

# ***EVALUATING DEIS IN POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS?***

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## **Presentation to the PDST**

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# ELEMENTS OF DEIS POST-PRIMARY

- Improved staffing schedule
- Additional financial support
- Access to *Home School Community Liaison services*
- Access to *Schools Meals Programme*
- Access to a range of supports under *School Completion Programme*
- Access to Junior Certificate Schools Programme (JCSP)

## ELEMENTS OF DEIS POST-PRIMARY (CONT.)

- Some JCSP schools have a library
- Access to Leaving Certificate Applied Programme (LCA)
- Access to planning supports
- Access to a range of professional development supports
- Additional funding under *School Books Grant Scheme*

(Source: DES Website, 2013)

# EVALUATION

## Focus: Examining

- implementation (the match between what was intended and what is happening at the level of the system and at school level)
- outcomes

## Activities

- What Students Think (Survey of 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Years)
- School visits
- School questionnaires
- Analysis of centrally held data (e.g., exams, retention rates)

# THIS PRESENTATION

- Two aspects of implementation  
(1 national and 1 local)
- The opinions and experiences of principals and researchers
- Trends in centrally held data

## UPTAKE OF PROGRAMMES

- Shortly after the introduction of DEIS, the number of schools with JSCP libraries went from 10 to 30
- Our data indicate that the policy of opening JCSP libraries in schools with highest concentrations of disadvantage has been reasonably successfully implemented.

## UPTAKE OF PROGRAMMES (CONT.)

- Before DEIS, the number of schools with students taking JCSP hovered around 130 for about 4 years
- Since 2006/07, the number has risen steadily to between 200 and 210
- All but one of the 70 (approx.) extra JSCP schools are in DEIS
- LCA participation has also been affected by the introduction of DEIS but to a much smaller extent than JCSP

# PLANNING

- By school year 2012/13, almost 90% of participating schools had completed a DEIS plan (a majority doing so between 2008 and 2010).
- All plans contained specific targets across a range of areas with a focus on literacy, numeracy, retention and attendance.
- All but 2 or 3 school principals reported progress in relation to stated targets.
- Principals are overwhelmingly positive about the planning process while acknowledging drawbacks and obstacles.
- Inclusive (whole-school) approach to planning is favoured.
- Greater engagement in planning than that reported in 2010 by inspectorate.



# WHAT PRINCIPALS THINK ABOUT DEIS

- Universal positivity about all elements of DEIS
- Despite deteriorating socioeconomic context, principals reported improved
  - Retention
  - Exam performance
  - Literacy and numeracy
  - Attendance
  - Transfer to 3<sup>rd</sup> level
- Negative feedback mainly reflects concerns about resourcing

# IMPRESSIONS OF THOSE OF US WHO VISITED SCHOOLS

- We thought that we got 'a feel' for the overall atmosphere in about two-thirds of schools
- In most of the other third, contact was almost entirely with the principal
- Positives seen in almost all schools including
  - Enthusiastic engagement with planning
  - Team work
  - Flexibility in use of resources
  - Strong pastoral care

# IMPRESSIONS OF THOSE OF US WHO VISITED SCHOOLS (CONT.)

- Many DEIS schools are entitled to be regarded as 'trail blazers' in terms of planning and self evaluation
- Challenges faced very evident
  - Scale of marginalization
  - Resistance to change among a very small minority of staff
  - Impact of enrolment policies and practices

# TRENDS OVER TIME IN ACHIEVEMENT & RETENTION LEVELS

- Academic Achievement
  - Junior Certificate Overall Performance Score
  - Junior Certificate English
  - Junior Certificate Maths
- Retention Levels
  - Retention to Junior Certificate
  - Retention to Leaving Certificate

# TRENDS OVER TIME

## Schools

- 704 schools in total
  - 200 'SSP' schools
    - Enlisted into SSP in 2006 / 2007
  - 504 'Non-SSP' schools
    - Did not participate in SSP

# TRENDS OVER TIME: JC EXAM PERFORMANCE AND RETENTION

- Evidence of a significant trend over time?
- Evidence of differing trends for SSP & Non-SSP schools?
- Evidence that the introduction of DEIS in 2006 / 2007 had an impact on trends over time?

# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

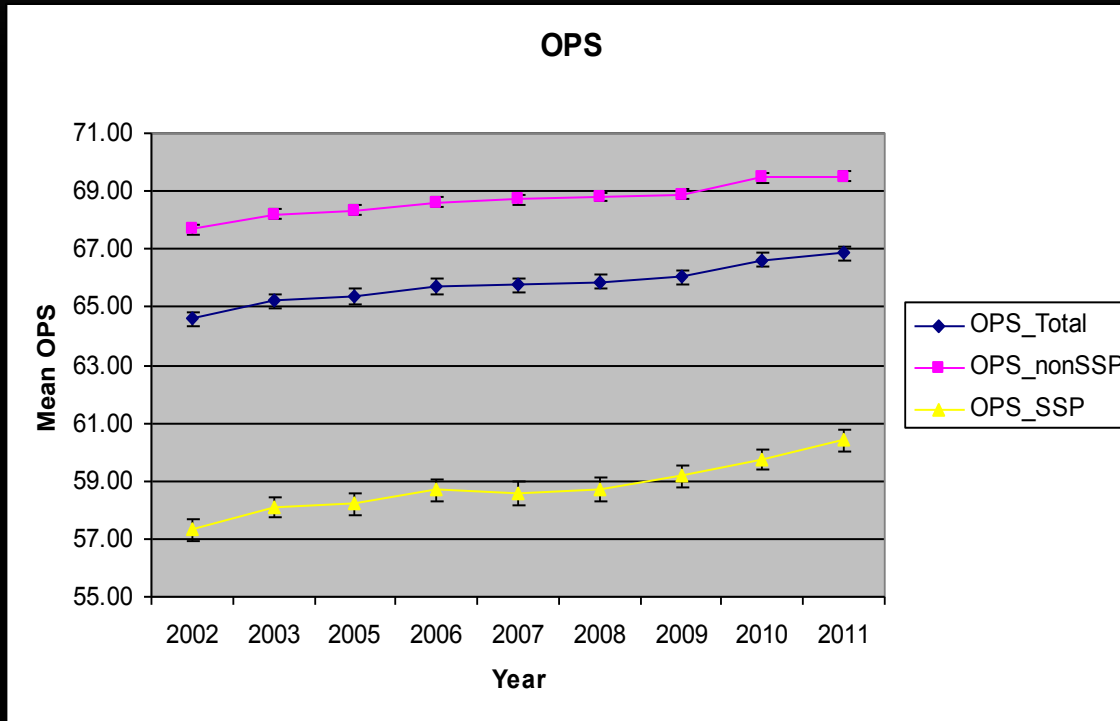
Higher	Ordinary	Foundation	OPS score
A			12
B			11
C			10
D	A		9
E	B		8
F	C		7
	D	A	6
	E	B	5
	F	C	4
		D	3
		E	2
		F	1

**Overall Performance Score** (Kellaghan & Dwan, 1995)

Number is assigned to each letter grade

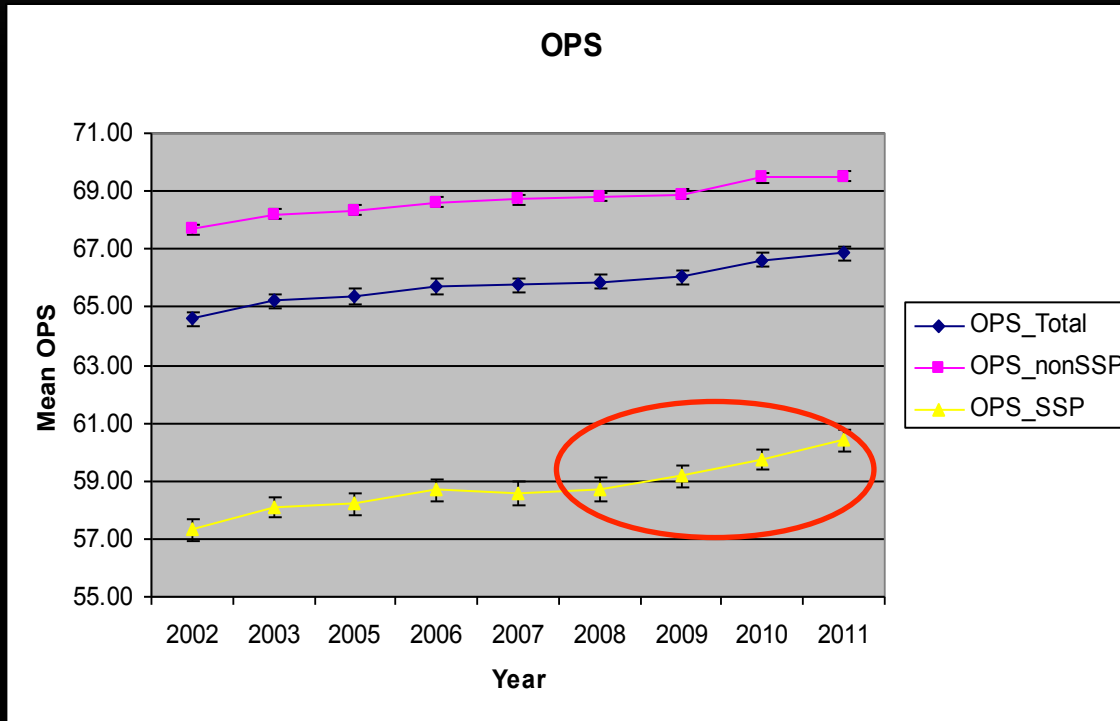
OPS score for best 7 subjects summed to give OPS

# MEAN JC OPS FROM 2002 TO 2011

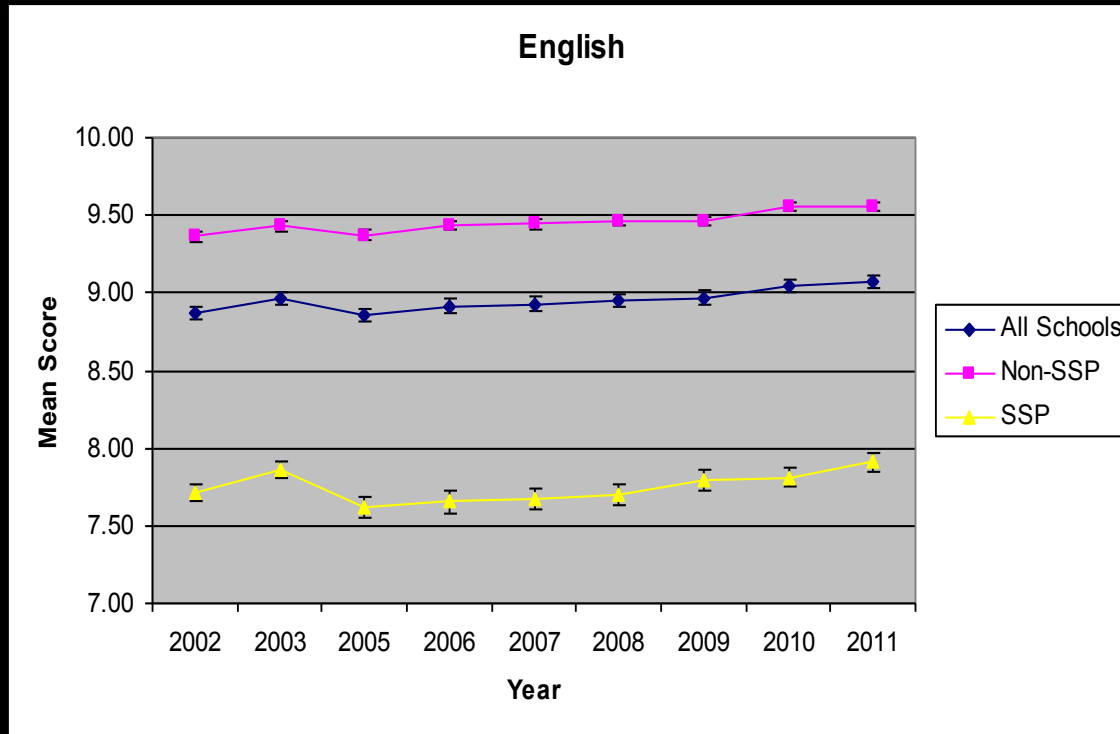




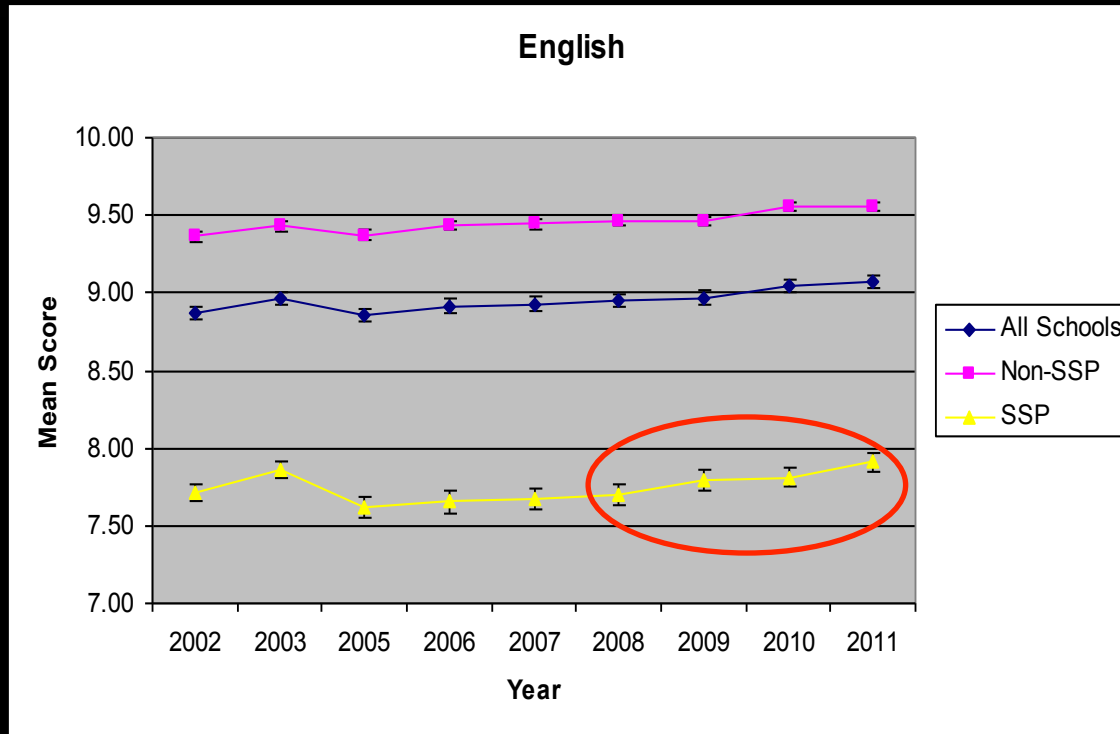
# MEAN JC OPS FROM 2002 TO 2011



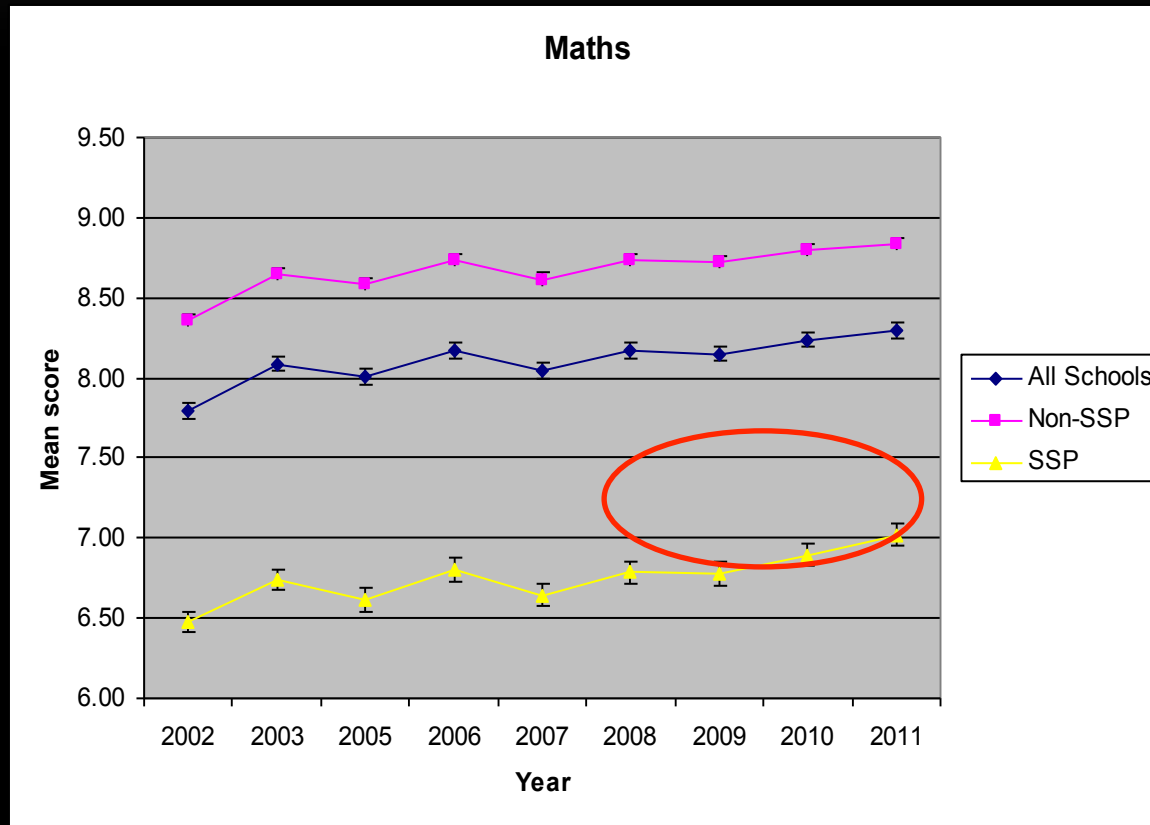
# MEAN JC ENGLISH SCORES FROM 2002 TO 2011



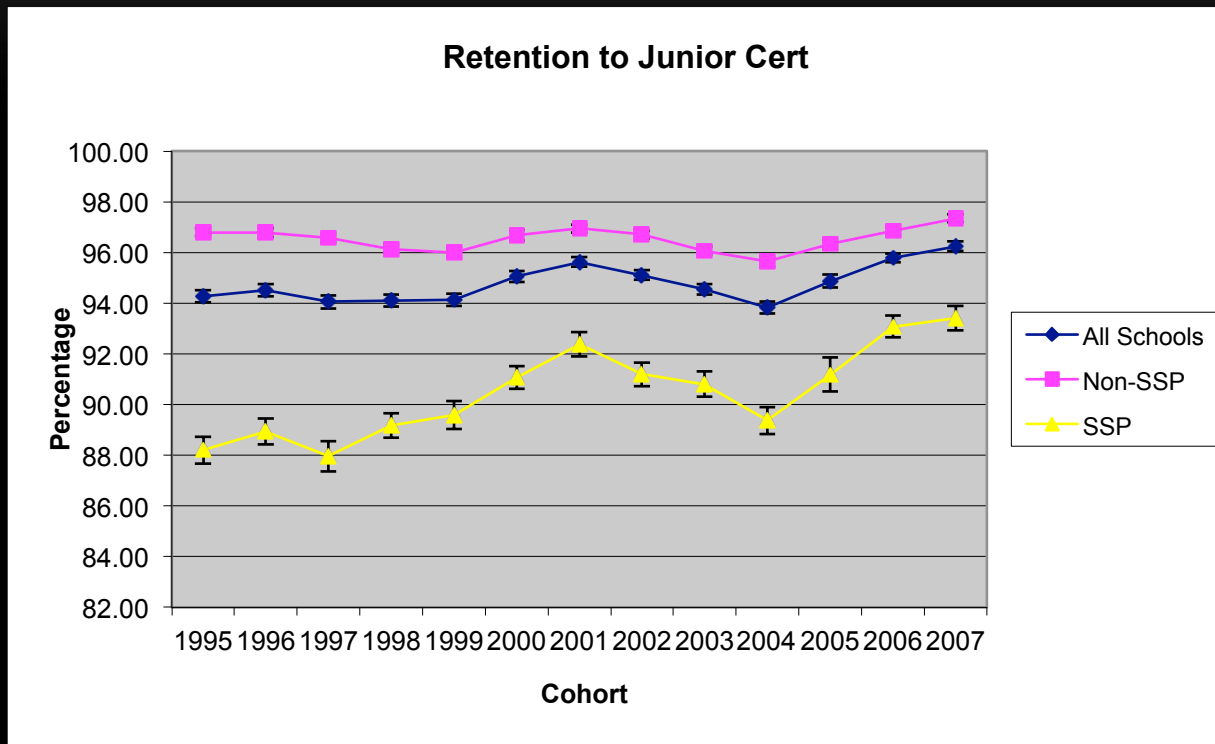
# MEAN JC ENGLISH SCORES FROM 2002 TO 2011



# MEAN JC MATHS SCORES FROM 2002 TO 2011



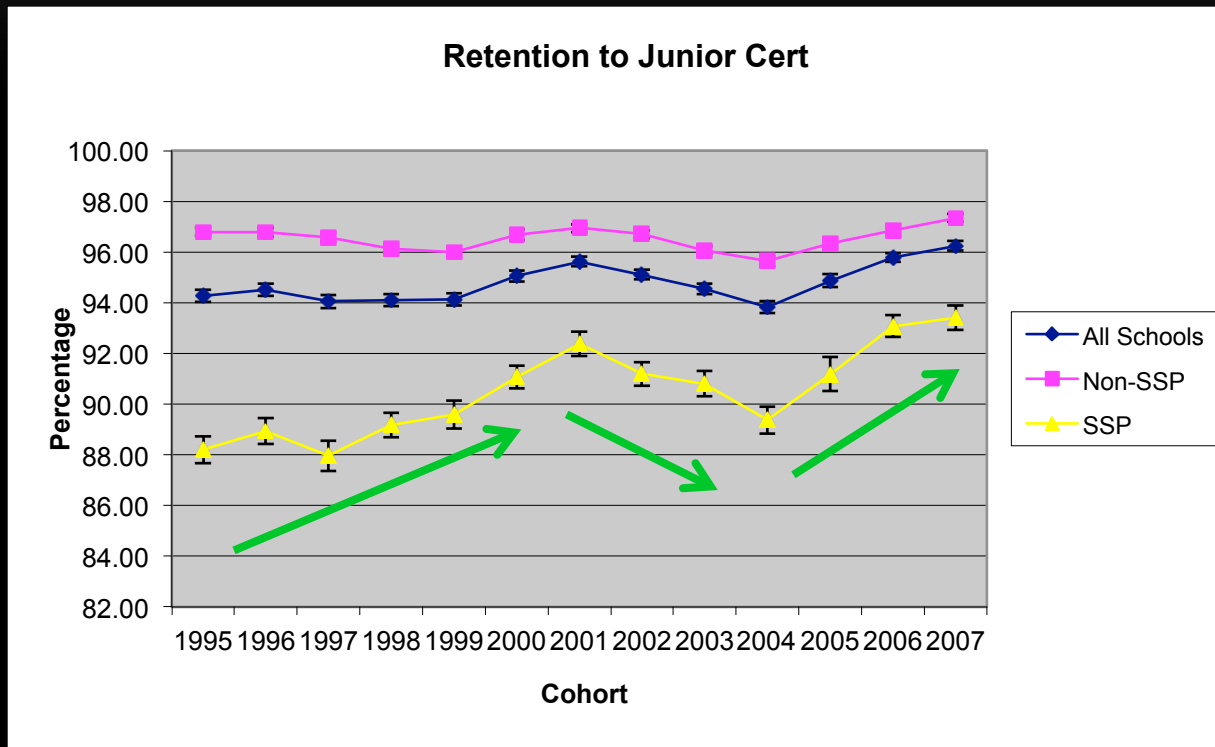
# AVERAGE PERCENTAGE RETENTION TO JC



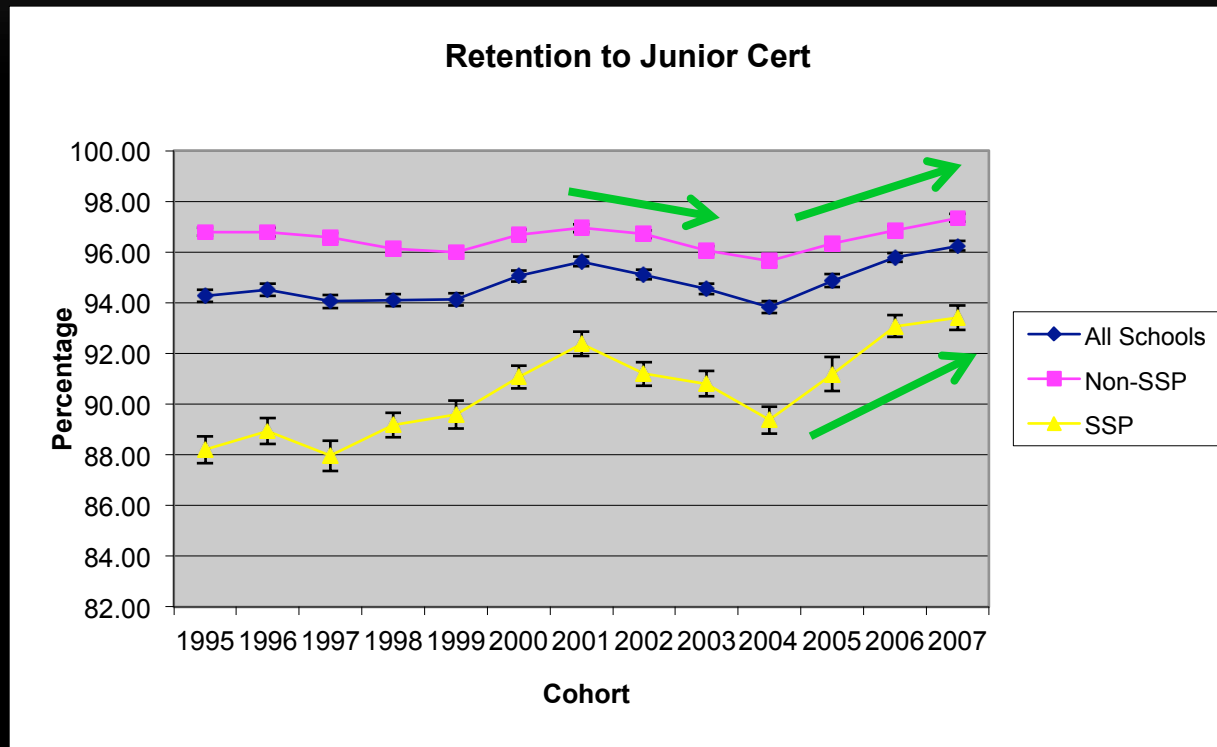
Cohort refers to Year of Entry

1995 cohort entered second level in 1995 & left 5 / 6 years later

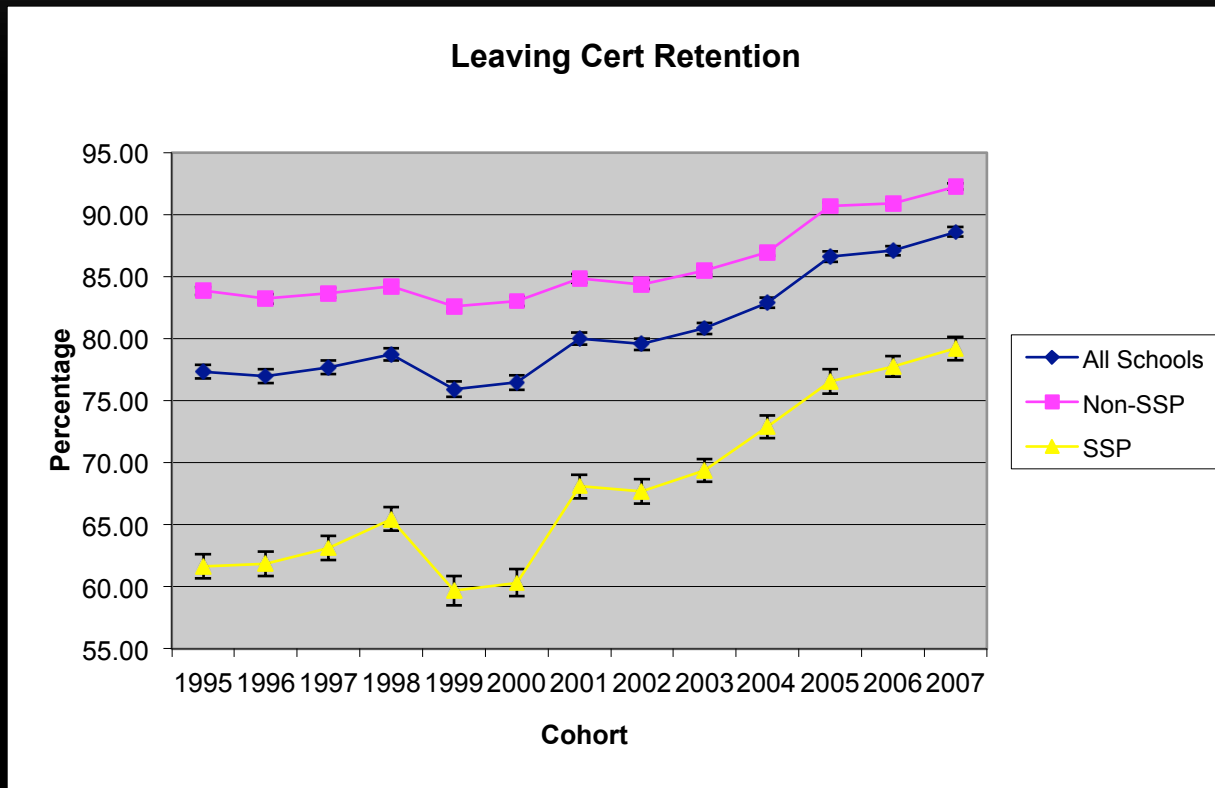
# AVERAGE PERCENTAGE RETENTION TO JC



# AVERAGE PERCENTAGE RETENTION TO JC



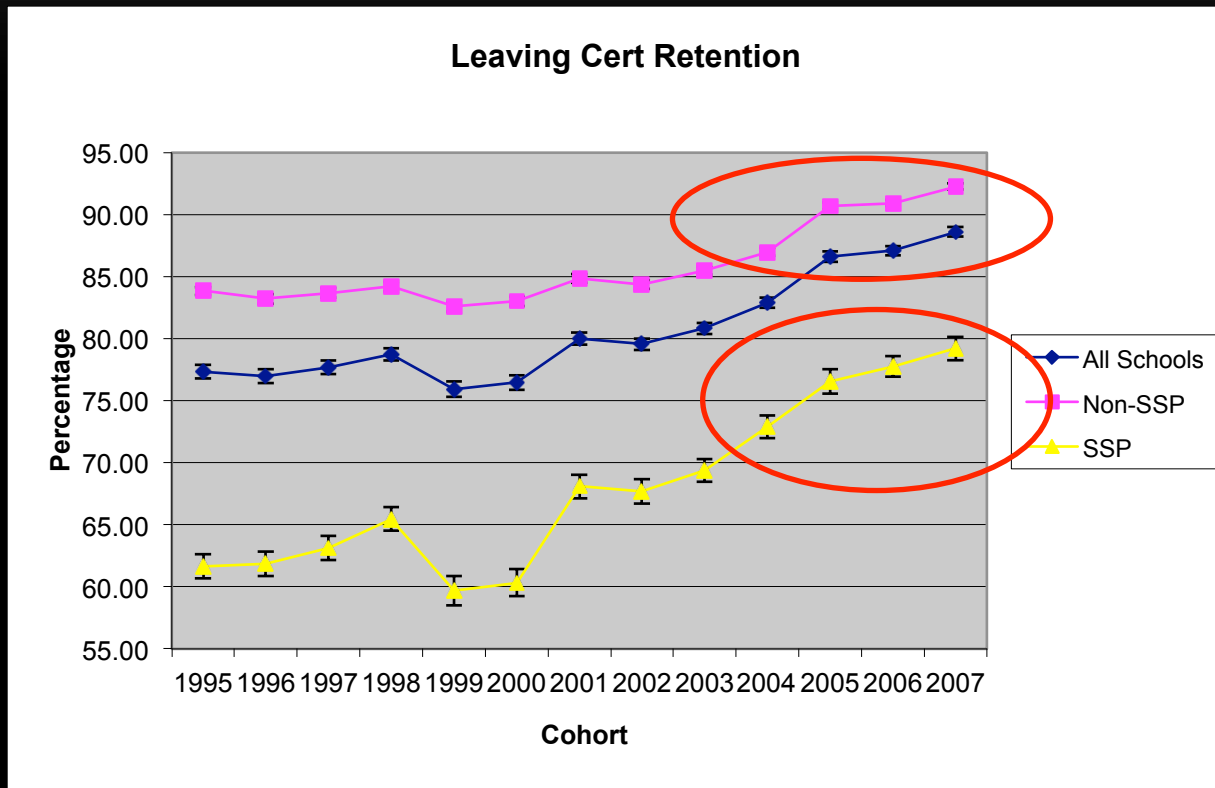
# AVERAGE PERCENTAGE RETENTION TO LC



Cohort refers to Year of Entry



# AVERAGE PERCENTAGE RETENTION TO LC



Cohort refers to Year of Entry

# SUMMARY

Evidence of a significant trend over time?

- Yes
- SSP & Non-SSP on all variables
  - Exception of JC Retention for Non-SSP

Evidence of differing trends for SSP & Non-SSP schools?

- Yes
- SSP schools trends of greater magnitude
  - Junior Certificate OPS
  - Retention to JC & LC

## SUMMARY CONTD.

Evidence that the introduction of DEIS in 2006 / 2007 had an impact on trends over time (i.e., were these years associated with change in trend)?

- Yes, in JC achievement (OPS & English scores)
- Difficult to interpret in relation to retention to JC & LC

# OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

- High levels of implementation have been achieved
- Great variation in the scale of challenge faced by participating schools
- Improved outcomes in terms of achievement and attainment have been observed although they remain well below 'national norms'
- Not possible to attribute, with confidence, improvement to DEIS and certainly not to particular aspects of DEIS
- Differences between DEIS and its predecessors need to be carefully considered
- Differences between schools in terms of outcomes and levels of implementation will be examined
- Return on investment in DEIS likely to improve
- Monitoring progress in DEIS should continue, preferably as part of formal evaluation.