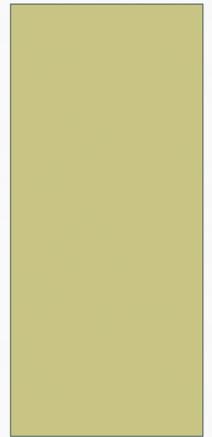


CONFRONTING SUBURBAN POVERTY IN AMERICA

RESEARCH, FINDINGS AND POLICY
IMPLICATIONS

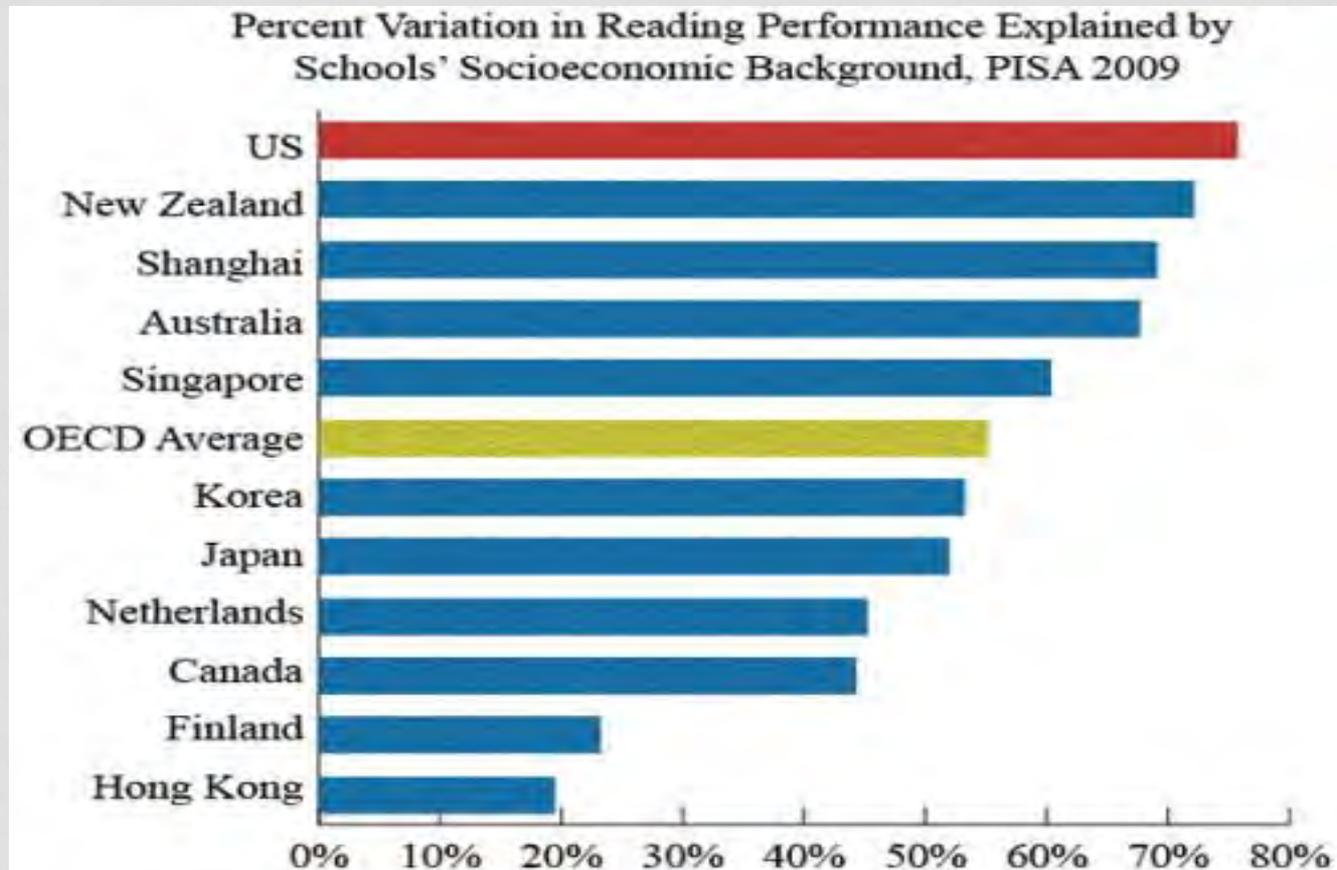
THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION



WEALTH AND POVERTY IN AMERICA

VIDEO: Wealth Inequality in America

POVERTY AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT



Source: OECD (2010) *PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background—Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes (Volume II)*

10 FACTS ABOUT SUBURBAN POVERTY

1. For decades, the poor population in America's suburbs has grown faster than anywhere else in the country. During the 2000s, the poor living in the suburbs grew by 64%—more than twice the growth rate in cities (29%).
2. Today, more poor people live in the suburbs than in America's big cities or rural areas. (Suburban poor = 16.4 million; urban poor = 13.4 million; rural poor = 7.3 million)
3. Throughout the 2000s, the suburban poor population grew significantly in 85 of the nation's 95 largest metropolitan areas
4. By the end of the 2000s, one-third of the suburban poor lived in distressed neighborhoods, where at least one in five residents was poor.

10 FACTS ABOUT SUBURBAN POVERTY

5. The urban and suburban poor have similar characteristics. Similar shares of suburban and urban poor residents have incomes below half the federal poverty line; are working age; work; have a disability; finished college; or are foreign-born.
6. Lower-paying jobs in sectors like retail and hospitality moved to suburbs. Job losses triggered by the Great Recession in industries like construction, manufacturing, and retail hit hardest in suburban communities and contributed to rising suburban unemployment and poverty.
7. Foreign-born residents accounted for 30 percent of the overall population growth in suburban areas, but contributed just 17% to the increase in overall suburban poor during the 2000s.

10 FACTS ABOUT SUBURBAN POVERTY

8. The changing location of affordable housing contributed to suburban poverty throughout the 2000s. By the end of 2010, roughly half of residents in voucher households lived in suburbs. In addition, three-quarters of foreclosures occurred in suburbia.
9. Poor suburban residents have fewer transit options available that can affect their ability to get to work. In the nation's largest metropolitan areas, 700,000 households—nearly all of which are in the suburbs—do not have a vehicle and are not served by public transit of any kind.
10. The federal government spends \$82 billion dollars a year across more than 80 programs to address poverty in place. But the spread-out nature of suburban poverty, and the lack of expert public and non-profit service providers in suburbs, mean that most of those dollars remain focused on urban communities

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING ON PLACE-BASED PROGRAMS

TO IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOODS

- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (\$5.6B; TREAS)
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Grants (\$2.9B; HUD)
- Supportive Housing Program (\$1.2B; HUD)
- HOME Investment Partnerships (\$1.0B; HUD)
- New Markets Tax Credit (\$0.6B; TREAS)
- Community Reinvestment Act (No direct expenditure; FED)

24 programs, \$14.1B

TO DELIVER SERVICES

- Title I school funding (\$14.5B; ED)
- Head Start/Early Head Start (\$5.0B; HHS)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (\$2.8B; USDA)
- Improving Teacher Quality State Grants (\$2.5B; ED)
- Child Care and Development Block Grant (\$2.3B; HHS)
- Consolidated Health Centers (\$2.3B; HHS)

49 programs, \$47.7B

TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITY

- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (Vouchers; \$18.9B; HUD)
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (\$0.5B; TREAS)
- Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (\$0.4B; ED)
- Charter Schools Program (\$0.3B; ED)
- Job Access and Reverse Commute (\$0.2B; DOT)
- Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants (\$0.1B; HUD)

8 programs, \$20.4B

THREE KEY PRINCIPLES FOR ADDRESSING REGION-WIDE POVERTY CHALLENGES:

Getting to scale means:

- Improve systems and networks,
- Promote high-performance organizations, and
- Support smart consolidation.

Promoting collaboration and integration requires strategies that:

- Identify and reduce barriers to integration and collaboration,
- Reward integrated and collaborative approaches, and
- Catalyze regional capacity.

Funding strategically and flexibly means that government funding streams should:

- Commit to enterprise-level funding,
- Promote strategic tools that leverage public and private funds,
- Develop and maintain consistent, comparable data sources.

FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF EACH OF THESE TENETS:

- Regional planning strategies that prioritize and promote equitable development;
- Building capacity in places where it does not exist to ensure that struggling suburbs are poised to absorb and implement resources; and
- Strategies that engage and promote the regional intermediaries or “quarterbacks” who can help coordinate interventions across jurisdictions and policy silos.

CASE STUDY: THE ROAD MAP PROJECT

- A collective impact approach to closing the achievement gap
- Goal: Double postsecondary educational attainment and close achievement gaps for the almost 120,000 students in the suburban school districts of Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, and Tukwila, as well as the public schools in South Seattle.

CASE STUDY: THE ROAD MAP PROJECT

Regional Student Demographics:

- 66 percent are students of color
- 58 percent are low-income students
- 167 different languages are spoken at students' homes
- 16 percent are English-Language-Learners

Regional Data:

- One of the nation's most knowledge-oriented economies.
- Seattle region exhibits the 5th-highest demand for education, and 7th-highest demand for STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) skills, among the nation's 100 largest metropolitan areas.
- Has filled those jobs mostly by importing well-educated workers from elsewhere in the country, or from abroad.

THE METROPOLITAN OPPORTUNITY CHALLENGE: ALIGNING ANTI-POVERTY INVESTMENTS REGION-WIDE

“By repurposing a fraction of existing place-based anti-poverty funding, the federal government should create a Metropolitan Opportunity Challenge to increase access to economic opportunity throughout metropolitan regions, particularly for the majority of metropolitan poor who now live in suburbs. **Similar to the Department of Education’s Race to the Top program, the Challenge would award resources to states through a competitive process,** transforming the field by offering organizations and state and local governments incentives to increase low-income families’ access to regional opportunity, and to leverage new resources to address those challenges.”

Elizabeth Kneebone & Alan Berube, Authors

THE METROPOLITAN OPPORTUNITY CHALLENGE COMPONENTS

1. **Spark state-level reforms.**

States would be required to adopt key reforms that streamline access to work supports for low-income individuals and families.

2. **Support tailored metro-level strategies.**

Provide enterprise-level funding to capable regional entities to implement strategies tailored to their places.

3. **Bend “mainstream” funding.**

Resources would obligate states and regions to bend existing place-based programs toward those new strategies.

THE METROPOLITAN OPPORTUNITY CHALLENGE COMPONENTS

4. **Fund for success.**

Conditioning a portion of the funding on how well the strategies achieved their desired gains in metropolitan access to opportunity.

5. **Deploy data strategically.**

Incorporate funding for rigorous program evaluation and data sharing.

6. **Grow metropolitan capacity.**

Designed not only to stimulate new metro-level thinking and action around access to opportunity, but also to grow stronger networks of intermediaries and supporting institutions working at a regional scale.

THE METROPOLITAN OPPORTUNITY CHALLENGE COMPONENTS

7. *Join up federal efforts.*

Grants could incorporate interventions across a wide variety of policy areas, so coordinated federal leadership would be needed to design and judge applications, and to align existing federal resources and authorities behind the metropolitan strategies.

“We propose that 5 percent of the existing \$82 billion in annual federal place-based antipoverty funding—\$4 billion—be redirected to the Metropolitan Opportunity Challenge.”

TAKING ACTION

VIDEO: Confronting Suburban Poverty in America

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

For more information

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- Visit the Brookings Institute webpage
on Confronting Suburban Poverty
www.confrontingsuburbanpoverty.org