

Evaluation Brief

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Trends in Achievement of Subgroups, 1994 to 1999:

Percent of Students At/Above Achievement Level III in Grades 3-8

Trends of various subgroups of students on End-of-Grade (EOG) Tests were analyzed since 1993 and 1994. In 1993 the only subgroups for which data were disaggregated were White, Black, American Indian, and Limited English Proficient (LEP). In 1994 Asian and Hispanic students were also included, allowing disaggregation of EOG test data by these subgroups as well. Thus, 1994 provides a common beginning point for tracking all five major ethnic subgroups of students, as well as LEP and Migrant students.

For purposes of this summary, the term “proficient” will be used to mean scores at Achievement Levels III and IV.

Statewide Trends

When the entire student population is considered, percent proficient has increased in *each successive year*. Percent of all students proficient across grades 3-8, as well as the amount of gain since 1994 are provided in the table below.

**Table 1. Percent Proficient in 1999
and Amount of Gain from 1994 to 1999**

Subject Areas	Percent Proficient	Amount of Gain from 1994-1999
Reading and Mathematics	69.1	13.6
Reading only	74.9	9.6
Mathematics only	79.3	15.3

Ethnic Group Trends

While all ethnic groups have gained since 1993 and 1994, performance varies widely across groups; and several groups have not made increases every year. The 1994 data is the starting point used here. *The greatest gains have been made by ethnic groups in the following order (from highest to lowest gains): American Indians, Black, White, Hispanic, Asian.*

Since 1994 the *pattern of gains* relative to the statewide average is the same in each subject area:

- White students gain *approximately the same or slightly less* than the statewide gain.
- Hispanic and Asian student gains *are below the state average gain*.
- Black and American Indian student gains *exceed the state average gain*.

Table 2 below shows actual gains for these ethnic groups from 1994 to 1999 for reading and/or mathematics.

Table 2. Gains in Percent Proficient by Ethnic Group: 1994-99

Ethnic Group (in order of amount of gain)	Amount of Gain by EOG Subject Areas		
	Reading and Math	Reading	Mathematics
American Indian Students	22.3	17.1	28.0
Black Students	16.5	12.3	21.3
All Students	13.6	9.6	15.3
White Students	13.0	9.0	13.0
Hispanic Students	8.2	4.3	12.5
Asian Students	5.7	3.2	7.4

Note. Multiracial students constitute a small percentage of the student population and are not included in this table.

Other Subgroup Trends

Other subgroups of interest are Limited English Proficient, Title I, and Migrant students. Table 3 summarizes the **1999** proficiency level for these subgroups. Because the way in which Title I schools are identified changed in 1995-96, trends for these students are not comparable to the other subgroups before 1996. Also, there appeared to be numerous errors in understanding and correctly identifying Title I students on the EOG header sheets until 1998 and 1999. Therefore, no trends are discussed for Title I. Similarly, LEP student performance has varied considerably across years, only showing consistent gains since 1997. The makeup of the LEP group is problematic; thus, trends also are not shown for LEP students.

Table 3. 1999 Proficiency Level for Selected Subgroups

Subgroups	Reading and Math	Reading	Math
	Proficiency 1999	Proficiency 1999	Proficiency 1999
Limited English Proficient	33.3	38.7	58.1
All Title I served	59.0	66.2	72.6
Title I, Free Reduced Lunch	49.5	57.7	65.6
Migrant	47.1	53.3	64.3
All Students	69.1	74.9	79.3

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Trends (Table 3)

LEP students can be exempt from taking the state EOG tests for two years if they are deemed to not have adequate language skills. Therefore, students included here were either determined to have appropriate language skills or had been exempted for two years previously and were no longer eligible for exemption from testing.

These students are the lowest performing subgroup of students that can be tracked over time (not shown on charts). Their performance is consistently low, not rising with each subsequent year as for ethnic subgroups. Percent proficient has varied across the years since 1992-93 from 24% to 33% in reading and mathematics combined. As is true for all students, proficiency is higher in mathematics (58%) than reading (39%). The lower performance and the lack of gains is probably not surprising, since students should move out of LEP status once they are deemed to have a “superior” language proficiency. Also, large increases in the number of LEP students have occurred each year.

Based on EOG test data for 1999, these tested LEP students are primarily Hispanic (68%) and Asian (25%), with considerably fewer being white (7%) or black (3%). The “parent education level” as indicated on the EOG tests is lower overall than for students in general across the state. Parents of 89 percent of these students have a high school degree or less (55 percent have *not* graduated from high school). Sixteen percent of LEP students are also designated as Migrant.

Title I, Free/Reduced Price (FRL) Lunch Student Proficiency (Table 3)

Title I trends that show dramatic gains since 1994 (not shown on charts) are misleading, due to a change in how Title I schools were identified in 1995-96 and to inaccurate marking of EOG test header sheets. Also, Title I “served” students include many students who are not poor and are served only because they are in a School-Wide Program School (SWP). However, consistent gains since 1996, when the new definition took place, do indicate improved Title I results.

The most comparable and interesting results are for Title I students who are *also* identified as eligible for free and reduced price lunch. These results are available only for 1999 (a single point on charts), as this is the first year for which FRL status was available *by student*. About 50 percent of Title I FRL students are proficient in reading and math combined, twenty percent below all students. Somewhat smaller gaps between Title I FRL students and all students are found for reading and mathematics (see Table 3).

When Title I results are considered for Targeted Assistance Program Schools (TAP) and SWP schools, TAP students score lower (37% compared to 57% respectively on reading and math). However, some individual students who are not poor likely are served and included in both these numbers. Therefore, it is important to look at *students who were also identified as FRL eligible*. The proficiency level of such TAP students is especially low – 26% in both reading and mathematics, 38% in reading, and 47% in mathematics. Informal conversation with local Title I directors indicate that many TAP schools use FRL status in obtaining Title I funding, but focus their assistance and remediation on Level I and II students. This focus would not address FRL-eligible students who fell from Level III or IV back to Levels I or II.

Because of the disparity of the performance of FRL-eligible students in SWP and TAP, further study of the types of programs and interventions offered in both schools would be important. These results *may* support other studies that suggest better results are achieved when *whole-school reform* is the focus rather than pull-out intervention programs only. However, further work is needed to examine this hypothesis.

Migrant Student (Table 3)

Migrant student percent at/above grade level has increased steadily since 1994 (not shown on charts), exceeding gains for all students statewide. However, their proficiency is still well below the state average, as well as most other subgroups except LEP and Title I students in targeted assistance program schools. This group is likely the most transient subgroup analyzed, other than LEP students. While the data trends for any group are not based on matched students, the overall student population has most of the same students from one year to the next. By the vary nature of Migrant students, different students are likely to be included in the migrant population each year.

Summary

- Overall, student proficiency (at/above grade level) has increased each year since 1994. This pattern holds for all subgroups except Limited English Proficient, the lowest performing and ever-changing subgroup.
- While Title I subgroups are not comparable back to 1994, these groups have increased consistently since 1996 as have other subgroups.
- American Indian and Black students have had gains in proficiency that exceed the state average. Hispanic and Asian student gains are below the state average. White students approximate the state average.
- There is considerable difference in the 1999 proficiency level of Title I students served in SWPs compared to those served in TAPs, even when looking only at Title I students who are eligible for free/reduced price lunch. Further study of the instructional programs in these Title I approaches is warranted.