

NCLB Making a Difference in Massachusetts



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by three percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points

(*Education Trust*)
- “Boston is touted in education circles as an example of the incremental progress that accompanies stable leadership and systemic reform. Test scores have gradually improved districtwide, and the gap between city and state scores has narrowed. In 2001, 40 percent of Boston’s 10th-graders failed the English language arts portion of the state’s standardized test; by 2004 that figure had dropped to 25 percent. In math, the drop was from 47 percent to 27 percent.” (*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 1/19/05)
- “A federal reading program has helped third-graders at Brayton and Sullivan elementary schools make headway on this month’s MCAS test results. ... ‘We did exceptionally well this year,’ added Superintendent James E. Montepare. ‘Sullivan soared past the state’s reading averages [and] Brayton improved.... It shows that our reading initiatives are finally taking hold, and we’re looking to continue with this great progress.’ ... At Sullivan, 69 percent of the students achieved proficiency, up from 55 percent last year and 46 percent in 2003. Also, 4 percent fell in the warning category this year, compared to 11 percent in 2003. At Brayton, 57 percent of students attained proficiency, up from 47 percent last year and 46 percent in 2003. Also, seven percent fell in the warning level, compared to 11 percent in 2003. For two years, the five-year Reading First program has provided Brayton and Sullivan schools with \$400,000 for reading materials, laptops, computer software, reading consultants and teacher coaching by professors from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst’s school of education’s psychology program.” (*Berkshire Eagle*, 6/23/05)
- “Four South Shore towns are among the state’s 29 ‘outperforming school districts’ in an unofficial ranking announced recently by Standard & Poor’s School Evaluation Services. Hingham, Norwell, Scituate, and Sharon got the distinction because higher percentages of their students scored proficient or better on MCAS reading and math tests than other towns with similar levels of student poverty. (This is Standard & Poor’s first ranking of outperforming districts. The analysis was conducted over the previous two years.) ... In Norwell, Superintendent Donald Beaudette said the town’s students score high on the MCAS tests because the town has good schools and supportive families. ‘We have consistently been performing at a high level,’ Beaudette said. ‘This is no big surprise to us. We’ve done a good job in selecting top-flight teachers and having them share a strong commitment’ to education. To maintain its performance, Norwell’s district often compares itself to the test scores in other towns with similar socioeconomic profiles, Beaudette said.” (*Quincy Patriot Ledger*, 7/6/05)