

# SEO: Closing the GAP





# Access to Opportunity

**SEO was founded on the conviction that all young people can succeed when given access to opportunities.**

For more than 45 years, SEO has provided tremendous opportunities for more than 6,000 students of color through its three major programs:

- **The Scholars Program**, founded in 1963, is an out-of-school academic enrichment program, helping motivated students from NYC public high schools gain access and succeed at competitive colleges.
- **The Career Program** recruits, trains and mentors outstanding college students from across the country for internships that lead to careers in some of the nation's most competitive industries.
- **The Alumni & Philanthropy Programs** support the ongoing professional development and philanthropic effectiveness of SEO's alumni and their communities.

# SEO Scholars Program

## Closing the Achievement Gap for New York City Public High School Students





# The Need for the SEO Scholars Program

## *Lost Talent:*

- ❑ **1.5 million** high school students nationwide do not earn college degrees despite having ranked in the top half of their high school class.
- ❑ Low-income and minority students are overwhelmingly represented in this pool of lost talent.

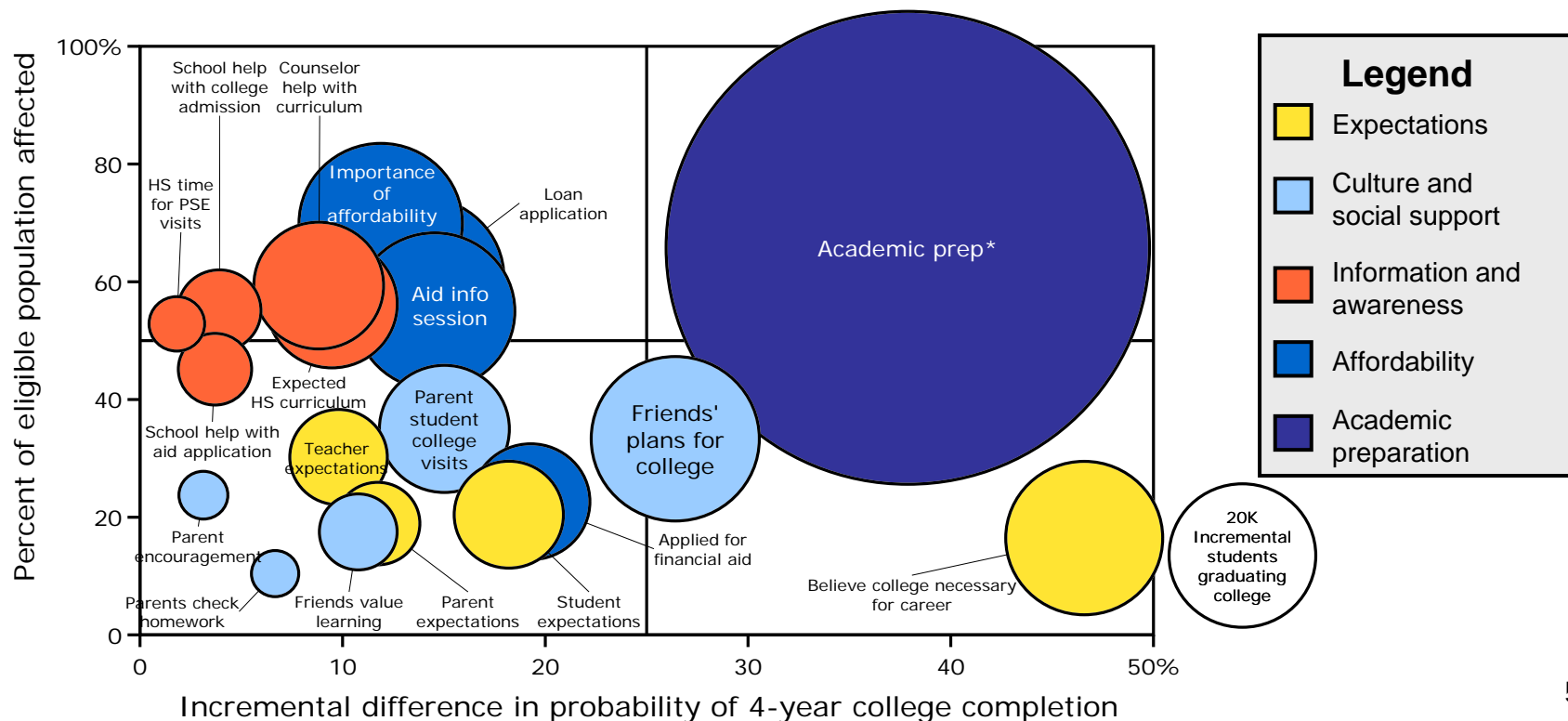
## *Financial Benefits of College Graduation:*

- ❑ A college graduate will earn approximately \$1 million more than a high school graduate over his or her lifetime.
- ❑ If half of the 1.5 million students were to graduate college, the results would be:
  - \$750 billion in greater earnings
  - \$225 billion in increased tax revenue

# What Do These Students Need?

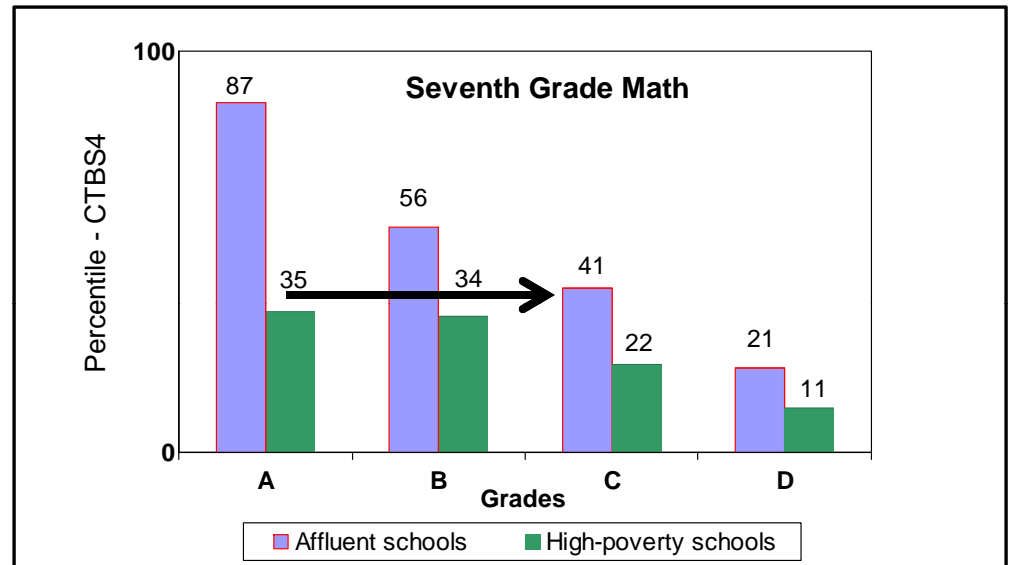
✓ Academic preparation is the most important lever for increasing college admission & graduation

(According to *Reclaiming the American Dream*, a report produced by the Bridgespan Group, formed by Bain Consulting)



# Low-Income Students Do Not Graduate from High School Prepared for College

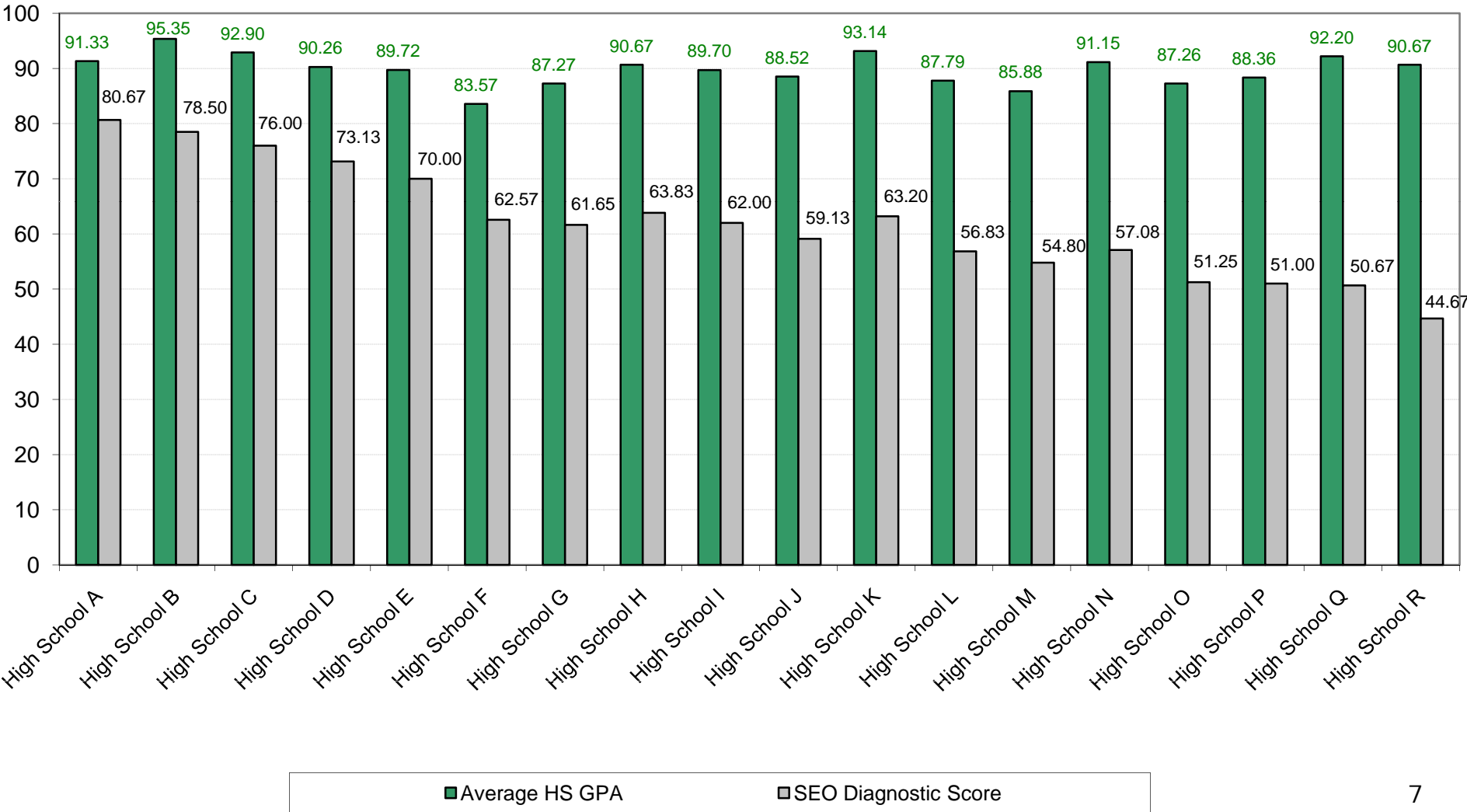
- According to the US Department of Education:  
**'A' Work in High-Poverty Schools Would Earn 'C's in Affluent Schools**



- **Nearly 80% of students in remedial courses in college had a high school GPA of 'B' or higher**  
(Strong American Schools' *Diploma to Nowhere*)
- Joel Klein, New York City's school chancellor: **"The extent to which students are graduating high school unprepared for the challenges of college is clearer now than ever."**

# SEO Diagnostic Results

**Spring 2008 SEO Scholars Program Recruitment**  
Freshman High School GPA compared to SEO-administered Diagnostic Test of Basic Skills





## What Distinguishes SEO?

- SEO focuses on the “Motivated-Middle”: The large number of students who regularly attend their urban public school but are not receiving an adequate education to prepare them for college admission and graduation.
- Current funding largely focuses on two segments of urban public school students:
  - Drop-out prevention for at-risk students: Urban public schools devote enormous financial resources aimed at those who are most at risk for dropping-out.
  - Removing the highest performing students from the system: NYC exam schools and programs that place students in private schools focus on the best prepared students and remove them from urban public schools (i.e.: Prep for Prep, A Better Chance, Student Sponsor Partners).
- Philanthropic dollars can be best leveraged by targeting the thousands of students in the “Motivated Middle”.



## What Other Factors Distinguish SEO?

- **Serves 9<sup>th</sup> grade throughout college:** Works with students throughout the 8-years of high school and college.
- **Intensive high school academic preparation:** High school Scholars receive more than 800 hours of rigorous academic instruction to help close the achievement gap.
  - High school Class of 2009: 100% college acceptance; 80% attending Barron's top-3 tiers of competitive colleges.
- **Comprehensive College Scholars Program:** SEO not only prepares students to attend competitive colleges but prepares them to excel once there by focusing on college success and on-time graduation. Staff provides academic, financial, personal and career advisement that links college achievement to career opportunity.
  - Average college student GPA is 3.07; and 94% are on-schedule to graduate in 4 years.
- **Data-driven Program:** Careful tracking and evaluation against program metrics to drive program refinement and innovation.



# The SEO Scholars Program

- **Scholars attend SEO's rigorous out-of-school academic program**
  - Saturday Academy 3 times a month from 9:00am-4:30pm
  - Weekly 2-hour after-school classes
  - Full-day classes during school breaks
  - A 3-week summer session
  - 91% student attendance rate
  
- **Serves more than 450 students each year**
  - Over 265 NYC public high school students
  - More than 190 college students
  
- **The median annual household income is approximately \$33,000**



# SEO Closing the Gap

## **More Time on Task**

- SEO adds the equivalent of 60 school days of instructional time to the 180 days in the NYC public school calendar

## **Rigorous Curriculum**

- Critical reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar and computer-aided math instruction
- Seminar-style classes, no more than 20 students per class

## **Enrichment Programs**

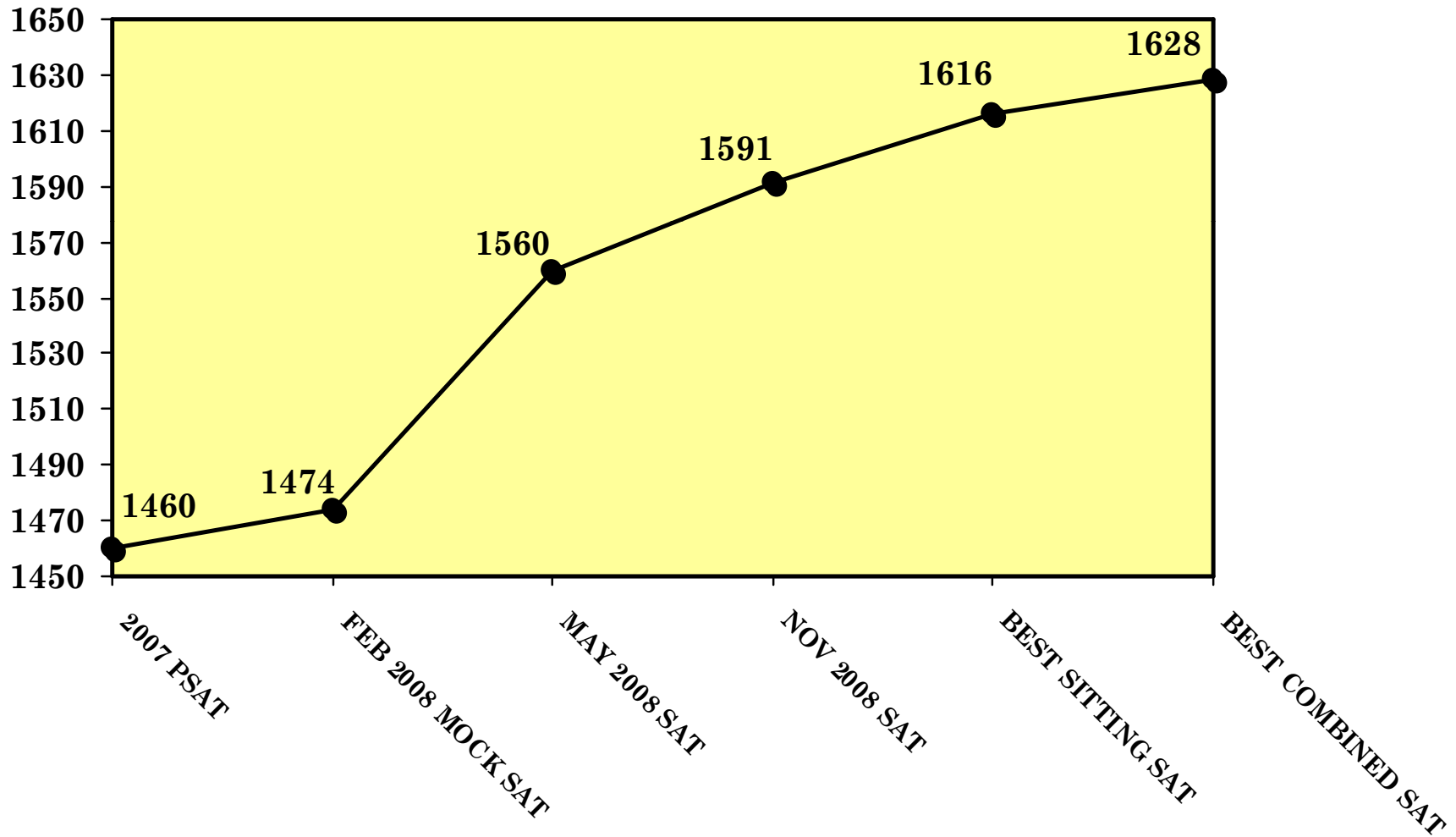
- Travel abroad and leadership experiences
- Mentoring

## **College Support**

- College Scholars continue to receive academic and social advisement, mentoring, retreats and workshops covering:
  - academic and personal advisement
  - managing coursework and earning top grades
  - financial and budgeting strategies
  - career readiness, preparation and internship advisement

# SEO's Intervention Works

Class of 2009: Scores improved more than 160 points from PSAT to best SAT

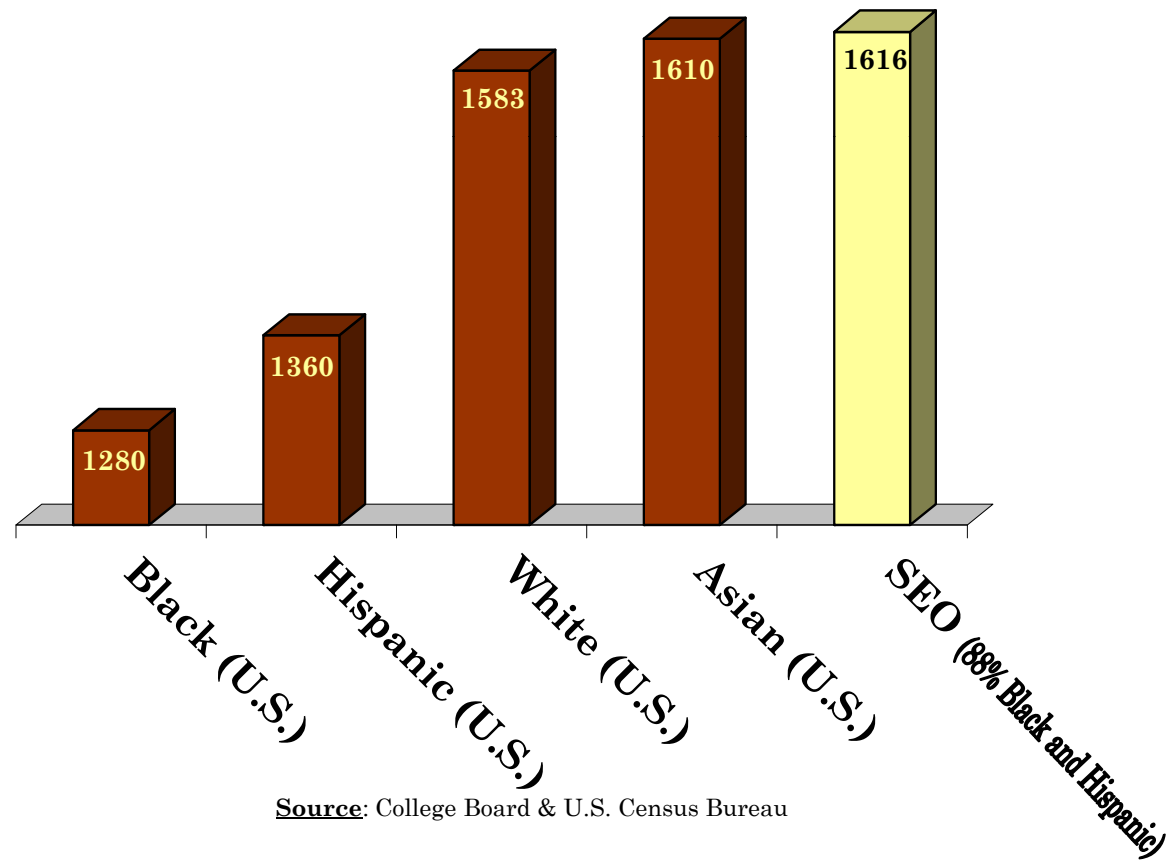


1 Average of students' best total score from May 2008 or Nov 2008 exam

2 Average of students' best scores from each of the three sections, whether from May 2008 or Nov 2008 exam

# SEO Students Achieve Well Beyond Scores Based on Ethnic Grouping

(2008 SAT scores out of a possible 2400)

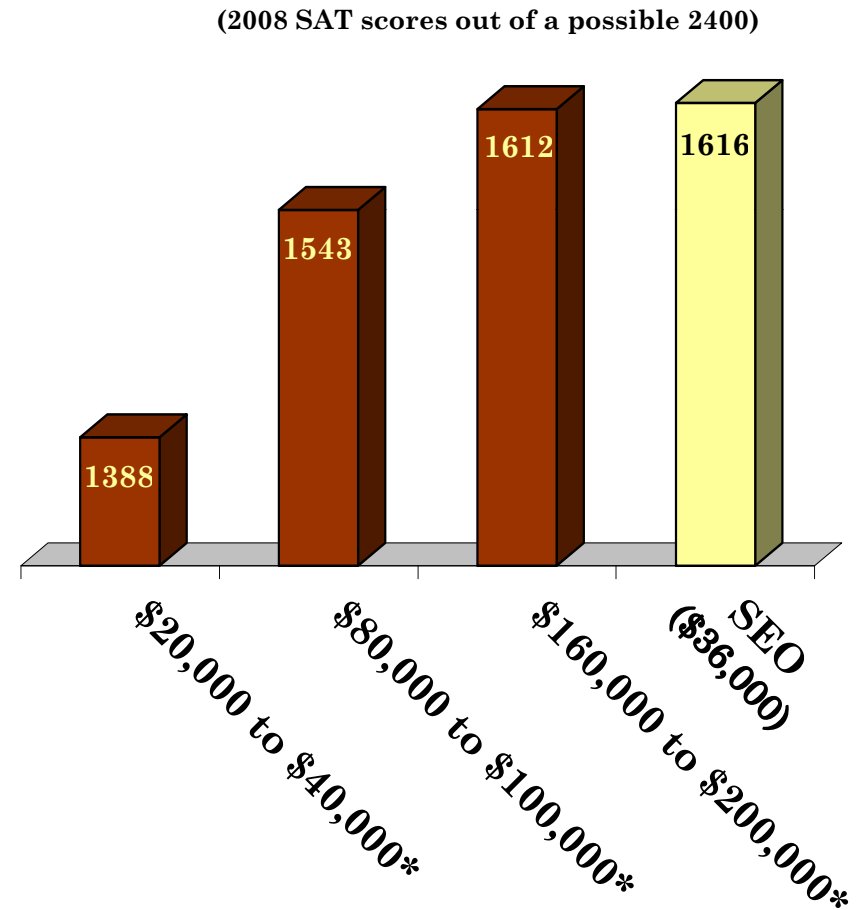


Source: College Board & U.S. Census Bureau

# SEO's Intervention Works

## SEO Students Achieve Scores Higher Than Students with Household Income 4 Times Their Own

- *College Board research has established that scores on the SAT directly correlate with household income.*
- The SEO Class of 2009 has a median household income of \$36,000.
- With SEO's intervention, their scores on the SAT are on par with students with a median household income of \$160,000 to \$200,000.



\*Source: College Board "Total Group Report 2008"



# Scholars Program Success

- 100% of the Class of 2009 is attending college
- 80% of the Class of 2009 is attending a college ranked *Most, Highly* or *Very Competitive* by Barron's , including Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Columbia, Harvard, MIT, Mount Holyoke, NYU and Williams
- The Class of 2009 has been awarded more than \$950,000 in scholarships and grants for their first year of college:
  - 5 SEO Scholars were among the 37 NY State winners of the Gates Millennium Scholarship, which pays up to \$50,000 a year for undergraduate and graduate education
  - 3 Scholars were awarded full-tuition scholarships through the Posse Foundation
- 94% of SEO Scholars who have graduated in the last 4 years are currently on track for on-time college graduation
- The average cumulative GPA for SEO students in college is 3.07