



# Increasing 9th Grade Success and High School Graduation in Chicago

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# UChicago Network for College Success

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Using research, data, and professional experience to organize high schools for improvement and improve student outcomes

## **Our Community:**

- 15-20 Chicago public high schools in an NSI
- Chicago Public Schools
- Regional and national clients

**Key Focus:** 9th Grade Success

# Understanding the Problem

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Graduation rate for students entering Chicago high schools in 1999:

47%

The conversation about dropping out in 2005...

- Student background and prior performance
- At any time, for any reason

Source: UChicago Consortium on School Research: Graduation and Dropout Trends in Chicago (2005)

# The Indicator: Ninth Grade On-Track

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## What is it?

A 9<sup>th</sup> grader is on-track to graduate if they have:

- At least 5 credits by the end of the year
- No more than one semester failure in a core class

## Why is it important?

- 4 times more likely to graduate
- Lots of variation across schools

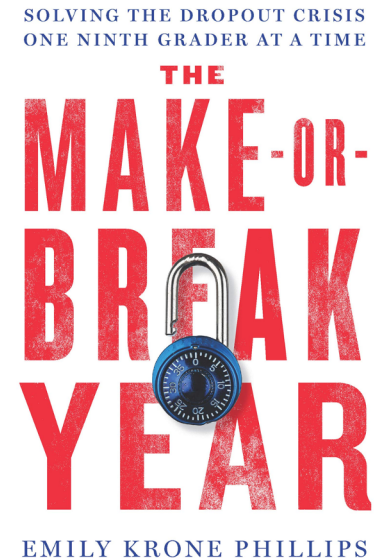
Source: UChicago Consortium on School Research The On-Track Indicator as a Predictor of High School Graduation (2005)



# The Early Adopter: Hancock High School

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- Neighborhood high school on the Southwest Side of Chicago
- Began work with a ~60% on-track rate
  - Research and data
  - Home visits
  - Grading policy adjustments
  - Highlighting bright spots
  - On-track coordinator
- Lasting structure: 9th Grade Success Team

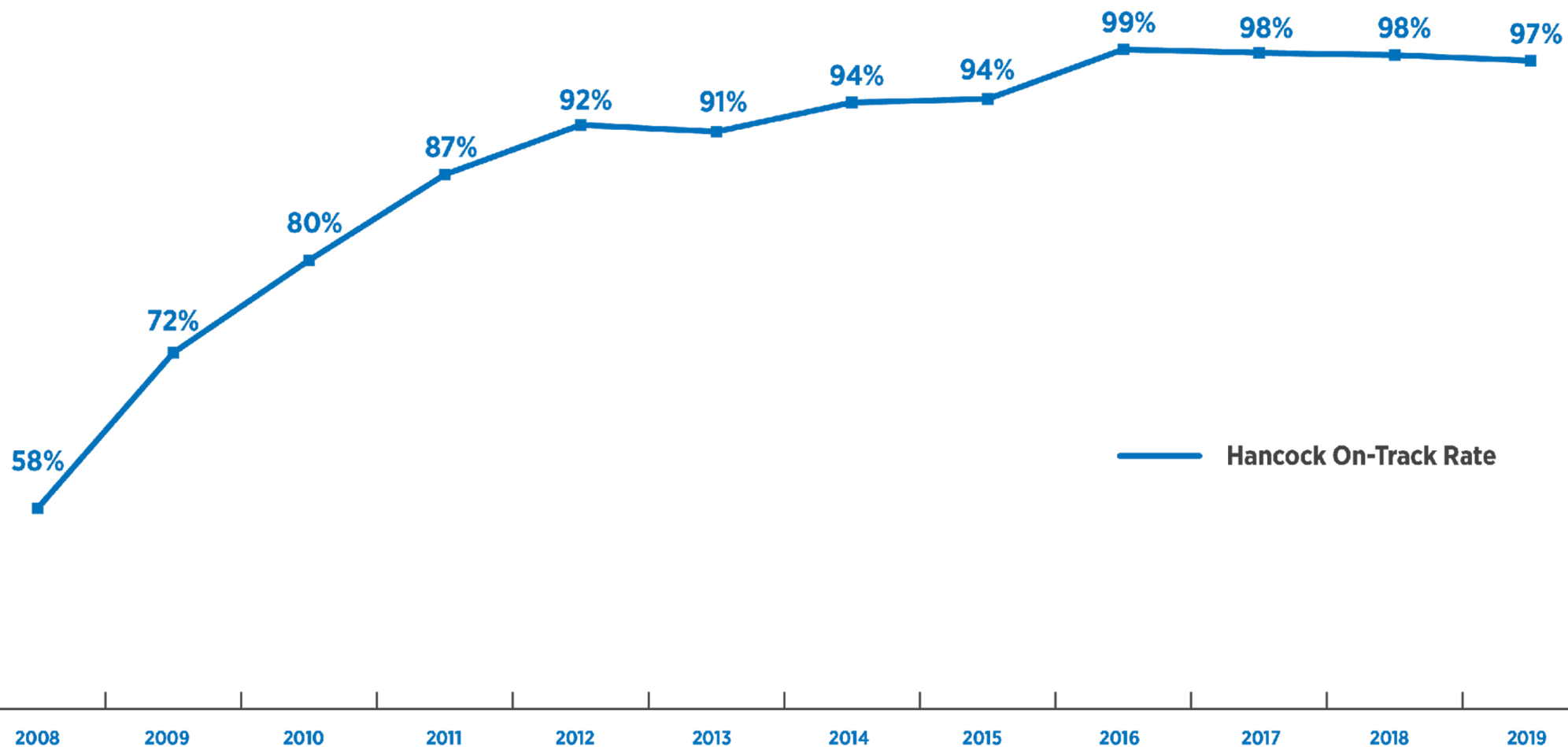


# The Strategy: 9th Grade Success Teams

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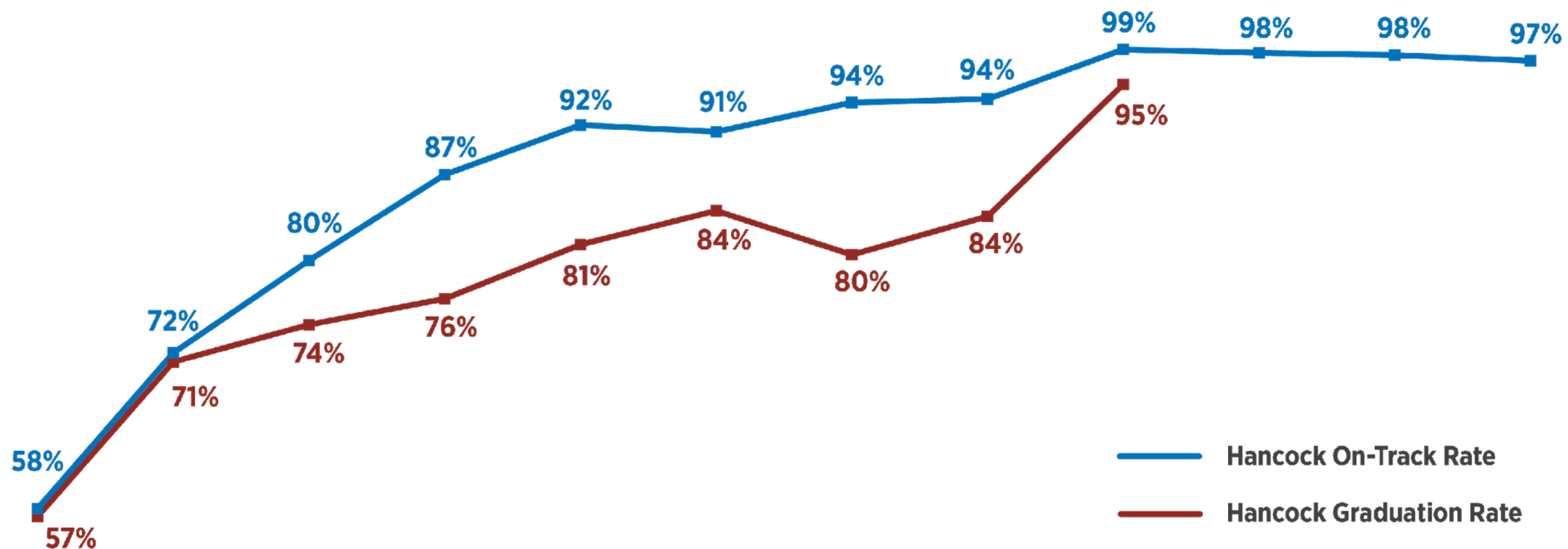
- Dedicated 9th grade teachers
- Collaboration across departments
- Focused on the whole 9th grade cohort
- Collective efficacy

# On-Track Rates at Hancock High School



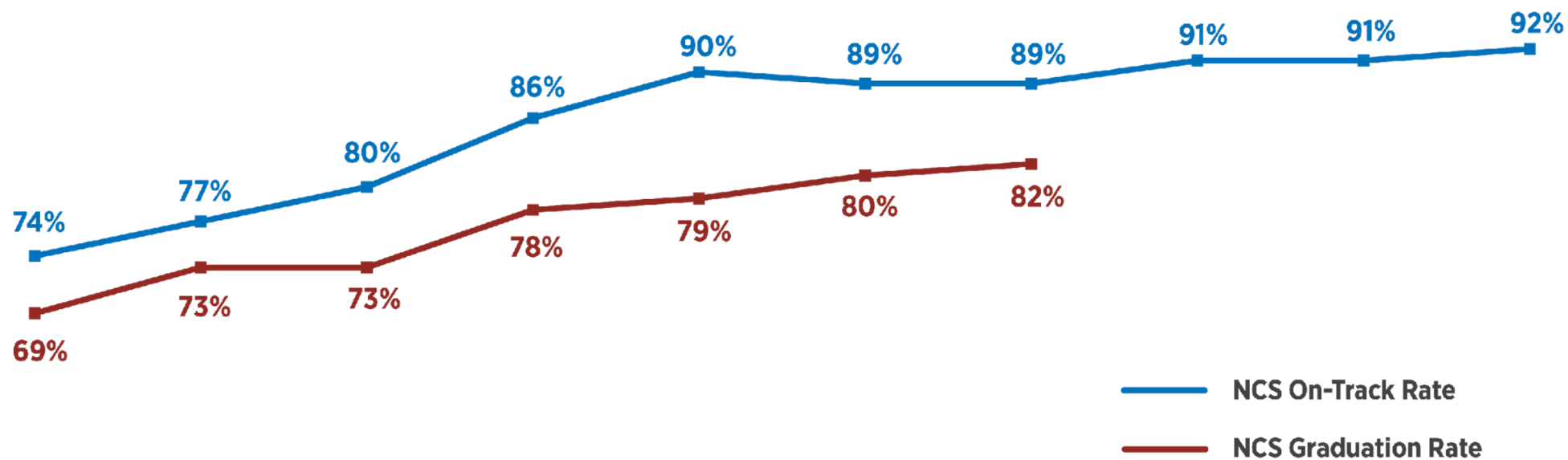
Data Source: Chicago Public Schools: <https://www.cps.edu/about/district-data/>

# On-Track and Graduation Rates at Hancock High School



Data Source: Chicago Public Schools: <https://www.cps.edu/about/district-data/>

# On-Track and Graduation Rates at NCS Schools



Data Source: Chicago Public Schools: <https://www.cps.edu/about/district-data/>

# The Results: A Strong Theory of Change

## Aim

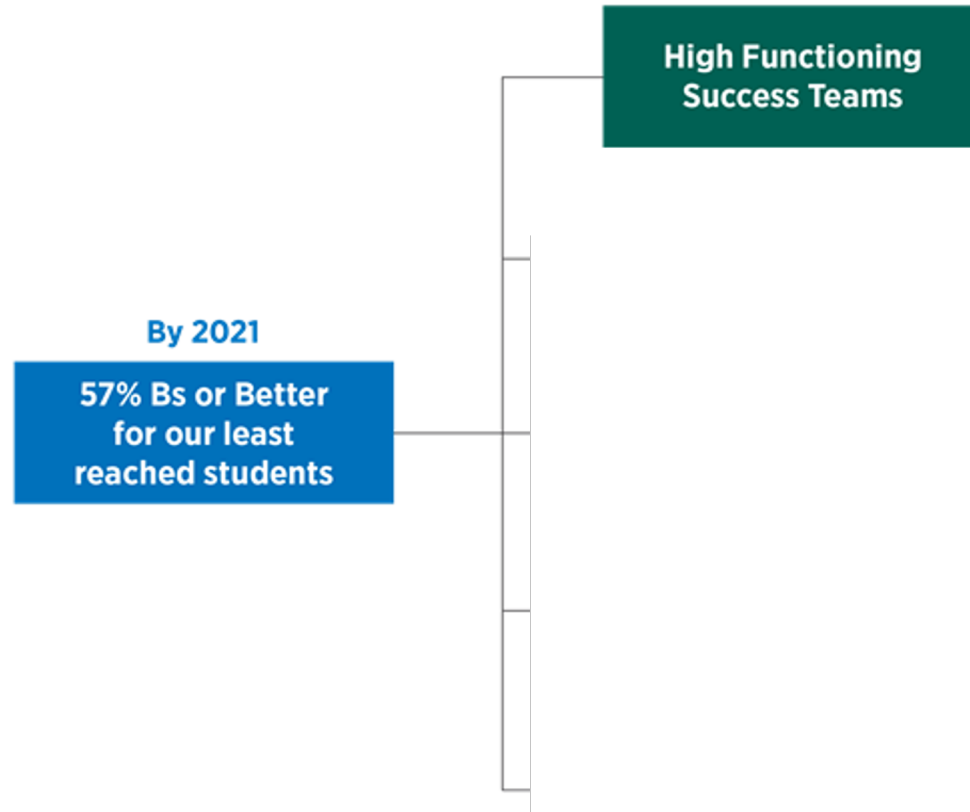
By 2021

57% Bs or Better  
for our least  
reached students

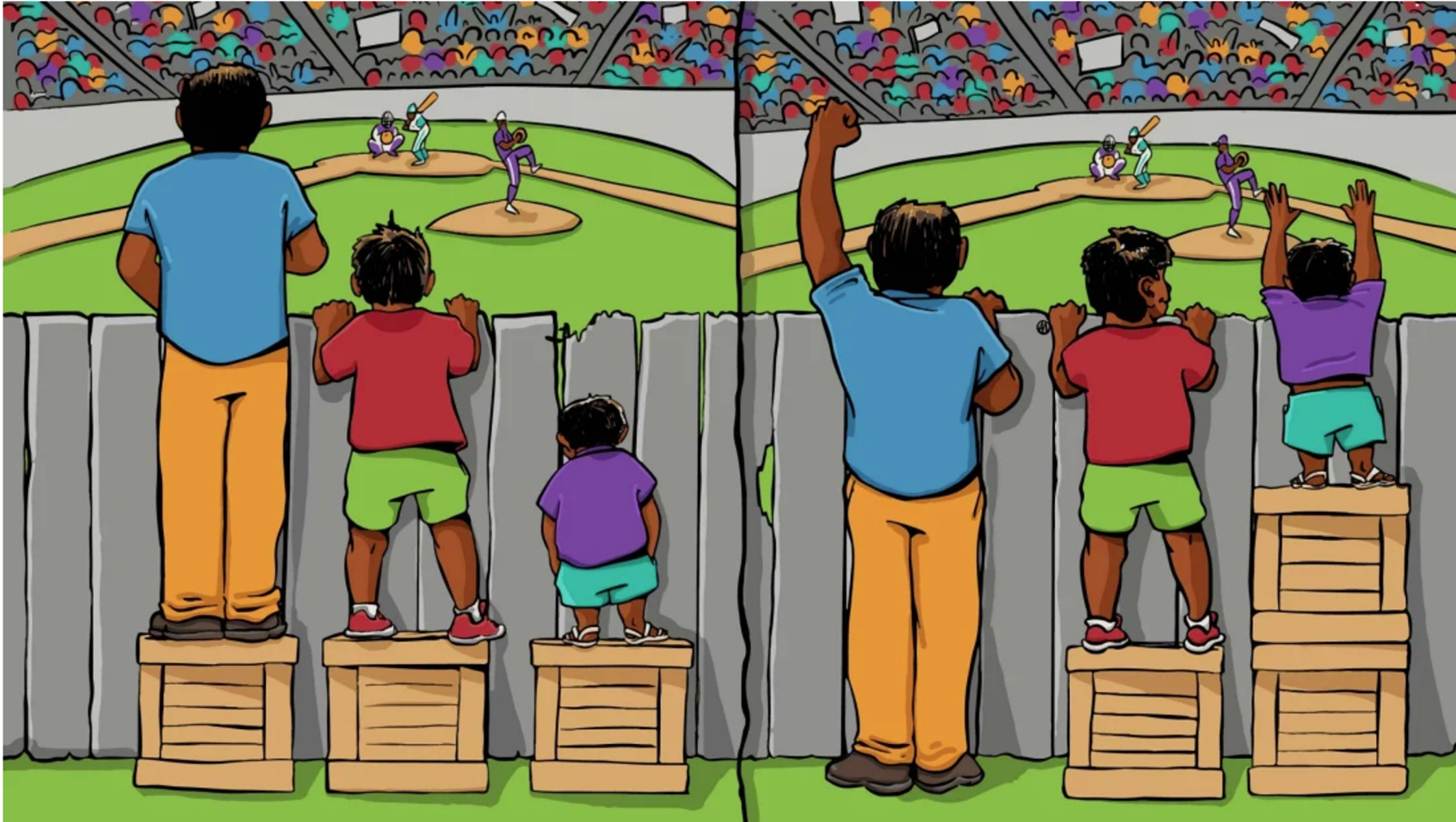
# Going Deep: 9th Grade Success Teams

## Aim

## Primary Drivers



# Going Deep: 9th Grade Success Teams





# Lessons Learned

