

# NCLB Making a Difference in Vermont



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
  - Fourth-grade mathematical concepts proficiency increased by eight percentage points
  - Fourth-grade mathematical problem-solving proficiency increased by 18 percentage points  
(*Vermont Report Card*)
- “Students who are native speakers of languages other than English in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont will soon begin taking a new standardized test designed to prove their understanding of English is improving. ... The test was designed by a 10-state consortium and has oral and written components. ... Michael Hock, testing director for the Vermont Department of Education, said the testing will help improve the services provided those very students. ‘We haven’t had much good data in the past to be able to determine whether those students are making progress,’ Hock said. ‘We’re hoping that this will provide information on individual students.’” (*Associated Press*, 1/19/05)
- “Catamount Elementary School and the Concord School are making progress toward getting off the state watch list for underperforming schools. The Bennington elementary school and the K-12 school in Concord were two of the 39 schools reported to have not made adequate yearly progress, according to the state. On Thursday, after the schools had submitted updated information, the schools learned they had met the standards for yearly progress. The updated data showed Concord’s graduation rate exceeded the required 75 percent. Test results at Catamount showed the school had met the standard in English/language arts for low-income students. Bennington Supervisory Union Superintendent Wes Knapp said he was ‘thrilled’ because the school had the highest rate of free and reduced lunch students in the district. The teachers have been really committed ‘to bringing these students up to speed,’ he said.” (*Associated Press*, 12/17/04)
- “As principal Joyce Stone tells it, Colchester High School hit rock bottom seven years ago. Test scores were sinking. Six students were expelled. Fights and bomb threats put everyone on edge. ‘We ended the year with metal detectors and a lockdown,’ said Stone, who was then assistant principal. ‘It was a very, very low point for this school.’ Since then the suburban school on Laker Lane has embarked on a makeover – dropping its ninth and 10th grade honors program in favor of teaching to students’ different academic abilities within the same class – that might provide lessons for other school districts in an era when both national and state leaders are pressuring high schools to better educate students.... Between 1998 and 2004, reading proficiency scores on state-mandated standardized tests nearly doubled. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard in solving math problems increased from 16 to 48 percent. The dropout rate has fallen from six to less than one percent and expulsions are rare.... Also, as Colchester de-emphasized ‘tracking,’ it opened the door wider to Advanced Placement [AP] classes. Enrollment increased in these courses significantly, and hit 212 students this year. ‘We have several kids in AP classes who would have been in the lower track, without a doubt,’ [English teacher Bill] Rich said.” (*Burlington Free Press*, 3/22/05)