

# Improving College Access and Success

Recommendations for Urban  
Catholic Education

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# Strategic Approach

1. Increase enrollment in all grades
2. Increase retention through secondary education
3. Add college access components
4. Modify existing components to address college access
5. Centralize marketing functions
6. Form partnerships with community agencies

# National Models

- Memphis Jubilee Schools
- Cincinnati Archdiocese
- Washington, D.C. Archdiocese
- Philadelphia Archdiocese
- New York Archdiocese

# Local Models

- Knowledge is Power Program (charter)
- Center for Inquiry (IPS)

## **Model: Memphis Jubilee Schools**

- Reopened 6 urban parish schools
- \$15m private grant underwrite
- 90 percent of students non-Catholic
- Engagement of religious orders (1-2 per school)
- Average family income: \$14,000

## **Model: Memphis Jubilee Schools**

- Memphis Catholic student graduation rate: 99.9%
- Memphis Catholic student college continuation rate: 95 percent
- Tuition sliding scale from \$100 spread over 10 payments
- 95 percent of Jubilee students subsidized
- 80 percent receive 50 percent or greater subsidy

## **Model: Cincinnati St. Joseph School**

- Doubled enrollment during decade of public school declines in inner city
- Emphasis on strong academics, values, character, discipline, safety
- 60 percent low-income students
- Archdiocese has marketing plan targeting inner city and rural schools
- Funds available for subsidizing cost

## **Model: Washington D.C. Archdiocese**

- Large federally funded voucher program: 1,700 students @ \$7,500
- \$65 million capital campaign
- Mission to help low-income families/not evangelize
- Center city consortium forms partnerships and sponsorships for 13 schools

## **Model: Philadelphia Gesu Nativity School**

- 430 students – over half from single parents
- Independent Nativity School since 1993
- 95+ percent graduate from high school
- 75 percent go to college
- Businesses contributed to re-open school

## Model: New York City

- 116 inner city schools
- Enrollment growth since mid-nineties
- Vigorous marketing campaign to address parent concerns or misconceptions (based on focus groups)
- Dynamic Cardinal tells story in constant fundraising

## **Model: New York City Archdiocese**

- 99 percent high school graduation rate
- 95 percent of graduates attend postsecondary
- 85 percent attend college
- 52 percent minority
- 79 percent Catholic

## **Model: The KIPP School**

- Grades 5 – 8 by 2007-2008 school year
- Described as college prep academy
- Two grade level improvement in first semester
- Open Enrollment
- 98 percent minority

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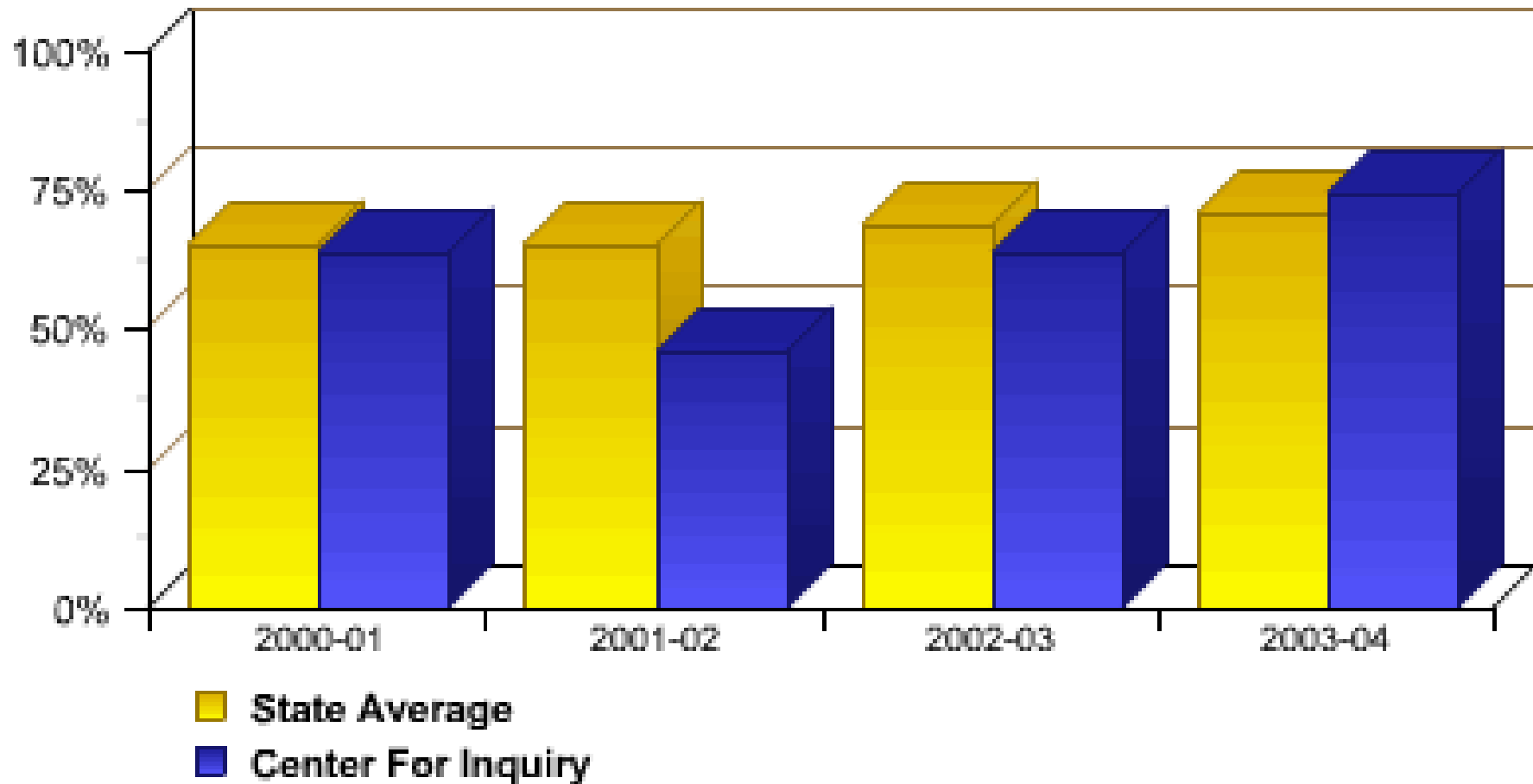
- Long school days
- Long school year
- Saturday programs
- Critics say “too much skill and drill”

## **Model: Center for Inquiry**

- Inquiry-based learning
- Collaborative learning
- Highly engaged students
- Two-thirds minority students
- 87 percent receive lunch subsidy

# Model: Center for Inquiry

ISTEP Average Pct Pass - All Tested Grades



# Caveats

- No common way of reporting data or verifying accuracy of reports
- Some degree of selection and de-selection of students may mean that results won't generalize to larger population
- Most reports are anecdotal

# Caveats

- Inclusion Characteristics
  - Parents who give to church
  - Academically able students
  - Families that live within parish bounds
  - Students with good moral character
  - Families with ability to pay (at least some portion)
  - Families committed to child's education-willing to sacrifice

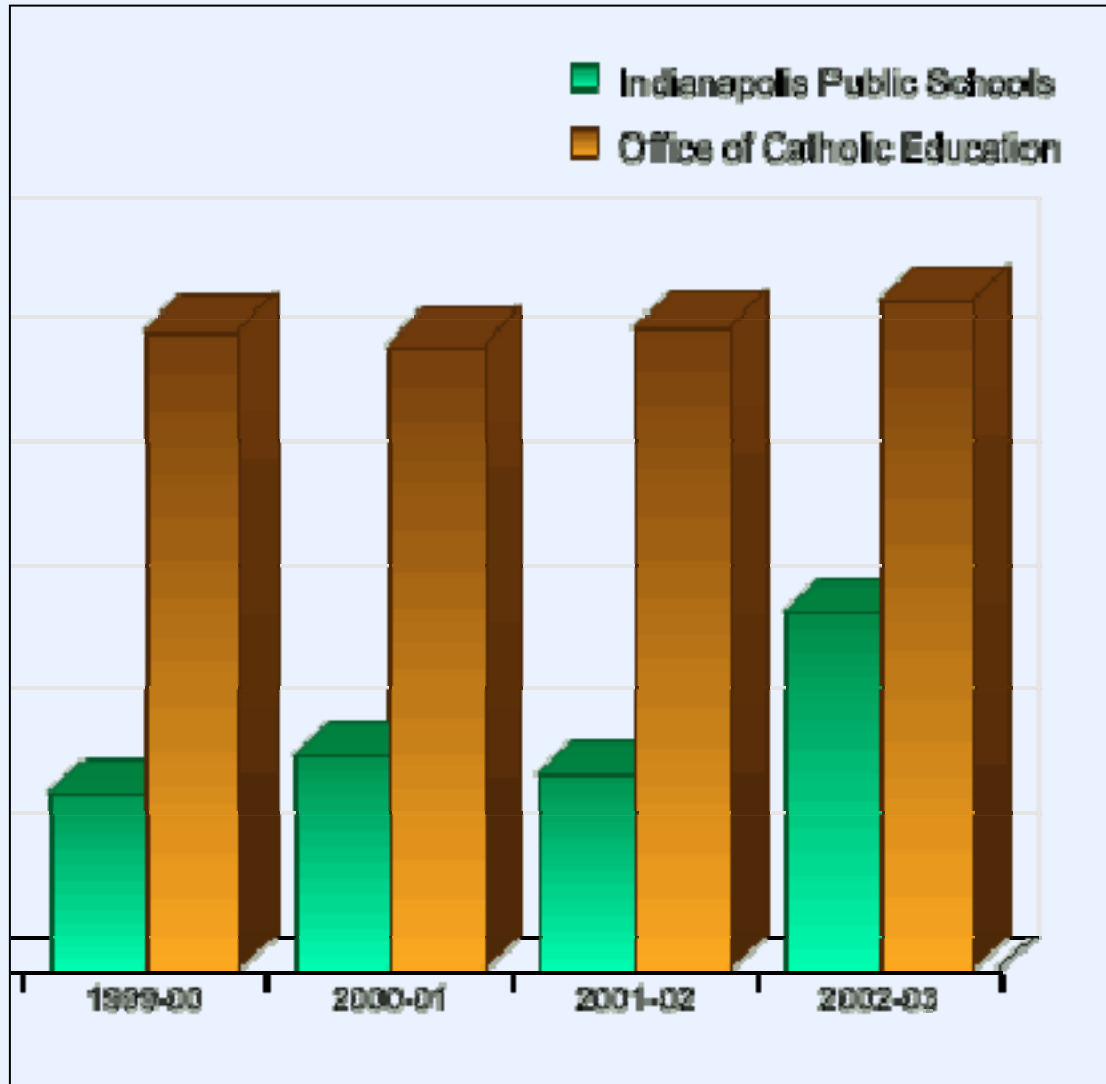
# Common Elements of Successful Programs

- High academic expectations
- Successful fund raising/business support
- Involvement of religious orders, volunteers, parents
- Heavy subsidization of low-income students
- Early literacy emphasis
- Emphasis on character formation
- Extended days

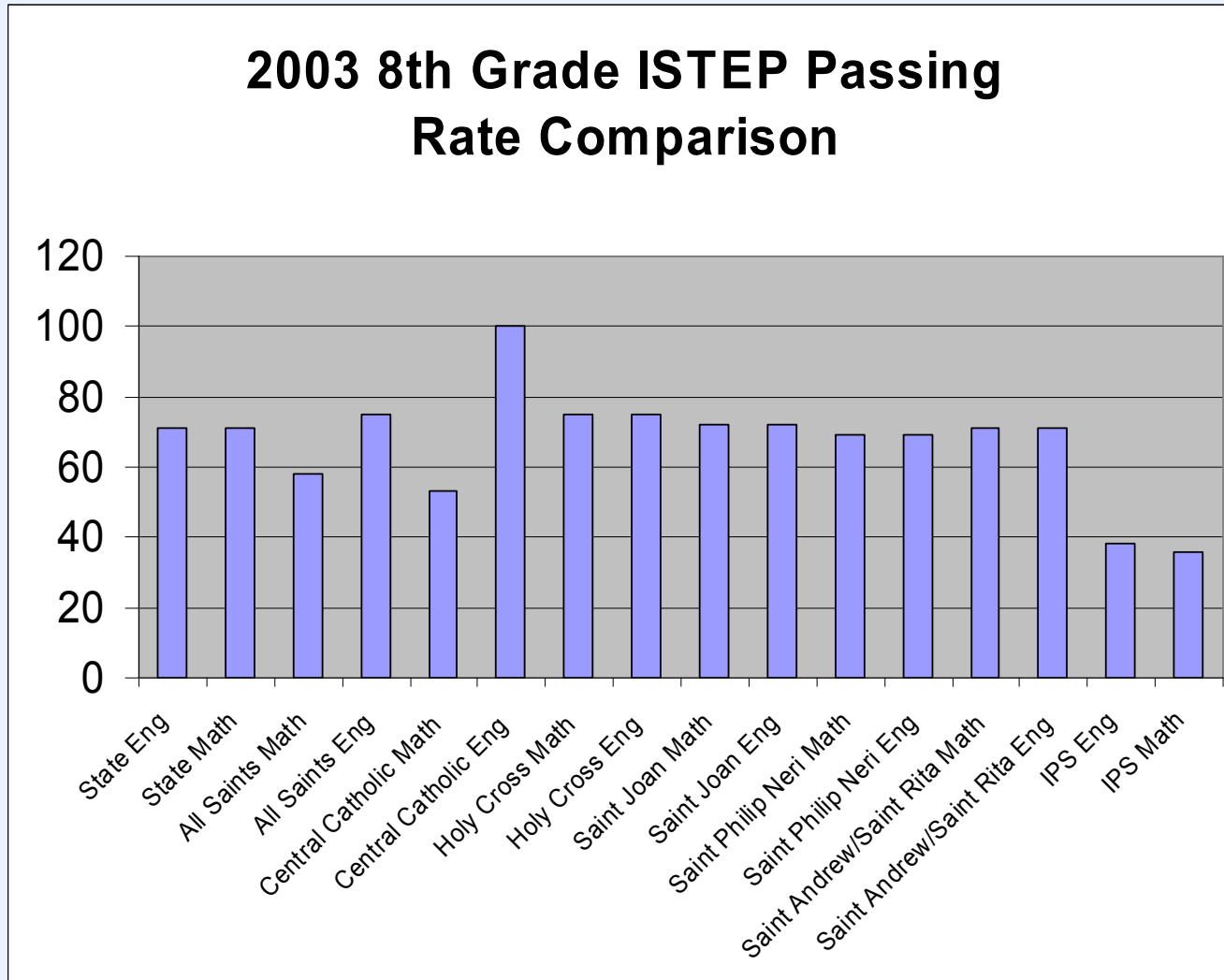
# Common Elements of Successful Programs

- Telling/hyping the story
- Organized marketing effort or
- Almost no marketing effort

# The Story: IPS and Catholic High-School-to College Continuation Rates



# The Story: Center City Schools, IPS, and Indiana ISTEP



# Recommendations

- Increase enrollment at elementary schools by stressing the *Catholic path to success in college*
  - Safe schools
  - High achievement expectations
  - Character development
- Improve elementary – secondary retention
  - Subsidies
  - Marketing the success of Catholic high schools

# Recommendations

- Enroll all eligible students in Twenty-first Century Scholars Program during grades 7 and 8
- Create Twenty-first Century Scholars support sites at Cardinal Ritter High School and Secina High School
- Provide fully subsidized high school to all Twenty-first Century Scholars who enroll at Ritter and Secina

# Recommendations

- Create college connections for elementary children
  - College Mentors for Kids, Inc.
  - Visits to local colleges
  - School visits by college students
  - College and career plans in eighth grade
- Provide algebra to all eighth-grade students
- Develop internship program that brings math and science teachers to center city schools

# Recommendations

- Strengthen academic enrichment in after-school programs
- Extend school year
- Provide Saturday offerings of college access programs
- Tell the story in the media
- Bring more members of the religious orders to Indianapolis
- Involve parents with education programs for them

# Recommendations

- Label K-8 schools as “college prep academies”
- Initiate comprehensive career planning process in grade 7
- Formalize career plans in document in grade 8
- Document student achievement through portfolios
- Visit local college campuses during eighth grade
- Contract with NCCC for high school guidance programs

# Recommendations

- Emphasize literacy development in pre-k and Kindergarten
  - Sign language
  - Grandmother readers
  - Eliminate “kindergarten achievement gap”
  - High school students as “cadet teachers”

# Recommendations

- Central marketing function
  - School “goody bags”
  - Direct mail to target audiences
  - Website with brochures, postcards, bulletin inserts, links to achievement measures, and easy donation reception
  - Tell the story in pictures
  - Portfolio night – let the students show the story

# Recommendations

- Invite human services to establish satellite offices in unused classrooms
- Make schools wellness centers by hosting vaccinations, school physicals, and other community health services
- Work with Ivy Tech - Indianapolis to develop dual credit offerings at Ritter and Secina

# Recommendations

- Market to Latino community
  - Dispel myth that Catholic education is for the wealthy
  - Publish enrollment information in both English and Spanish
  - Hire Latino workers in pre-school programs
  - Add Spanish language signs to school buildings –  
“Escuela para todos”