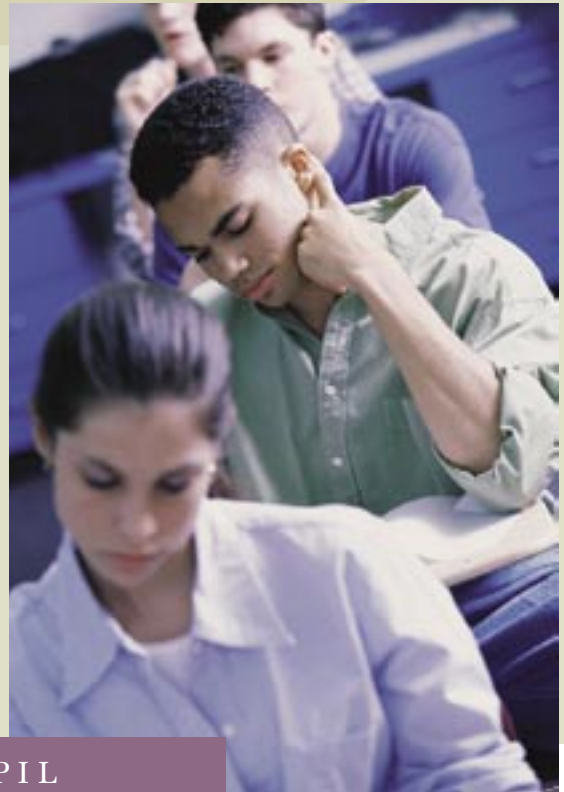


Setting aside debate over pedagogical methods and program quality, we acknowledge that the academic success of students can predict their productivity as adult citizens. Education may be the best anti-poverty program we have, and the best tool available to foster economic well being, promote social equity and sustain a high quality environment. Reliable indicators of how well schools serve students can be as elusive as are definitive methods for raising student achievement.



EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL

WHAT IS THE MEASURE?

The measure is the amount of money school districts spend per student. This is, in large part, dictated by the State of California. Base funding amounts still vary across the state, but these amounts are the foundation of school district budgets.

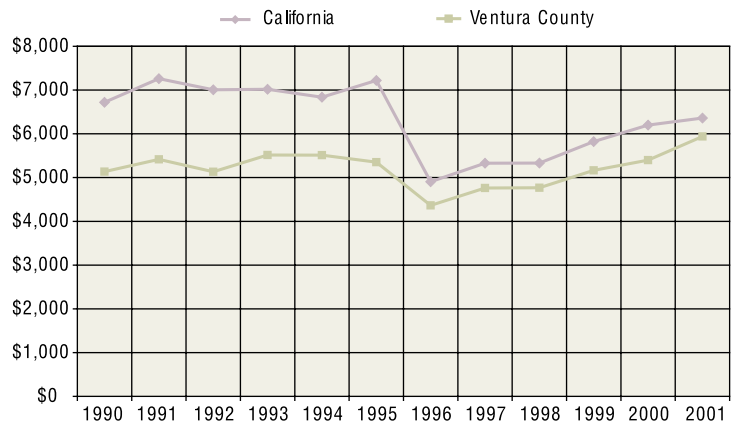
WHY IS THE MEASURE IMPORTANT?

Everything, from salaries that attract qualified teachers and funds for enriching school programs, to facility maintenance and equipment acquisition affects students and the quality of education offered to them.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

After dropping to a low point in 1996, per-pupil spending in Ventura County is approaching the more generous levels of the early 1990's. The figure does not include funding from special Federal programs designed to compensate communities lacking abundant resources to enhance educational offerings.

AVERAGE EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN VENTURA COUNTY AND THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

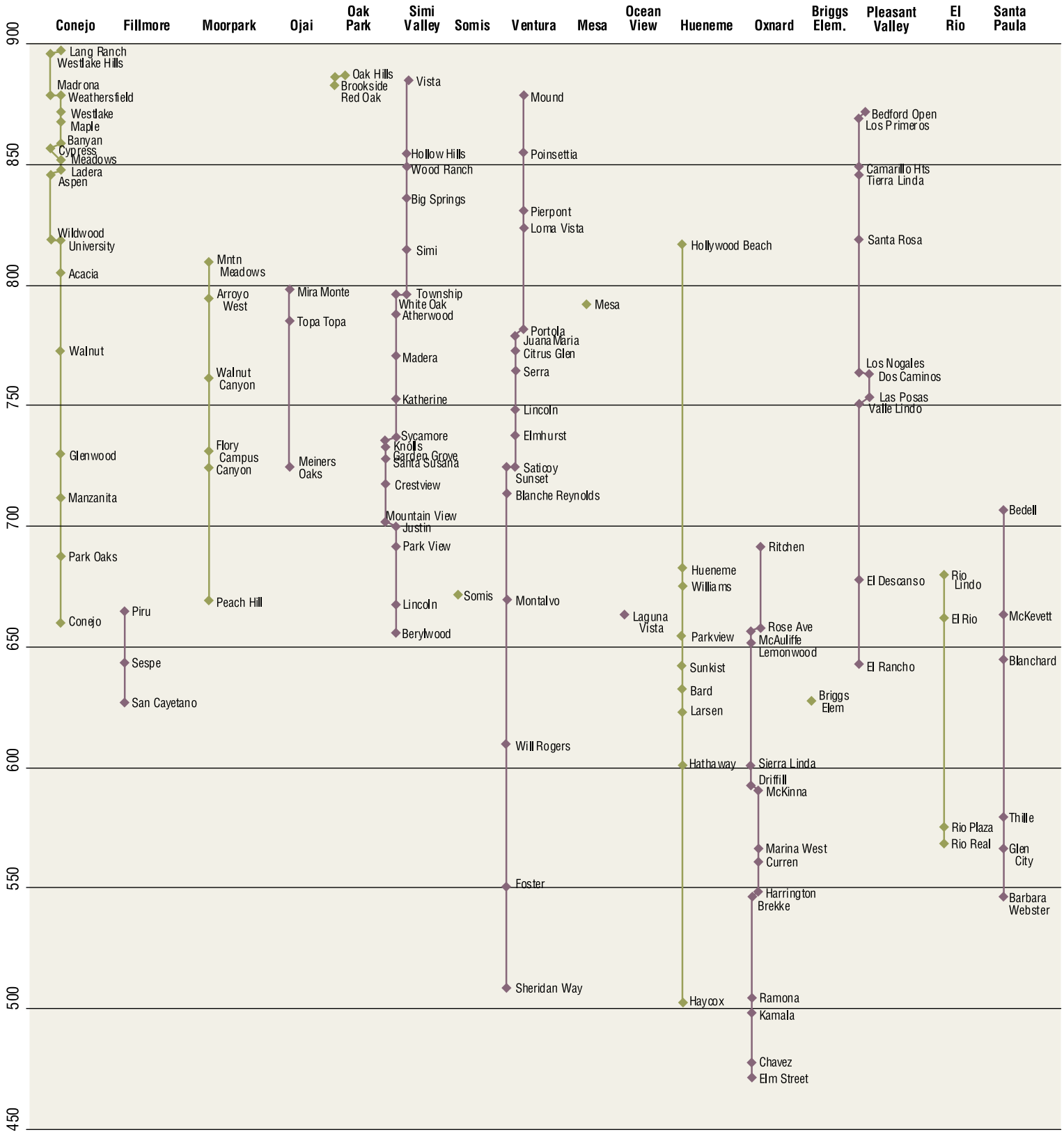


ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDEX (API)

WHAT IS THE MEASURE?

Standardized test scores, administered annually, determine the “Academic Performance Index,” the state’s measurement of successful schools.

VENTURA COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL API SCORES 2000



WHY IS THE MEASURE IMPORTANT?

Whether test scores measure true student achievement or only measure their ability to prepare for a test, scores shape community attitudes, administrative decisions, teacher morale, textbook and curricular choices and staff recruitment.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Test scores are rising statewide and they are rising, but slowly, in Ventura County as well. Schools in lower socio-economic areas in the western half of the county generally have lower test scores than communities in which affluence and a high level of parent education and participation are the norm. According to the California Department of Education, in its most recent, baseline 2001 API report, of the 177 public schools rated in Ventura County and cited in the report, only 51 met state designated standards for academic achievement.

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE

WHAT IS THE MEASURE?

The measure is the number of students in a classroom supervised by one teacher

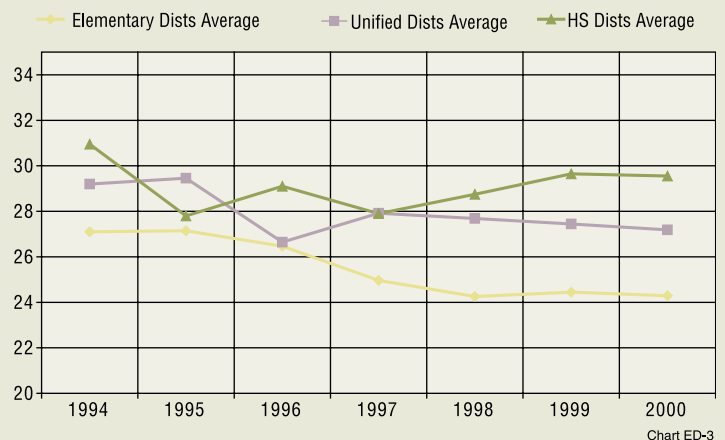
WHY IS THE MEASURE IMPORTANT?

The number of students in a classroom can directly affect the quality of instruction and academic achievement. Smaller class size allows teachers to interact more frequently with students at risk of falling behind. Since 1997, state-funded and mandated class size reduction from Kindergarten to third grade dictates a maximum of 20 students per teacher. Upper grade classes are often larger by ten or more students.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Elementary school districts have shown a drop in class size since 1995, a trend that reflects the state's class-size reduction effort in the lower elementary grades. Unified school districts show a slight decline, presumably for the same reason. High school districts, which have not benefited from the class-size reduction mandate, have seen an increase in class size in recent years.

AVERAGE CLASS SIZE BY TYPE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT

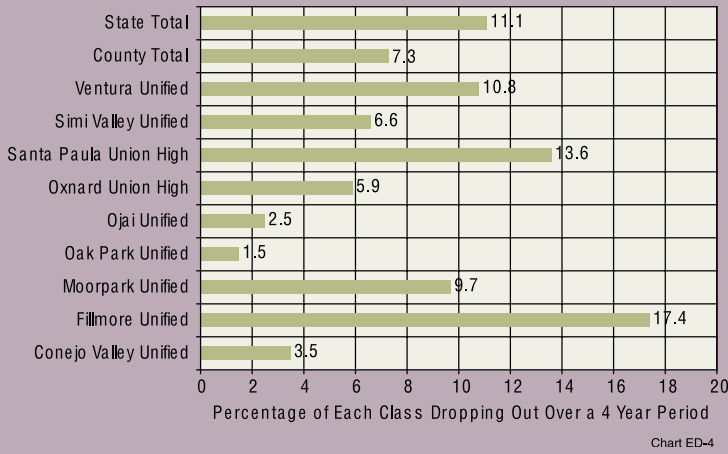


HIGH SCHOOL DROP-OUT RATE

WHAT IS THE MEASURE?

The four-year measure is an estimate of the number of students who drop out of high school over the 4-year period that it takes a normal student group to complete grades 9-12. It is a representation of the actual number of students leaving high school without diplomas, and the percentage of high school students who leave school prematurely.

FOUR YEAR DROP OUT RATES FOR HIGH SCHOOLS



WHY IS THE MEASURE IMPORTANT?

Whether they curtail their education because school failed to engage them, or because they fell behind early in their academic development, high school dropouts limit their future earnings and productivity, and present a potential future burden on social services.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

While the number of high schools in Ventura County has increased, the dropout rate has declined, though only modestly since 1990. Alternative program offerings have increased options for students, and Ventura County's Student Attendance Review Board takes an active role in keeping students involved in school until they graduate, or reach the age of 18. However, there is considerable variation in dropout rates from district to district and from school to school.

NUMBER OF LIMITED ENGLISH LEARNERS

WHAT IS THE MEASURE?

The measure is the percent of public school students acquiring English language proficiency while learning math, science and other core subjects.

WHY IS THE MEASURE IMPORTANT?

How are Limited English learners best served? Debate continues about methods, but most educators agree that these students need significant additional support, requiring more resources at all levels of schooling.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The percentage of Limited English language learners in the county is higher than in the state overall, but is increasing at roughly the same rate. Overall, Ventura County has seen an increase as the pattern of Hispanic immigration continues.

PERCENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS CLASSIFIED AS ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL) IN CALIFORNIA AND VENTURA COUNTY

