

The Chicago Model for Selective High School Enrollment

Boston Exam Schools Admissions Task Force

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Two Goals of Chicago System

To improve opportunities for students by:

- 1) providing all students with the benefits of a diverse learning environment (racially and economically);
- 2) identify talent in a manner that recognizes not only achievement levels but distance travelled/obstacles overcome.

Benefits of Diversity for All Students

- Research that “diversity makes us smarter.”
- Richer discussions lead to enhanced learning, something recognized by elite colleges.
- Job skills to navigate diversity in the workforce. Bridge-building skills are valued.
- Employers fire more often for inability to get along with others as compared to incompetence.

Sources: Berends & Penaloza (2010) Antonio et al, (2004) Marin (2000), Johnson & Johnson (1994), cited in Kahlenberg and Potter, A Smarter Charter (2014), p. 63.

Using Socioeconomic Considerations to Create Both Socioeconomic and Racial Diversity

- Legal constraints on using race: Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle (2007)
- Political constraints: Gallup poll finding 63%-36% opposition to race as a factor in selective college admissions, but 61%-39% support for considering family economic circumstances in admissions (Source Scott Jaschik, "Poll: Public Opposes Affirmative Action," Inside Higher Ed, July 8, 2016).
- Socioeconomic criteria, especially those that look at neighborhood poverty, are highly correlated with race. Black and Latino families with incomes in excess of \$75,000 live in neighborhoods with higher poverty rates than white families earning less than \$40,000. (Source: John R. Logan, Separate and Unequal: The Neighborhood Gap for Blacks, Hispanics and Asians in Metropolitan America, US2010 Project, July 2011, <http://www.s4.brown.edu/us2010/Data/Report/report0727.pdf>, p. 5)

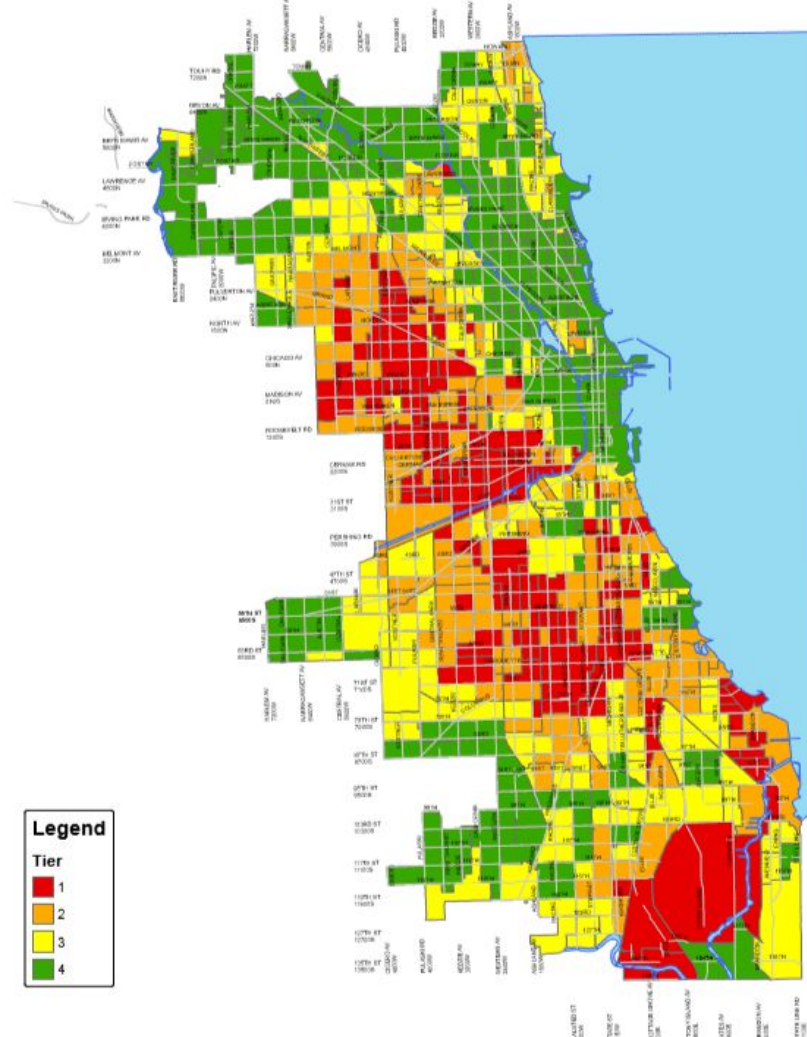
Chicago Model

- Consider state test scores (1/3); grades (1/3) & special admissions exam (1/3)
- 30% admitted by strict academic criteria; and 70% by academic criteria considering socioeconomic obstacles overcome (17.5% from each of 4 socioeconomic tiers).
- Socioeconomic tiers consider Census Tract data looking at 6 factors: 1) parental income, 2) parental education, 3) homeownership rates, 4) proportion single-parent household 5) proportion non-English speaking 6) Home school performance.

Sources: Richard D. Kahlenberg, "Elite, Separate, Unequal," New York Times, June 22, 2014; Chicago Public Schools, <http://www.cpsboe.org/content/documents/boardmeetingmagnetselectivepolicypresentation.pdf>

Map of Chicago by Census Tract Tiers

Socio-Economic Tier by Census Tract
Based on 2016 Census Data

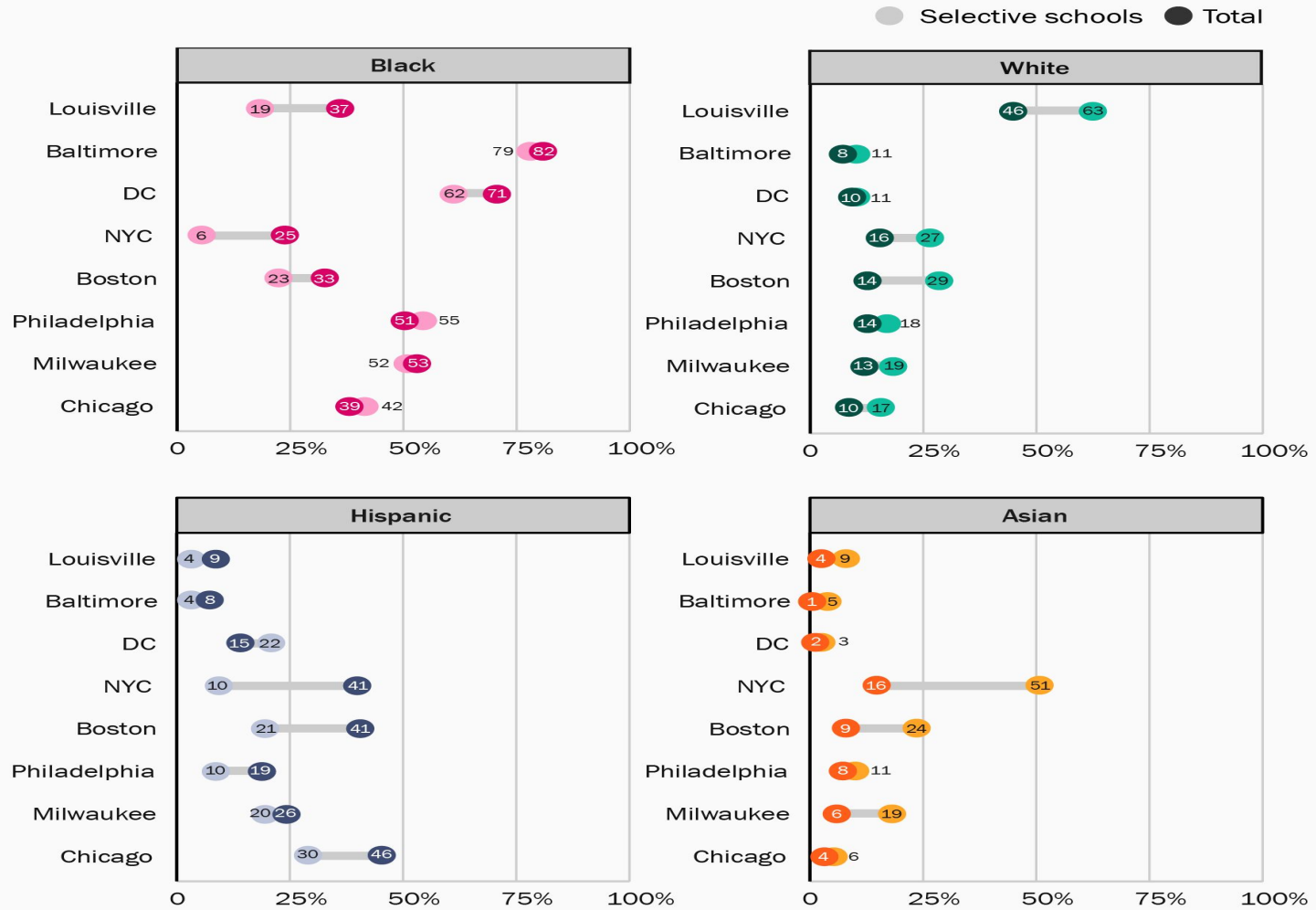


Possible Tweaks on Chicago Plan used in Charlotte-Mecklenburg NC for non-selective magnet schools

- Three socioeconomic tiers – low, medium and high -- not four
- Weight parental education more heavily than other factors. (In Chicago, all 6 factors are equally weighted).
- Rely on Census data but supplement with individual family data on parental income and education (self-reported).

Brookings 2019 Study of Exam Schools (Race)

Selective high schools racially unrepresentative

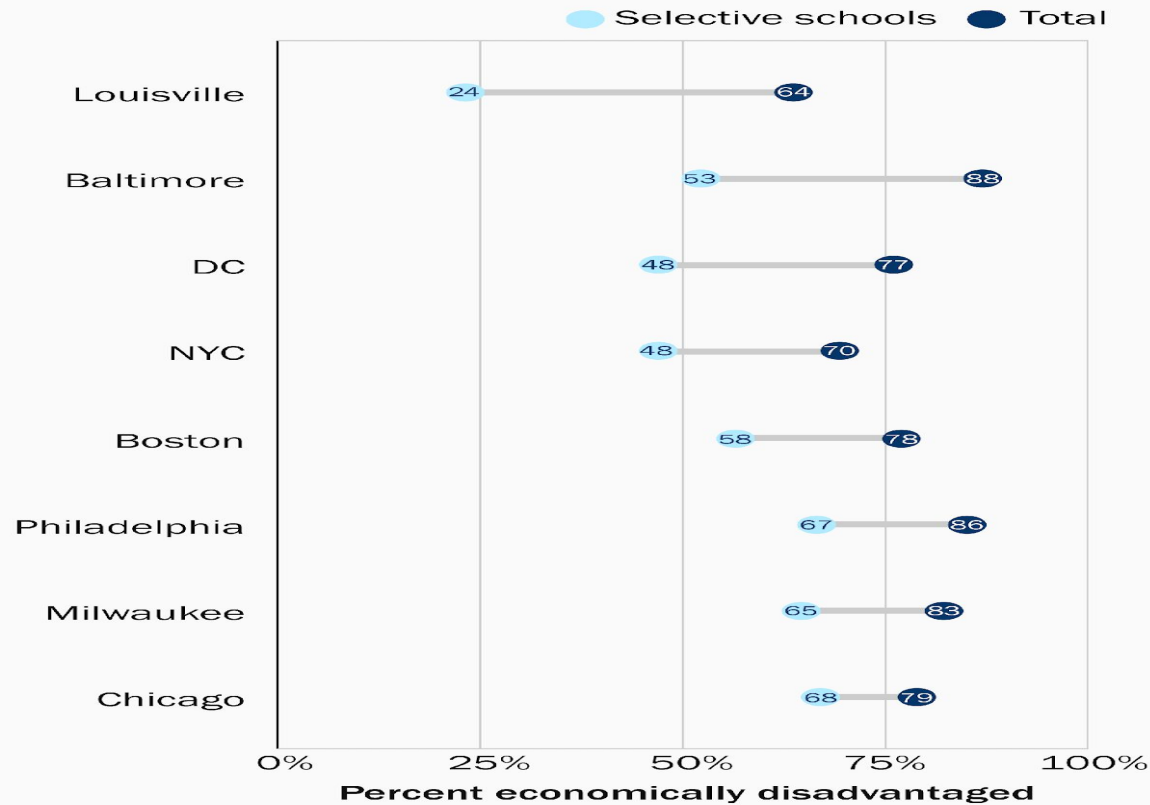


Source: Authors' calculations using 2015 U.S. Department of Education Data.

BROOKINGS

Brookings 2019 Study of Exam Schools (Class)

Selective high schools economically unrepresentative



Source: Authors' calculations using 2015 U.S. Department of Education Data.
Note: Economically disadvantaged refers to students who possess one of the following characteristics: received FRPL, eligible to receive TANF or SNAP, identified as homeless, under the care of CFSA.

BROOKINGS

Richard V. Reeves and Ashley Schobert, "Elite or elitist? Lessons for colleges from selective high schools," Brookings Institution, July 31, 2019.

<https://www.brookings.edu/research/elite-or-elitist-lessons-for-colleges-from-selective-high-schools>

Whitney Young High School (Chicago)

Demographic makeup

- 29% Hispanic,
- 28% white
- 21% Black,
- 17% Asian,
- 4% Multiracial,
- 38% low-income

<https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/school.aspx?source=studentcharacteristics&source2=lowincome&Schoolid=150162990250764>

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