

NCLB Making a Difference in Illinois



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by nine percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by seven percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by 10 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by 16 percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by six percentage points

(*Illinois Report Card*)
- “An intensive push to improve reading skills in Chicago’s lowest-performing schools appeared to pay off this year, with nearly two-thirds of these schools seeing gains on reading scores and fewer kids than ever before scoring among the worst. An analysis of Chicago Public Schools’ performance on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills...showed continued incremental improvements in reading. ... Overall, nearly 44 percent of Chicago pupils are meeting national norms for reading, the highest number ever.... One of the most promising trends to emerge from the data was the steady decline in the number of pupils scoring in the bottom quarter of the nationwide reading tests. At the lowest point in 1992, nearly 48 percent of Chicago pupils scored in the bottom quartile. That number has steadily declined in the past decade, and now 24 percent of Chicago pupils are at the bottom in reading. That moves Chicago slightly ahead of the national average in keeping pupils out of the lowest tier. School officials celebrated the gains as proof that new initiatives, such as Saturday school, reading specialists and summer school for incoming 3rd graders, are working. ...” (*Chicago Tribune*, 6/10/05)
- “Free after-school tutoring mandated by federal law appears to have helped faltering Chicago Public School kids begin to catch up in reading.... Test scores show the 61,000 tutored kids made more gains in reading this year with tutoring than they did last year without it. Their gains also outpaced kids who were eligible but weren’t tutored. Before tutoring started under the No Child Left Behind law, these kids only gained on average .8, or 80 percent of a year of reading achievement. But between 2004 and 2005, they gained on average 1.09, or a little more than a year’s worth of achievement. ‘Tutoring made a significant difference in kids’ lives who had struggled,’ Schools CEO Arne Duncan said of the \$50 million program. ‘Of course you can’t attribute it all to tutoring, but it was part of the success story.’” (*Chicago Sun-Times*, 8/11/05)
- “Pleasant Hill Elementary School should be struggling. More than 80 percent of its students come from low-income, often-transient families. One out of every five Pleasant Hill students will attend at least one other school this year. Such statistics usually translate into difficult learning environments. But Pleasant Hill is beating the odds, according to the Illinois State Board of Education. It recently designated Pleasant Hill...a ‘Spotlight School.’ The distinction was awarded to schools in which at least half the students are poor, but no fewer than 60 percent met state academic standards during the 2003-04 school year.” (*Springfield State Journal-Register*, 3/4/05)