

Greetings and welcome!

- Please find a set of quotes on your table
- Read them with a partner at your table and discuss what you find in them
- We will begin in 5 minutes

WASHINGTON STUDENT ORAL HISTORIES PROJECT



Antony Smith
University of Washington, Bothell
Barbara Waxman
Paragon Education Network
Deborah Feldman
Paragon Education Network

Research Questions

- **What patterns emerge in youth school experiences** in terms of initiating events, tipping points, and pathways to dropping out?
- **What institutional characteristics** do youth perceive to have encouraged or discouraged their engagement in school?
- **What actions can schools and teachers take** to divert paths toward disengagement and dropping out?

Methods

Settings

- 5 youth-serving organizations, 3 urban & 2 rural
- Western Washington

Participants

- 53 participants, 29 (phase 1) + 24 (phase 2)
- Ages 16-22
- Dropped out or truant for an extended period

Methods

Data collection

- Screening survey
- Semi-structured interview
- School rating form

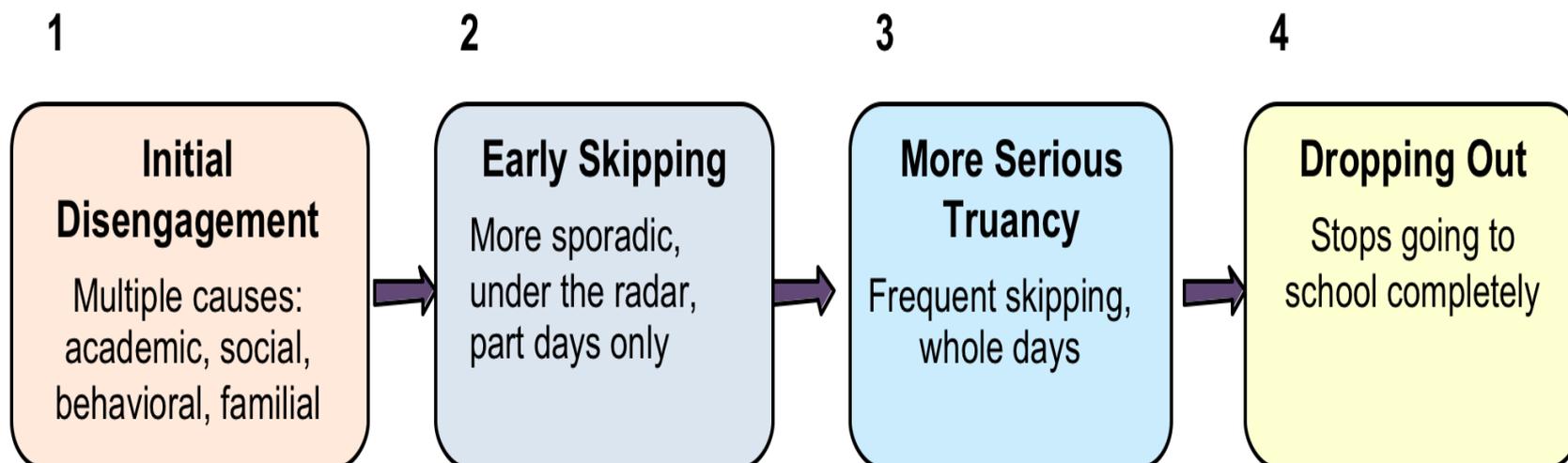
Analysis

- Descriptive statistics
- Qualitative analyses (open coding, emerging themes)

My School Rating Form

	Early Elementary [K-2 nd grade]	Late Elementary [3 rd -5th grade]	Middle School [6 th -8th grade]	Early High School [9th-10th]	Late High School [11 th -12th]
Liked a Lot	5	5	5	5	5
↑	4	4	4	4	4
↑	3	3	3	3	3
↑	2	2	2	2	2
Disliked a Lot	1	1	1	1	1
	Early Elementary [K-2 nd grade]	Late Elementary [3 rd -5th grade]	Middle School [6 th -8th grade]	Early High School [9th-10th]	Late High School [11 th -12th]

Results: 4 Phases to Dropping Out



Important Factors

- **Academic difficulties**
- School environmental factors
- **Classroom learning contexts**
- Family and personal factors
- Peer group influences

Academic Difficulties

- Learning issues
- Middle school transition
- Academic behaviors
- Academic mindset
- Interplay of factors

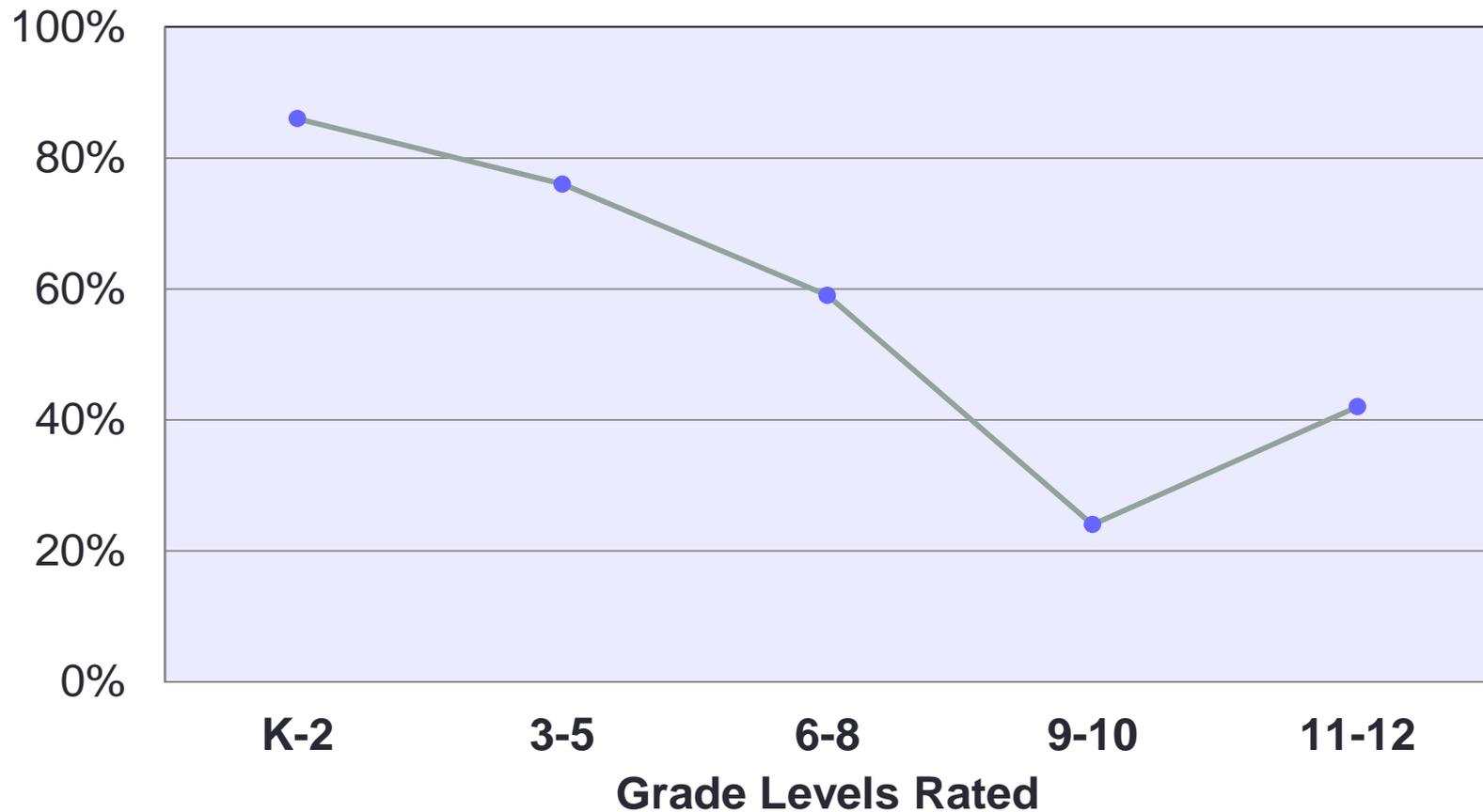
School Environment Factors

- Impersonal or unwelcoming school environment
- Transitioning to a new school environment
- Student mobility

Classroom Learning Contexts

- Middle school classroom environment
- Connection to teachers
- Lack of individual support
- Curriculum and Instruction

Percent of Participants Who Rated School Favorably (N=29)



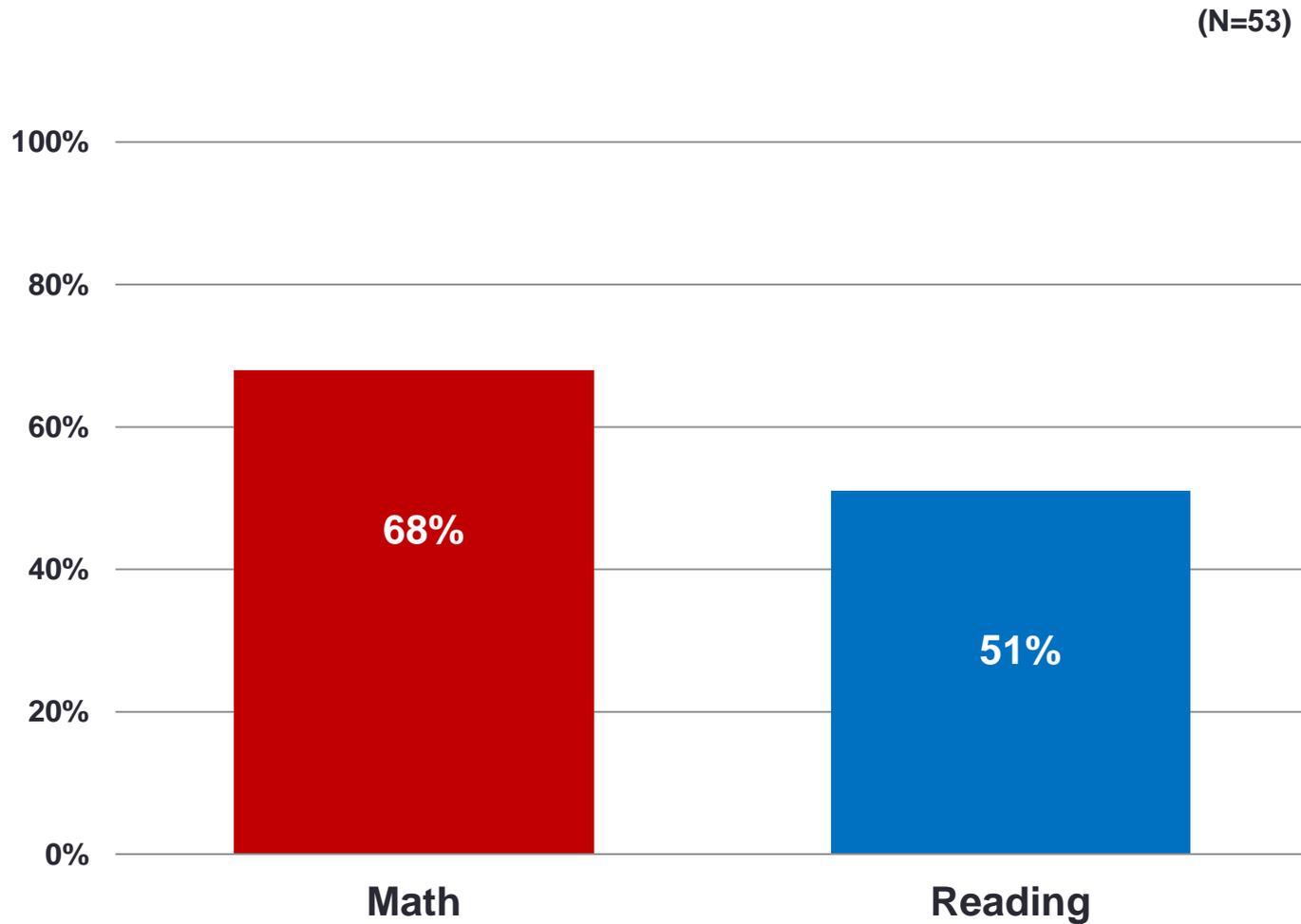
Top Reasons for Leaving School

- **Serious academic failure**
- Expulsion and suspension
- Homelessness (and severe family issues or discord)
- Pregnancy
- Substance abuse and mental health crises
- Gang/criminal involvement

Serious Academic Failure

- Failed classes multiple times
- Always 'behind'
- Low on credits

Reported Learning Difficulties



Math Mindsets at Work

- “I’m no good in math.”
- “I hate math.”
- “I’ll never get it.”
- “It’s hopeless.”

How Did Mindsets Develop?

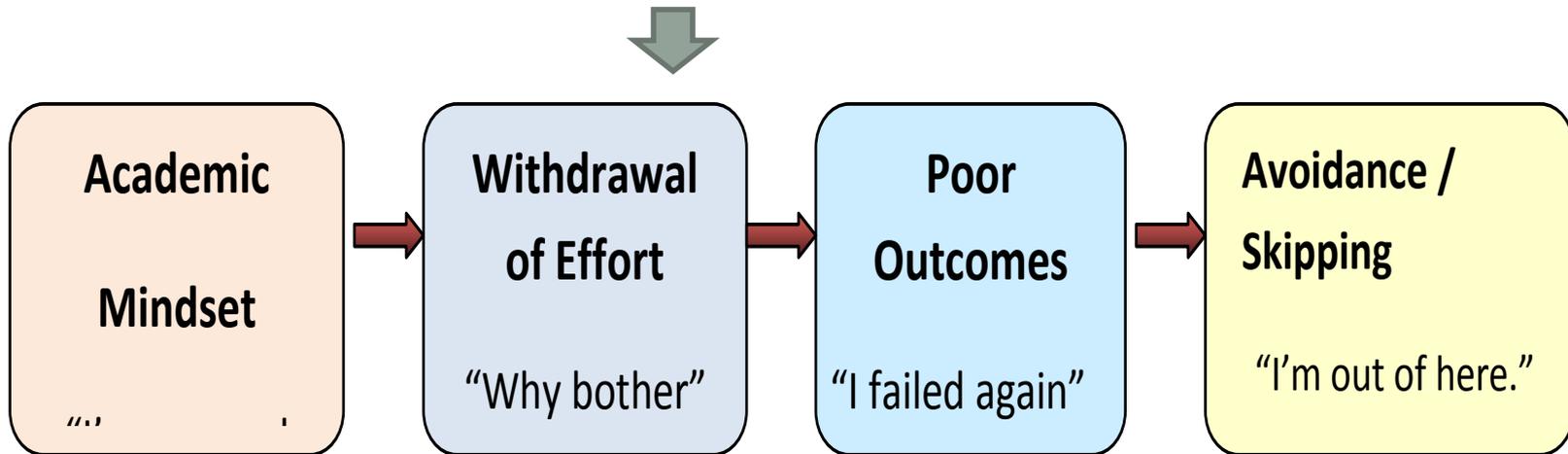
- Starts in elementary school
- Teacher language
- Ability comparisons formed (e.g. timed tests)

Middle School Scenarios

- Negative mindsets solidify in middle school
- Course failure common
- Low “self-efficacy”
- Allure of skipping culture
- Downward spiral

The Downward Spiral

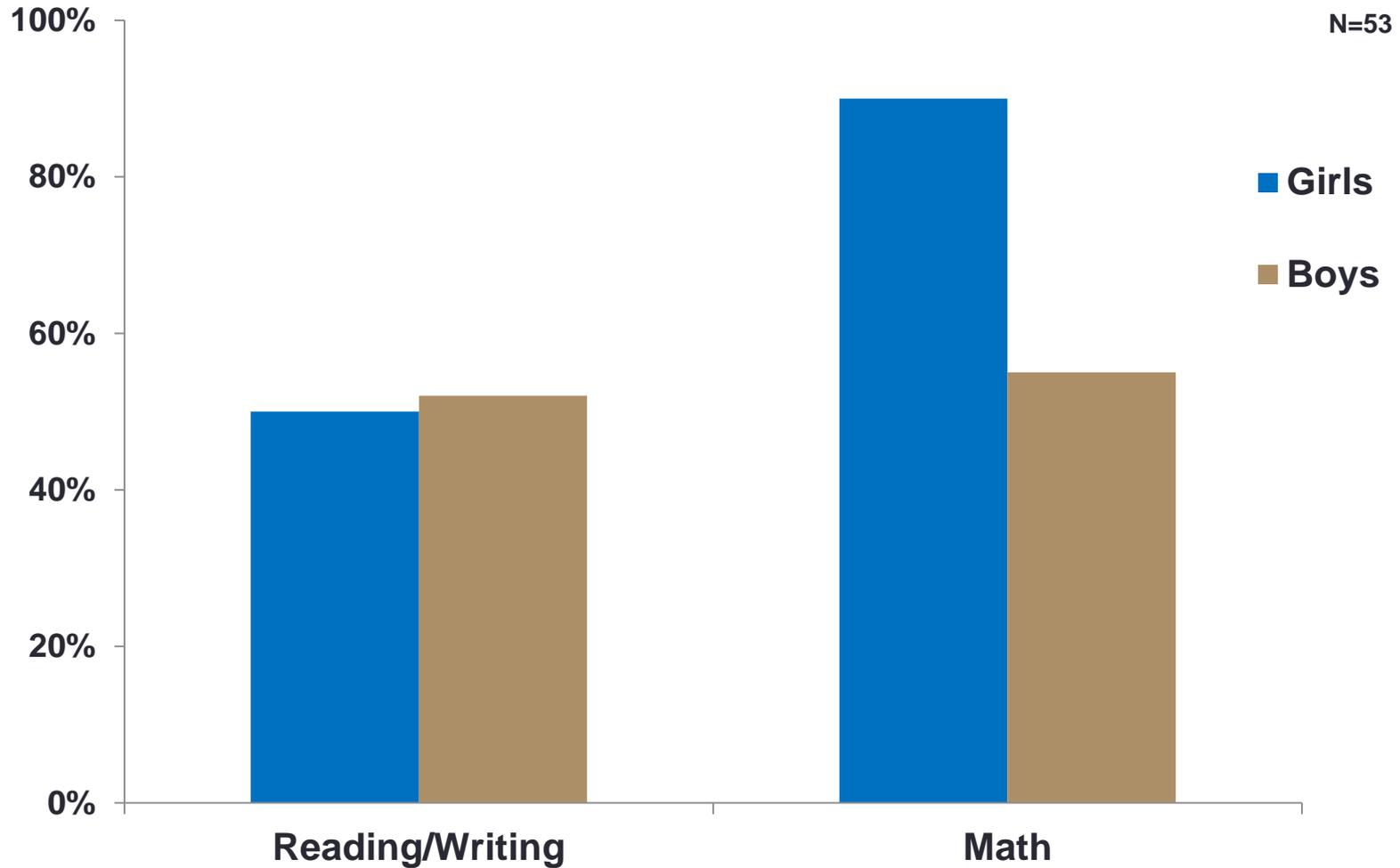
Negative Learning Experiences



Major Math Themes

- Poor connection to teachers
- Lockstep curriculum
- Instructional practices
- Algebra
- Gender gap

Reported Learning Difficulties: Girls vs. Boys



Analyzing Math Quotes

At your tables, please find a folder with math quotes and the recording form.

Make sure everyone at the table gets one of each.

Take 5 minutes to read through the quotes in your assigned section (on next slide) and to put your thoughts in the recording form.

When everyone has finished, discuss your thoughts.

In two minutes...

*Choose one person at the table to report out
one of the biggest things that struck the
group*

AND

*an implication that could lead to an action
people could take back at their schools.*

Math Quote Assignments

- Mindset:
- Middle and Early High School Math:
- Homework:
- Confident and Unconfident:
- Math and Skipping:

Implications?

1. Dropout Prevention Strategies
2. School Organization and Policy
3. School Climate
4. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Practices

Actions

- Rethink and revamp mathematics instruction
- Institute peer mentoring
- Develop safe and nurturing learning environments
- Make instruction engaging, interactive, and purposeful
- Diagnose and address learning issues
- Foster growth mindset and self-efficacy
- The power of language
- Implement formative assessment and proficiency based grading systems

WASHINGTON STUDENT ORAL HISTORIES PROJECT

www.wsohp.org

THANK YOU!