

# Persistence of 'Failing Schools'

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An especially noteworthy symptom of dysfunctionality is a system's failure to reform or purge low performing producers. It is a hallmark of the public sector wherein low performance is often widely asserted as an entitlement to increased funding. Certainly that has been true for K-12 schooling where massive per pupil funding increases frequently follow documentation of horrifically poor performance.

All traditional public schools (TPS) fail at high rates because one size cannot fit all, plus additional [heroic assumptions](#) about educators, children, economics, and politics. At some TPS the 'one size' is so poorly produced that it fits everyone badly. States' formal, top-down assessment rubrics recognize only the latter failure to serve anyone adequately, or sometimes disappointing outcomes for particular sub-groups.

Programs that document such total failure, including the programs that provide increased access to TPS alternatives for children assigned to officially 'failed' assigned schools, have not put themselves out of business. Such massive failure persists despite the shame, the often increased funding and attention that goes to schools labeled 'failed', and supposed greater access to assigned school alternatives made possible for students assigned to 'failed' TPS. In the rare cases where access to alternatives creates some rivalry behavior, it falls far short of the needed genuine [competition](#). Failure persists because the anti-failure strategies address few, if any, of the [roots of the low performance problem](#).

Even the relatively rare markets suffering 'failure' [to achieve maximum efficiency] for one or more of the standard reasons (information deficiencies, not enough competition, and relevant spillover effects), rapidly eliminate low-performing producers. The rapid resolution/disappearance

of low-performing producers is a hallmark of markets with the key features of price change, profit/loss, and total openness to newcomer attempts at choiceworthiness.