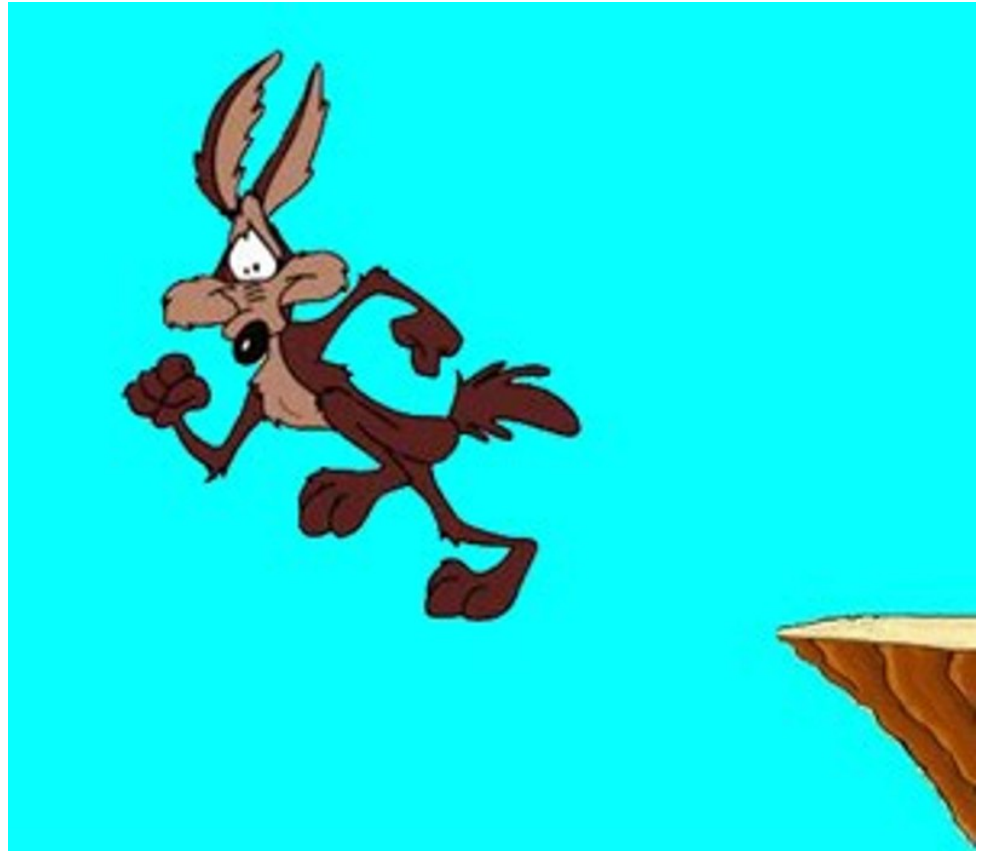
LEAGUE OF
EDUCATION
VOTERS™

Special Education in WA State – a Rural Perspective



JIM KOWALKOWSKI
DIRECTOR – RURAL EDUCATION CENTER
&
SUPERINTENDENT - DAVENPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT

This is how many school districts (rural & urban, big and small) are feeling...



Small but Mighty!



- Davenport School District

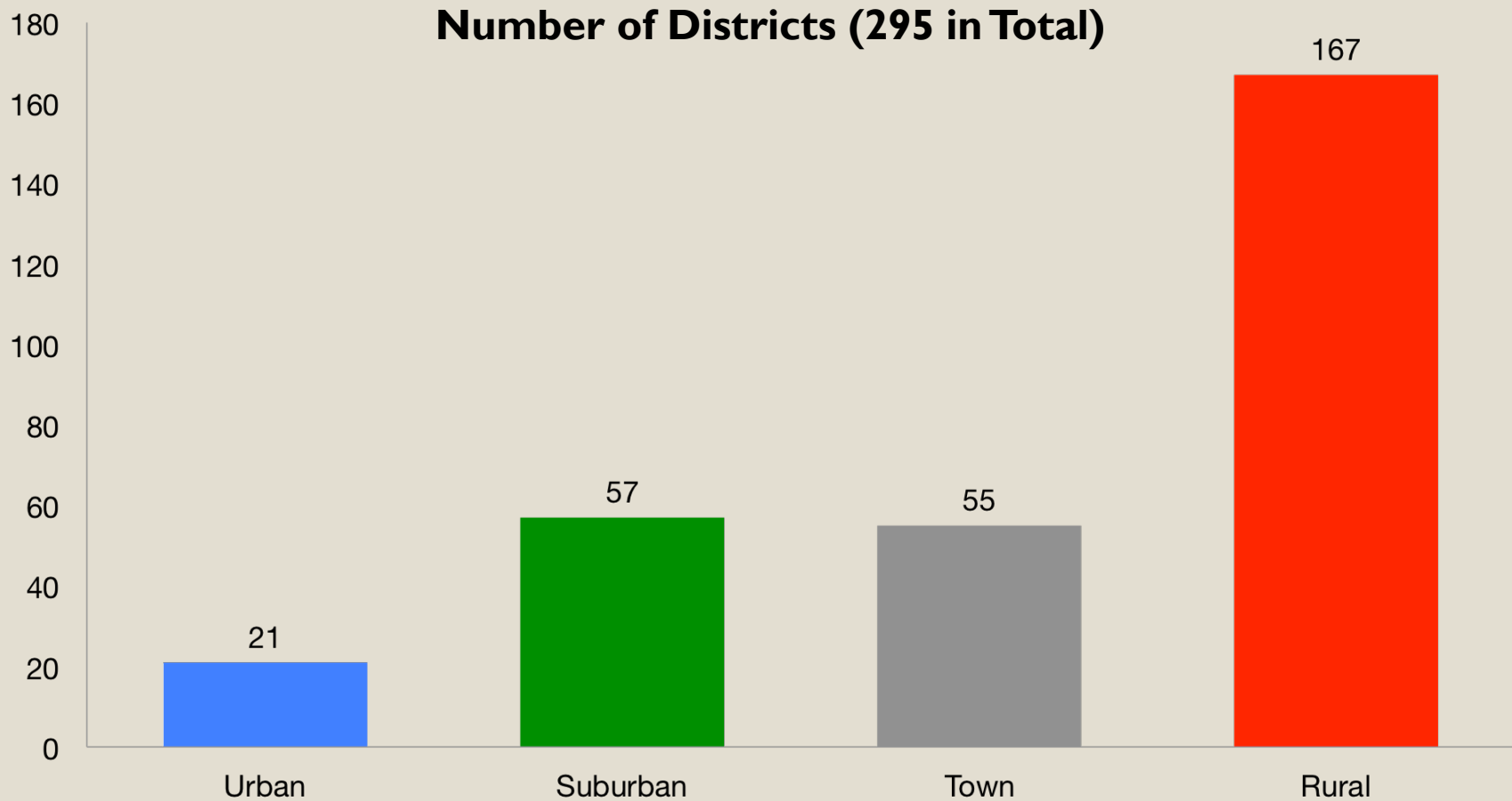
- K-12 district
- 545 students
- Home of the Gorillas!



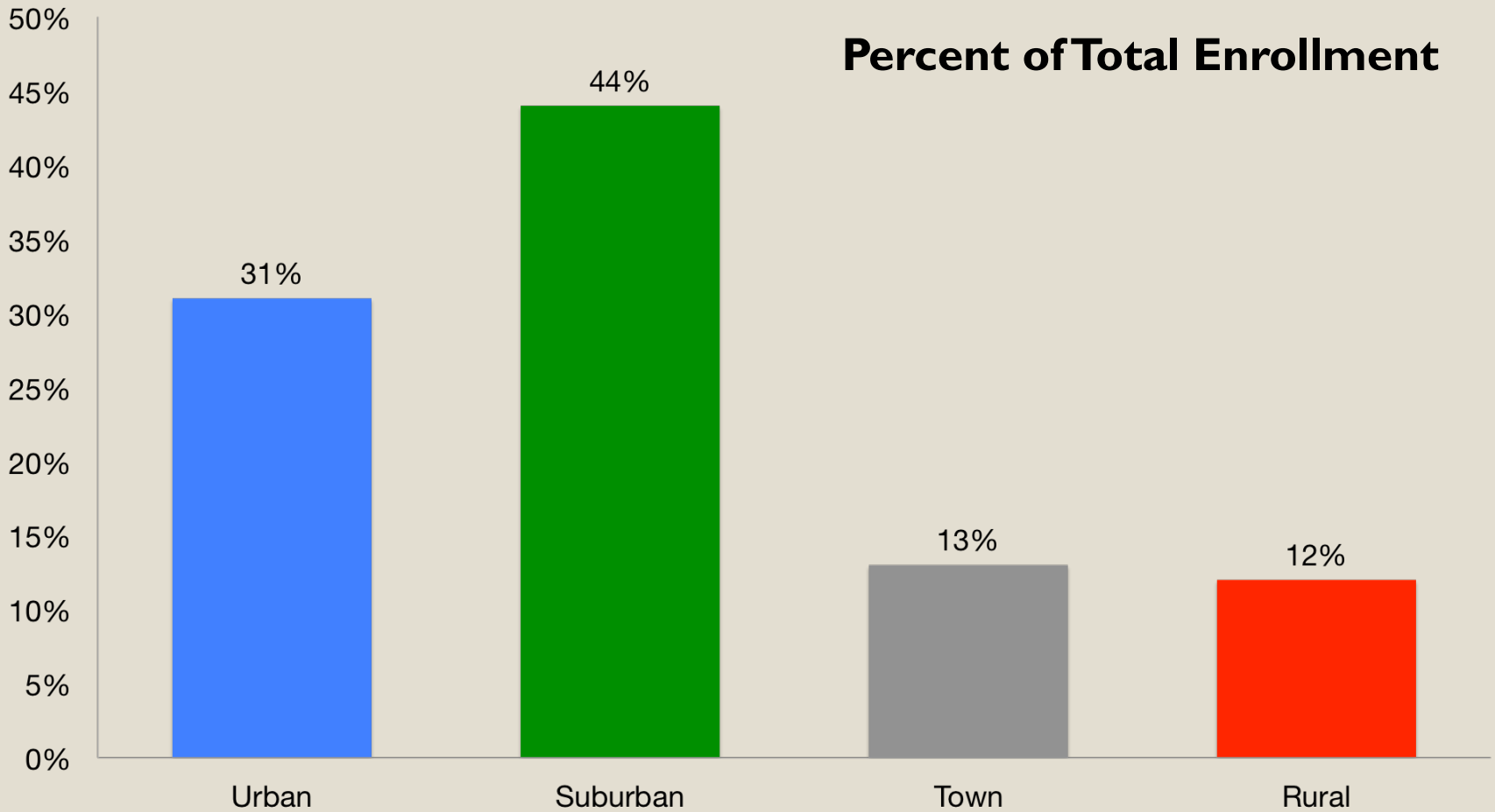
- Rural Education Center

- Statewide cooperative of over 80 small and rural districts and several educational organizations, including ESD's.
- Program support received from the College of Education at Washington State University

Most Washington Districts Are Rural



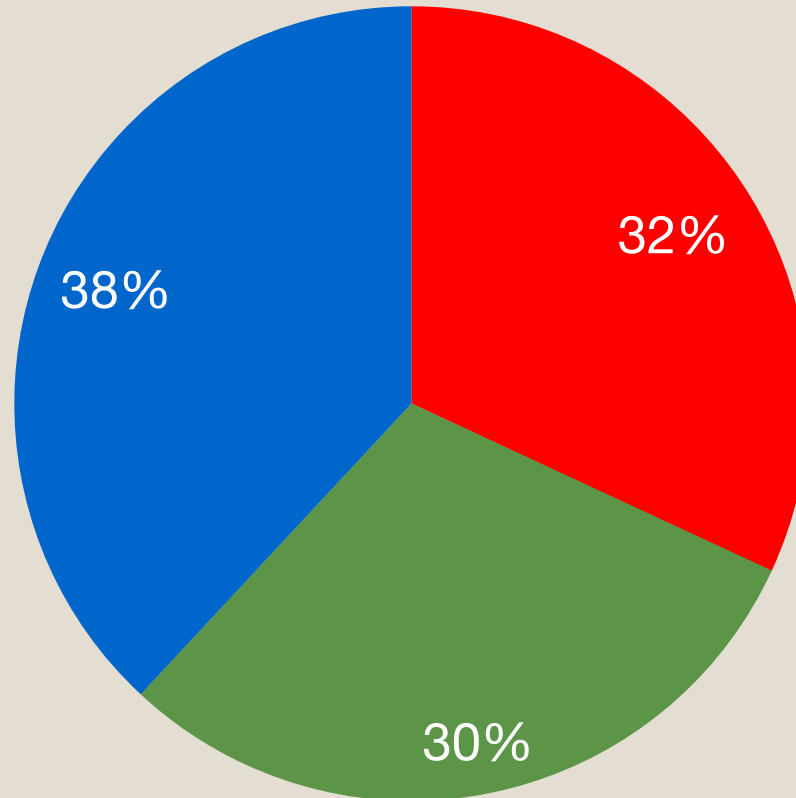
12% of All Students Are in Rural Districts



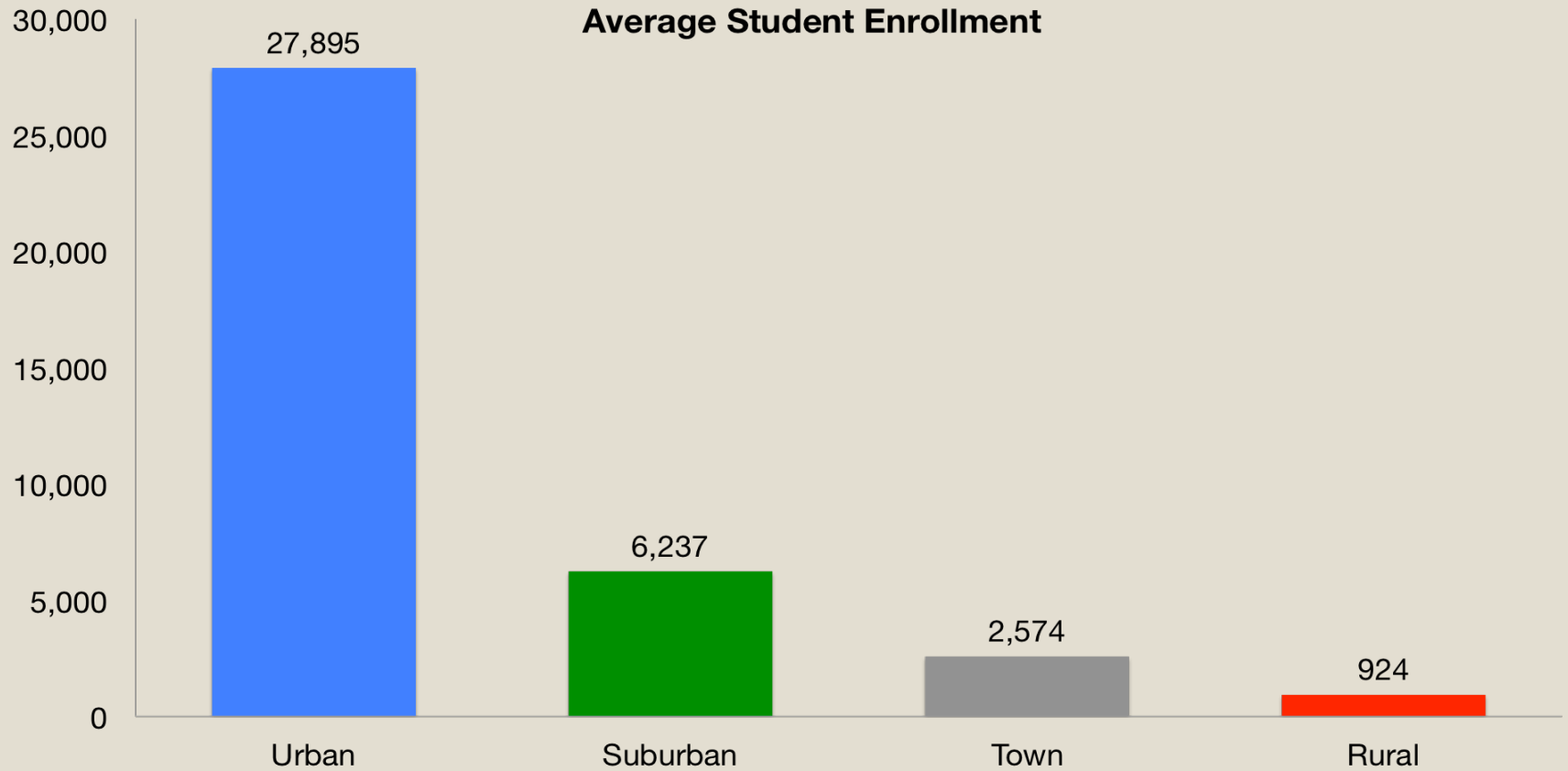
1/3 of All Districts in Washington Have Fewer Than 350 Students



■ Fewer Than 350 ■ 350 to 2000 ■ More Than 2000



Most Rural Districts Are Small



Rural enrollment ranges from 8 to 14,880 students

MYTH: Rural schools “short change” special ed. students



[HTTPS://WWW.SEATTLETIME
S.COM/OPINION/RURAL-
SCHOOL-DISTRICTS-ARE-
EFFECTIVE-AND-DONT-NEED-
CONSOLIDATION/](https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/rural-school-districts-are-effective-and-dont-need-consolidation/)

MYTH: Rural schools “short change” special ed. students



The (3/27/10) Seattle Times editorial mentioned special-education services, stating “... more-intensive student needs often go unserved.” Are you saying that small districts do a poor job of providing services to special-education students? To assume that just because a school district is small, its students will be shortchanged is wrong. In fact, many special-needs students thrive in small districts.

“Benefits” – small & rural districts



- ❖ Smaller class sizes (generally)
- ❖ Personalized learning
- ❖ “Family” type setting
- ❖ Inclusion is “easier”



“Challenges” – small & rural districts



- ❖ Teacher isolation
- ❖ Budget constraints
- ❖ Difficulty in finding specialists to provide services: OT/PT/SLP/Etc.
- ❖ Teacher & Specialists—recruiting, hiring, and retaining...Ouch!



\$\$\$ = Resources for Kids



- ❖ More funding is certainly needed – for rural schools and for urban schools!
- ❖ Real Life Example - 9th Grader –Deaf
 - ❖ From “How can we afford this? To...
 - ❖ Wow, we have learned a lot from this young man
 - ❖ Safety Net Funding “This is Nuts”



Current Leg. Session



❖ SB 509 I

- ❖ Would increase excess cost multiplier...
 - ❖ From .96 to .98...recently amended to 1.0
 - ❖ Many are advocating for an increase to 1.07

- ❖ Scheduled for executive action in House Education Committee today (Tuesday, March 26)

Sharing **Your** Stories



What's your story?



The Arc of King County

Since 1936

League of Education
Voters Webinar
An Urban Perspective

Stacy Dym, Executive Director





EQUITY

The Arc of King County is at the heart of a civil rights movement, promoting and protecting the rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to thrive as equal, valued and active members of the community.



COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS

Developing and Supporting Community Activists Speaking Out for Equity and Human Rights for all persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



DEFINING INCLUSION

Loudly Advocating for more inclusive government policy, work environments, health care delivery, schools and families



THE "GoTo" COMMUNITY RESOURCE

A trusted information hub, resource and referral agent for accessing and navigating complex systems of services and providing technical assistance



EXEMPLARY CARE DELIVERY

Setting the standards for quality care and supporting other service providers to continually enhance best practices.

Our Values

People with Intellectual and Development Disabilities ...

are entitled to respect, dignity, equality, safety and security

have moral, civil and constitutional rights to be included

make decisions about their own lives and must be heard

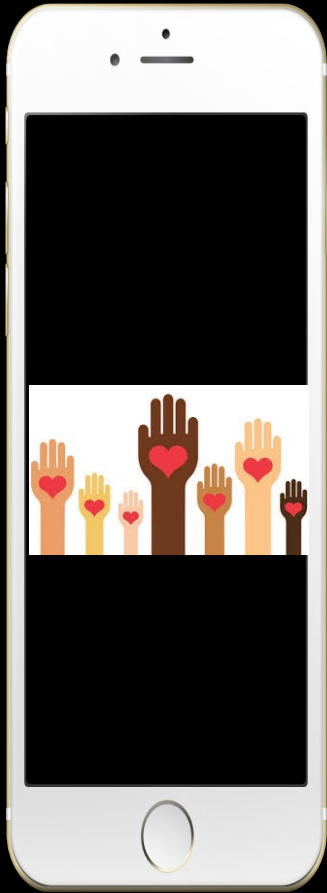
are individuals with unique abilities, strengths, creativity and inherent value

The Arc is a community catalyst to unite all voices advancing civil rights through advocacy, education, service and partnerships.



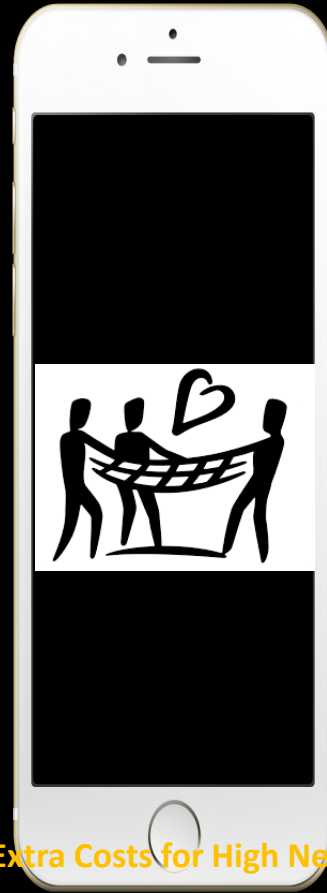
What We
Hear





**Every Student
Counted**

Special Education
Allocation



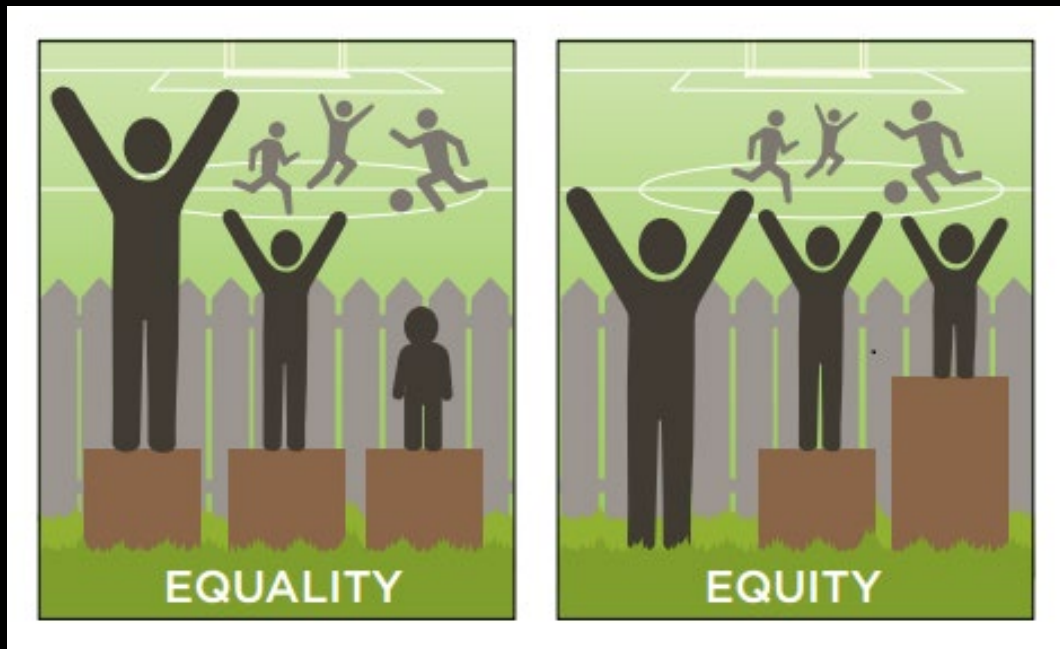
Extra Costs for High Needs

Safety Net Changes



Eliminate the Cap

Local Districts must
serve every identified
student



Equity is making sure that children with disabilities have access to learning environments so that everyone achieves a common-benefit outcome

Legislative Action This Session:

SSB 5532 (Braun) –
Professional learning,
Advocates for the child, local
SEACs, LRE data, DVR
mandate, Transition Planning,
Advisory Group

E2SSB 5091 (Wellman) –
Increases multiplier to 1.0,
costs for institutional
programs, safety net
changes, professional
learning, state auditor reqt



2019-2021 Biennium

How will the state legislature FUND special education costs in light of local levy restrictions, TRAIN educators to include students with disabilities and reduce the opportunity gap, and define good OUTCOMES for students with disabilities?

What is different about an urban setting?

- Potentially more access to specialists
- Potentially access to programs “designed” to meet the needs of your child

Washington struggles with high rates of segregation

- Urban schools may have more standalone programs for special education – for instance, a separate classroom or certain services offered only at certain locations.
- This can complicate school enrollment for families with multiple children. The “system” may be more complicated to navigate
- Most students are in urban or suburban settings, however, so these settings have a big impact overall outcomes

How do we eliminate segregation and isolation?

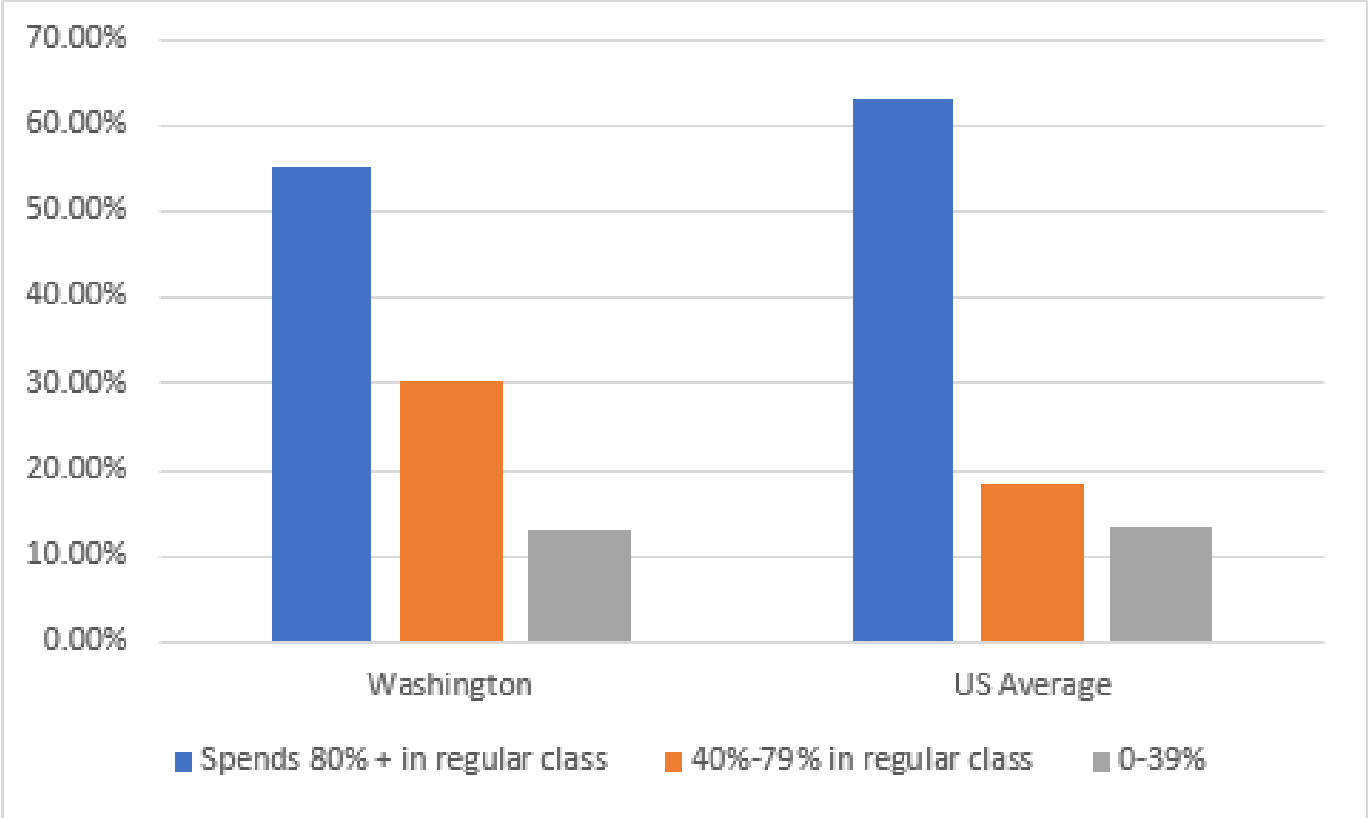


Teacher Training

Principal Leadership Training

Paraprofessional Training

Inclusion rates, Washington and the national average



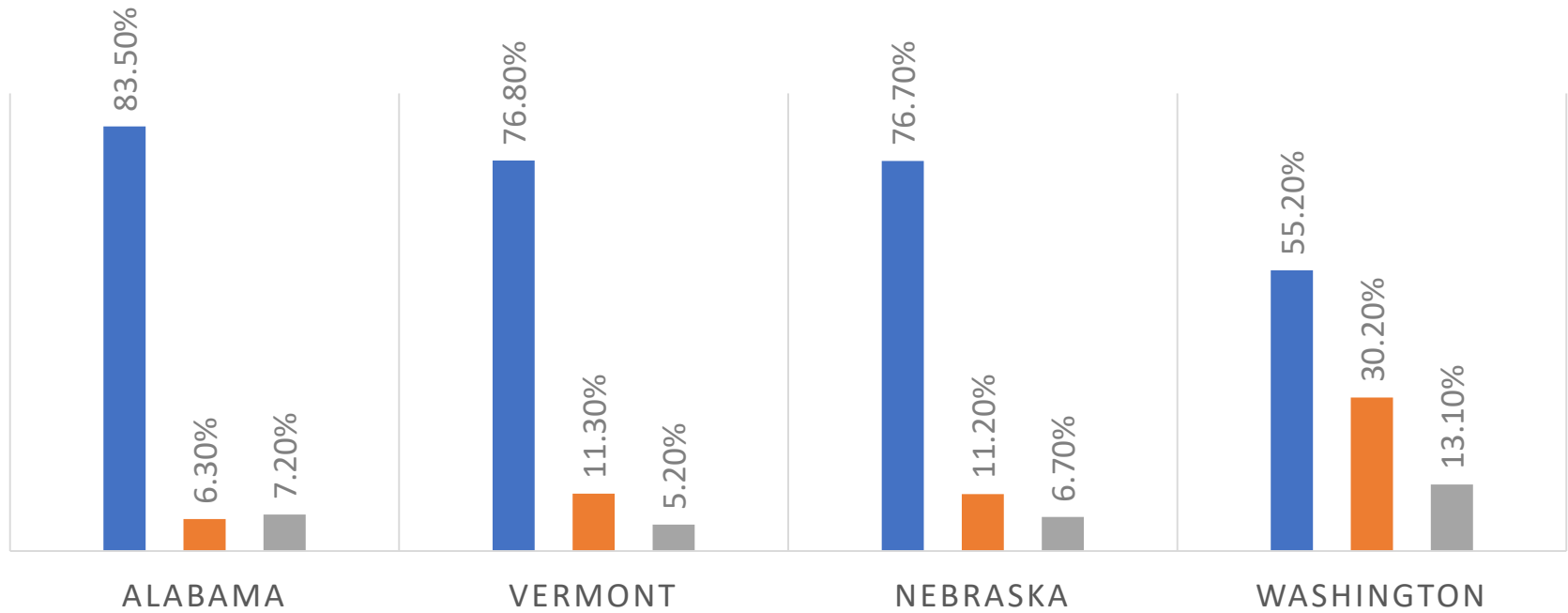
We are less inclusive, as a state

MOST INCLUSIVE STATES ... & WASHINGTON

■ Spends 80% + in regular class

■ 40%-79% in regular class

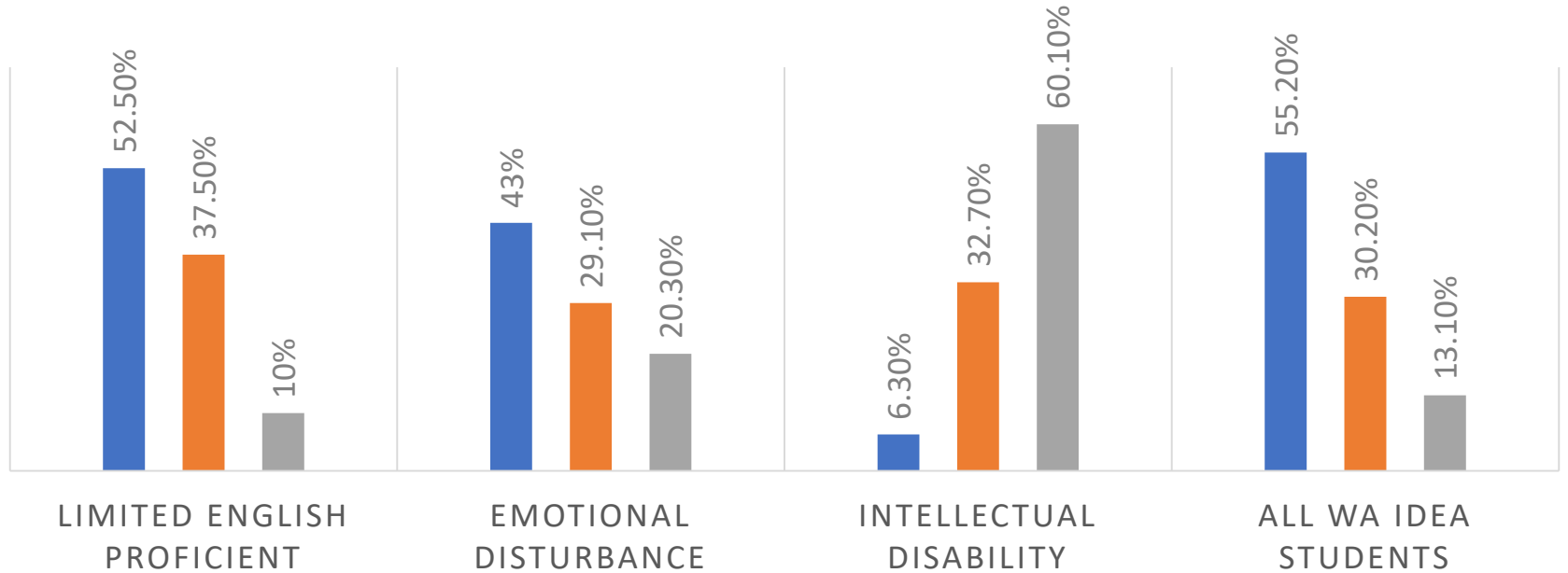
■ 0-39%



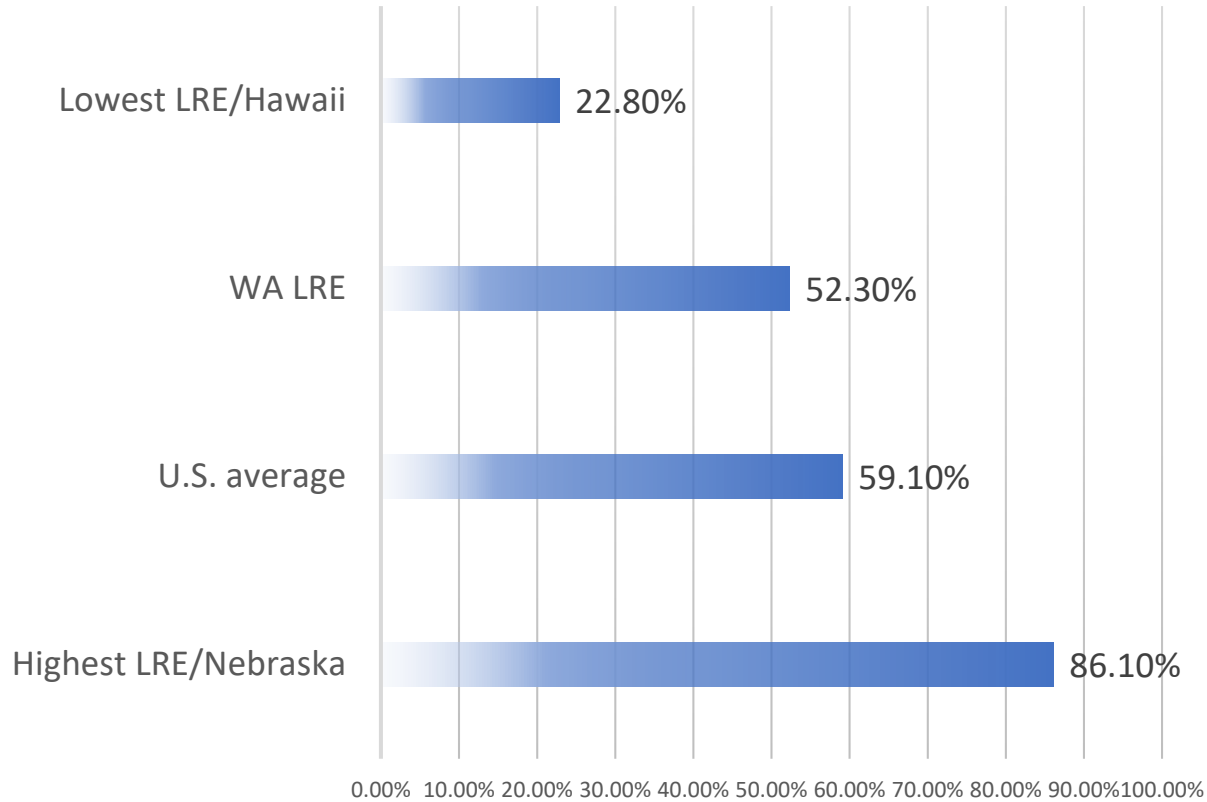
INCLUSION IN WASHINGTON - BY

■ Spends 80% + in regular class ■ 40%-79% in regular class ■ 0-39%

CATEGORY

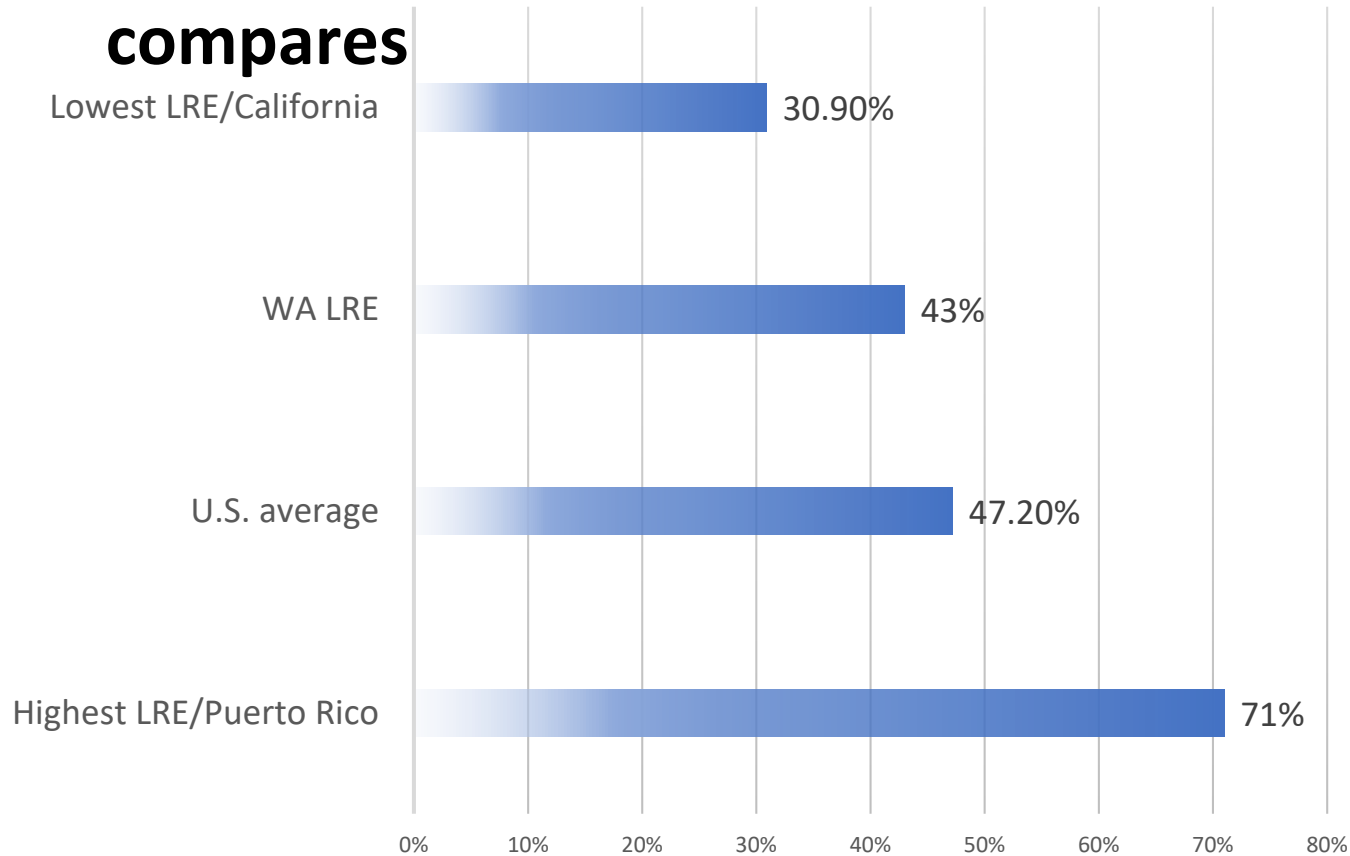


Limited English proficient - How



We are below the national average

Emotional disturbance - How WA compares



We are below the national average

Intellectual disability - How WA

compares

Lowest LRE/Illinois

4.20%

WA LRE

6.30%

U.S. average

17%

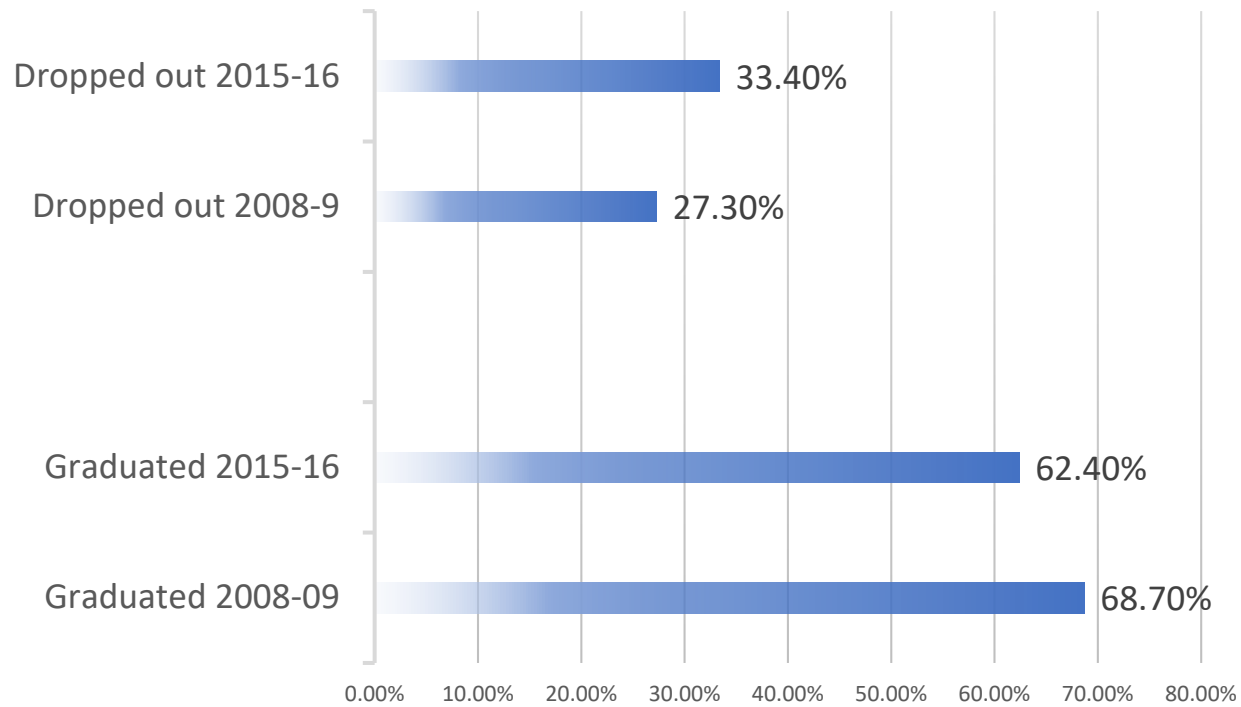
Highest LRE/Iowa

66.10%

0.00% 10.00% 20.00% 30.00% 40.00% 50.00% 60.00% 70.00%

We are substantially below the national average

Washington outcomes



Dropout rates increasing for students receiving special education services.

Graduation rates decreasing

SOURCE: [40th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2018](#) Data is from the 2015-16 school year.

QUESTIONS?





Thank you for joining!

If you would like to learn more about League of Education Voters or support our work, please visit our website, educationvoters.org.