



ST. JOHN'S NORWOOD
Bethesda - Chevy Chase

UNEVEN GROUND

A Call for Economic Justice

Uneven Opportunity in Education

March 8, 2026

Everything we do in the first 18 years of our kids' lives is one long preparation for that moment where their future will be determined, which is, by which college they go to. It's ridiculous, but it's true.

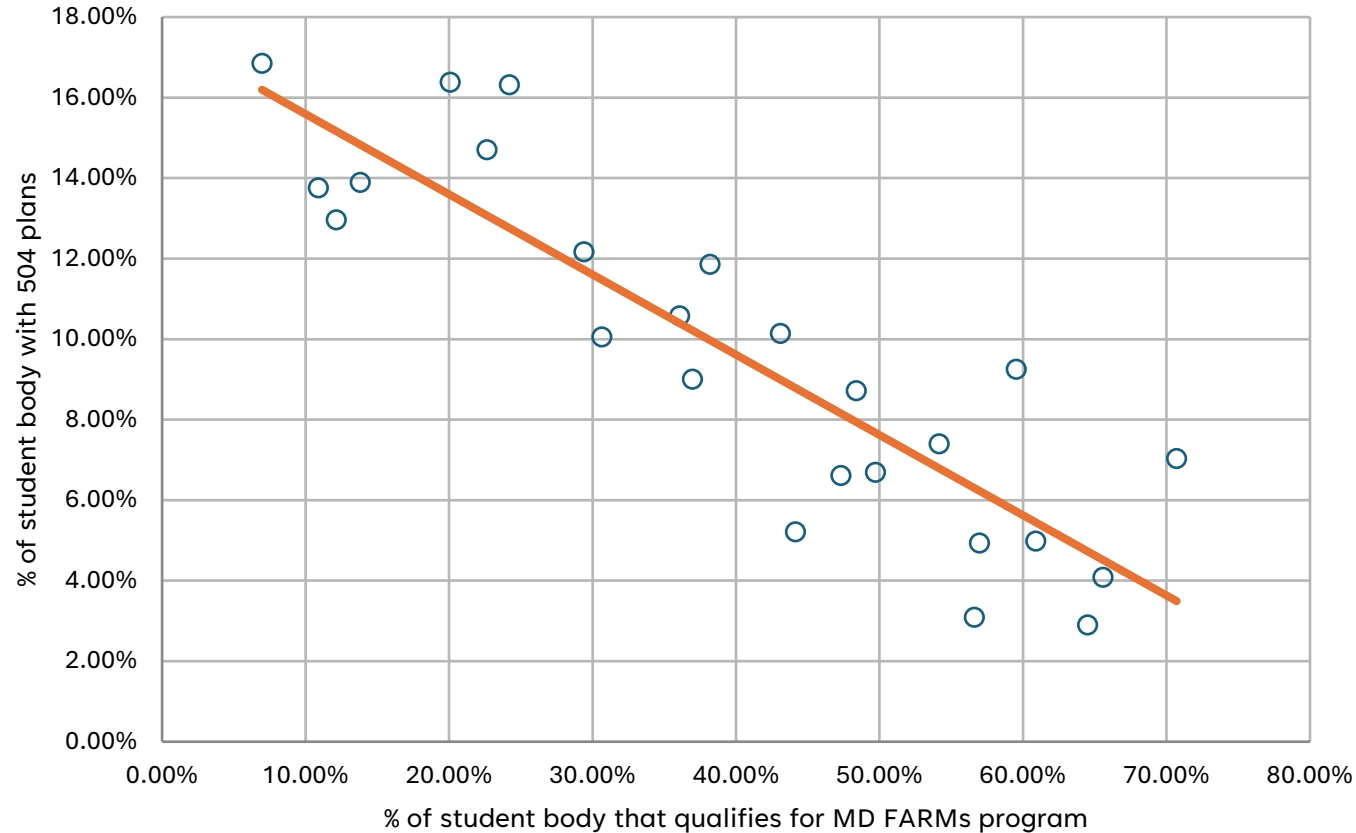
Richard Reeves, Brookings Institution

October 17, 2017

St. John's Adult Forum



Each dot on this chart represents a different MCPS High School



504 plans cover students with physical or mental impairments that "substantially limit" major life activities (e.g., learning, walking, concentrating) but who do not require specialized instruction like an IEP. Common 504 accommodations include extended test time, preferential seating, and therapy breaks.

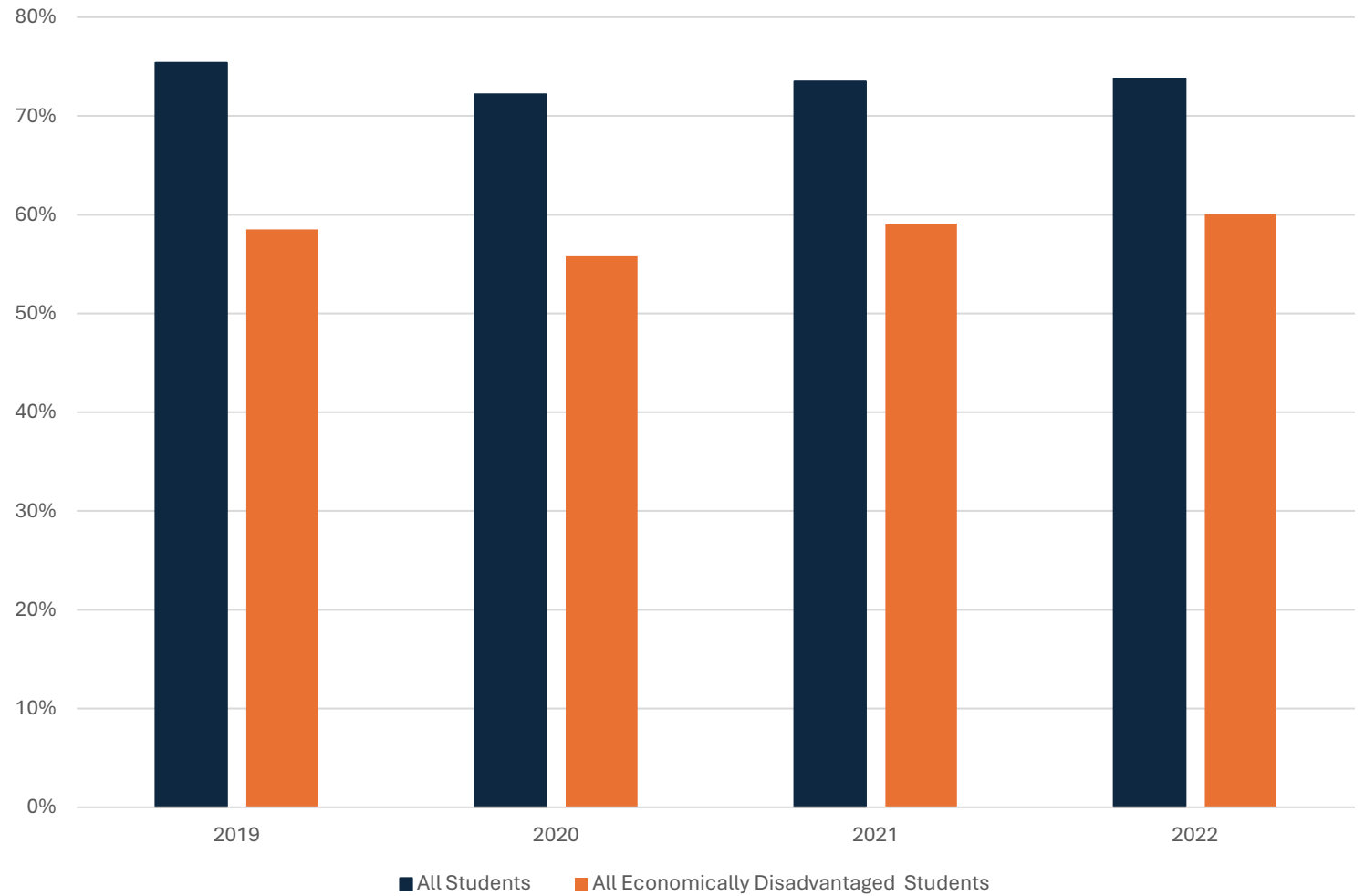
FARMs = Free and Reduced Meals program. In Maryland, a family of 4 with an annual income of \$59,478 or less can qualify for the FARMs program

Source: MD State Dept of Education, available [here](#), and MCPS data, available [here](#)

Can a family's capital literally buy a student more time (on tests and assignments)?

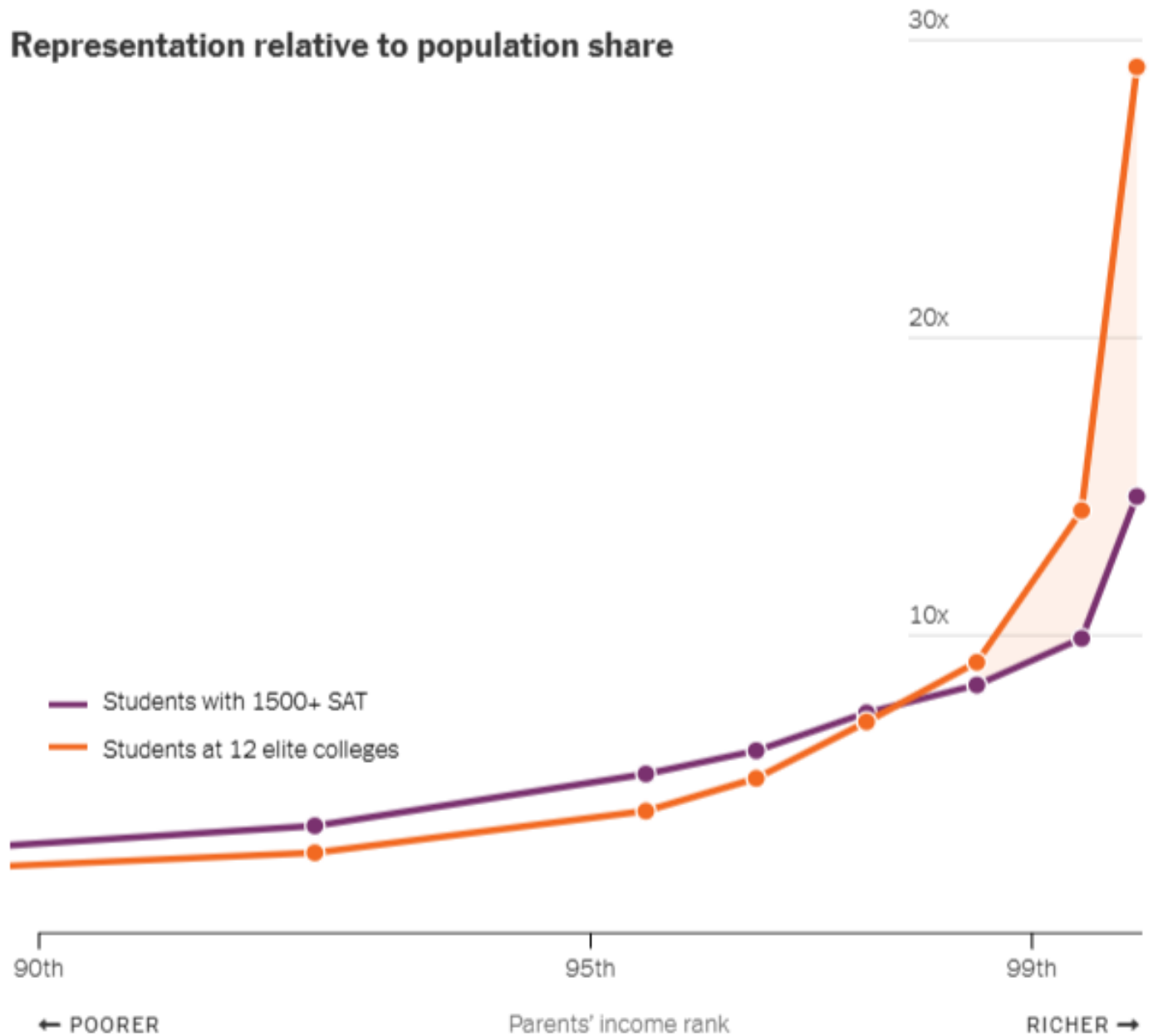
This data shows an inverse relationship between MCPS high schools' FARMs (Free And Reduced Meals) rates and their percentages of students with 504 accommodations.

Fewer MCPS Economically Disadvantaged students enroll in college



Source: MD State Dept of Education, available [here](#)

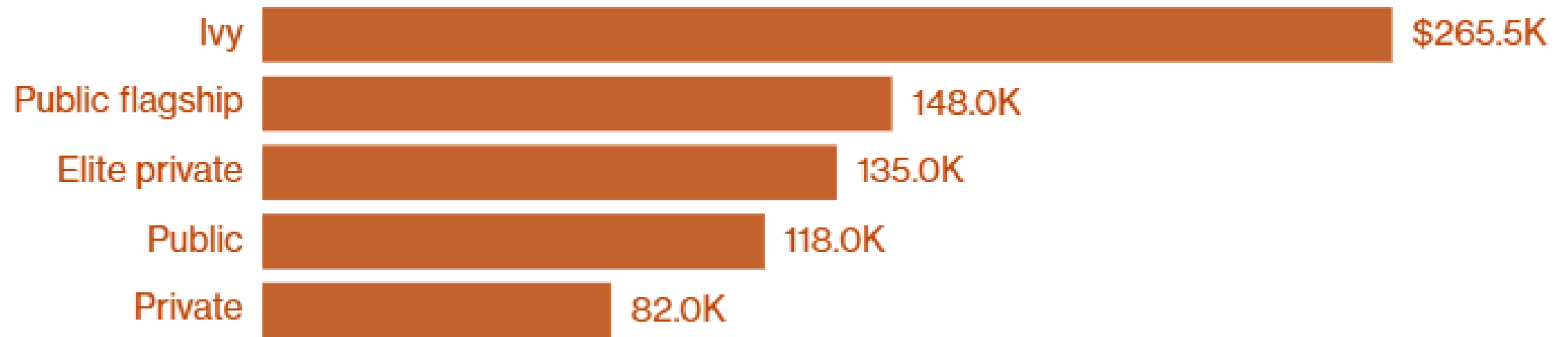
Students from the richest 1 percent of families make up 1 in 6 students at "Ivy Plus" institutions



Source: New York Times, available [here](#)

Going Ivy pays off

Median ROI 10 years after enrollment



Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce

Students from low-income families are less likely to graduate from college

4x

Rate at which students from the
Highest-Income Quartile
graduate vs students from the
Lowest-Income Quartile