

# Preparing Teachers for Tomorrow's Schools

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Science, Mathematics, & Technology Education



*Washington State Academy of Sciences*  
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# ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS

## Protein Crystal Growth in Microgravity

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## Higher Education Collaborators

**Physics:** Jim Stewart<sup>1</sup>, Andrew Boudreaux<sup>1</sup>, George Nelson<sup>1</sup>, Sara Julin<sup>2</sup>, Ann Zukoski<sup>3</sup>, Linda Zuvich<sup>4</sup>, Ted Williams<sup>5</sup>

**Biology:** Deb Donovan<sup>1</sup>, Carolyn Landel<sup>1</sup>, Alejandro Acevedo<sup>1</sup>, John Rousseau<sup>2</sup>, Val Mullen<sup>3</sup>, Rene Kratz<sup>4</sup>, Pam Pape-Lindstrom<sup>4</sup>, Adib Jamshedi<sup>5</sup>

**Geology:** Scott Linneman<sup>1</sup>, Sue DeBari<sup>1</sup>, Bob Mitchell<sup>1</sup>, Bernie Dugan<sup>2</sup>, Brad Smith<sup>3</sup>, Ben Fackler-Adams<sup>3</sup>, Steve Grupp<sup>4</sup>, Terri Plake<sup>5</sup>

**Chemistry:** Steve Gammon<sup>1</sup>, Emily Borda<sup>1</sup>, Paul Frazey<sup>2,3</sup>

**Science Education:** Chris Ohana<sup>1</sup>, Jacob Blickenstaff<sup>1</sup>(Physics), Liesl Hohenshell<sup>1</sup>(Biology), Don Burgess<sup>1</sup>(Biology), Molly Lawrence<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Western Washington U, <sup>2</sup> Whatcom CC, <sup>3</sup> Skagit Valley C, <sup>4</sup> Everett CC, <sup>5</sup> Northwest Indian College,

<sup>6</sup> FacetInnovations Inc.

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# My Start as a University Professor

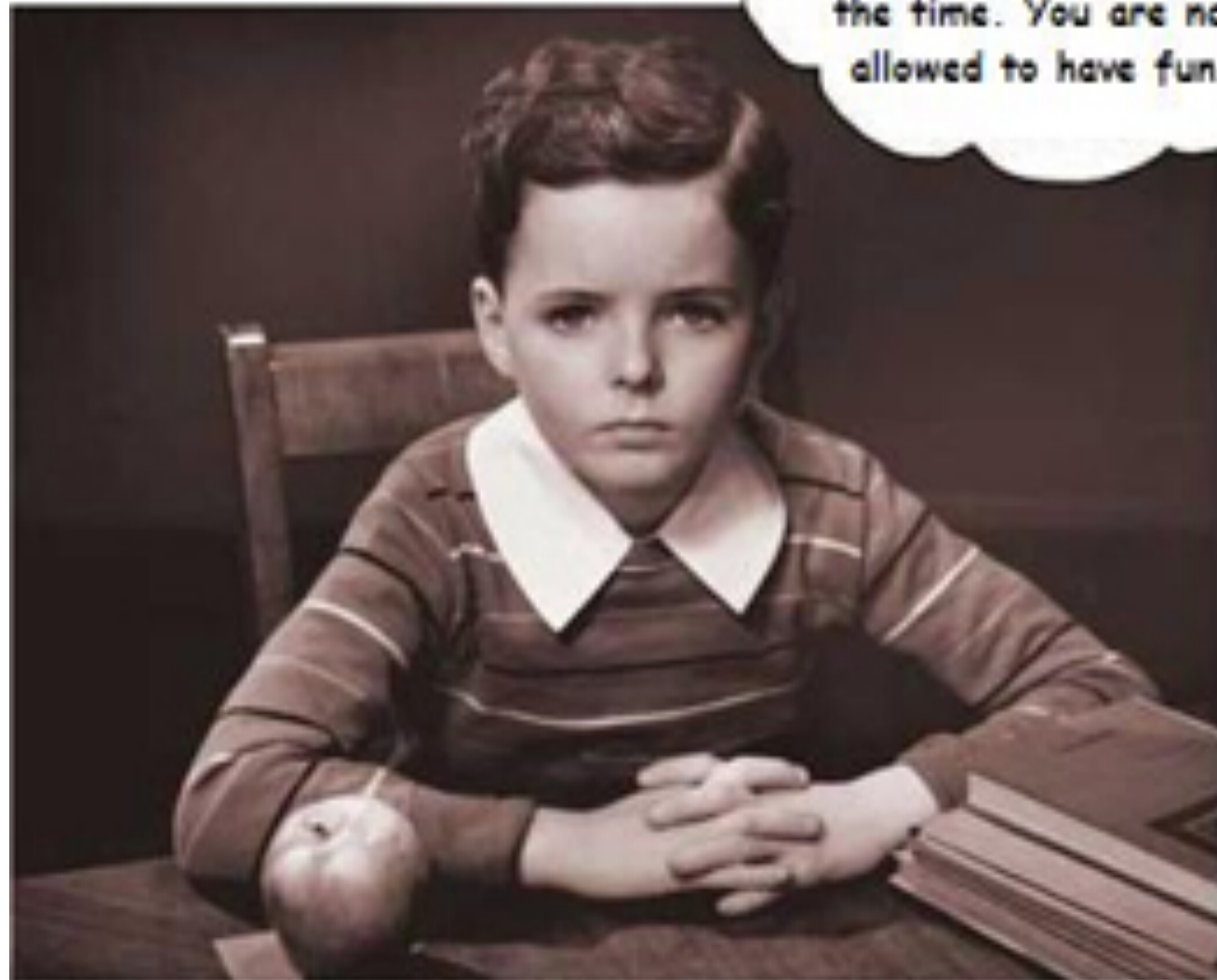


Teaching is hard.

Teaching so your students learn—and you know that they have learned—is really hard.



# How do we think about teaching?



Everybody knows that learning is a serious and difficult thing and you have to remain seated all the time. You are not allowed to have fun

# What helps children learn?

- Effective teaching in the classroom every year, which involves much more than just good teachers
- Sufficient, appropriate, consistent, individual support for students—all the time

*“...teacher effectiveness is the single biggest factor influencing gains in achievement, an influence bigger than race, poverty, parent’s education, or any of the other factors that are often thought to doom children to failure.”*

-Thinking K-16  
Education Trust, Winter 2004

# Effective Teaching/Teachers

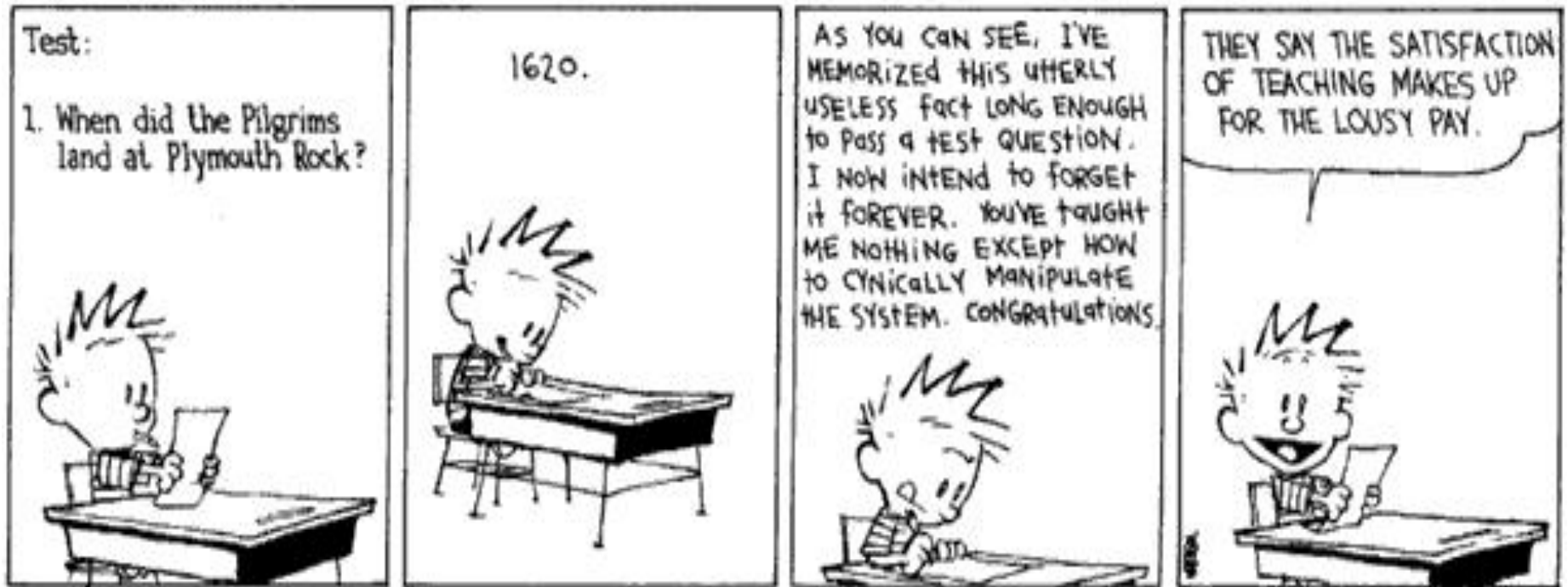
- Effective Teachers have:
  - **Shared beliefs** (All students can learn, it is our moral responsibility, no excuses)
  - **Research knowledge** (HPL, FA, etc.)
  - **Deep content knowledge**
  - **Knowledge and skills to teach specific content** (PCK)
  - **Practical knowledge and skills** (Management, formative assessment processes, relationships)
  - **Collaborative knowledge and skills** (Continued growth through professional teamwork)
  - **Experience** (Excellent training and mentoring during internship and early career)
- **AND....**

# Effective Teaching/Systems

- Effective systems (buildings, districts, communities, state) have:
  - **Shared beliefs** (All students can learn, it is our moral responsibility, no excuses)
  - **Clear Learning Goals** (standards and beyond)
  - **Excellent, balanced curricula and assessments**
  - **Sufficient resources** (\$\$, staff, IT, labs, equipment)
  - **High expectations and support from leaders**
  - **Coherent community support** (parents, social services, higher education, business...)
  - **Low Noise**



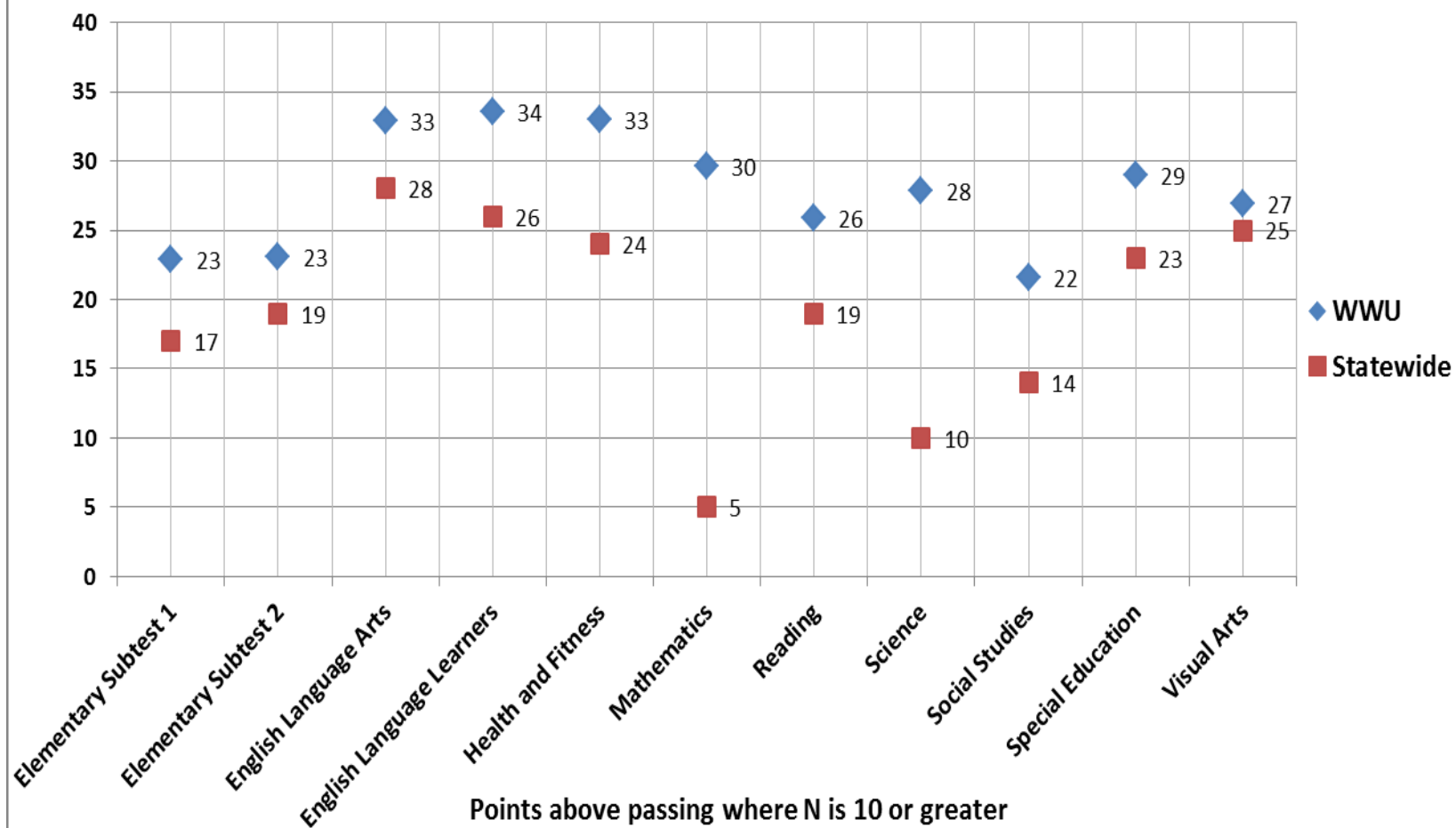
# Who doesn't want to be a teacher?



# How do we prepare new teachers?

- Recruit the best possible students (from everywhere)
- Set high expectations
- Maintain professional standards
- Model effective teaching to help students gain the necessary knowledge and skills in the classroom and in the field
- Provide purposeful mentoring at every stage
- Help develop shared beliefs through positive (though not necessarily easy) experiences
- WWU Examples: We certify the most HS STEM and elementary teachers (who teach science and math) in the state

## 2009-2010 WWU Graduates WEST E Mean Scores Points Above Passing Compared with Statewide 2010 WEST E



**Western Washington University Secondary Preservice Students  
2006-2007 WEST-E (Praxis II)  
100% Pass Rate**

<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Passing Score</b>	<b>N (69)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
• Biology	152	13	175
• Chemistry	152	9	172
• Earth Science	150	4	185
• Gen. Science	153	14	181
• Mathematics	134	21	167
• MS Math	152	2	190
• MS Science	145	2	168
• Physics	140	4	163



# A Year-Long Course Sequence for Future Elementary Teachers



- One quarter each of Physics, Geology, Biology
  - Chemistry and Astronomy come later
- Small Classes (24)
- Reduced content coverage, increased depth
- Based on principles in *How People Learn*
- Developed using *Understanding by Design*
- Learning Cycle Model (Physics and Everyday Thinking, SDSU)
  - Purpose
  - Initial Ideas
  - Collecting and Interpreting Evidence
  - Summarizing Questions (Reflection)



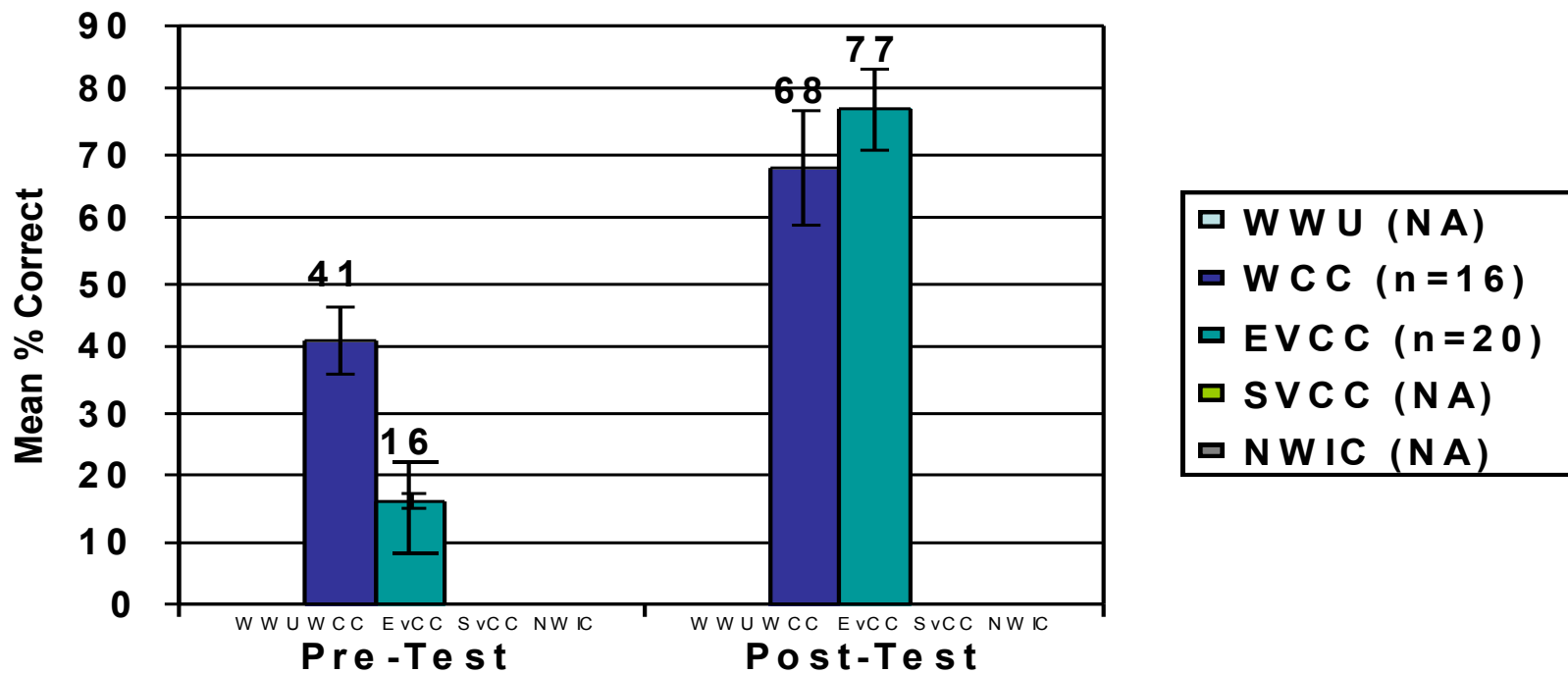
## Results

- Courses are taught on five campuses
- Students are learning some physics, biology, and geology and pedagogy relevant to their teaching
- Students in elementary methods and practicum classes are different (research just starting)
- Practicing teachers that have taken the courses have improved student state test scores



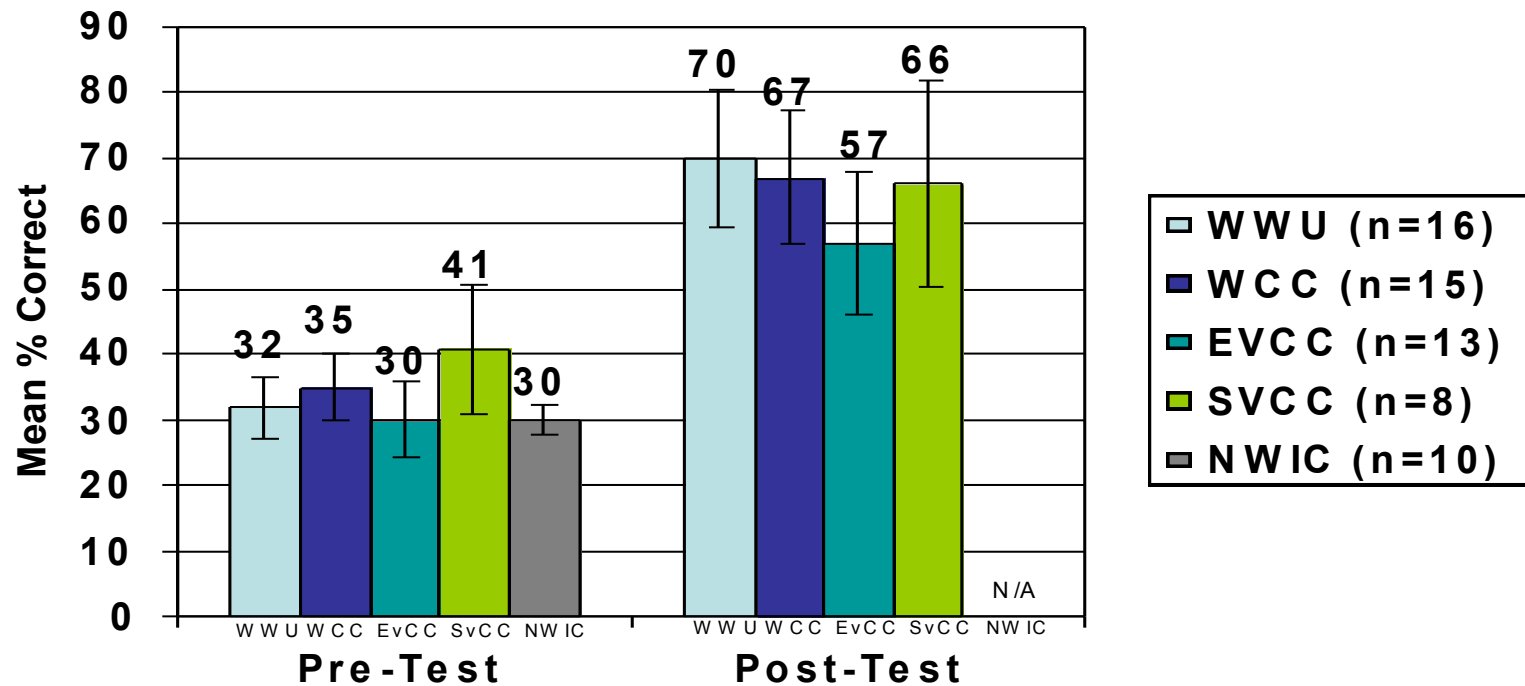
# Pre-Post Scores Physics

**Figure 28:** Physical Science Content Assessments in Year 5



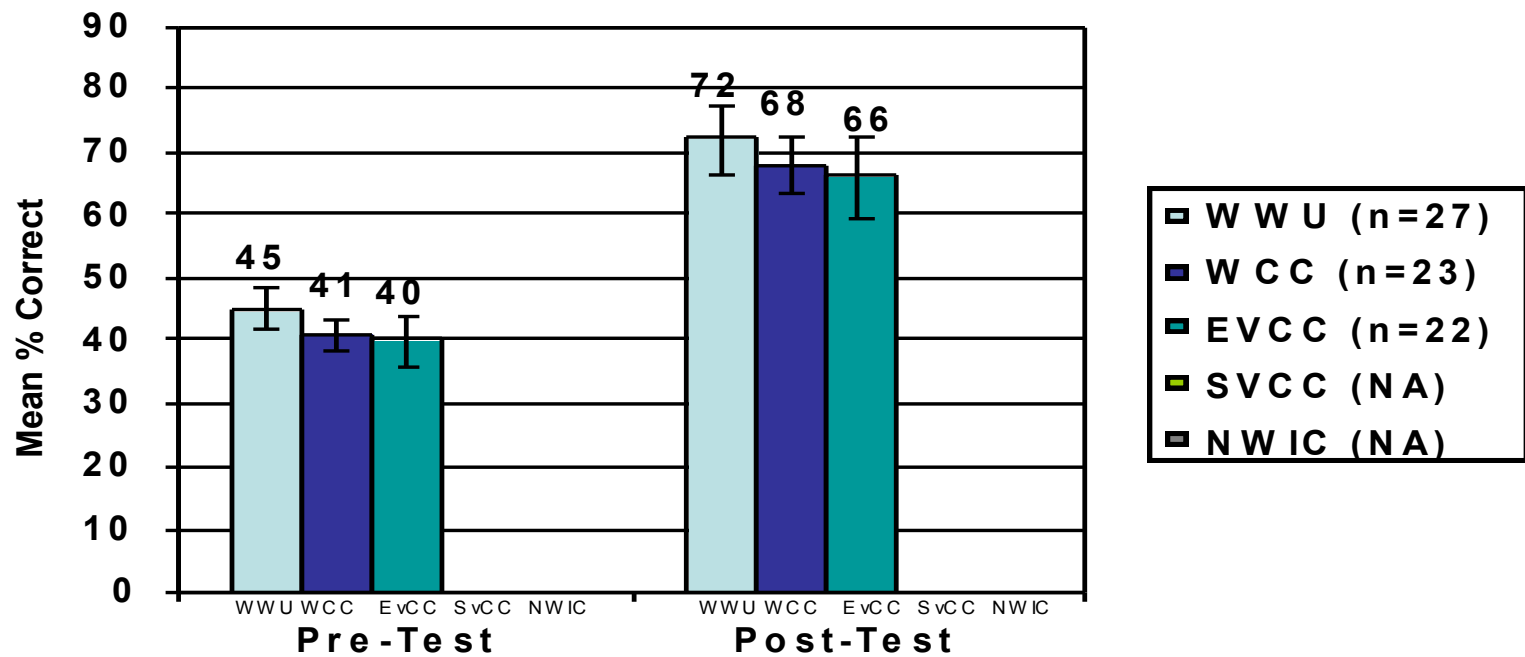
# Pre-Post Scores: Biology

Figure X: Life Science Content Assessments in Year 5



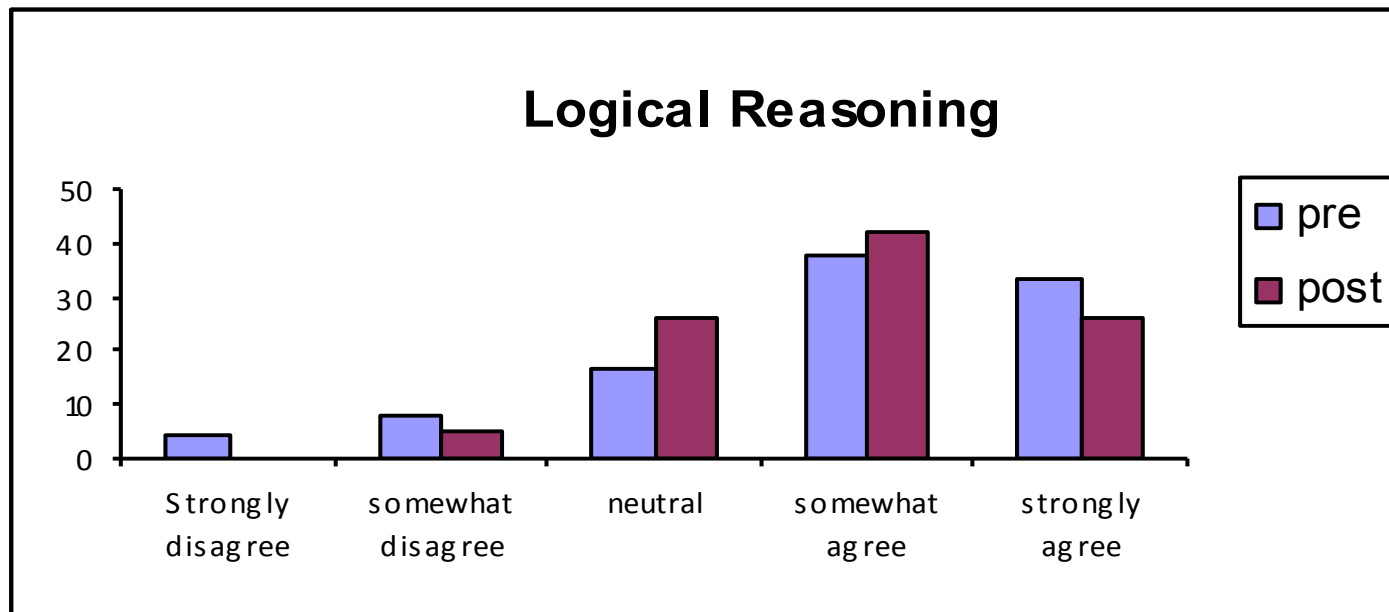
# Pre-Post Scores: Geology

Figure 29: Earth Science Content Assessments in Year 5



## Students' Views of the Nature of Science

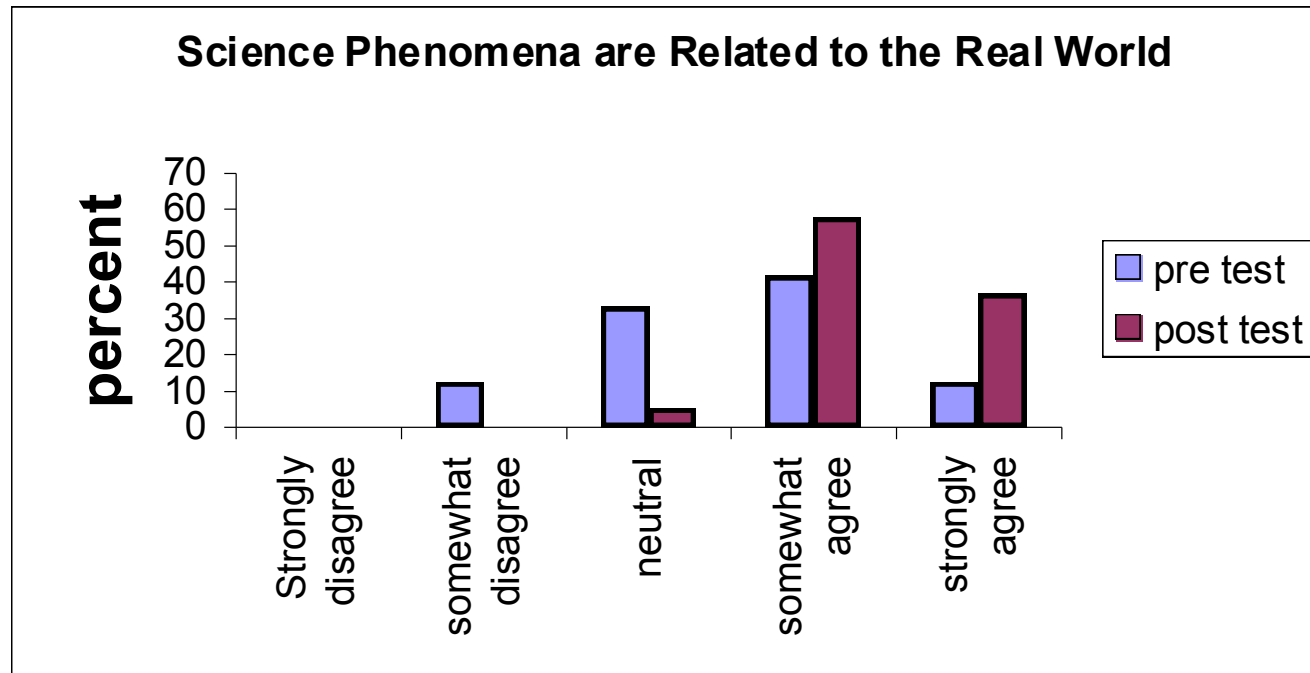
The main skill I expect to get out of this course is to learn how to reason logically about the physical world.



“... a lot of the things that I just take for granted I had to question and then realize that I was wrong on a lot of the things I thought and the good thing is that because we did experiments... we had to figure out how to learn it ourselves and the teacher didn't just tell us how to think, it counteracted what I thought what was wrong so it forced me to realize what was wrong and not go back to what I was thinking before”.

-WWU student

Learning science made me change some of my ideas about how scientific phenomena can be used to understand the world around me.



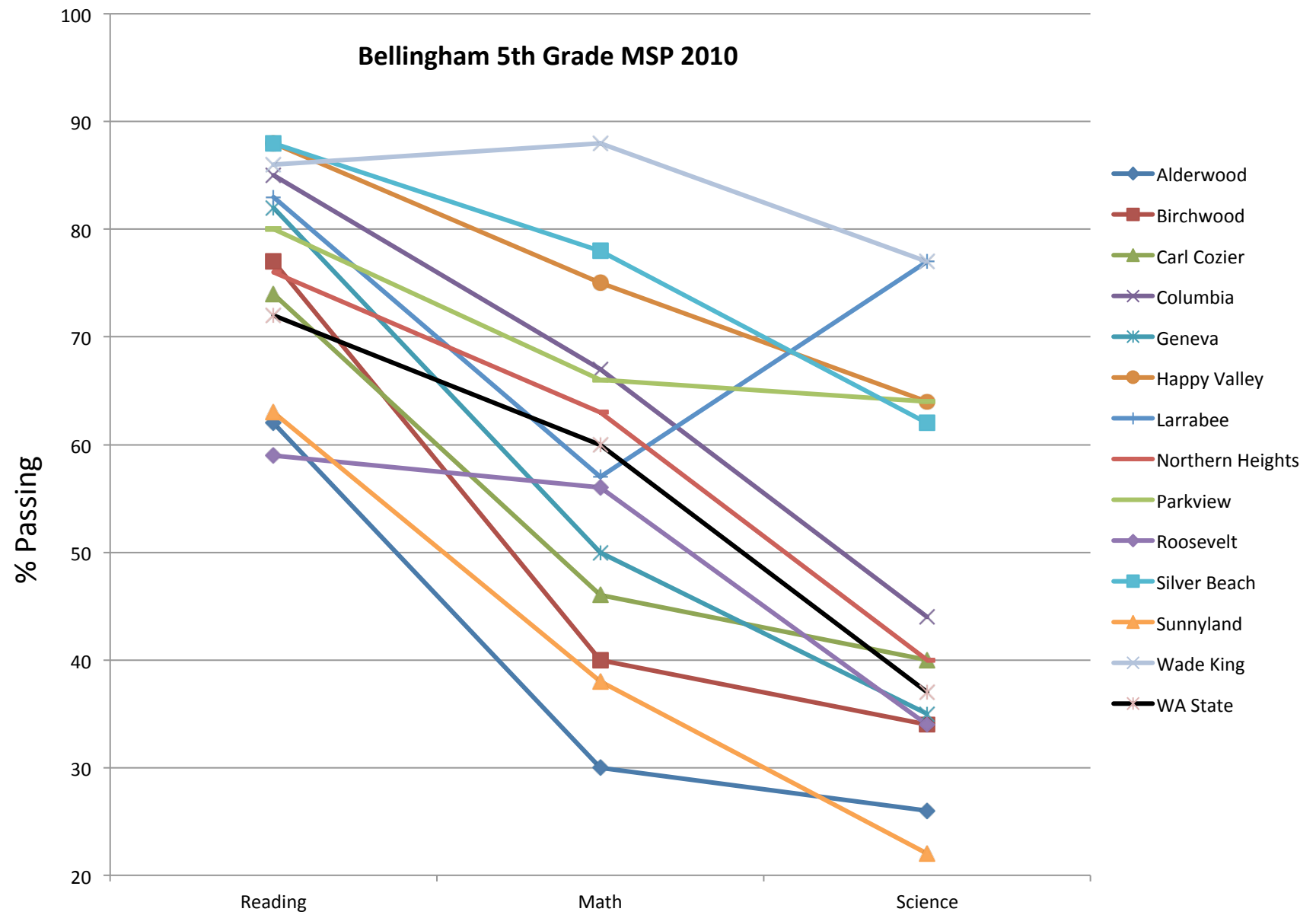
## **Final Reflection (Geology)**

Earth science had never made so much sense to me before. Walking away from the final exam this quarter I felt accomplished and confident in my knowledge of how matter and energy in earth systems work(s). But how did I get to that feeling? Through active participation and constant questioning I gained a solid understanding of the material.

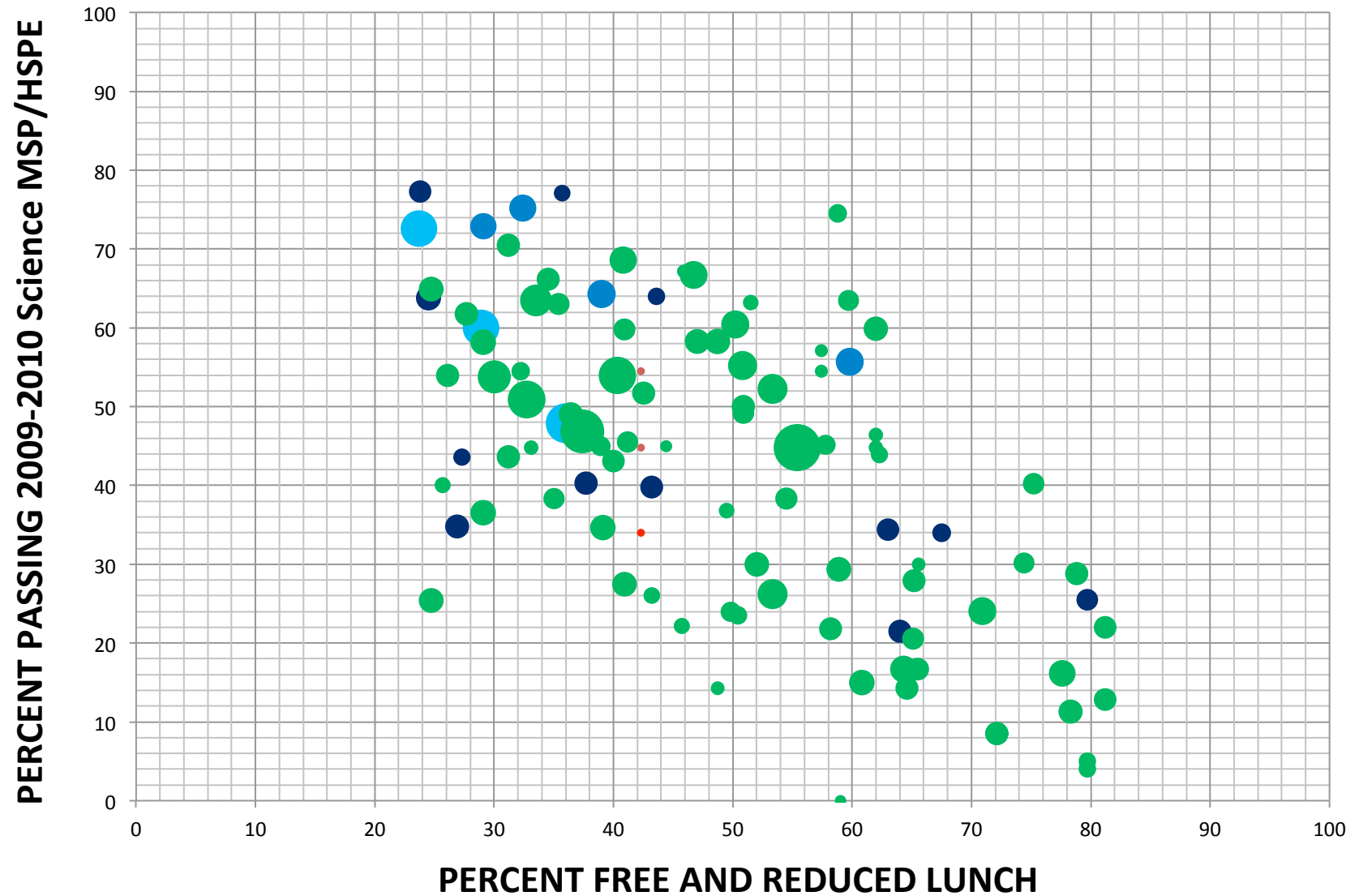


# Concurrent K-12 and HE reform is critical

- Teachers learn to teach in the classroom where they can be supported to apply new knowledge and develop new skills
- Mentor teachers should be demonstrably effective as both teachers and mentors
- Buildings should be part of an effective system
- **Not enough examples of these exist yet**



## Skagit, Whatcom, Cape Flattery Science MSP/HSPE 2009-2010



# Where would you place your student teachers?

School (population)	1 (403)	2 (398)	3 (262)	WA (80,000)
<b>% Ethnicity</b>				
White	84	73	68	61
Hispanic	4	18	25	19
<b>% FRL (Poverty)</b>	20	54	57	44
<b>% Passing 2011 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science MSP</b>	81	86	95	56
<b>Level 4</b>	61	55	67	24
<b>Level 3</b>	20	31	28	32
<b>Level 2</b>	15 (9)	6 (4)	5 (2)	24
<b>Level 1</b>	4 (2)	8 (5)	0 (0)	20

# Finally

- At WWU we are preparing teachers to be part of successful schools where every student is expected to learn and every teacher and leader is committed to making that happen—no excuses. We are not preparing teachers for today's schools
- We are helping today's schools become successful schools
- This is not easy work, but it is critical work and it is doable work. Join us!

# Thank you

