

NSDC
Summer 2009
Conference
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Standards in Practice

Instructional Gap Analysis Strategy

Aligning Instruction w/ Standards and Assessments



The Education Trust

Stephanie Robinson, PhD and Shana Kennedy

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What is The Education Trust?

A non-profit advocacy group based in Washington DC that works with educators, policy makers, parents and community to close the achievement gap.

Today's Objectives

- Understand the Academic Achievement Gap as a function of the curriculum/instruction gap
- Learn and practice gap analysis process
- Learn 3 iterations of the Standards in Practice process to close the instruction/curriculum gap

Core Beliefs

- Students will learn to high levels when taught to high levels.
- When teachers “instruct” students learn.
- Good instruction takes ongoing work on the work.
- Schools can reduce the debilitating effects of poverty and racism on student achievement.
- All school reform should involve parents, however, lack of parent involvement is not an excuse for not teaching students to high levels.

Agenda

- Standards in Practice (SIP) Rationale
- SIP experience #1
- Break 10:45-11:00
- SIP experience #2
- Lunch 12:00-1:00
- SIP experience #2 (continued)
- Break 2:15:2:30
- SIP experience #3
- SIP implementation
- SIP Q+A

Instructional Gap Analysis Exercise:


For each assignment, determine the grade do you think it belongs in and in which grade you think we found it.

- **Assignment A:**

- There are four rows of desks in the classroom. There are 5 desks in each row. How many desks are there altogether? Explain your answer.

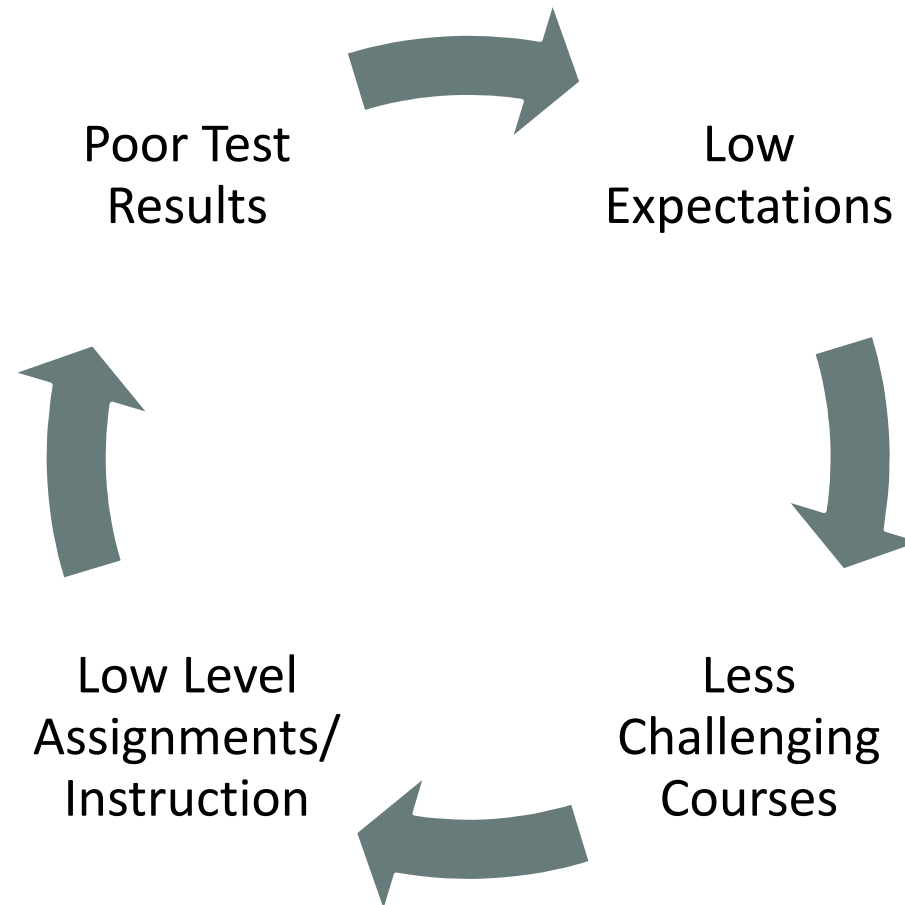
- **Assignment B:**

- A fable is a story that teaches a moral lesson and it usually uses animal characters in place of people. Write a personal fable. Write about something that has happened to you (family or friend) that will inspire or motivate others. Type or write in blue or black ink; handwriting must be cursive. Use animals as characters. The title must be clearly stated at the beginning of the fable and the moral must be written at the conclusion of the fable. Grammar, punctuation, spelling and neatness count. Then, mount your writing on posterboard and illustrate it. Animal characters must be drawn (no Xeroxing or cut-outs) on your poster.



How do these discrepancies in grade-level expectations contribute to the achievement gap?

The Cycle of Low Achievement




Source: Stephanie Robinson, The Education Trust

This cycle results in another gap:

The instructional gap –

The gap between standards (what students should know, understand and be able to do) and what they are being taught.



What does a student have to know
and be able to do to complete the
following assignment?

Which grade 7 writing assignment would you want your kids to get?

Essay on Anne Frank

Your essay will consist of an opening paragraph which introduced the title, author and general background of the novel.


Your thesis will state specifically what Anne's overall personality is, and what general psychological and intellectual changes she exhibits over the course of the book

You might organize your essay by grouping psychological and intellectual changes OR you might choose 3 or 4 characteristics (like friendliness, patience, optimism, self doubt) and show how she changes in this area.

Or This?

The "ME" Page	
My name:	
Three words which describe me best:	
Three words others would use to describe me:	
My best feature:	
A neat expression:	
My best friend:	
My favorite food:	
A chore I hate:	
Something I wish would happen at my home:	
My hero:	
My favorite sport:	
A car I want:	
The best thing about my school:	
My biggest secret:	
A television character I act like:	
My worst fear:	
A contest I want to win:	
My favorite movie star:	
My heartthrob:	
A political office I would like to hold:	
Something I want to buy:	
My chosen career:	
My favorite beverage:	
A place I want to visit:	
A school subject I adore:	
My favorite book:	
A nightmare I have:	
Someone I would like to have as a relative:	
A movie I would like to be the star in:	
Something I would like to do for my family:	
A teacher I respect:	
What I would do if I were in Hollywood:	
A friend I would like to have:	
What I would do to change our school:	
My dream for America:	

- My Best Friend:
- A chore I hate:
- A car I want:
- My heartthrob:



Students can do no better than the
assignments they are given...

and the instruction they receive.

Standards in Practice™

What is it?

- A process to identify and close the gap between what students learn and what they need to learn to attain proficiency;
- Provides a structured conversation to develop and implement instructional strategies to ensure rigorous academic work ***for all students.***

The Steps of the Model

1. We discuss the purpose of the assignment;
2. We analyze the demands of the task;
3. We identify the standards that apply to the assignment;
4. We generate a task-specific rubric using the standards and the assignment;
5. We score the student work, using the task-specific rubric;
6. Redesign assignment-plan instructional strategies.

NOTE: there are variations of this model

Important SIP Tips (more later)

- Collaboration is key
- Do not “SIP” every assignment
 - SIPnosis is the goal
- Assignments ideal for SIP
 - Common assessments
 - End of unit assessments
 - Culminating assignments
 - WRITING IS A MUST
- SIP gets smoother with time
- SIP starts with past assignments and moves towards future assignments



An Example of a “SIPed” Assignment

Middle School Example

Original 7th Grade Assignment

Name and describe functions of the five body systems.

Middle School Example (cont.)

The benchmark that best fits the 7th grade assignment shown is the 4th grade benchmark:

Understands the functions of the various body systems.

Low level written communication.

Middle School Example (cont.)

Florida 7th Grade—Processes of Life (Science):

- Understands that the systems within living things respond to changes in the environment (for example, allergens and carcinogens).

Florida 7th Language Arts:

- Uses an effective organizational pattern and substantial support to achieve a sense of completeness or wholeness (for example, considering audience, sequencing events/ideas, choosing effective vocabulary, using specific details to clarify meaning).

Middle School Example (cont.)

With this knowledge, let's revise the assignment:

Revised Assignment:

- Explain the difference between the systems of the body affected by an allergy to pollen and those affected by an allergy to food as well as the process by which different medicines reduce the symptoms of each allergy.


Let's Look Again at the Two Assignments:

1st Assignment:

- Name and describe functions of the five body systems.

Revised Assignment:

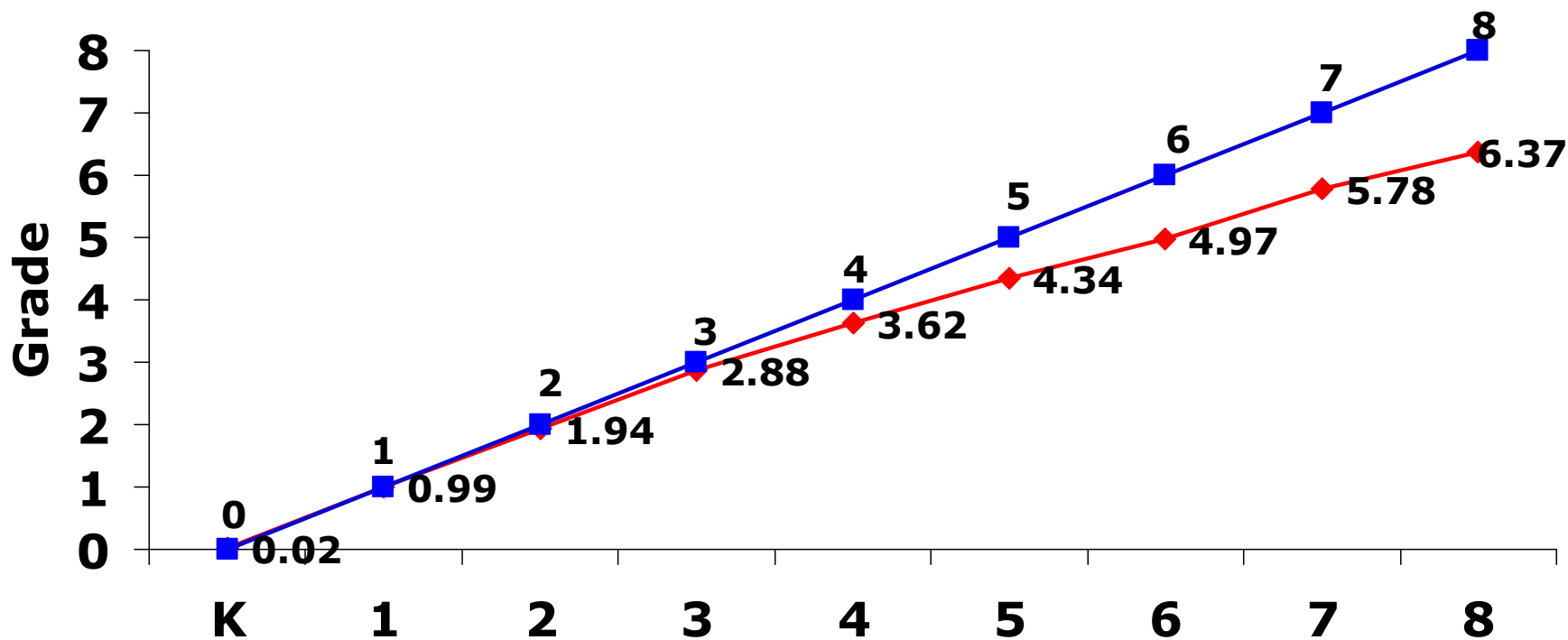
- Explain the difference between the systems of the body affected by an allergy to pollen and those affected by an allergy to food as well as the process by which different medicines reduce the symptoms of each allergy.



Of all the gaps we hear about, the instructional gap is the least discussed and sadly rarely addressed.

But the consequences of the instructional gap are devastating.

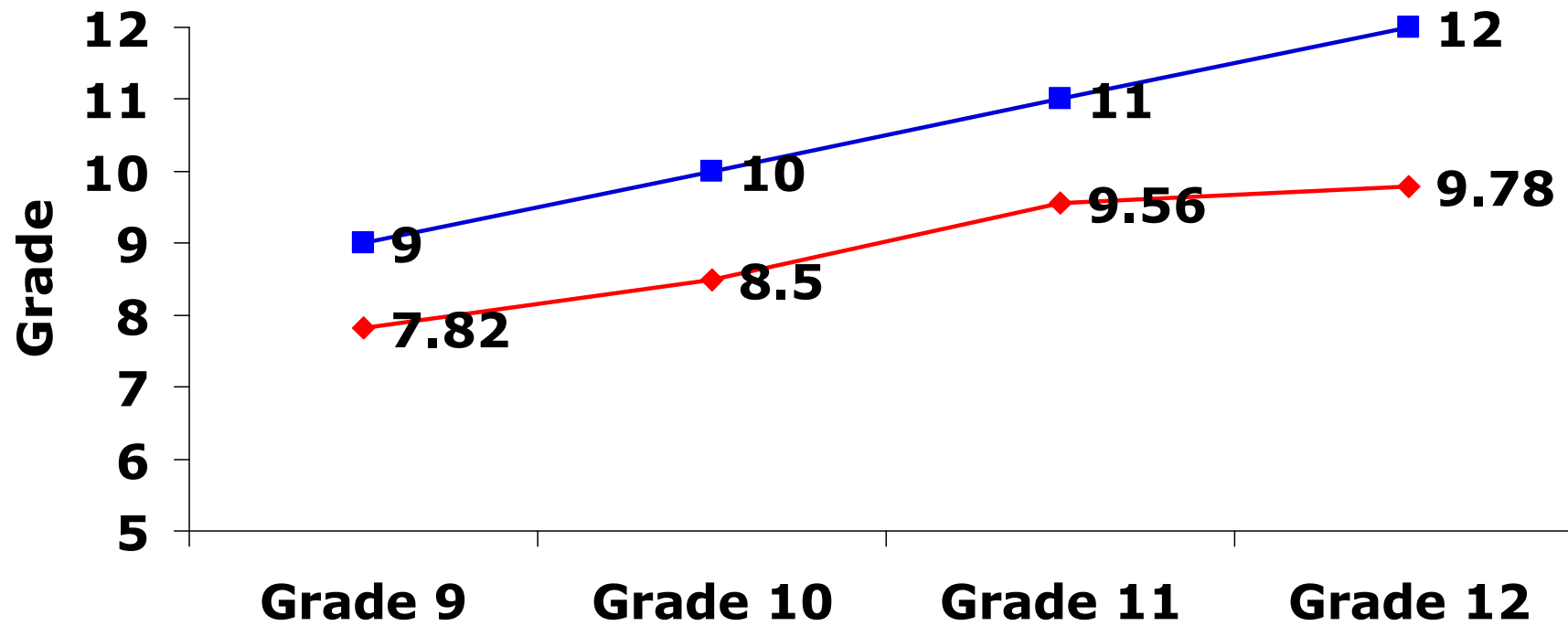
As Grade Level Increases, the Assignments Given to Students Fall Further and Further Behind Grade Level Standards



◆ Average Grade Level of Assignment ■ Grade Level Standard

Source: John Holton, South Carolina Department of Education, analysis of English Language Arts assignments from 362 Elementary and Middle Schools in SC.

And this Pattern Continues in High School

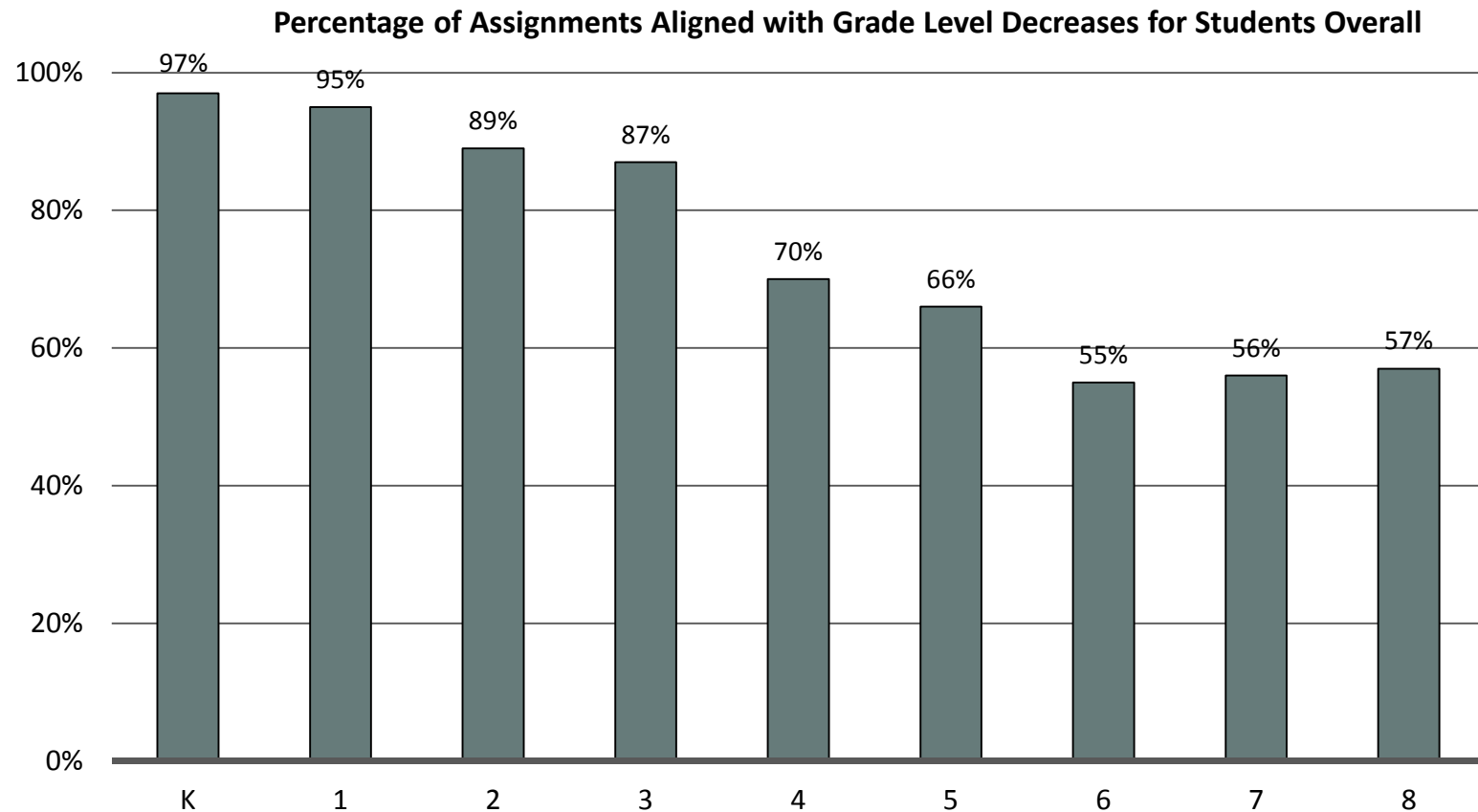


◆ Average Grade Level of Assignment ■ Grade Level Standard

Source: John Holton, South Carolina Department of Education, analysis of English Language Art Assignments in 14 High Schools in South Carolina

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As Grade Level Increases, The Percent of Assignments Aligned to Standards Decreases

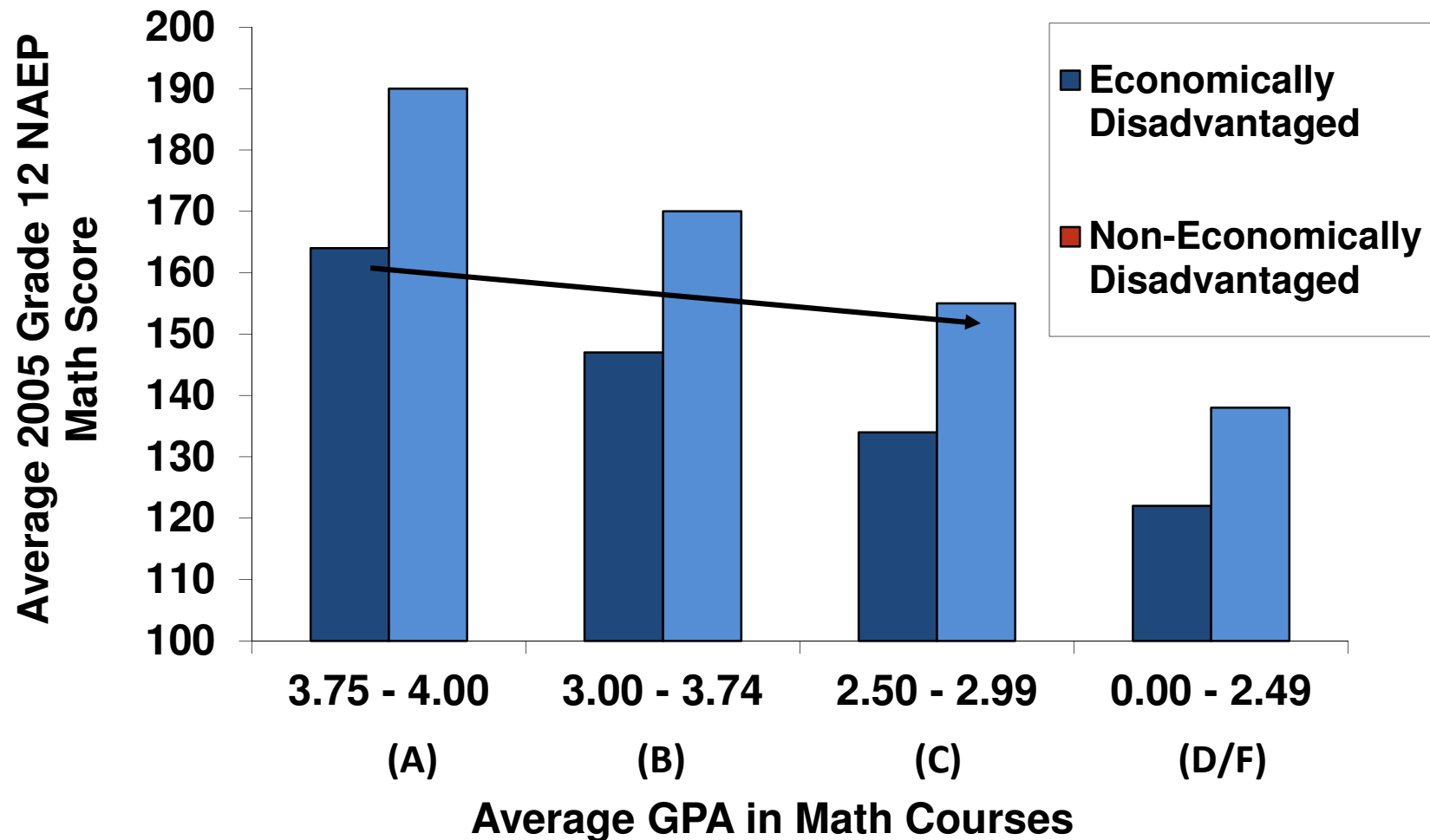


Source: John Holton, South Carolina Department of Education, analysis of assignments from 362 Elementary and Middle Schools in SC



In High-Poverty Schools, Kids
Receive A's on A Lot of Misaligned
Assignments

Economically Disadvantaged “A” Students Score at About the Same Level as More Affluent “C” Students

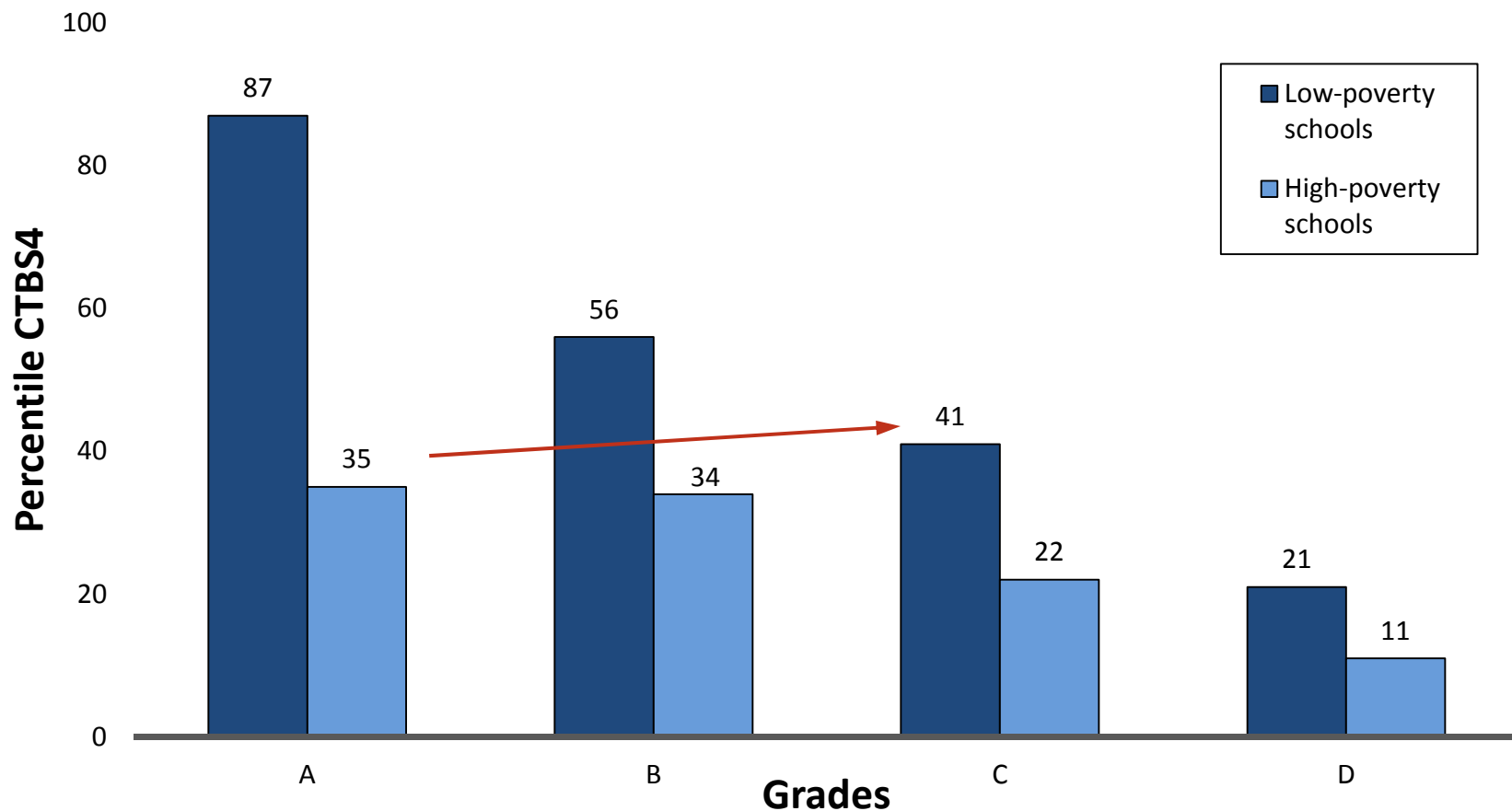


Note: Economically disadvantaged refers to students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, NAEP Data Explorer, High School Transcript Study, 2005 <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/hstsnde/>

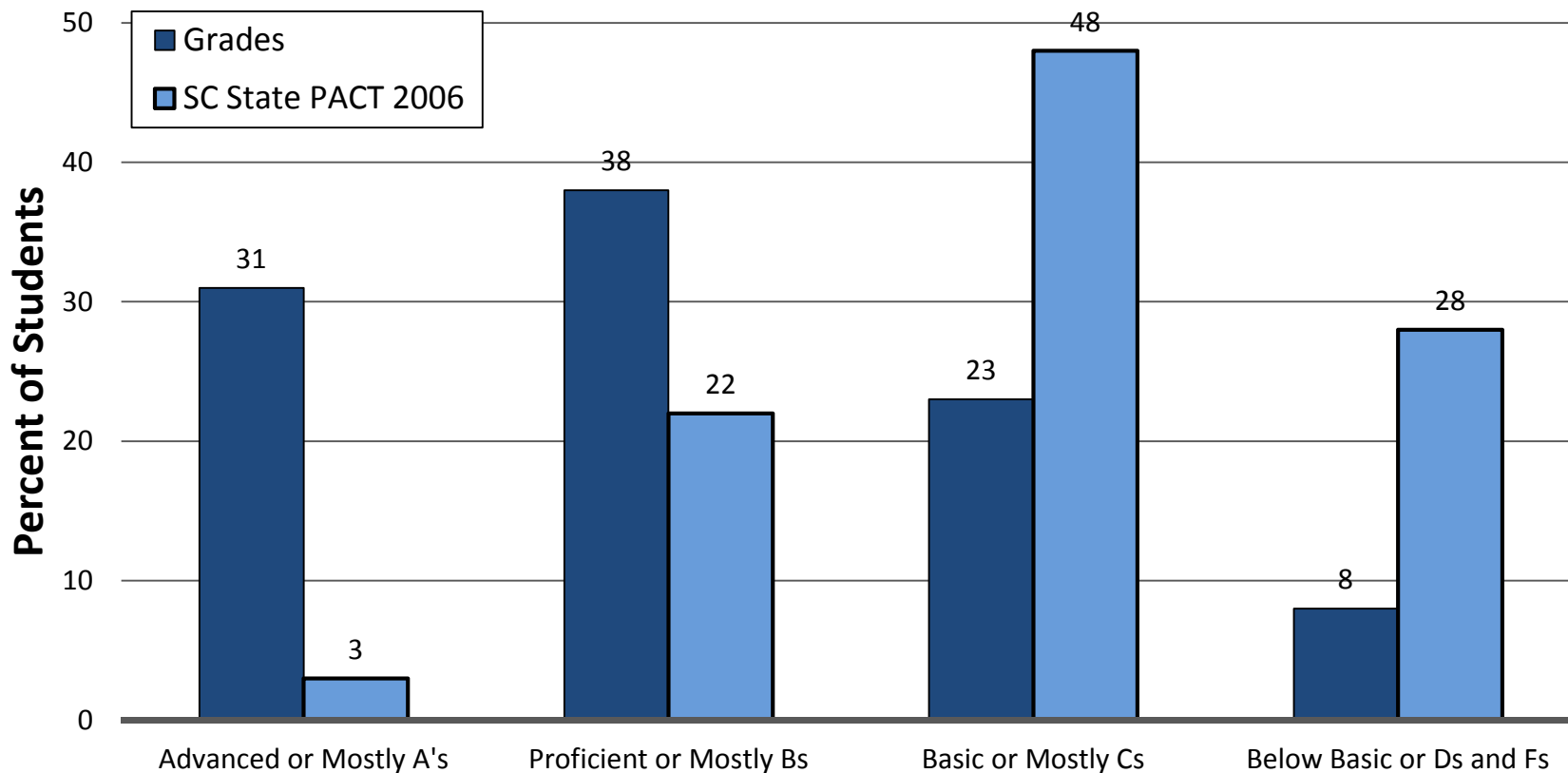
“A” Students in High Poverty Schools Score at About the Same Level as “C” Students in Affluent Schools

Seventh Grade Math



Source: Prospects (Abt Associates, 1993), in “Prospects: Final Report on Student Outcomes”, PES, DOE, 1997

Comparison of Letter Grades and Test Scores in English Language Arts



Source: SC State Department of Education, Office of Research Education Report; SC Standards-based Education Design Team - Mohr, Holton, & Keim

Reflections on Data

- Is this pattern going on in your schools?
 - What evidence do you have that this is happening?
- What are you doing about this disparity in assignments and grades?



Let's Give SIP a Try

Be sure to have your SIP form out and ready

Standards in Practice™

6 Step Model

STEP 1: What is the academic purpose of this assignment ? The team examines the task to ask about content and context: What learning was expected from this task?

Sample Assignments

- Assignment 1: Grade 10 ELA writing. End of unit on African-American history and literature. Wanted to see what they knew about MLK. Wanted them to write and express themselves visually.
- Assignment 2: Grade 4 Math. Common assessment after a three week unit on extending patterns, representing them numerically, and a focus on written explanations. Team developed.
- Assignment 3: Grade 10 ELA writing. End of book, part of unit on Greek epics. Finished reading the Odyssey. Wanted them to do a compare/contrast between the book and this modern movie to bring out the major idea behind both.

Standards in Practice™

6 Step Model

STEP 2: The team asks: What does someone need to know and be able to do to complete the task successfully?

Standards in Practice™

6 Step Model

STEP 3: The team identifies the standards that apply to this assignment.

General Standards in Practice™ Rule

Each assignment must address at least:

- One content standard—literature, math, social studies, science, art, music, world language, etc. (reading and writing are NOT content standards)
- One writing standard

Note: If the assignment is misaligned, SKIP to step 6/redesign.

Standards in Practice™

6 Step Model

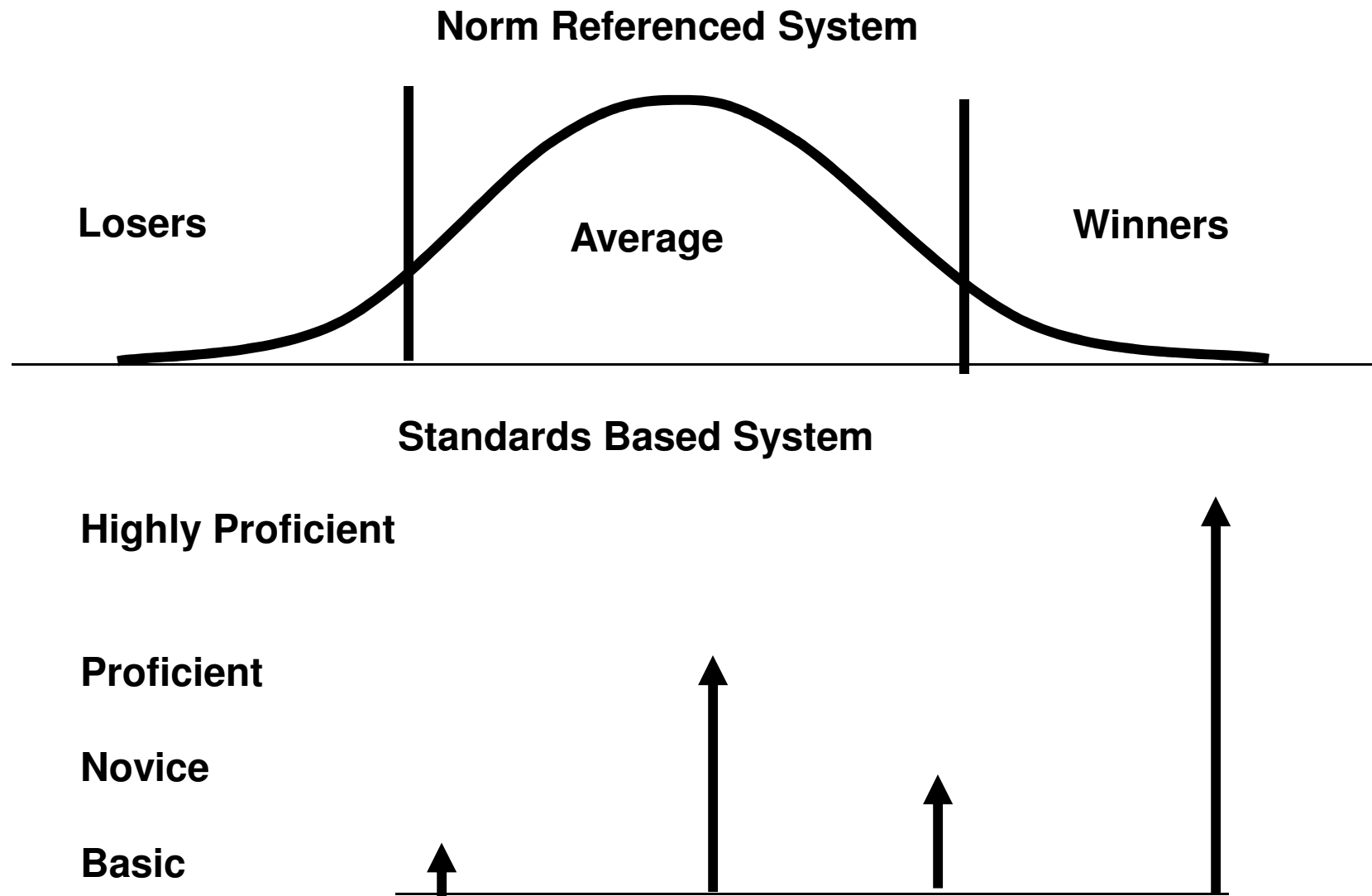
STEP 4: The team generates a task-specific rubric for this assignment from the standards and the assignment.

Standards in Practice™

Task Specific Rubric

- A qualitative description of the student work on the assignment being reviewed that is exemplary - **NO RETEACHING NECESSARY**
- A qualitative description of student work on the assignment being reviewed that meets the standard(s) - **NO RETEACHING NECESSARY**
- A qualitative description of student work on the assignment that *almost* meets the standard(s) student is in his/her *zone of proximal development* and is “using but confusing” **concepts - SOME RETEACHING NECESSARY**
- A qualitative description of student work on the assignment that does not meet the standard(s) - **SIGNIFICANT RETEACHING NECESSARY**

Norm Reference vs. Standards-based system



Standards in Practice™

6 Step Model

STEP 5: The team diagnoses the student work, using the task-specific rubric/scoring guide.

Standards in Practice™

6 Step Model

STEP 6: The team analyzes the student work to plan instructional strategies for improving students' performance. Questions, such as these, are asked:

- What changes need to be made to the assignment to make it more rigorous?
- What instructional strategies do we need to teach the assignments?
- What other action needs to occur at the classroom, school and district level?
- What additional support do teachers/principals need?



Getting Started With SIP

Variations of the SIP Theme

- SIP as gap analysis and redesign
- SIP as gap closer through rigorous assignment design and instruction
- Split Sip as a quality control process*
(your “A” means the same as my “A”)

* Staff needs to be ready for this variation

Standards in Practice™ is NOT

- Another **PROGRAM** to be added to your already full plate.
- Another meeting – the process is to enhance effectiveness/focus of existing planning meetings.
- Focused only on student work, but on teacher work.
- Dependent upon expensive materials or consultants.

Participant Roles at a Standards in Practice™ Team Meeting

- **Facilitator/Lead Teacher**
Keeps team on step, focuses discussion.
- **Recorder**
Records major points of discussion using SIP record form.
- **Teacher introducing the lesson**
Provides a BRIEF introduction to the lesson in Step 1.
- **Coach**
Ensures discussions are around grade appropriate content and effective instruction.

Collaboration is key

- Principal's active support and encouragement of SIP is critical in fostering the cultural change necessary for true cooperation.
- Idea of reflecting on own work with peers is foreign to many teachers; therefore, the facilitator needs to tactfully guide teams through the SIP process.
- Meeting every week will help build this culture of collaboration.
- Honesty is expected (assignments brought, student work brought, standards addressed...)

Source: Ruth Mitchell, 2005. Building a Better Assignment. *Journal of Staff Development*, NSDC, Winter 2005

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Organization

- All activities at the school site, in school using classroom work.
- Teams can be grade level, vertical, interdisciplinary, subject matter--include teachers, administrators, higher ed faculty, parents.
- Meetings are once a week, ideally during the school day.
- May need to break-up the steps of the meeting in the beginning but in time SIP meetings can be completed in 45 minutes to an hour. *Do not want to shortchange step 6.*
- The 6 steps of the model serve as an agenda for ongoing collaborative meetings.

Assignments to SIP


- Do not SIP every assignment
 - SIPing every assignment is impossible- there are only 24 hours in a day
 - SIP frame of mind- SIP will influence much more than the SIPed assignments
- SIP is great for
 - Common assessments
 - End of unit assessments
 - Culminating assignments
- An assignment to SIP must include writing
- Start with assignments given and move towards assignments to give.

Why is there an achievement gap?

- What would your colleagues say is ***the largest*** determining factor contributing to the achievement gap?
- Please indicate your response on the post-it.

Why is There an Achievement Gap?

- Poor Health
 - Economically Disadvantaged
 - Parents Don't Care
 - Rough Neighborhoods
- Low Expectations
 - Low-level Assignments
 - Ineffective Instructional Methods
 - Inequitable Distribution of Resources



The bottom line is that we control
and can close the instructional gap.

SIP will help us do just that.



Any questions?

Participate in the 2009 Conference

**WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH:
Smart Choices and Bold Action
to Raise Achievement and Close Gaps**
November 12-14, 2009, in Arlington, Va.

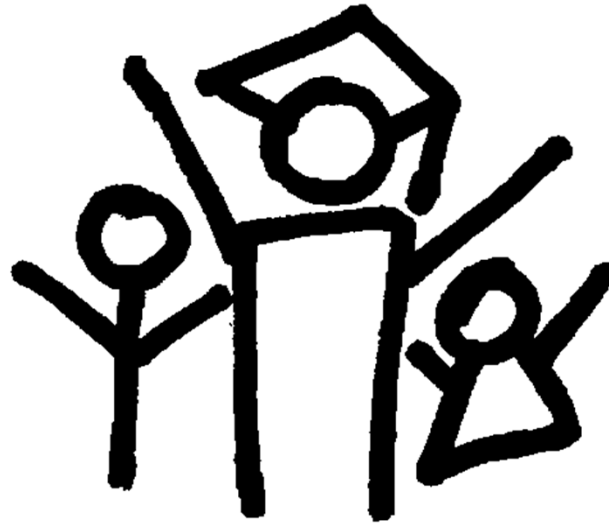
Let it go down in history that times were tough,
but we were tougher.
Join us.

For more information, visit www.edtrust.org



The Education Trust

1250 H Street N.W. Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
202/293-1217



Stephanie Robinson, PhD

steffinn@verizon.net

Shana Kennedy

skennedy@edtrust.org

www.edtrust.org