



Breaking Down Barriers: How Access to Resources Across Chicago High Schools Impacts Elite College Admissions

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Research Questions

What kinds of resources and social norms exist across private high schools, well-resourced public high schools, and under-resourced public high schools?

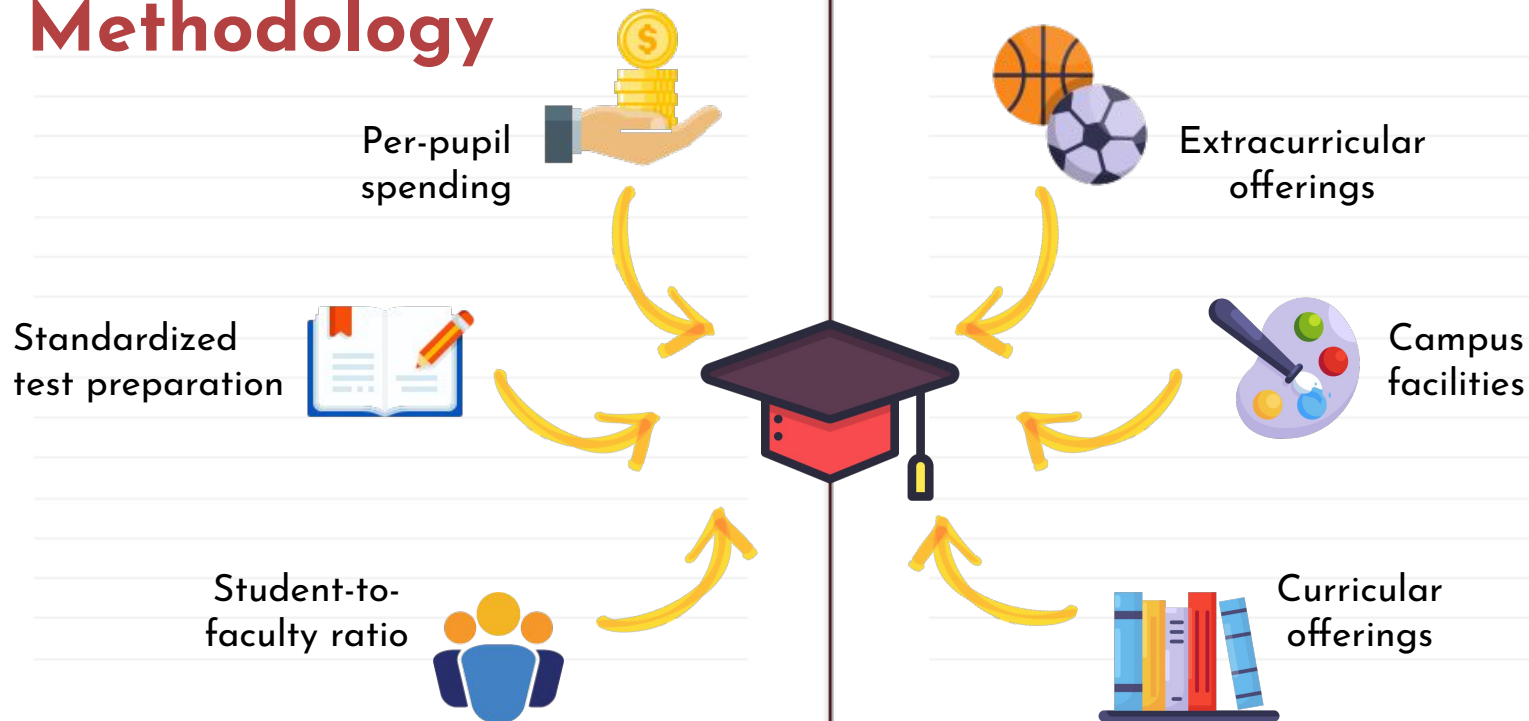
How does a student's access to these material resources and exposure to these non-material norms affect their ability to navigate, and succeed in, the elite college admissions process?



Background

- CPS receives **66%** of the funding it needs to fully fund schools
- **76.4%** of students in Chicago Public Schools are economically disadvantaged
- There are **4** types of schools in the CPS system: neighborhood schools, selective schools, magnet schools, & charter schools

Methodology



Case Study: Latin School of Chicago

174

courses offered

80%

students participate
in 65+ athletic
teams

\$58.5 million

school
endowment

9:1

average
student-to-teacher
ratio

8000+

average number of
hours of service
completed by
students

40

performing arts
productions &
concerts each
year

Findings & main arguments

- Students at well-resourced public and private high schools are better equipped to navigate the elite college admissions process compared to their peers at under-resourced public high schools, regardless of their family's income
- Admission into elite colleges is largely dependent on a student's social capital and familiarity with competitive admissions processes
- Students at under-resourced public high schools are less likely to apply to elite colleges because they feel unprepared & are unfamiliar with college admissions standards & procedures



Conclusions & implications

- Although students' individual backgrounds play a crucial role in determining college outcomes, high schools' practices & offerings also play an important, influential role
- Criteria for elite college admissions disproportionately disadvantages students from under-resourced high schools
- The presence of such highly-qualified applicants from private high schools & well-resourced public high schools in the elite college admissions game makes the process all the more competitive

Thank you!



Questions?