

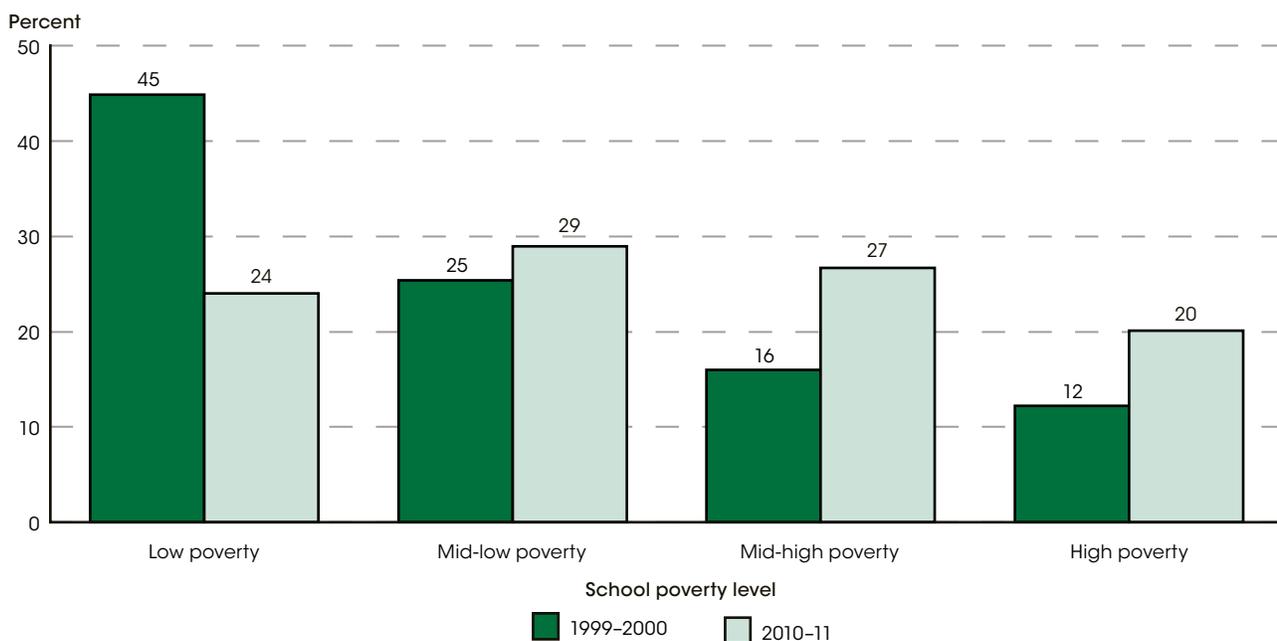
Concentration of Public School Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

In school year 2010–11, some 20 percent of public school students attended a high-poverty school, compared with 12 percent in 1999–2000. In 2010–11, some 24 percent of public school students attended a low-poverty school, compared with 45 percent in 1999–2000.

The percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) under the National School Lunch Program provides a proxy measure for the concentration of low-income students within a school. Children from families at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those from families with incomes that are above 130 and up to 185 percent of the poverty

level are eligible for reduced-price meals. In this indicator, public schools (traditional and charter) are divided into categories by FRPL eligibility. A low-poverty school is defined as a public school where less than 25 percent of the students are eligible for the program and a high-poverty school is defined as a school where more than 75 percent of the students are eligible.

Figure 1. Percentage distribution of public school students, by school poverty level: School years 1999–2000 and 2010–11



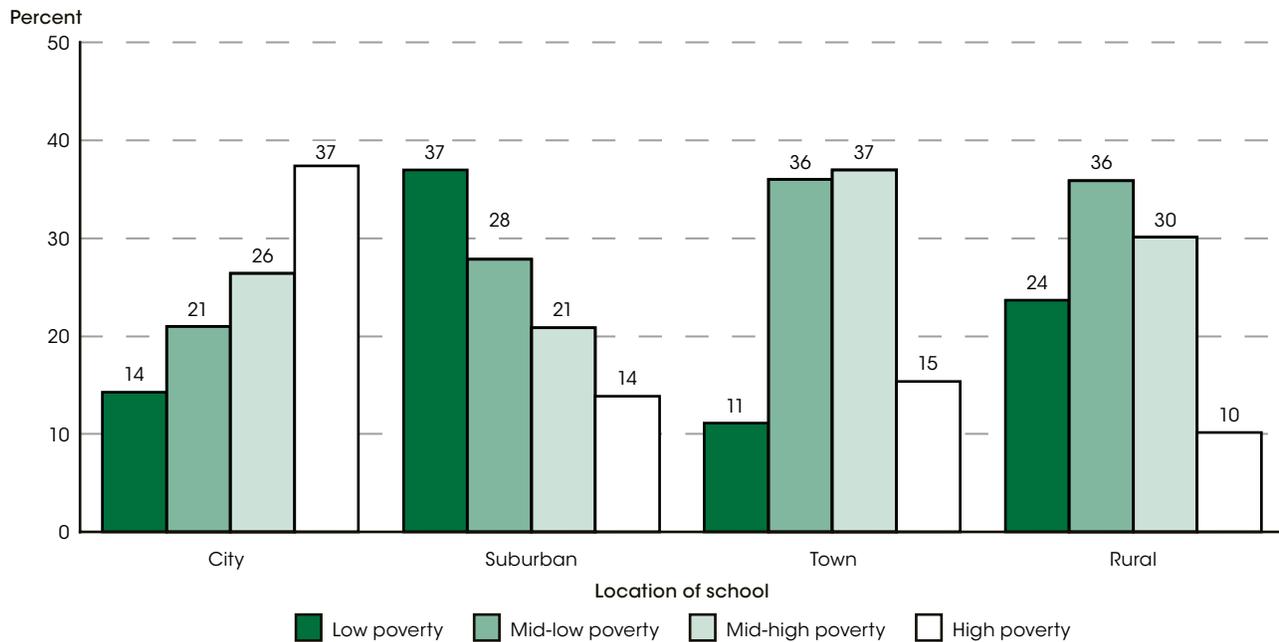
NOTE: This figure does not include schools for which information on free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) is missing and schools that did not participate in the National Student Lunch Program (NSLP). High-poverty schools are defined as public schools where more than 75 percent of the students are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) program, and mid-high poverty schools are those schools where 51 to 75 percent of students are eligible. Low-poverty schools are defined as public schools where 25 percent or fewer students are eligible for FRPL, and mid-low poverty schools are those schools where 26 to 50 percent of students are eligible for FRPL. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 1999–2000 and 2010–11. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 116.

A greater percentage of public school students attended a high-poverty school in 2010–11 than did a decade earlier. In school year 1999–2000, some 12 percent of public school students attended a high-poverty school, compared with 20 percent in 2010–11. The increase in the percentage of children who are eligible to participate may have been influenced by a number of factors,

including more systematic identification of children who are eligible, as well as an increase in the actual rates of child poverty. In 2010, some 22 percent of children under the age of 18 were living in poverty, compared with 17 percent in 1999. In 2010–11, some 24 percent of public school students attended a low-poverty school, compared with 45 percent in 1999–2000.

For more information, see the Reader's Guide and the Guide to Sources.

Figure 2. Percentage distribution of public school students, by school locale and school poverty level: School year 2010–11



NOTE: This figure does not include schools for which information on free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) is missing and schools that did not participate in the National Student Lunch Program (NSLP). High-poverty schools are defined as public schools where more than 75 percent of the students are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) program, and mid-high poverty schools are those schools where 51 to 75 percent of students are eligible. Low-poverty schools are defined as public schools where 25 percent or fewer students are eligible for FRPL, and mid-low poverty schools are those schools where 26 to 50 percent of students are eligible for FRPL. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey," 2010–11. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, table 112.

The distribution of schools across poverty concentration varies by locale, e.g., city, suburbs, towns, and rural areas. In school year 2010–11, over one-third, or 37 percent, of students in city schools were enrolled in a high-poverty school, compared with 10 percent of students in rural schools, 14 percent of those in suburban schools, and 15 percent of those in town schools. On the other hand, the percentage of students in suburban schools who attended

a low-poverty school (37 percent) was more than twice as large as the percentages of students in city schools and in town schools who attended a low-poverty school (14 and 11 percent, respectively). The percentage of students in suburban schools who attended a low-poverty school was also higher than the corresponding percentage of students in rural schools (24 percent).

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2012*, tables 26, 112, 116

Glossary: National School Lunch Program, Public school, Free or reduced-price lunch