



Education & Socioeconomic Status

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Socioeconomic Status (SES) is a combination of education, income, and occupation. Also included are SES related to gender, race/ethnicity and environmental factors.

I. Socioeconomic Status Impact for Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS) (See first 2 pages of handout: “LCPS Enrollment Demographics” for columns: gender, ethnicity, economic disadvantaged, English Language Learners, Gifted, & Special Education percentages.)

II. Samplings from Research of SES

SES Family Resources & Academic Achievement

- ❧ Families from lower SES communities are less likely to have the financial resources or time availability to provide children with academic support; develop academic skills more slowly.
- ❧ Children’s initial reading competence is correlated with the home literacy environment, number of books owned, and parent distress. (Most parents from low SES communities are unable to afford resources such as books, computers, or tutors to create this positive literacy environment.)
- ❧ In a nationwide study of American kindergarten children, only 36% of parents in the lowest-income SES read to their children on a daily basis, compared with 62% of parents from the highest-income SES.
- ❧ Children from low SES environments acquire language skills more slowly, exhibit delayed letter recognition and phonological awareness, and are at risk for reading difficulties.
- ❧ Children with higher SES backgrounds are more likely to be proficient on tasks of addition, subtraction, ordinal sequencing, and math word problems than children with lower SES backgrounds.
- ❧ Chronic stress more frequently found in low SES homes negatively affects a child’s pre-academic skills.
- ❧ More lower SES families are one parent families; the domination of one parent families in a school or school district can have an overriding negative influence stronger than that of poverty or race.
- ❧ More students from lower SES schools enter high school several grade levels behind students from higher SES schools. This often increases through high school.
- ❧ Proven programs that encourage and assist low income SES parents' involvement are essential to help improve students' academic performance.

Psychological Health

- ❧ Children from lower SES households are about twice as likely as those from high-SES households to display learning-related behavior problems; correlates to inattention, disinterest, and lack of cooperation in school.

- ☒ Identifying as part of a lower/working class in college leads to feelings of not belonging in school; dropping out of school before graduation; stress of financial limitations.

Poverty and Education

- ☒ Children and families living in poverty are at greater risk of hunger, homelessness, sickness, physical and mental disabilities, violence, teen parenthood, family stress, and educational failure.
- ☒ The greater the concentration of poverty in school districts, the lower the student achievement at the local (and state levels).
- ☒ Children that live in poverty are 4 times more likely to have learning disabilities than middle class and affluent students.

(If a student has not eaten for days, has clothes that don't fit, how can he/she be expected to maintain focus in a classroom?)

Racial and Ethnic Factors

- ☒ The achievement gap has lessened but still exists for African American, Hispanic & Native American students at all levels of academic achievement (increases in high school).
- ☒ Higher percentages of African American, Hispanic American, and Native American children live in poverty compared to white children (13.5%).
- ☒ When comparing within a single race, the poorest black youths are found to be thirty times more likely to drop out of school than the wealthiest black youths.

Dropout Rates

See “U.S. Dropout Rates by race/ethnicity from 1980-2009” & LCPS Graduation Rates

- ☒ If a student has a sibling or parent who dropped out of high school, they are at greater risk of dropping out.
- ☒ The U.S. dropout rate is 10.9%; SES is one of the main factors; students from low income families are 2.4 times more likely to drop out than middle-income students; attend schools with a high dropout rates..
- ☒ Low SES urban area students and rural area low SES students are at high risk to drop out.
- ☒ Poor grades in early grades increases chances of dropping out in high school.
- ☒ In 2007, the high school dropout rate among persons 16- 24 years old was highest in low-income families (16.7%) as compared to high-income families (3.2%) (Statistics from 2008).

School Environment

- ☒ School conditions contribute more to SES differences in learning rates than family characteristics.
- ☒ Schools in low-SES communities suffer from high levels of unemployment, migration of the best qualified teachers, and low educational achievement.
- ☒ A teacher's years of experience and quality of training is correlated with children's academic achievement; children in low income schools are less likely to have well-qualified teachers.

High poverty schools have far fewer qualified teachers. Students in a high poverty school have up to a 50% greater chance of being taught by an inexperienced teacher.

- ❧ Schools with a high population of low income students often provide a curriculum that is being narrowed and less intellectual content is being covered, few, if any, AP classes.
- ❧ Affluent schools are 22 times more likely to reach consistently high academic achievement compared with high-poverty SES schools.
- ❧ High poverty and affluent SES schools are still mostly segregated schools by both SES & race/ethnicity. Desegregated schools result in greater academic achievement for high poverty students.
- ❧ Schools (also schools within a larger school system) in low-SES communities are often under-resourced, negatively affecting students' academic progress. (LCPS work very hard to make all schools equally resourced.)
- ❧ School size may impact educational outcomes (research mixed). Smaller schools (600-900) may have better learning environments & experiences. *Ravitch challenges this theory.
- ❧ Improving school systems and proven early intervention programs help to reduce risk factors.

The following factors have been found to improve the quality of schools in low-SES neighborhoods: 1) Focus on improving teaching and learning, and creation of an information-rich environment; 2) Building of a learning community; 3) Continuous professional development; 4) Involvement of parents; and 5) Increased funding and resources.

Affluent, Suburban Students' Academic Achievement Issues

- ❧ High income SES students are vulnerable to anxiety and depression related to academic pressure and isolation from parents.
- ❧ The psychosocial adjustment problems of this group of students manifest themselves in higher incidences of substance abuse and academic dishonesty as compared with the national norm.

Funding issues related to socioeconomic status

- ❧ State funding for public schools is mostly derived from sales taxes and personal income taxes; taxes vary from state to state and aren't equal due to severe variations in financial resources.
- ❧ In many states the majority of public school finances is drawn from property taxes that create disparities in district budgets; property-rich areas equals more resources for schools.
- ❧ **Current funding is insufficient to assist public schools in overcoming the disparity in SES educational achievement for low SES students and to provide an essential quality learning environment for all students.**

SES Impacts on Students' Achievement and Society

- ❧ Inadequate education and increased dropout rates affect students' academic achievement, perpetuating the low SES of the community.
- ❧ Children of all socioeconomic statuses experience problems, but the educational challenges that children of low SES face are the most serious and the most prevalent.
- ❧ Low SES (e lower education, poverty, and poor health) ultimately affects our whole society.

Research Sources

1. “Education & Socioeconomic Status”; American Psychological Association; [www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/fact sheet-education](http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/fact-sheet-education)
2. “Socioeconomic Status, Race, Gender, & Retention: Impact on Student Achievement,” June Thomas & Cathy Stockton at Louisiana Tech University.
3. “The Effect of Socioeconomic Status on Academic Achievement”; Masters Thesis by Jennifer Barry; Wichita State University; December 2006.

U.S. Dropout Rates by race/ethnicity from 1980-2009

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2011). The Condition of Education 2011 (NCES 2011-033), Indicator 20.

Status dropout rates of 16- through 24-year-olds in the civilian, non institutionalized population, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1980-2009

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>	<u>Asian</u>	<u>American&Alaskan Indian</u>
1980	14.1	11.4	19.1	35.2	NA	NA
1985	12.6	10.4	15.2	27.6	NA	NA
1990	12.1	9.0	13.2	32.4	4.9!	16.4!
1995	12.0	8.6	12.1	30.0	3.9	13.4!
1998	11.8	7.7	13.8	29.5	4.1	11.8
1999	11.2	7.3	12.6	28.6	4.3 ‡	
2000	10.9	6.9	13.1	27.8	3.8	14.0
2001	10.7	7.3	10.9	27.0	3.6	13.1
2002	10.5	6.5	11.3	25.7	3.9	16.8
2003	9.9	6.3	10.9	23.5	3.9	15.0
2004	10.3	6.8	11.8	23.8	3.6	17.0
2005	9.4	6.0	10.4	22.4	2.9	14.0
2006	9.3	5.8	10.7	22.1	3.6	14.7
2007	8.7	5.3	8.4	21.4	6.1	19.3
2008	8.0	4.8	9.9	18.3	4.4	14.6
2009	8.1	5.2	9.3	17.6	3.4	13.2