

MIND THE GAP

How to ensure all students succeed in school and beyond

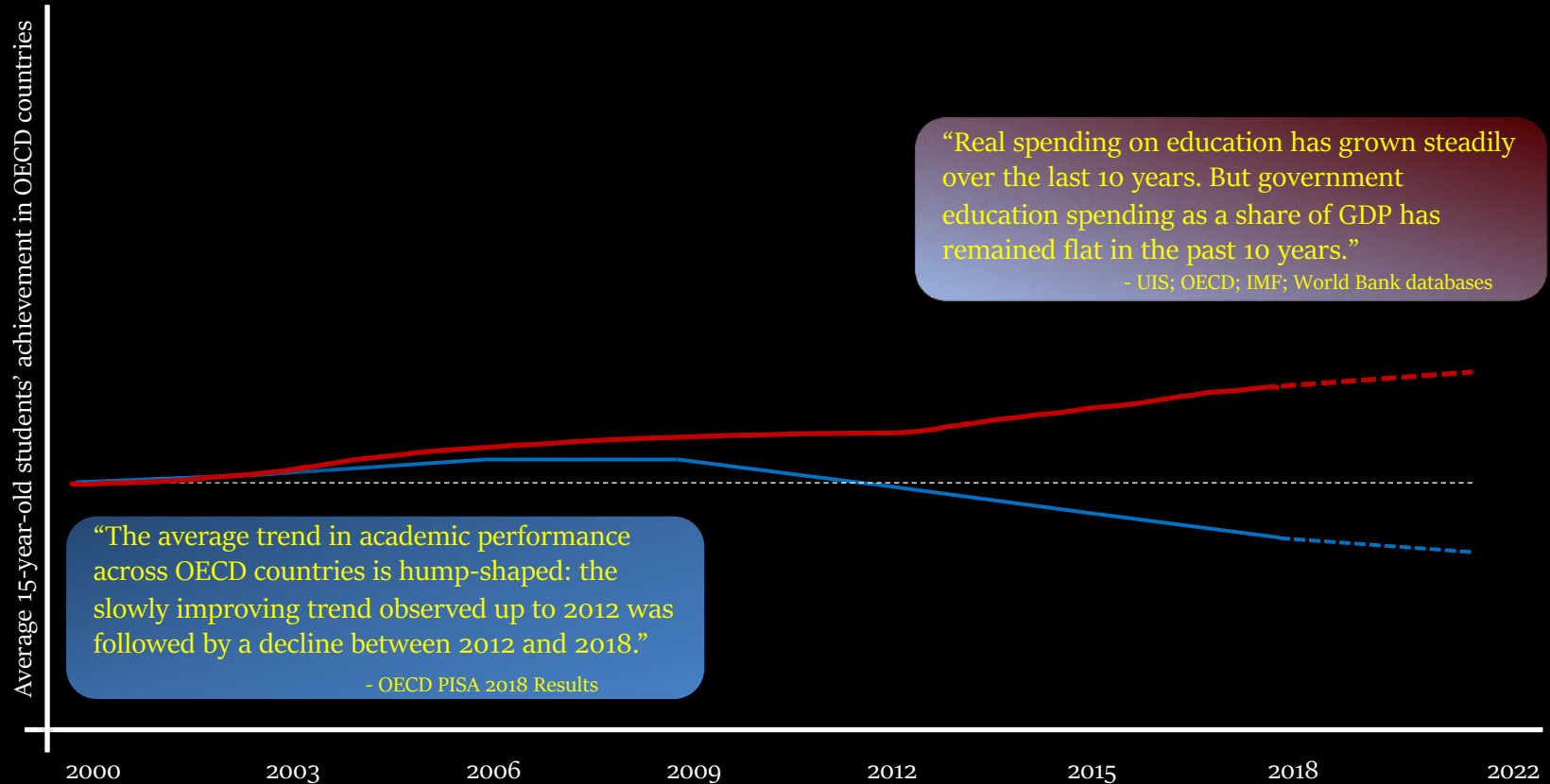


ISNZ Annual Conference

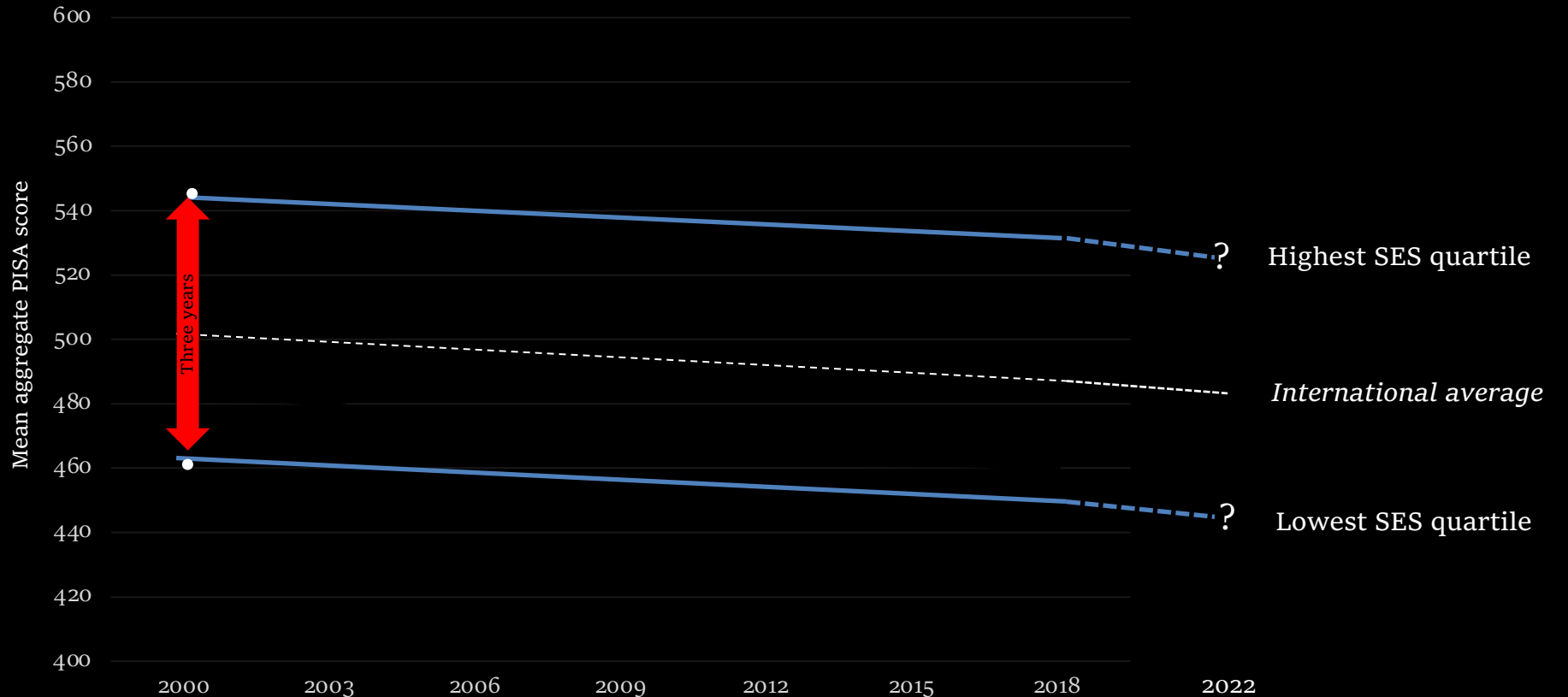
9th September 2023

Pasi Sahlberg

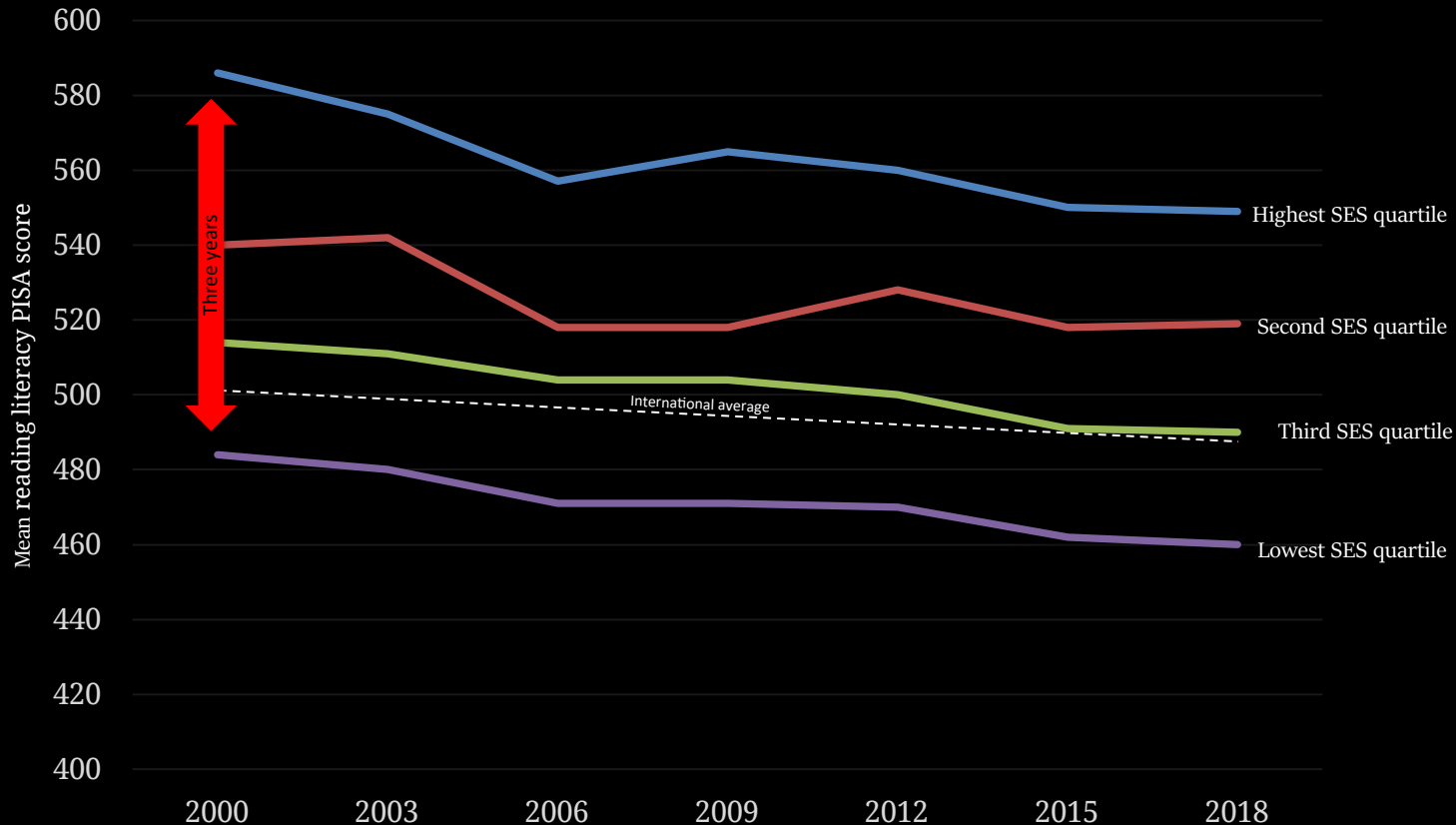
The state of school education: A global view



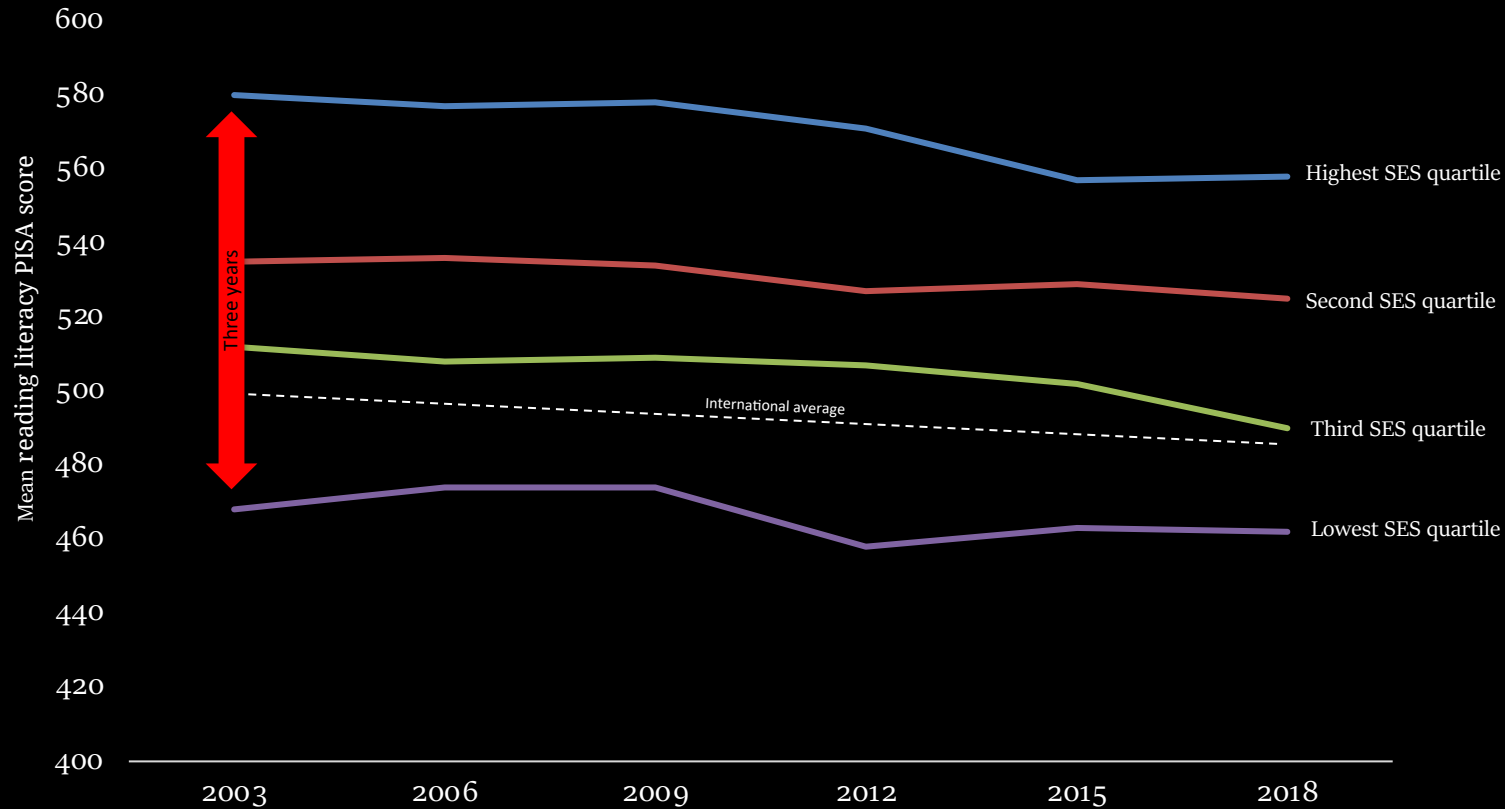
Average student academic achievement in OECD PISA by socioeconomic (SES) quartile



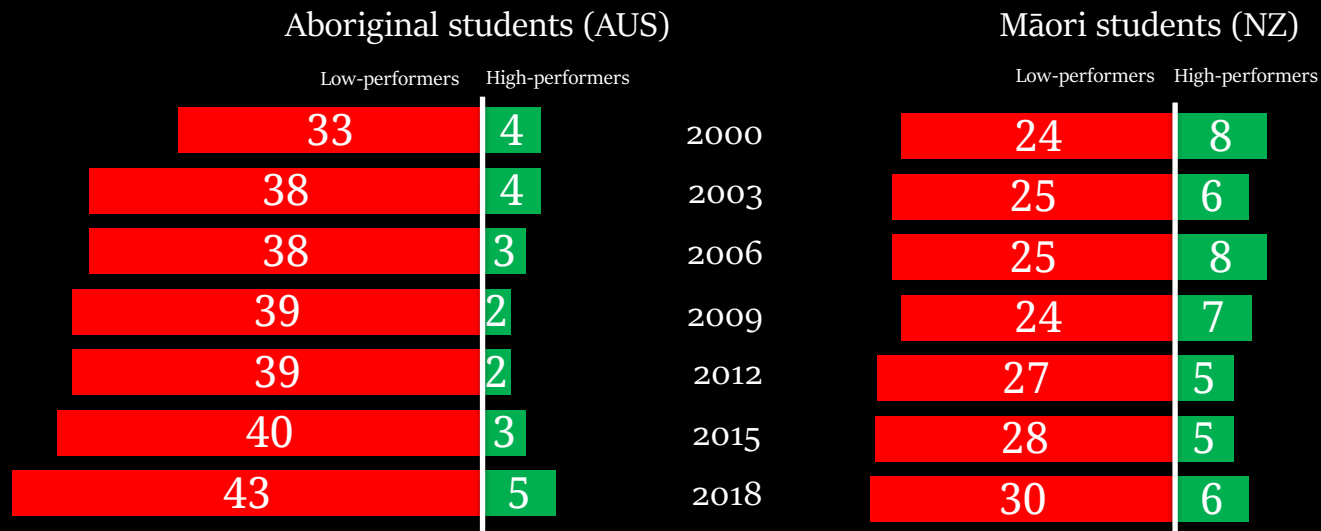
Average reading literacy PISA scores in Australia by SES quartile

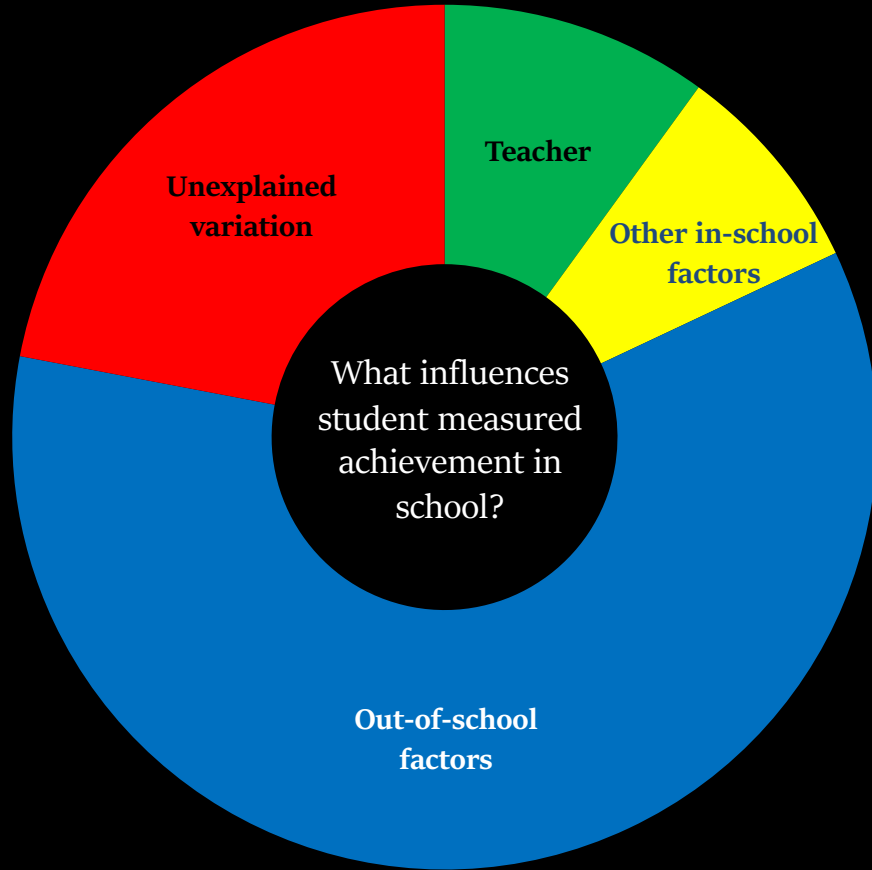


Average reading literacy PISA scores in New Zealand by SES quartile



Proportions of low and high performers in Australia and New Zealand on the OECD PISA reading literacy proficiency scale





Teachers account for about 10% to 15% of the variability in measured student achievement. Most opportunities for quality improvement are therefore found in the system-level conditions.

- American Statistical Association (2014)

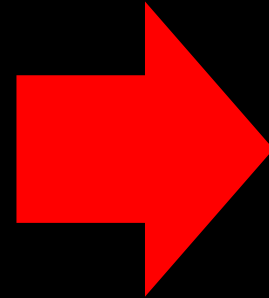
The conclusion that family background is far more important than people think has remained a solid empirical research finding for the past half a century.

LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY: In-school actions

Relevance of curriculum: Co-design curriculum in accordance with the needs of different students and communities.

Inclusiveness of pedagogy: Choose teaching methods that best serve the needs and interests of different students.

Fairness of assessment: Use wide range of assessment tools to support learning and wellbeing of all students.



Flexible, personalised
pathways to success

WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?

THREE ALMOST ZERO-COST SOLUTIONS

- 1 Whole child
- 2 Relationships
- 3 Engagement

1 WHOLE CHILD APPROACH

The "whole child approach" in education is a philosophy and strategy that emphasizes the comprehensive development of a student, taking into account not only their academic needs but also their social, emotional, physical, and psychological wellbeing.

Academic achievement

Health and wellbeing

Community and
cultural awareness

Social and emotional
development

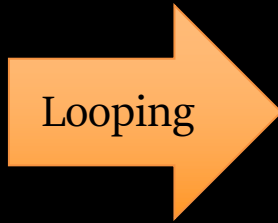
Character

Individualised
learning

Collaborative
partnerships

2 BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

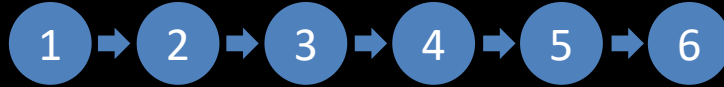
Studies around the world have found that healthy student-teacher relationships are associated with higher academic achievement, fewer disciplinary problems, and decreased risky behaviour.



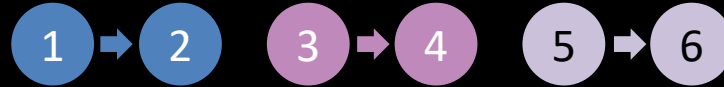
Looping is an old worldwide practice in which whole class is taught by the same teacher in two or more sequential years in school. Practiced for example in Finland, Germany, Japan and the United states.

2 BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

One 6-year loop:

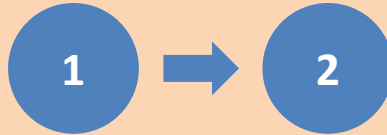


Three 2-year loops:

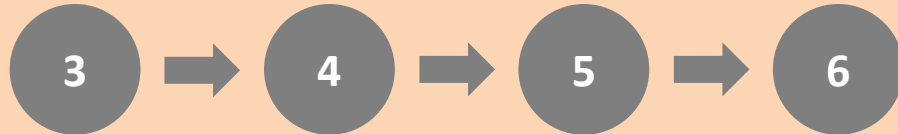


The Finnish Model

One 2-year loop:



One 4-year loop:



2 BETTER RELATIONSHIPS

The Attleboro (MA) 'Looping' experiment:

In primary and junior high schools:

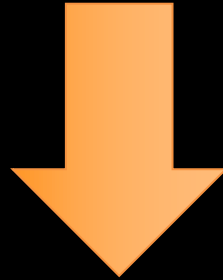
- **Student attendance** increased from 92% average daily attendance to 97%;
- **Retention** rates decreased by more than 43 percent;
- **Suspensions** declined significantly; and
- **Staff attendance** improved markedly.

3

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

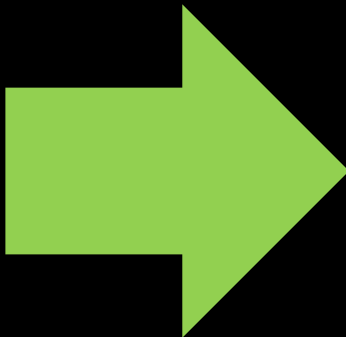
Studies round the world suggest that the duration for which a child can actively pay attention to a given task in school ranges from about 10 to 25 mins in primary school to about 30 to 45 mins in high school. After that, most students' engagement rapidly declines.

Decline of children independent mobility
“A primary cause of the rise in mental disorders is a decline over decades in opportunities for children and teens to play, roam, and engage in other activities independent of direct oversight and control by adults.”
– Gray et al. (2023)



Restructured schedule for active engagement

3 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



WRAP UP

Create a shared vision that broadens the definition of student success towards **whole child** development.

Redesign educational settings to build healthy **relationships** and active **engagement** for all children.

Teach social, emotional, cognitive and health skills through **student agency** and leadership.

Build **trust** in schools and within the community – schools improve at the speed of trust.

THANK YOU!

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