

# NCLB Making a Difference in Colorado



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

(*Colorado Report Card*)
- “A notable success story among the school districts analyzed by the Rocky Mountain News is Pueblo city schools. All students made gains there, but progress in schools with the most low-income students far outpaced that of schools with fewer poor students. In eight years, Pueblo’s poorest schools posted a 20-point gain in the percentage of fourth-graders passing the reading test in the Colorado Student Assessment Program, or CSAP. In 2004, the most recent year for which data were available, 61 percent of students in those schools scored proficient or advanced. ... Some officials say larger Colorado districts don’t want to admit they can learn from the smaller 17,600-student Pueblo District 60. Other educators say Pueblo is too different – its students less mobile and less beset by language issues – to compare it fairly with districts facing complex urban challenges. Some of that may be true, but children are children, noted Superintendent Joyce Bales. ‘Anybody can do what we’re doing,’ Bales said. ‘It’s easier to complain and whine than it is to do this hard work. We work hard. We work hard all the time.’” (*Rocky Mountain News*, 7/16/05)
- “If the Colorado Student Assessment Program is the state report card for schools, then the slightly less well-known Measure of Academic Progress is the progress report for Montezuma-Cortez School District Re-1. ‘We’re able to use the MAP to predict how we will do on CSAP,’ District Assistant Superintendent George Schumpelt said. ‘They both measure our state standards.’ ... MAP, which Schumpelt describes as an assessment for learning, provides fast results and the ability for frequent testing. Teachers can modify their instruction based on the results while they still have the same group of students. ... The results have Schumpelt singing the schools’ praises. ‘I think every group needs to be recognized for their tremendous job that they are doing to move students to proficiency in all areas of the curriculum,’ Schumpelt said. ... According to Schumpelt, the implementation of these tests is the district’s way of accepting responsibility for the performance of students. ‘We are no longer making excuses,’ Schumpelt said. ‘When students fail to perform, that natural tendency is to look for causes outside the educational environment for the reasons why the student is not performing. We are now taking responsibility for the continuous academic achievement of all students.’” (*Cortez Journal*, 6/1/05)
- “Colorado’s public and private schools have made big strides when it comes to the percentage of students earning top scores on Advanced Placement exams that provide high school students with the opportunity to earn credits or be placed in higher-level courses at many colleges and universities.... More than 16 percent of Colorado’s high school graduates in 2004 earned a 3 or higher on AP exams. Just 10 states had higher percentages of students earning 3s. The national average was 13.2 percent.” [Note: The Colorado Department of Education was awarded a three-year grant for Advanced Placement exam fees for low-income students beginning with the 2004 exams.] (*Rocky Mountain News*, 1/27/05)