

NCLB Making a Difference in New Jersey



- Between 2003 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading and mathematics proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by six percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points

(New Jersey Report Card)
- “New Jersey’s students made gains on all but one of the state’s seven exams last year, with notable improvements in eighth-grade math and fourth-grade language arts. After several years of poor performance, 61.7 percent of eighth-graders passed the math exam last spring, up from 56.7 percent the year before. Students earning advanced scores on the Grade Eight Performance Assessment, or GEPA, math exam jumped to 20 percent, from 15.9 percent in 2003. For high school juniors, the advanced-scoring rate in math also increased, to 24.5 percent from 19.5 percent.... The progress in math was of particular interest to educators who have been working to improve the state’s lackluster scores.” *(Bergen Record, 2/3/05)*
- “For Isaiah Pitts, passing the High School Proficiency Assessment test means one thing: ‘I can graduate,’ said the 17-year-old special needs student at Brick Township Memorial High School. ... Nearly 70 percent of the 76 special education students who took the literacy portion of the 11th-grade test and 64 percent of the 77 students who took the math portion passed, compared with rates of 44 percent and 21 percent last year. ... Working by rotation, two at a time, the district’s special education teachers staff a Help and Homework Center, providing the students with the help they need. ... Superintendent Thomas L. Seidenberger said he believes that when a school achieves success like Brick Memorial’s, it is in the district’s best interest to discuss the school’s approach to determine whether it can be used elsewhere.” *(Asbury Park Press, 6/23/05)*
- “As state officials seek to repeal New Jersey’s controversial alternative high school test, Newark has proposed its own plan that would maintain the exam but add a serious set of conditions on students. Administrators of New Jersey’s largest school system...unveiled a program that would require thousands of students who take the alternative test to go through tutoring, summer school, and other remedial classes – or face the prospect of not receiving a diploma. Parents or guardians would also be required to sign ‘contracts’ committing their children to the plan. ... ‘Even when we were making the tutoring and summer programs available, we had youngsters who do not attend,’ [Superintendent Marion] Bolden said. ‘We needed to take a much more aggressive course.’” *(Newark Star-Ledger, 5/31/05)*