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Alternatives to Using the Bottom Quintile for At-Risk Identification

At-Risk Work Group

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Overview

- Overview of how the quintile is used to identify students
- Alternatives to the quintile
- Discussion

The Quintile Currently

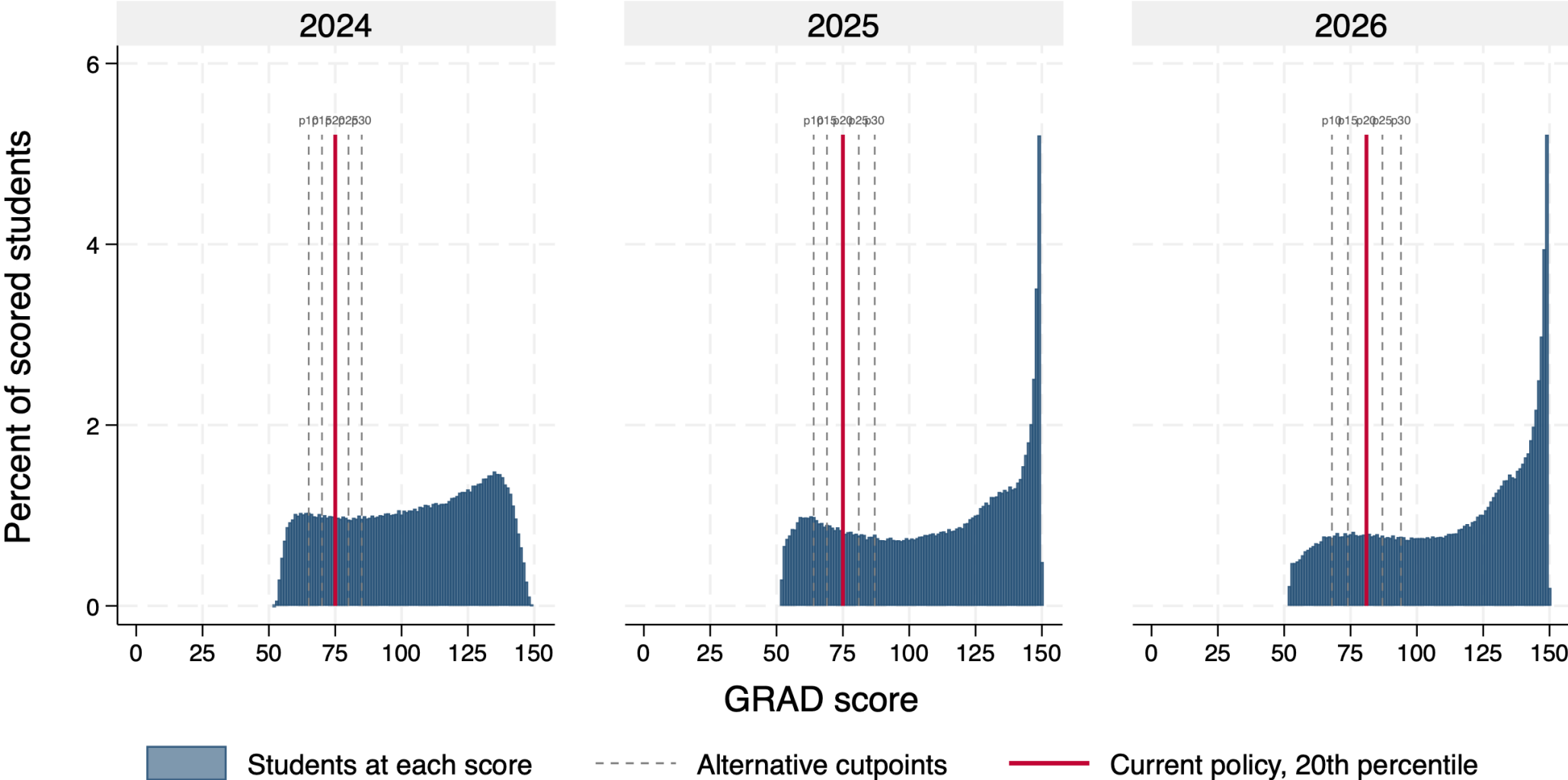
- Currently, students in the bottom quintile of GRAD scores are identified as at risk.
- As enrollment declines or as the number of dually identified students increases (e.g., the number of students with IEPs), the number of at-risk students identified as part of the quintile decreases.
- The Commission recommended removing the quintile from the state's approach to identifying which students are at risk.



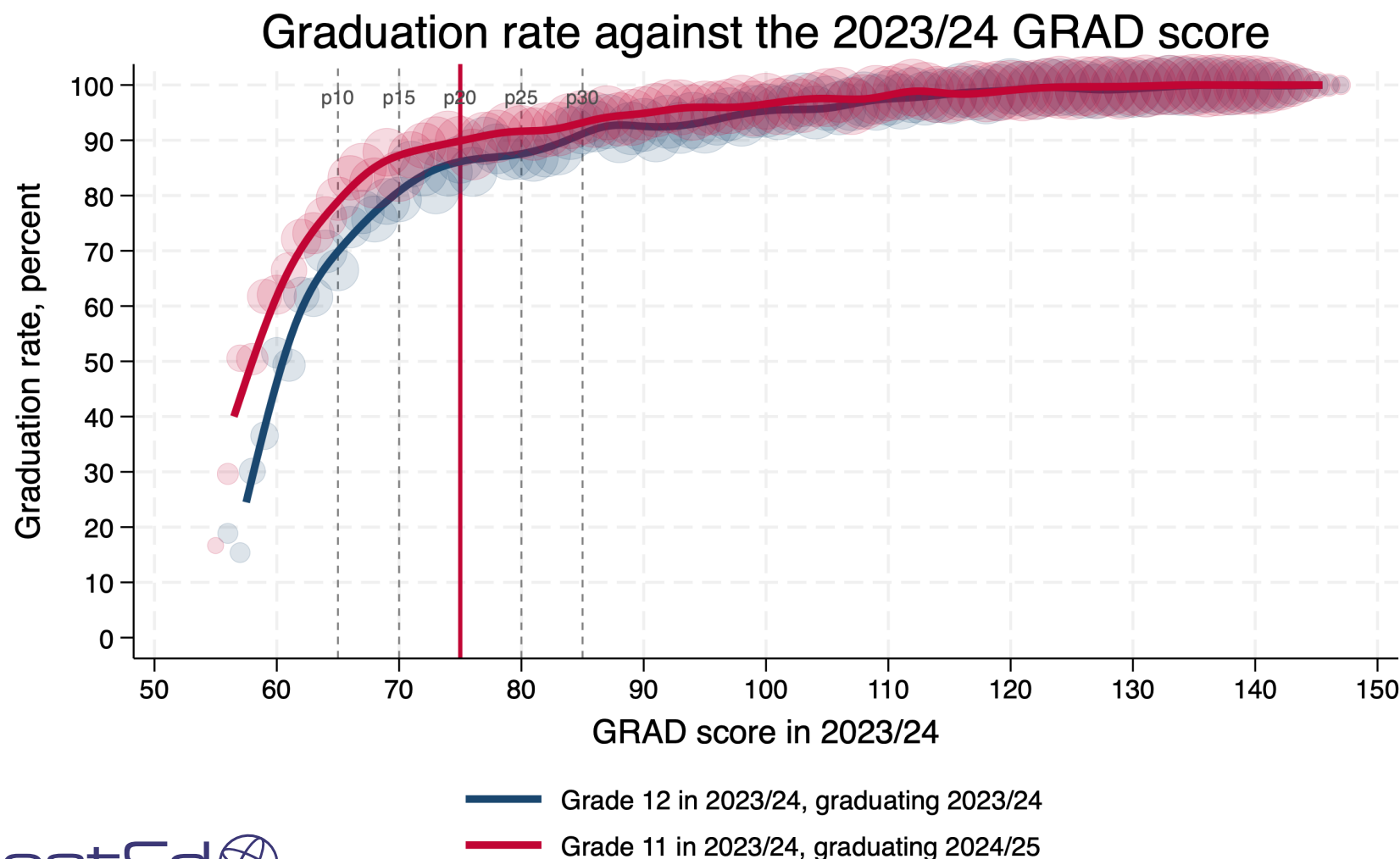
Alternatives to the Quintile for Identifying At Risk

- Identify by a score threshold.
 - For example, an outcome-calibrated threshold would determine eligibility based on where historical probability of on-time graduation falls below a specified GRAD score.
- Identify based on a set number of funded students each year.

The Quintile and Other Hypothetical Cut Points Are Relatively Stable Over Time, Although GRAD Score Distributions Have Been Skewed in Recent Years

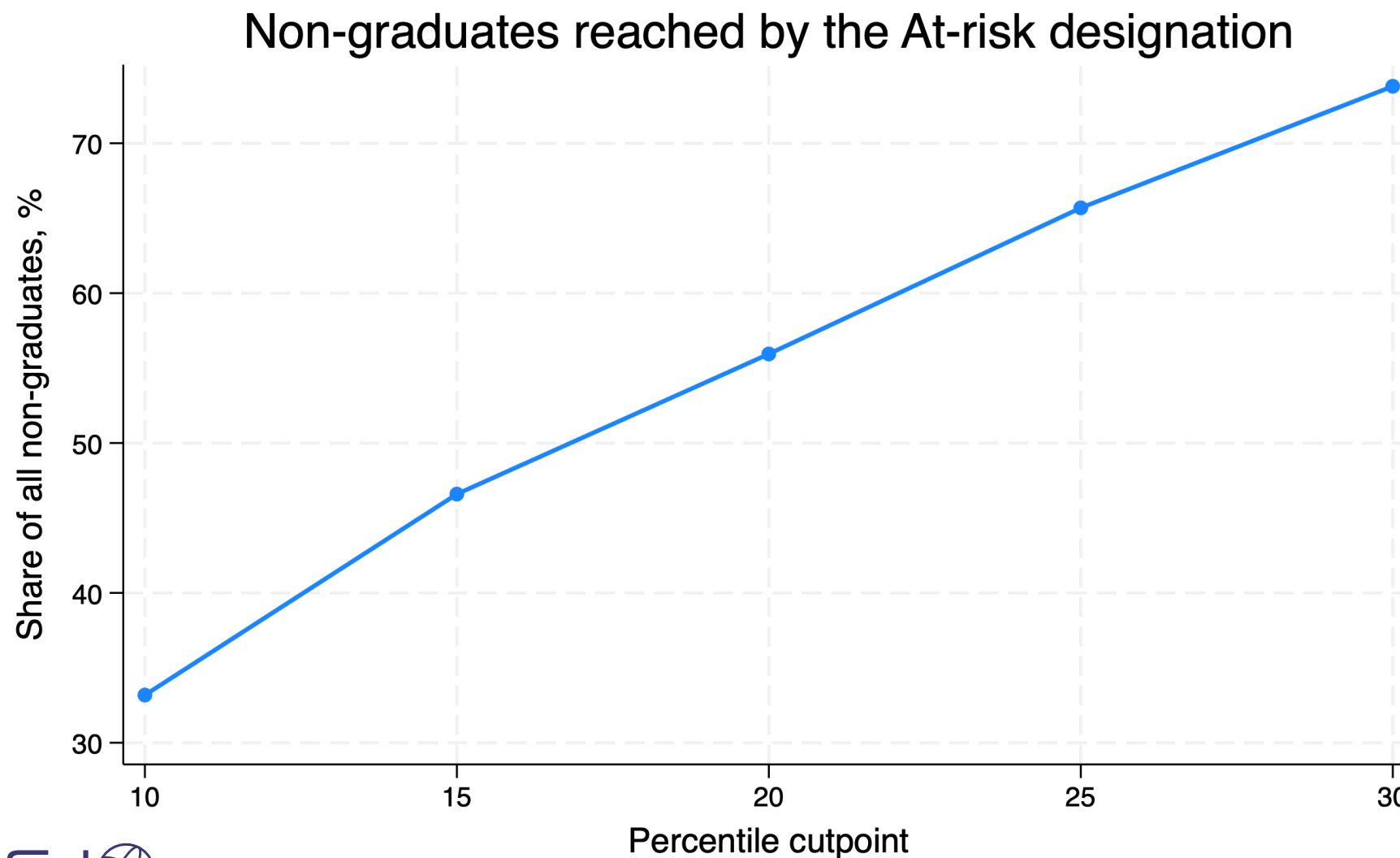


GRAD Scores Strongly Predict Actual Graduation Rates Among 11th- and 12th-Grade Students

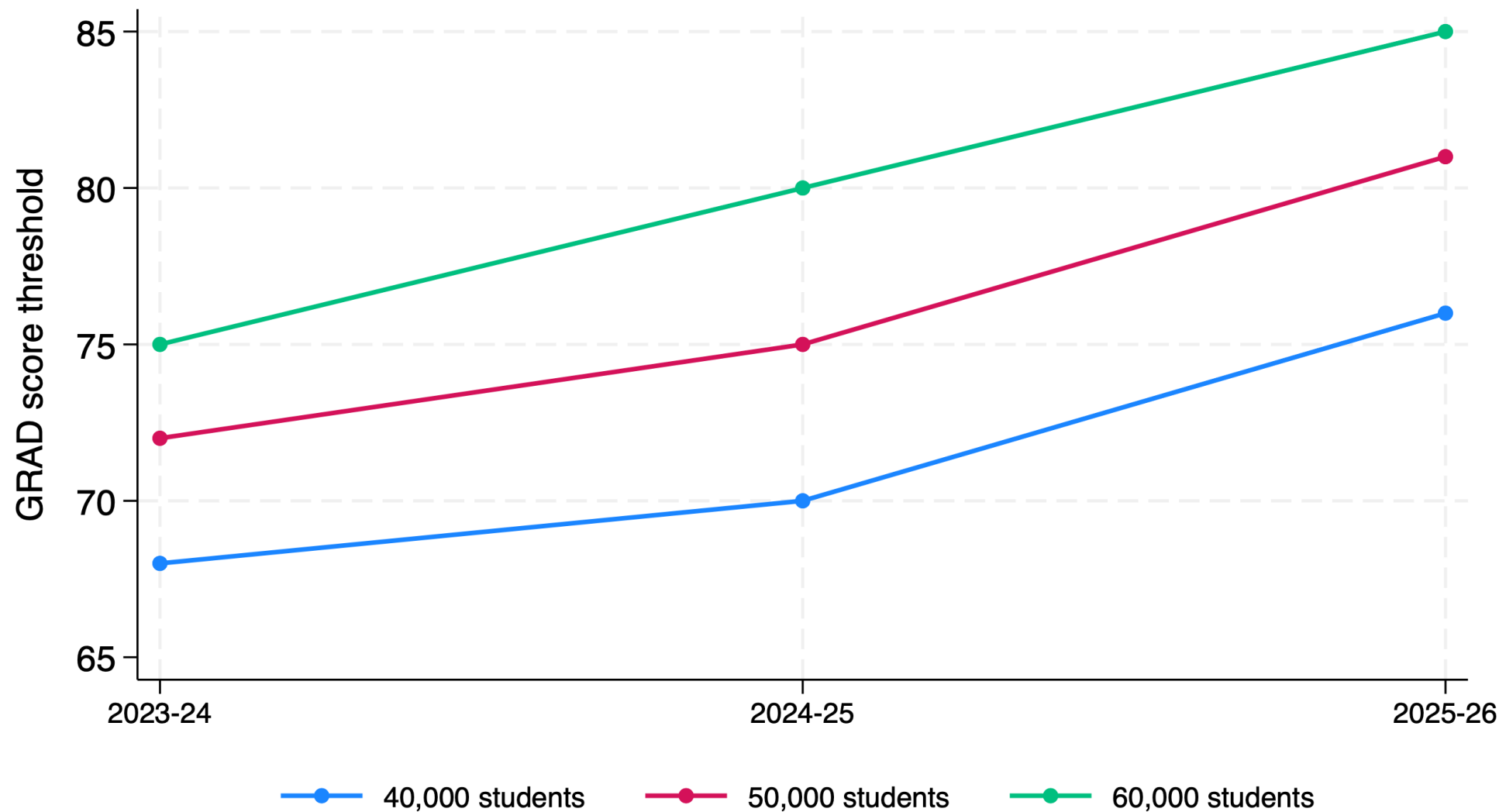


- Most significant declines in graduation likelihood are at the far-left end of GRAD scores distribution

Using the Bottom-Quintile Method, More Than 55% of Non-Graduating Students in 2024/25 Were Deemed At Risk



Maintaining a Fixed Number of Funded At-Risk Students Would Require Adjusting the At-Risk Threshold Each Year



Wrap Up

- The distribution of GRAD scores has increased since 2023/24; the GRAD scores corresponding to the bottom quintile have increased accordingly.
- GRAD scores are highly predictive of actual graduation rates for 11th and 12th grade students. At the far-left end of the GRAD scores distribution, graduation rates fall steeply.
 - Newness of GRAD scores limit analyses to recent grads and non-grads.
- Identifying new cutoffs based on a fixed number of students would mean the at-risk threshold would change each year.
 - If enrollment declines, then holding the *number* of at-risk students fixed will increase the *share* of students deemed at risk.



Potential Considerations

- Continue to fund students at the lowest end of the distribution of GRAD scores.
- Rather than using a percentage cut point (e.g., the bottom quintile), determine a fixed number of students with the lowest GRAD scores to be funded each year. Use this number as the floor for identification of funding. Revisit the number of students every biennium to account for any increases in enrollment.
 - Accounts for enrollment declines which could decrease the number of students identified as At-risk.
 - Accounts for increases in the number of students who are dually identified (e.g., for Special Education) within the lowest quintile (or any other cut point).
- Consider more clearly articulating the outcomes expected from the additional investment directed to support At-risk students (e.g., graduation rates, chronic absenteeism, ELA and math growth and proficiency).

Discussion

