

NCLB Making a Difference in South Dakota



- Between 2003 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by five percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by nine percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by 12 percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “South Dakota students scored higher than the national average and showed progress over last year on the Stanford 10 abbreviated tests. Scores were up 1-3 percentile points for each grade tested, and reading and math had the biggest increases.... The statewide average shows that no grade scored lower than the 64th percentile. The largest gain came in the lower grades, with third graders moving up three percentile points. Overall, juniors scored the highest, at the 69th percentile. That means South Dakota 11th-graders scored better than 69 percent of students in the nation.” (*Associated Press*, 6/14/05)
- “A longer day this past year drew good marks from students and teachers at three Sioux Falls schools that put in extra hours. About 95 percent of children in second- through fifth-grade said they learned new words because of additional vocabulary instruction. And 90 percent said reading about topics that interested them helped them learn, according to district surveys. Teachers agreed the longer day helped develop vocabulary, but said the best part of the program was uninterrupted class time. ... Students at Laura B. Anderson, Lowell and Hawthorne elementaries went to school 30 minutes a day longer January 17 until May 25. The district chose a longer day to help schools failing to make adequate progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Those three schools will continue the longer day next year, and the district might expand it to other schools, said Sharon Schueler, coordinator of assessment.” (*Sioux Falls Argus Leader*, 7/4/05)
- “As a teacher, coach and administrator, Keith Moore has a good idea of the challenges he’ll face as South Dakota’s coordinator for American Indian education. But he also sees the job, a new position in the state Department of Education, as a way to use his skills to serve others.... As South Dakota strives to improve student achievement under the federal No Child Left Behind law, Moore expects much of his time will be spent helping reservation schools improve attendance, graduation rates and test scores.... This year in South Dakota, five school districts were identified as needing improvement under the law. Three of them – Shannon County, Todd County and Eagle Butte – are located on reservations. The others are Sioux Falls and Rapid City.... ‘As schools begin to be put on alert [under NCLB] and the numbers begin to show up, you can see a real need for our reservation schools,’ said Moore. ‘We need to pay some attention to what’s going on.’” (*Associated Press*, 2/13/05)