

Education and School-Aged Children

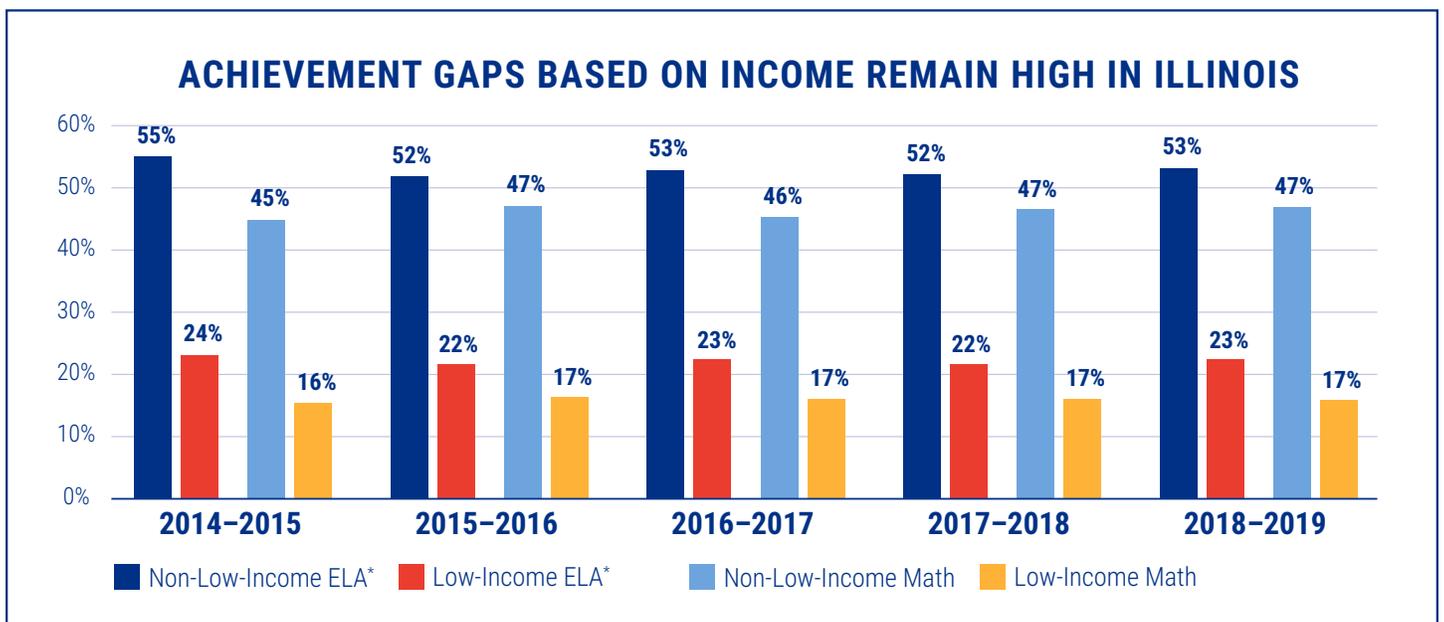


“Every child has a different learning style and pace. Each child is unique, not only capable of learning but also capable of succeeding.”

ROBERT JOHN MEEHAN

Earlier in the Challenge, we explored how segregation persists in American communities. Our economically and racially divided neighborhoods are leading to inequitable educational environments and adverse academic outcomes for our youth. **Studies show that children from families with low incomes** enter high school with literacy skills 5 years behind and are over 4 times more likely to drop out than those from high-income families. Students of color, who are more likely to attend under-resourced schools than their white counterparts, suffer because their teachers work in under-resourced school environments with large class sizes. When controlling for socioeconomic status, underfunding almost entirely explains **disparities in academic achievement**, according to Brookings.

In our State, the **achievement gaps** remain a serious problem. According to the Illinois State Board of Education non-low-income elementary school students scored an average of 30 percentage points higher in terms of proficiency in both English & Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics than their low-income peers in the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR). This was the same percentage in last year’s report card. The racial achievement gaps also persist at a stubbornly high rate. White students score an average of 30 percentage points higher in proficiency in ELA and math than their African American counterparts and 22 percentage points higher in ELA and 21 percentage points higher in math than their Latinx counterparts.



* English Language Arts Source: Illinois State Board of Education

Week 14 Challenge

Please **choose one or two** of the below activities to engage with for 15 minutes this week, and if you have time, we encourage you to complete more.



ACTIVITY A

Check out this [interactive database to examine racial disparities in educational opportunities and school discipline](#). Reflect on your education experiences, and the disciplinary actions taken for your (or your child's) Black peers. How did this shape your ideas about Black people?



ACTIVITY B

Watch [Boston teacher Kandice Sumner](#) on the TED stage discuss the disparities she sees in her classroom every day because of segregation in our school systems. Reflect on the disparities that impact learning in your local schools due to segregation. Identify your local community resources that are working to address the disparities. Is there a way for you to help magnify their efforts?



ACTIVITY C

Even though there has been an increase in academic growth in Illinois, gaps persists and proficiency lags. Review [The State We're In Illinois 2019 Report](#) by Advance Illinois (pages 13–17).

Share your reflections and any resources that helps further the discussion on today's topic on social media using the hashtag **#UWIEquityChallenge**.

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