School Funding Equity in France

Risk and resource analysis of public collèges, nationally and by académie

Bruce D. Baker · University of Miami · October 2026

Teaching hours follow need, through labels

1.15

High-need ÷ low-need teaching hours per pupil, same académie, size and remoteness held constant

+13%

Extra hours for REP+ collèges beyond what their measured need predicts

27%

Share of collèges in the 8th tenth of need inside éducation prioritaire

2.14×

Gap in département collège spending per pupil, 90th vs. 10th percentile, unrelated to need

Teaching hours per pupil (H/E) are the State's main resource: teachers are paid on national scales and allocated as weekly hours. 15,940 collège-years, 5,323 public collèges.

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

Two questions from the equal-opportunity framework

1a Risk analysis

Which pupil and community characteristics most strongly predict lower outcomes?

Outcomes = f(Needs, Context)

1b Resource analysis

Are teaching hours and spending higher where risks are concentrated, net of costs?

Resources = f(Needs, Context)

2 Cost modeling (next)

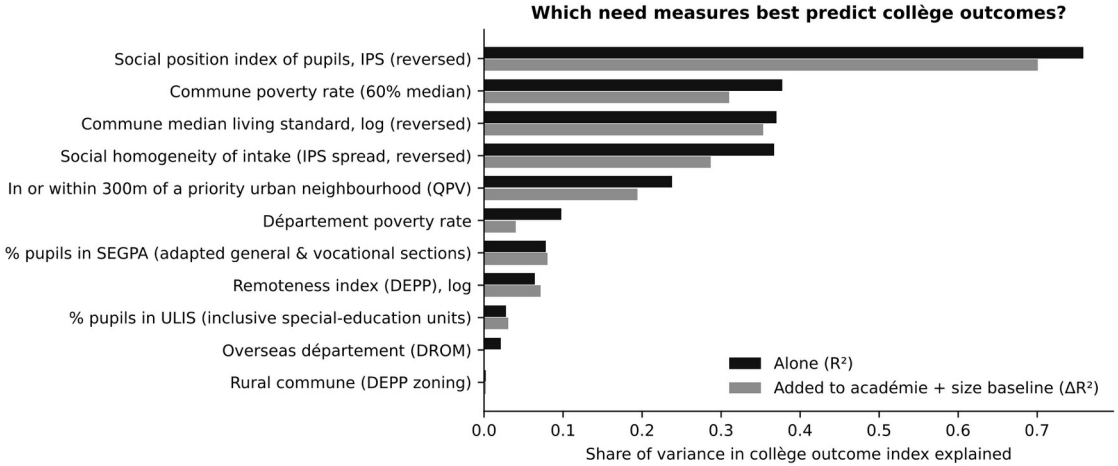
How much more would give high-need collèges an equal opportunity to reach common goals?

Sizing the differential

Purpose of a school finance system: deliver the resources schools need to give every child an equal opportunity to achieve common, adequate outcome goals (Baker, Atchison & Levin, 2026; Code de l'éducation, art. L111-1).

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

Pupils' social background predicts outcomes best



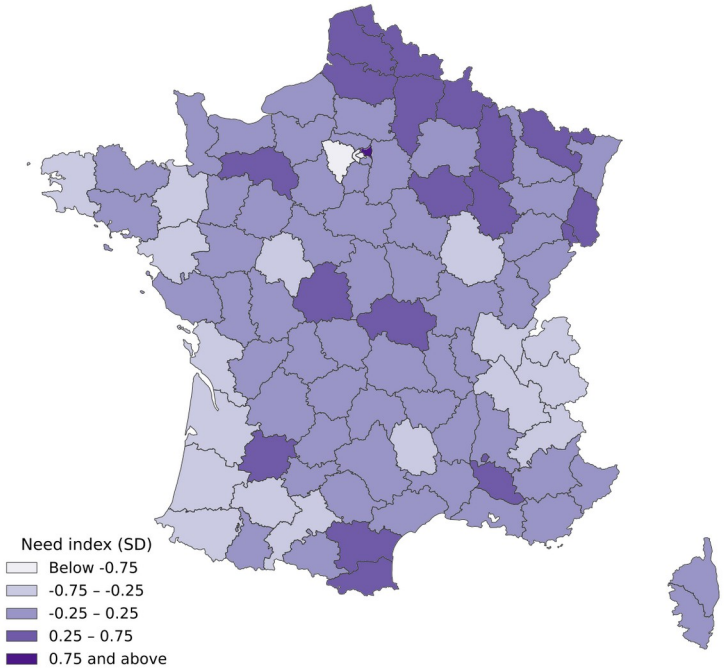
The social position index of the intake (**IPS**) alone explains **76%** of the variation in collège outcomes

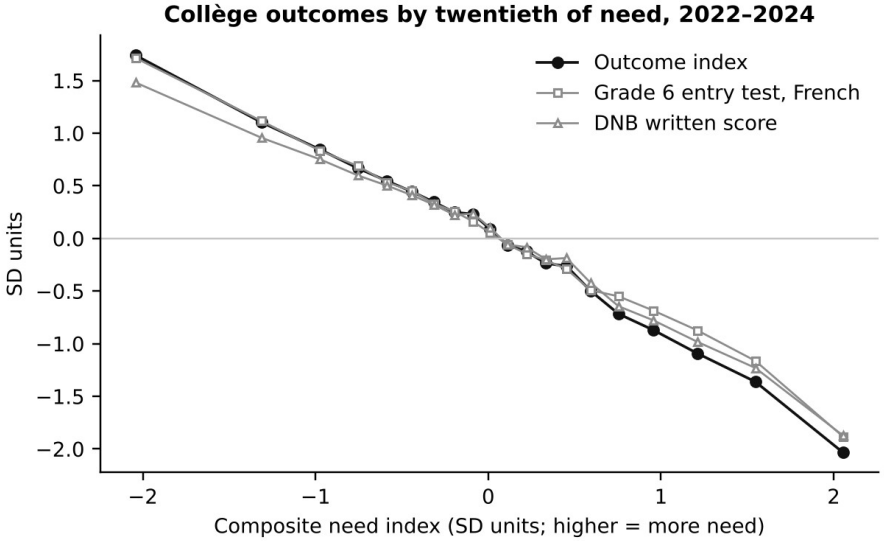
Commune poverty and income explain about **37%**

Remote and rural collèges do slightly **better** than their intake predicts

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

A three-standard-deviation gap, present at entry

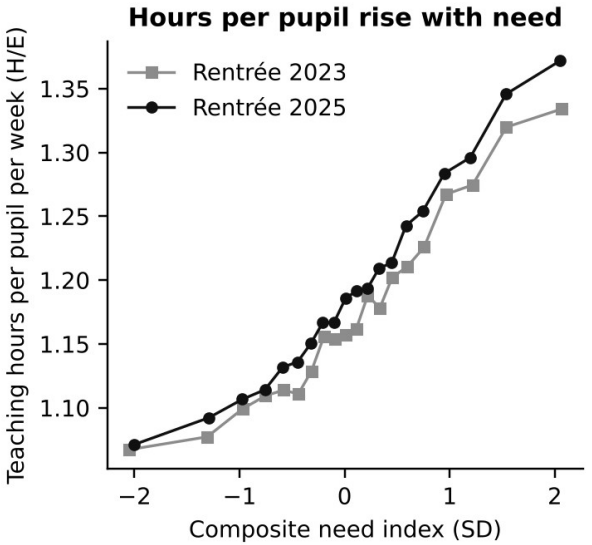


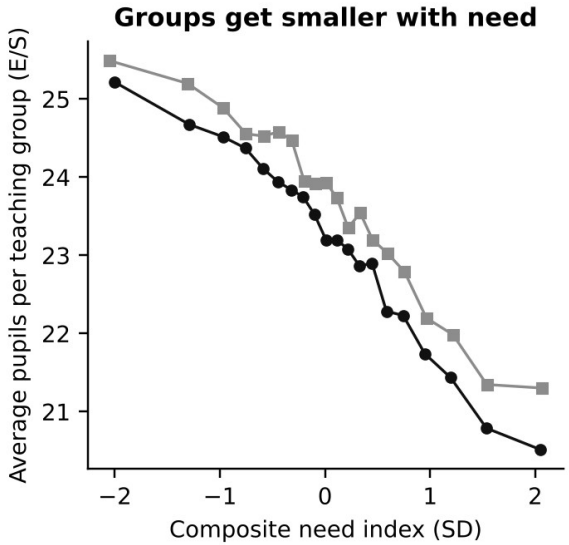


Left: mean collège need by département. Right: outcomes by twentieth of need. Brevet written score: 8.7/20 in the highest-need tenth vs. 12.4 in the lowest.

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

Hours per pupil rise and groups shrink with need





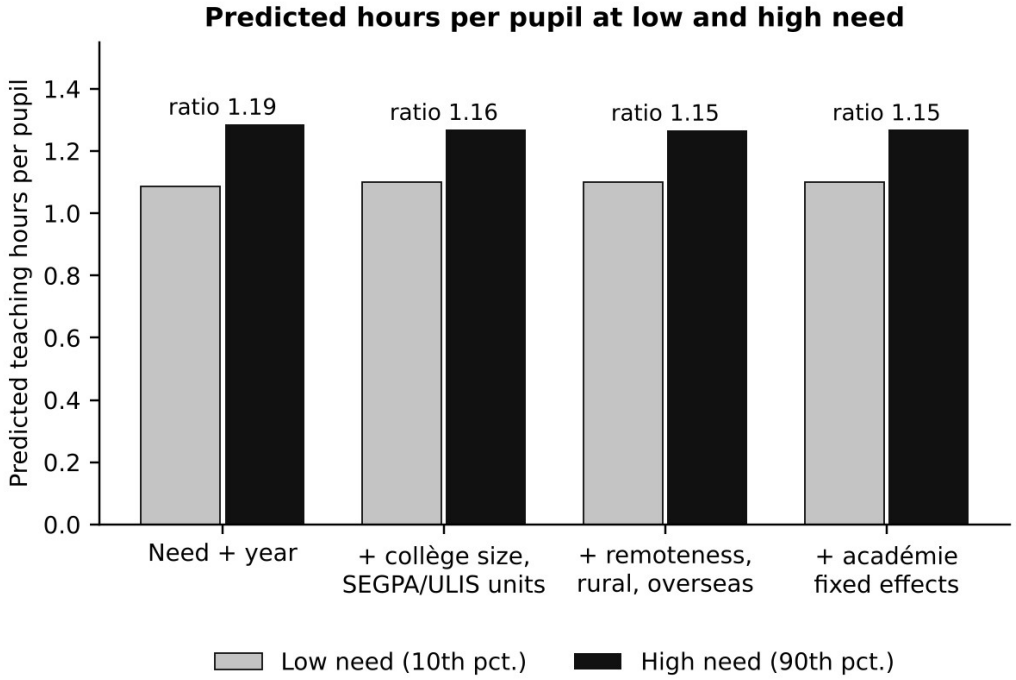
Lowest-need fifth: **1.10** hours per pupil; highest-need fifth: **1.33**

Group size falls from about **25** to **21** pupils

Slightly more progressive in 2025 than 2023

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

Progressive within académies, after costs



Need and year only: **1.19×**

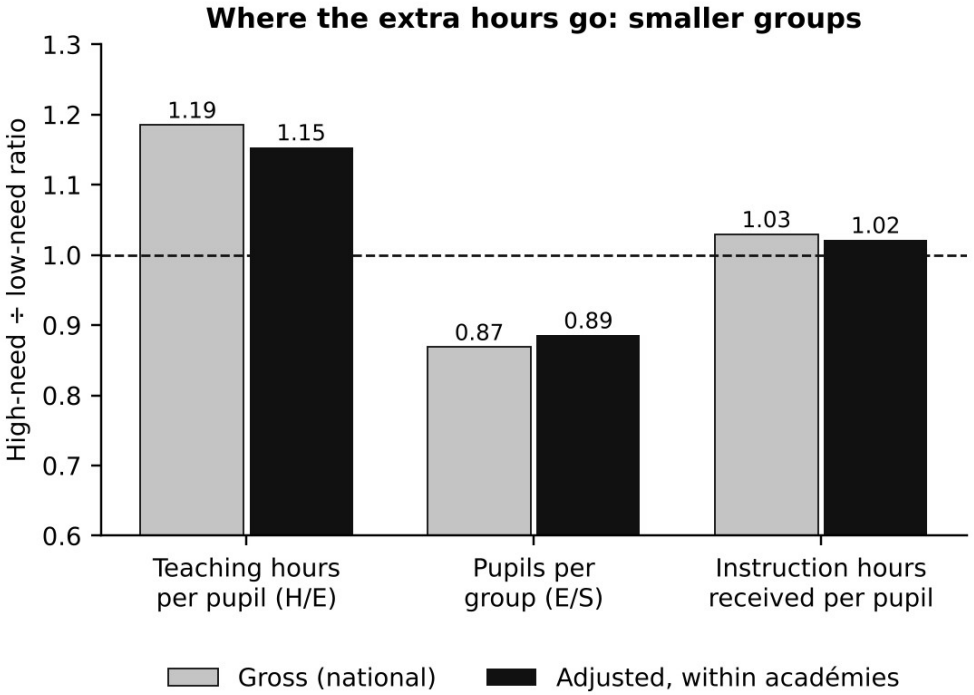
Add size, units and remoteness: **1.15×**

Within the same académie: **1.15×**

For a 400-pupil collège ≈ **3.7** extra full-time teachers

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

The extra hours buy smaller groups



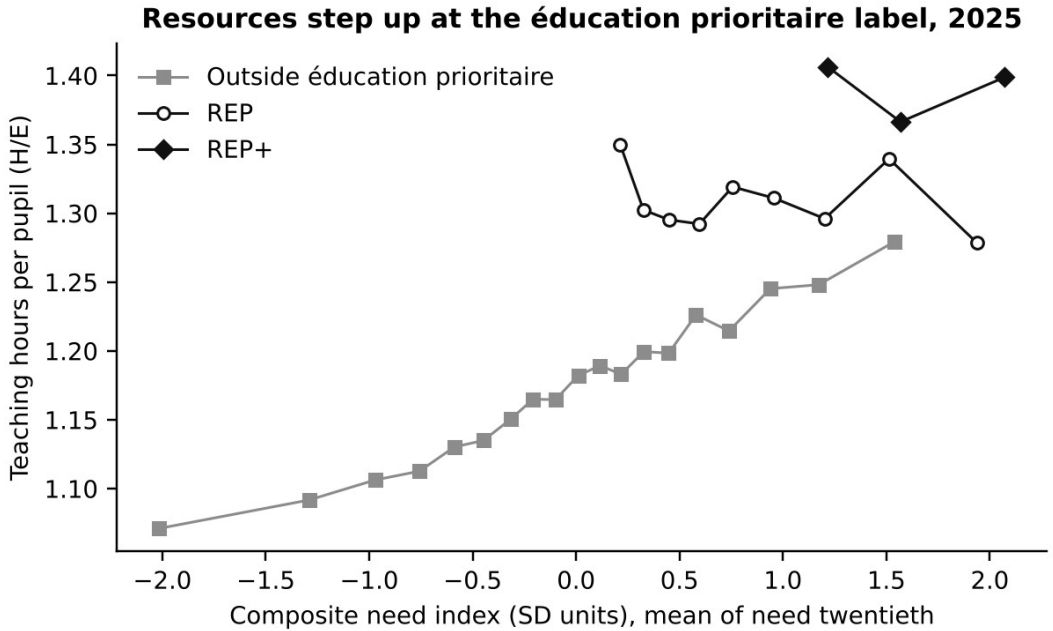
High-need groups average **21.9** pupils vs. **24.7**

Weekly instruction per pupil is nearly equal (**1.02×**)

Hours are not euros: less experienced teachers in high-need collèges lower the cost of each hour

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

The éducation prioritaire label creates cliffs



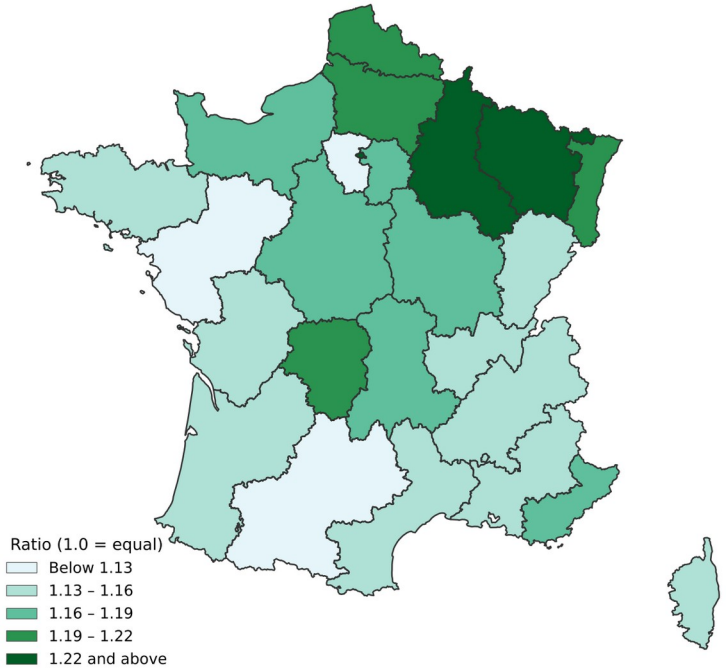
REP: **+9%** and REP+: **+13%** hours beyond measured need

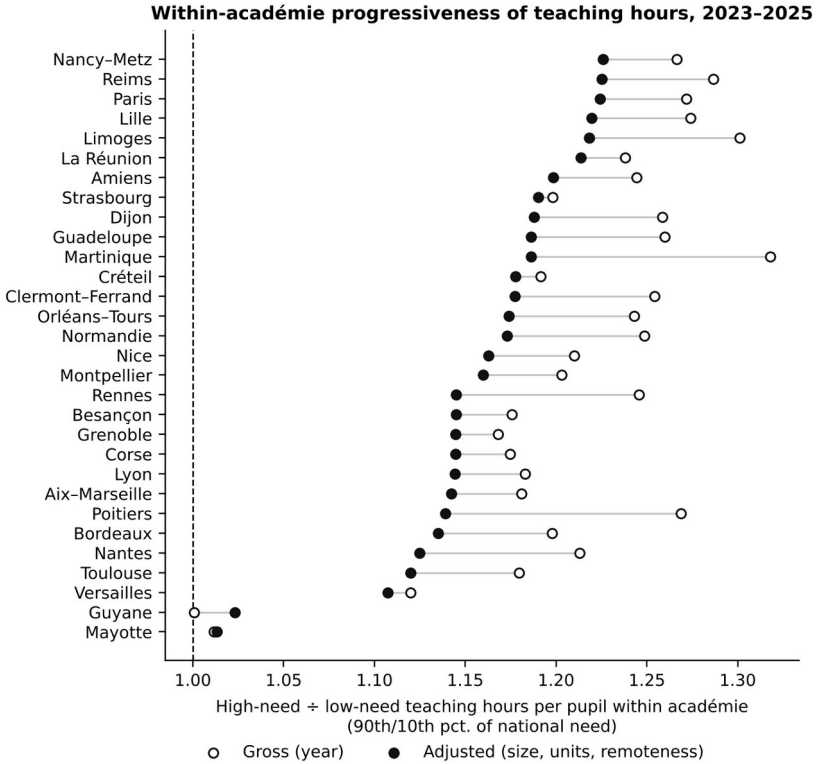
Network covers **95%** of the highest-need tenth but only **64%** of the 9th and **27%** of the 8th

The map has not been redrawn since 2015

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

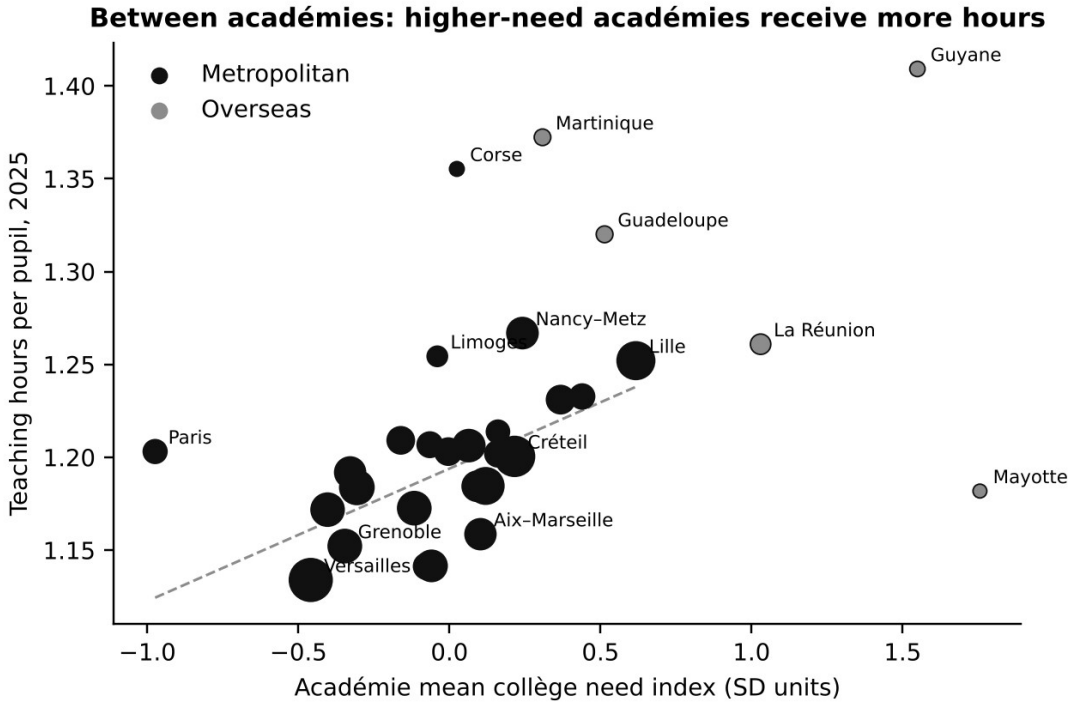
Every metropolitan académie is progressive





Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

Between académies, Mayotte is the exception



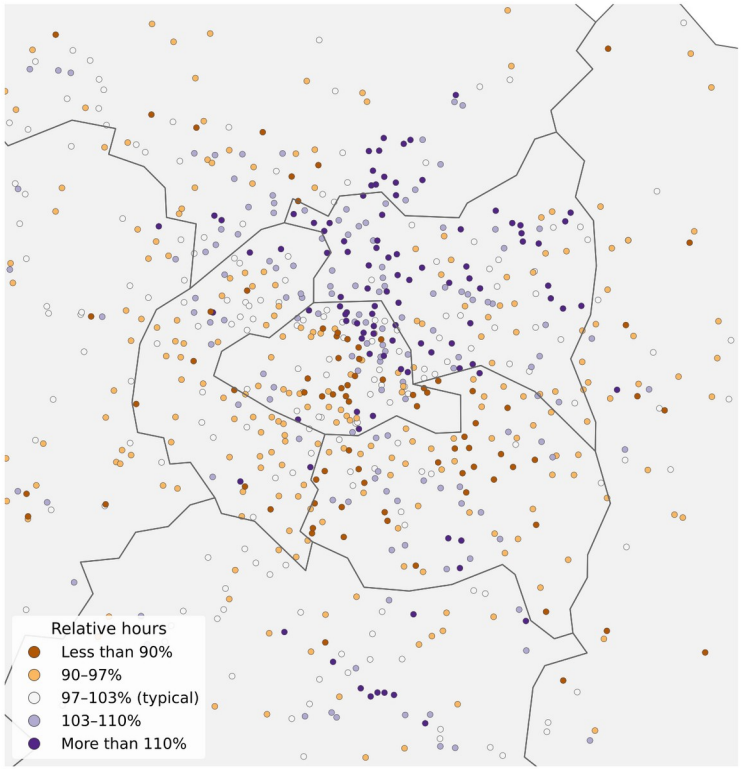
Académie hours rise with need (r = **0.39**, metropolitan)

Mayotte, mean IPS **70**, receives **1.18** hours per pupil, the national average

Its collèges are not differentiated by need

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

Paris and the inner suburbs: extra hours follow need



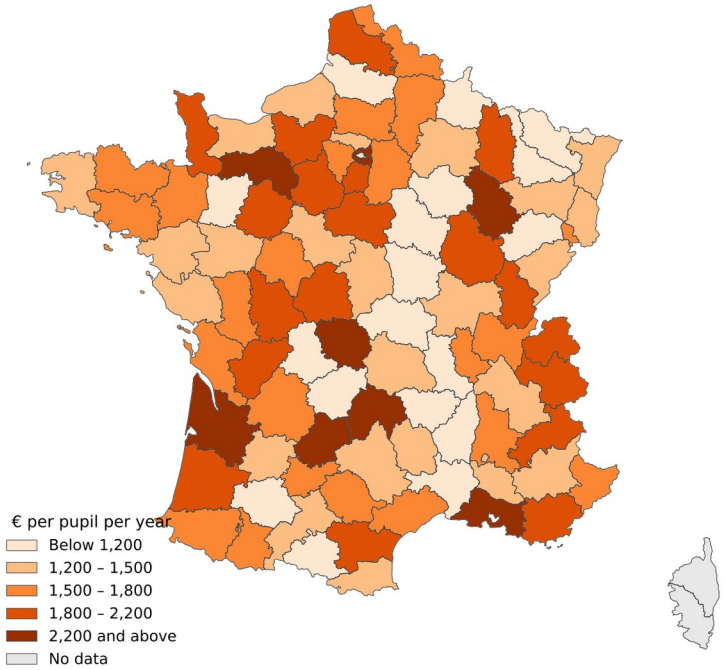
Each dot is a public collège, rentrée 2025

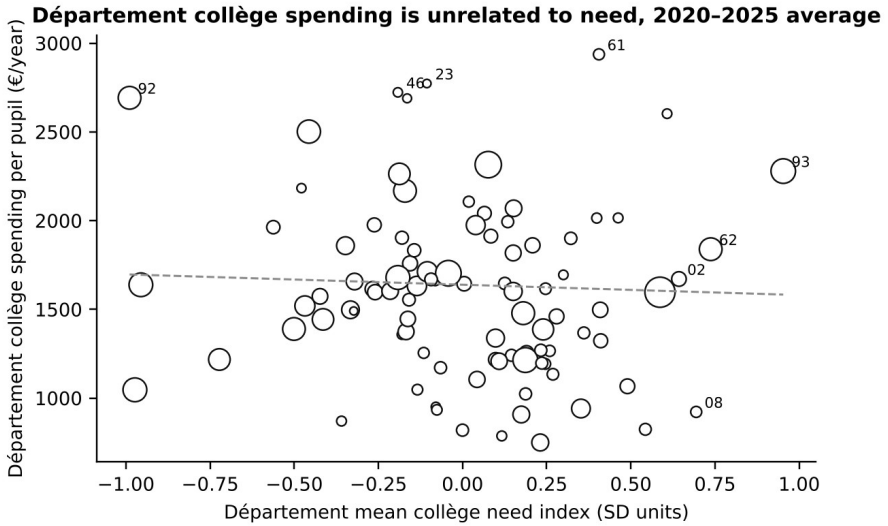
Purple: more hours per pupil than collèges of the same size in the same académie; orange: fewer

Seine-Saint-Denis collèges receive more; central and western Paris collèges fewer

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

Département spending: unequal, need-blind

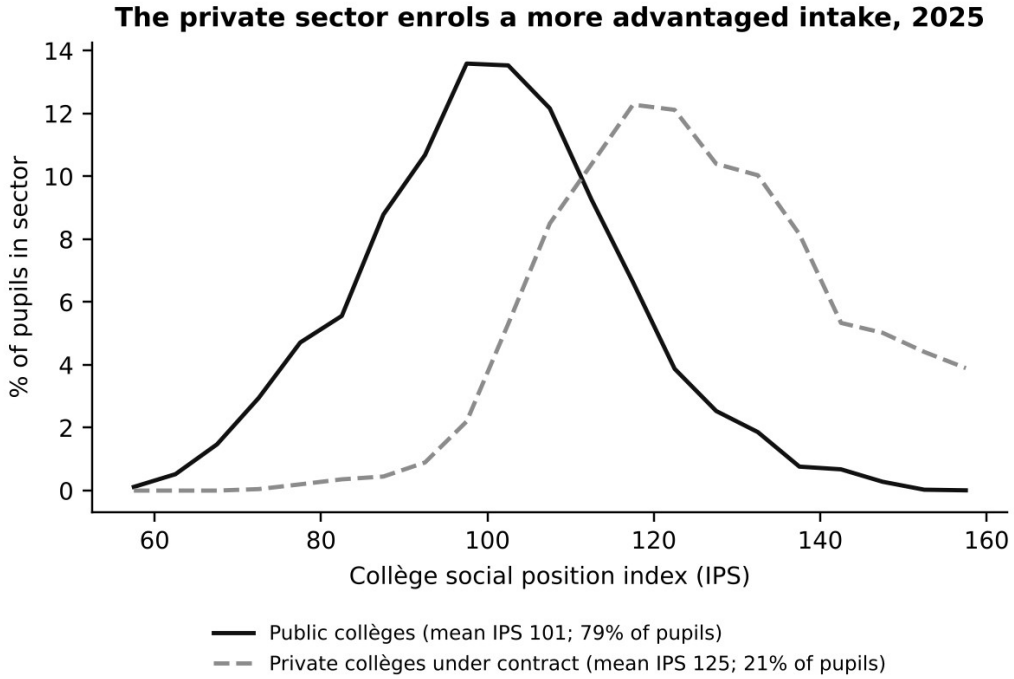




Départements spent €1,641 per collège pupil on average (2020–2025), about a sixth of total spending. The 90th percentile spends 2.14× the 10th; correlation with need -0.10.

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

A more advantaged private sector



Private collèges under contract: mean IPS **125** vs. **101** in public collèges

Their teachers are also paid by the State

Concentrates disadvantage in nearby public collèges

Source: B. D. Baker analysis of DEPP open data (H/E–E/S, IPS, DNB, 6e evaluations, enrolments), INSEE Filosofi 2021 and OFGL. Public collèges, 2023–2025.

Implications

- Replace steps with a slope: allocate supplementary hours continuously by IPS so collèges outside the 2015 map are reached
- Size the differential to a three-standard-deviation gap; a 15% difference in hours is modest
- Make Mayotte a priority of the national allocation; equalize the département layer
- Next: cost modeling, and publication of school-level spending including staff costs