Section 2 Learner Outcomes



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This List of Indicators includes all the indicators in Section 2 that appear on The Condition of Education web site (http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe), drawn from the 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003 print volumes. The list is organized by subject area. The indicator numbers and the years in which the indicators were published are not necessarily sequential.

Introduction: Learner Outcomes

The indicators in this section present findings on student achievement and outcomes and the progress that is being made in improving student performance and closing achievement gaps.

Student achievement is measured as the progress made by children after they enter the educational system. Children enter school with varying levels of knowledge and skill. Measures of these early childhood competencies represent important indicators of future prospects both inside and outside of the classroom. As students proceed through school, it is essential to measure their progress to ensure they are acquiring the necessary skills and understanding challenging subject matter. Academic outcomes are measured as the change in performance over time, as the percentage of students achieving predetermined standards of competence, and through international comparisons of national averages. Together, these measures help create a composite picture of academic achievement.

In addition to academic achievement, there are culturally and socially desirable outcomes of education. One measure of these outcomes is an educated, capable, healthy, and engaged citizenry, which can be gauged by civic knowledge, community volunteerism, and voting participation, among other things—all of which are necessary to ensure a well-rounded and complete education.

Adult education and economic outcomes also figure prominently among indicators of education outcomes. Adult education refers to the lifelong learning capacities of adults and the educational opportunities provided to them to continue meeting the changing needs of society. Economic outcomes refer to the wages employers are prepared to pay individuals with varying levels of skill and competence.

In addition to the indicators on learner outcomes presented in the following pages, indicators from previous editions of *The Condition* of Education are available at http:// nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/list/i2.asp, including indicators on the reading performance of students, an international comparison of student performance in mathematics, trends in the achievement gap in reading between White and Black students, and the relationship between educational attainment and health. A full list of the indicators in this section available online can be found on the previous page.

Early Childhood Outcomes

Students' Reading and Mathematics Achievement Through 1st Grade

Differences in children's reading and mathematics skills when they enter kindergarten persist or increase across the kindergarten and 1st-grade years.

The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study is collecting information on a cohort of children who began kindergarten in the fall of 1998. These children will be followed through the 5th grade. One purpose of the study is to assess the gains in the children's knowledge and skills in reading and mathematics from the beginning of kindergarten through 5th grade.

From the beginning of kindergarten to the end of 1st grade, children demonstrated significant gains in reading and mathematics knowledge and skills. During kindergarten, the average reading scale scores increased by 10 points, or about one standard deviation. From fall to spring of 1st grade, when many children learn to read, children's average reading scale scores increased by 19 points, or about two standard deviations. In mathematics, children's average scale scores increased by 8 and 10 points in kindergarten and 1st grade, respectively, or about one standard deviation in each grade (see supplemental table 9-1).

When the children entered kindergarten, their reading and mathematics skills differed by their mother's education. The average scores of children whose mothers had a bachelor's degree or more were 9 points higher in reading and 8 points higher in mathematics as they entered kindergarten than children whose mothers had not completed high school.

Whether the gaps in reading and mathematics performance change over the course of schooling is an important measure of the contribution of schooling to educational equity. Among children who entered kindergarten in 1998, the differences in children's average reading and mathematics performance persisted or increased through the first 2 years of school. No differences were detected in children's reading gains in kindergarten by the level of their mother's education, while 1st-graders whose mothers had completed high school demonstrated greater gains than children whose mothers had less education. In mathematics, no differences were detected in the gains in each year.

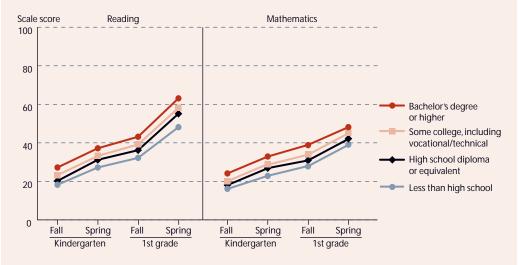
In reading, no differences were detected between the scores in the spring of kindergartners whose mothers had less than a high school education and the entry scores in the previous fall of kindergartners whose mothers had a bachelor's degree or higher. The same pattern was evident in mathematics for both kindergartners and 1st-graders.

NOTE: A standard deviation provides information about the distribution of students' scale scores. In a normal distribution, 68 percent of scores fall within plus or minus one standard deviation of the mean, and 95 percent fall within plus or minus two standard deviations of the mean. The reading scale score ranged from 0—72, and the mathematics score from 0—64. Estimates based on children assessed in English in fall and spring of kindergarten and 1st grade (excludes approximately 19 percent of Asian and 31 percent of Hispanic children). Estimates based on children who entered kindergarten for the first time in fall 1998 and were promoted to 1st grade in fall 1999.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99 (ECLS-K), Longitudinal Kindergarten-First Grade Data files, fall 1998 through spring 2000, previously unpublished tabulation (March 2001).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Note 3
Supplemental Table 9-1
NCES 2000–062, Indicators 11, 12,
NCES 2000–070, NCES 2001–023

$EARLY\,READING\,AND\,MATHEMATICS\,PERFORMANCE: Children's\,overall\,reading\,and\,mathematics\,performance\,from\,kindergarten\,through\,1st\,grade,\,by\,mother's\,education:\,1998-2000$



International Comparisons of Reading Literacy in Grade 4

U.S. 4th-graders performed above the international average of 35 countries in reading literacy in 2001. Three countries had a higher average combined reading literacy scale score than the United States and 23 countries had lower average scores.

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) assessed the reading literacy of 4thgraders in 35 countries in 2001. The average U.S. 4th-grade combined reading literacy scale score of 542 was above the international average of the 35 countries. England, the Netherlands, and Sweden had a higher combined reading literacy scale score, and 23 countries had a lower average score than the U.S. average. There were no detectable differences between the U.S. average scale score and the average score in 8 countries.

For the PIRLS assessment, combined reading literacy was divided into two subscales: reading for literary purposes and for informational purposes. U.S. 4th-graders had a higher average scale score on reading for literary purposes than on reading for informational purposes. They had a higher average scale score than the international average on both subscales. On reading for literary purposes, Sweden had a higher average scale score, and 26 countries had a lower average score than the U.S. average. No difference was found between the average score of 7 countries and the U.S. average. On reading for informational purposes, Bulgaria, England, Latvia, the Netherlands, and Sweden had a higher average scale score than the United States. No difference was found between the average scale score of 12 countries and the U.S. average, and 17 countries had a lower average score than that of U.S. 4th-graders (see supplemental table 10-1).

In all 35 countries, females outperformed males on the combined reading literacy scale, with a gap ranging from 27 points in Belize, Iran, and New Zealand to 8 points in Italy. Among U.S. 4th-graders, females had an average score of 551, while males had an average score of 533, a gap of 18 points.

Nineteen percent of U.S. students reached the top 10 percent benchmark of the combined reading literacy scale, meaning that almost one-fifth of U.S. respondents scored in the top 10 percent internationally. Forty-one percent of U.S. 4th-graders reached the upper quarter benchmark, and 68 percent reached the median benchmark, meaning that almost 70 percent of U.S. 4th-graders scored above the international average. Eightynine percent of U.S. students who were assessed reached the lower quarter benchmark (see supplemental table 10-2).

¹Country did not meet the international sampling and/or other guidelines. For more information, see supplemental note 5.

²Canada is represented by the provinces of Ontario and Quebec only.

³Hong Kong SAR is a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China.

NOTE: The target population was the upper of the two adjacent grades with the most 9-year-olds. In most countries, this was 4th grade. The international average (500) is the weighted average of the national averages of the 35 countries, with a standard deviation of 100.

SOURCE: Mullis, I.V.S., Martin, M.O., Gonzalez, E.J., and Kennedy, A.M. (2003). PIRLS 2001 International Report: IEA's Study of Reading Literacy Achievement in Primary Schools in 35 Countries exhibit 1.1 Data from the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, 2001.



FOR MORE INFORMATION: Supplemental Note 5 Supplemental Tables 10-1, 10-2 NCES 2003-073

INTERNATIONAL READING PERFORMANCE: Average combined reading literacy scale score of 4th-graders, by country: 2001

Average score relative to the United States	Country and score							
Significantly higher	Sweden	561	Netherlands ¹	554	England ¹	553		
Not significantly different	Bulgaria Latvia Canada ²	550 545 544	Hungary Lithuania ¹ United States	543 543 542	Italy Germany Czech Republic	541 539 537		
Significantly lower	New Zealand Hong Kong SAR ³ Russian Federation ¹ Scotland ¹ Singapore France Greece ¹ Slovak Republic	529 528 528 528 528 528 525 524 518	Iceland Romania Israel ¹ Slovenia International average Norway Cyprus Moldova, Republic of	499 494	Turkey Macedonia, Republicof Colombia Argentina Iran, Islamic Republicof Kuwait Morocco¹ Belize	449 442 422 420 414 396 350 327		

Mathematics Performance of Students in Grades 4, 8, and 12

The mathematics performance of 4th- and 8th-graders increased steadily from 1990 to 2000, while the performance of 12th-graders increased from 1990 to 1996 but then declined between 1996 and 2000.

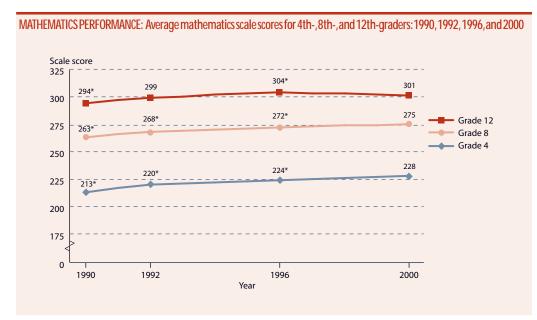
The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has assessed performance in mathematics in grades 4, 8, and 12 since 1990. Students in grades 4 and 8 showed steady growth in mathematics achievement from 1990 to 2000. In contrast, 12th-graders in 2000 scored higher than in 1990 but lower than in 1996. Achievement levels, which identify what students should know and be able to do at each grade, provide another measure of student performance. In 2000, 26 percent of 4th-graders, 27 percent of 8th-graders, and 17 percent of 12th-graders performed at or above the *Profi*cient levels for their respective grades (see supplemental table 11-1).

Certain subgroups of students outperformed other groups in 2000. Males, on average, scored higher than females in grades 8 and 12; however, in grade 4, there was no difference detected between the average scores of boys and girls. Whites at all three grade levels and Asians/Pacific Islanders in grades 8 and 12 scored higher, on average, than their Black, Hispanic, and American Indian counterparts. Asians/Pacific Islanders scored higher than Whites at grade 12. The level of poverty in

the school was associated with student achievement. In all three grades, average scale scores decreased as the percentage of students in the school eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch increased (see supplemental table 11-2).

Assessment results were associated with the opportunity to study challenging material and the degree to which students took advantage of these opportunities. Among 8th-grade students in 2000, those taking 8th-grade mathematics or prealgebra scored lower than those taking algebra I or II, geometry, or sequential or integrated mathematics. Twelfth-graders who had taken the most advanced mathematics courses scored higher than students who had taken low- or middle-level courses.

NAEP also provided a state comparison of public schools in grades 4 and 8. Of the 36 jurisdictions that participated in the assessment in 4th grade in 1992 and 2000, 26 had a higher average score and 1 had a lower score in 2000 than in 1992. Thirty-one jurisdictions participated in grade 8 in 1990 and 2000; 27 had a higher average score, and none had a lower score in 2000 than in 1990 (see supplemental table 11-3).



*Significantly different from 2000.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. (2001). The Nation's Report Card: Mathematics 2000 (NCES 2001-517), figure 2.1 and table B.1. Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1990, 1992, 1996, and 2000 Mathematics Assessment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Supplemental Notes 1, 4 Supplemental Tables 11-1, 11-2, 11-3

Poverty and Student Mathematics Achievement

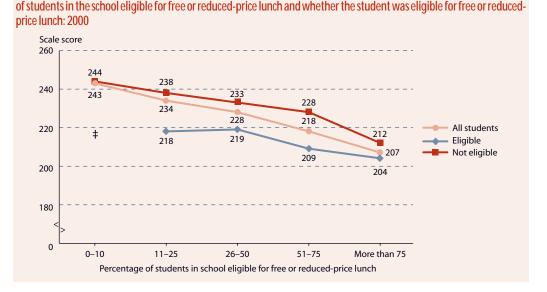
Compared with students in low-poverty public schools, students in high-poverty public schools have lower achievement scores in 4th-grade mathematics.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) collects background information on students, teachers, and schools, permitting analysis of student achievement relative to the poverty level of public schools, measured as the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. In 2000, higher levels of students in schools eligible for subsidized lunch were generally associated with lower scores on the 4th-grade mathematics assessment. Students in schools with more than 50 percent of their students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch had a lower average score than students in schools with a quarter or fewer of their students eligible for the program (see supplemental table 12-1).

This difference in achievement by school-level poverty exists whether or not the students were personally eligible for the school lunch program. For example, among students who were not personally eligible for the school lunch program, students in schools with more than 50 percent of their students eligible for the program had a lower average score than those in schools with a quarter or fewer eligible. Among those eligible for the school lunch program, the average score of students in schools with more than 75 percent of students eligible was lower than the score for students in schools with 11-50 percent of students eligible.

Certain characteristics of the highest poverty schools (more than 75 percent of students eligible for subsidized lunch) are evident. Relative to the total 4th-grade population, there was a lower percentage of White students and a higher percentage of Black and Hispanic students in the highest poverty schools in 2000. The highest poverty schools had higher rates of student absenteeism and a lower percentage of their students with a "very positive" attitude toward academic achievement than schools with the least poverty (i.e., those with 10 percent or fewer eligible). In addition, the highest poverty schools in 2000 reported less parental involvement than schools with the least poverty. For example, the highest poverty schools were more likely to report less than 50 percent parent participation in open houses or back-toschool nights than schools with the least poverty (see supplemental table 12-2).

‡Reporting standards not met (too few cases). SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2000 Mathematics Assessment, previously unpublished tabulation (October 2001).



POVERTY AND ACHIEVEMENT: Average scale score of public school students in 4th-grade mathematics, by the percentage



FOR MORE INFORMATION: Supplemental Notes 1, 4 Supplemental Tables 12-1, 12-2

Geography Performance of Students in Grades 4, 8, and 12

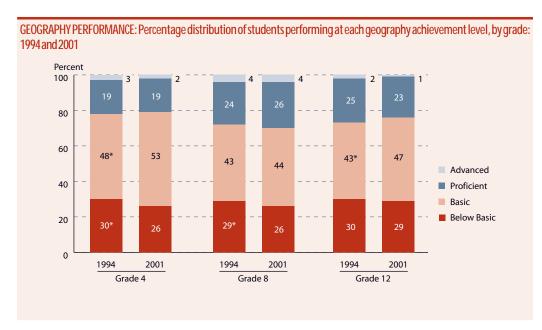
The performance of 4th- and 8th-graders in geography increased from 1994 to 2001, while no differences were detected in the performance of 12th-graders. In 2001, 21 percent of 4th-graders, 30 percent of 8th-graders, and 25 percent of 12th-graders were at or above the Proficient level.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessed 4th-, 8th-, and 12th-grade student performance in geography in 1994 and 2001. The average scale scores of 4th- and 8th-graders increased from 1994 to 2001 (from 206 to 209 and from 260 to 262, respectively), while there was no significant change in the scale score at grade 12 (see supplemental table 13-1).

Achievement levels, which identify what students should know and be able to do in each grade, provide another measure of student performance. In 2001, 21 percent of 4th-graders, 30 percent of 8th-graders, and 25 percent of 12th-graders were at or above the *Proficient* level, which is defined as "solid academic performance for each grade assessed." At grades 4 and 8, the percentage of students below *Basic* decreased from 1994 to 2001. At grade 12, no significant differences were detected in the percentages of students performing at any of the achievement levels.

Scores at the 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th percentiles reveal changes in scale scores for lowerand higher-performing students. Fourth- and 8thgraders at the two lowest percentiles scored higher in 2001 than in 1994. At grade 12, there were no significant differences in scores at any of these percentile levels between 1994 and 2001.

Certain subgroups outperformed other subgroups in 2001. At all three grade levels, males had higher scores than females. At grade 4, White students had higher average scores than their peers from all other racial/ethnic groups, and Asian/Pacific Islander students outperformed Black, Hispanic, and American Indian students. At grade 8, White students had higher average scores than Black, Hispanic, and Asian/Pacific Islander students. In addition, Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian students outperformed Black and Hispanic students. At grade 12, White, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian students had higher average scores than Black or Hispanic students. At all three grades, students in lower poverty schools outperformed students in higher poverty schools, as measured by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. In addition, in grades 8 and 12, students whose parents had higher levels of education scored higher than their peers whose parents had less education (see supplemental table 13-2).



*Significantly different from 2001.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. For more information, see *supplemental* note 4.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. (2002). The Nation's Report Card: Geography 2001 (NCES 2002–484), table B.3. Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1994 and 2001 Geography Assessments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Supplemental Notes 1, 4
Supplemental Tables 13-1, 13-2

U.S. History Performance of Students in Grades 4, 8, and 12

The performance of 4th- and 8th-graders in U.S. history improved from 1994 to 2001. Eighteen percent of 4th-graders, 17 percent of 8th-graders, and 11 percent of 12thgraders performed at or above the Proficient level in 2001.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessed the performance of 4th-, 8th-, and 12th-graders in U.S. history in 1994 and 2001. Average scale scores increased for 4th- and 8thgraders from 1994 to 2001; there was no significant change in the scale score of 12th-graders (see supplemental table 14-1).

NAEP also provides achievement levels indicating what students should know and be able to do in each grade. In 2001, 18 percent of 4th-graders, 17 percent of 8th-graders, and 11 percent of 12thgraders performed at or above the *Proficient* level, which is defined as "solid academic performance for each grade assessed." The percentage of 4thgraders performing at or above the Basic level was higher in 2001 than in 1994. At grade 8, the percentages of students at or above the *Basic* level, at or above the *Proficient* level, and at the Advanced level were higher in 2001 than in 1994. At grade 12, no significant differences were detected in the percentages of students performing at each level.

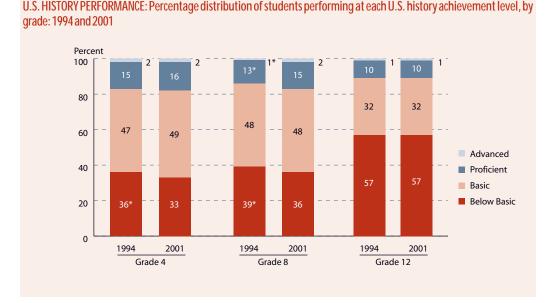
Scores at the 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th percentiles reveal changes in scale scores for lowerand higher-performing students. At grade 4, scale scores at the 10th and 25th percentiles were higher in 2001 than in 1994. There were increases from 1994 to 2001 in the average 8th-grade scores among the lower and upper percentiles (25th, 75th, and 90th percentiles). There were no significant changes in 12th-grade scores by percentile between the 2 years.

In 2001, student performance differed among subgroups. At all three grades, White students on average had higher scores than Black, Hispanic, and American Indian students, and Asian/Pacific Islander students had higher average scores than Black and Hispanic students. At grade 4, Whites had higher average scores than Asians/Pacific Islanders. There were no differences detected in the scores of males and females at all three grades. Students in lower poverty schools generally outperformed students in higher poverty schools, as measured by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, at all three grades. In addition, in grades 8 and 12, students whose parents had higher levels of education scored higher than their peers whose parents had less education (see supplemental table 14-2).

*Significantly different from 2001.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. For more information, see supplemental note 4

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. (2002). The Nation's Report Card: U.S. History 2001 (NCES 2002-483), table B.3. Data from U.S. Department of Education, NCES, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1994 and 2001 U.S. History Assessments.





FOR MORE INFORMATION: Supplemental Notes 1, 4 Supplemental Tables 14-1, 14-2

Social and Cultural Outcomes

Voting Participation

The more education people have, the more likely they are to vote in presidential and congressional elections.

In the 2000 presidential election, 70 percent of the U.S. voting-age citizen population (18 years of age and older) was registered to vote and 59 percent voted (see supplemental table 15-1). Among these citizens, the more education a person possessed, the more likely that person was to be registered to vote and to vote. For example, 52 percent of voting-age citizens who had not completed high school were registered to vote in 2000, compared with 83 percent of those with a bachelor's degree or higher. Thirty-eight percent of citizens who had not completed high school voted in 2000, compared with 77 percent of those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

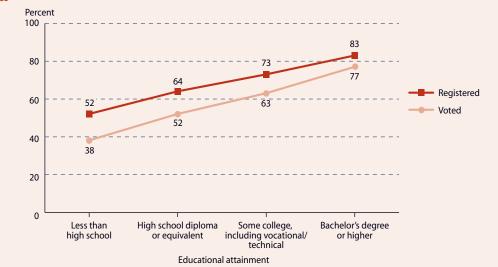
In addition to the positive relationship between educational attainment and voting, there were also positive relationships between voting and length of residence, and voting and age in 2000. The longer a person resided in one place, the more likely that person was to vote. Among age groups, the likelihood of voting was higher among older rather than younger individuals. Regardless of a person's age, however, a positive relationship between educational attainment and voting was present; that is, within each age group, those with more education were

more likely to report voting than those with less education (see supplemental table 15-1).

The voting rate in presidential elections has historically been higher than in congressional elections, so it is necessary to consider these two types of elections separately (U.S. Department of Commerce 2002). Among U.S. citizens 18 years of age and older, the voting rate increased between 1996 and 2000 (from 58 to 59 percent), while it decreased between 1994 and 1998 (from 48 to 45 percent). In all four elections, there was a positive relationship between educational attainment and voting; citizens with more education were more likely to register and to vote (see supplemental table 15-2).

Young adults ages 18–24 were the least likely age group to vote. Among these citizens, those who were enrolled in college were more likely to have voted in the 2000 election than their peers who were not enrolled. On the other hand, they were less likely to have voted than their peers who were no longer enrolled but had already earned a bachelor's degree. White and Black citizens ages 18–24 were more likely to vote than their Hispanic peers (see supplemental table 15-3).





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NOTE: The survey sample includes the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. Years in which the president is elected, as well as congressional, state, and local officials (1996 and 2000), are called "presidential elections." Off years, in which congressional, state, and local officials are elected but the president is not (1994 and 1998), are called "congressional elections." For each year, information was collected from respondents 2 weeks after the election. These estimates may differ from administrative data or data from exit polls. See *supplemental note* 2 for further information.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), November 2000 Voting and Registration Supplement, previously unpublished tabulation (December 2002).

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Supplemental Notes 1, 2 Supplemental Tables 15-1, 15-2, 15-3 U.S. Department of Commerce

Social and Cultural Outcomes

International Civic Participation

Fifty percent of U.S. students in grade 9 participated in a community-related volunteer organization in 1999, a higher percentage than in any other country participating in the Civic Education Study.

In 1999, 28 countries, including the United States, participated in the Civic Education Study under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). The study asked 14-year-olds (9th grade in most countries) to report their participation in civic-related organizations. Students in the United States were most likely to report participating in a group conducting voluntary activities to help the community (50 percent), followed by a charity collecting money for a social cause (40 percent), student government (33 percent), and environmental organizations (24 percent). Ten percent of U.S. 9th-graders reported participating in youth organizations affiliated with a political party, and 6 percent participated in human rights organizations (see supplemental table 16-1).

Compared with the international average of the 28 countries, 9th-graders in the United States reported a higher rate of participation in student government, youth organizations affiliated with a political party, environmental organizations, community-related volunteer organizations, and charities collecting money for social causes. No significant differences were detected between the percentage of U.S. students participating in human rights organizations and the international average. The percentage of U.S. 9th-graders belonging to a community-related volunteer organization was greater than the percentage of students in any other country.

The participation rates of U.S. students in civicrelated organizations can also be compared with the rates in other countries. Seven countries had a higher participation rate and 17 countries had a lower rate than the United States in student government. Only Cyprus had a higher participation rate than the United States in youth organizations affiliated with a political party, and 24 countries had a lower participation rate. In environmental organizations, Colombia and Greece had a higher participation rate, and 21 countries had a lower rate. Colombia, Cyprus, Greece, and Portugal had a higher rate of participation than the United States in human rights organizations, while 8 countries had a lower rate. Six countries had a higher participation rate and 20 countries had a lower rate than the United States in charities.

¹Student government includes student council, student government, and class or school parlia-

NOTE: Countries were instructed to select the grade in which most 14-year-olds were enrolled at the time of the study. In the United States, as in most countries, this was 9th grade. SOURCE: Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H., and Schulz, W. (2001). Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries: Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen, table 7.2. Data from the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) Civic Education Study, 1999.



INTERNATIONAL CIVIC PARTICIPATION: Number of countries by the rate of student participation in various civic-related organizations relative to the participation rate of 9th-grade students in the United States: 1999

Students' rate of participation in each country relative to the United States	Student government ¹	Youth organization affiliated with a political party	Environmental organization	Human rights organization	Group conducting voluntary activities to help the community	Charity collecting money for social cause
Significantly higher	7	1	2	4	0	6
Not significantly different	3	2	4	15	0	1
Significantly lower	17	24	21	8	27	20