

# NCLB Making a Difference in Georgia



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest available data):
  - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by eight percentage points
  - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by nine percentage points
  - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points
  - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by six percentage points
  - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by eight percentage points
  - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by eight percentage points

(*Georgia Report Card*)
- “Georgia’s black and Hispanic students appear to be closing the achievement gap with their white peers, according to test score data released...by the state Department of Education. The gap is the smallest—and shrinking fast—in the early grades. ... Black students made the most progress in fifth-grade math, reducing the gap in half over the last three years. In 2002, 64 percent of black fifth-graders passed the state math test, compared with 86 percent of white students, a 22-percentage point gap. In 2005, 80 percent of black students passed the test, compared with 92 percent of whites, a 12-point gap. Hispanic students showed the biggest gains in third-grade reading, shaving the gap by almost half since 2002. In 2002, 71 percent of Hispanic third-grade students passed the state reading test, compared with 90 percent of white students, a 19-percentage point gap. In 2005, 86 percent of Hispanic students passed the test, compared with 96 percent of white students, a 10-point gap.... [No Child Left Behind] has forced schools to focus on their minority students like never before, [State Schools Superintendent Kathy] Cox said.” (*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 6/13/05)
- “State Schools Superintendent Kathy Cox singled out Gainesville’s Fair Street Elementary School...as she hailed the state’s performance on this past spring’s basic skills tests. ‘Their achievement, their progress is almost off the charts,’ Cox said while giving her annual report on the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests results to the state Board of Education. Despite high poverty and children learning English as a second language, the school is making big gains on the test that plays heavily into whether third-graders and fifth-graders are promoted. According to data provided by Gainesville City Schools, the percentage of third-graders passing the CRCT’s reading portion rose to 94 percent from 76 percent in 2003-04. The percentage of fifth-graders passing the CRCT’s reading portion rose to 91 percent from 75 percent in 2003-04; math, 88 percent from 78 percent.” (*Gainesville Times*, 6/9/05)
- “It’s not yet surfaced on the radar screen, but this school year ends with some wonderfully revolutionary prospects for public education. ... The die was cast by the federal No Child Left Behind law, with its emphasis on standards, accountability and parental empowerment. ... The state is far advanced toward establishing and testing a common curriculum, with performance standards for promotion. ... The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, in reviewing math and English/language arts standards, ranks it in the top 10 nationally. The state school board last month adopted the new math standards, which will be phased in over several years, and will require all students to know the content of a rigorous algebra course, for example, that’s now taken by only about 20 percent of graduates.” (Editorial, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 6/5/05)