

NCLB Making a Difference in Alabama



- Between 2004 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by six 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 three percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by five percentage points
(*Alabama Report Card*)
- “Calcedeaver Elementary School in Mobile County, Alabama, has 100 percent of its kindergarten and first-graders reading at or above grade level – and that’s including special education students. Reading has improved drastically at Calcedeaver since August 2003, when the school adopted the Alabama Reading First Initiative. Students who participated in the program that first year read an average of 43 words per minute faster than students in the same grades did the year before, and, this year, many kindergarteners are reading on a second-grade level.” (*Mobile Register*, 2/27/05)
- “Alabama educators are using DIBELS [Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills] tests to measure and evaluate the progress or lack of it among students in elementary schools around the state. One major advantage of DIBELS monitoring is that it can quickly identify individual children with reading problems and allow teachers to give them special help before they fall farther behind their classmates. Montgomarians can be proud that their public school system is among the state’s leaders in both using DIBELS and in adopting both the state-funded Alabama Reading Initiative and the federally funded Alabama Reading First Initiative. As a result, Montgomery has shown some truly impressive gains in reading among its elementary students. For instance, in kindergarten through third grade in Montgomery County, the percentage of students reading at or above grade level essentially has doubled since August 2003. The percentage of students at or above grade level for kindergarten soared from 42 percent to 96 percent in those two academic years. For first grade, the percentage went from 31 to 81. For second grade, it rose from 38 to 75, and for third grade from 38 to 74.” (*Montgomery Advertiser*, 6/20/05)
- “State Board of Education member Mary Jane Caylor, D-Huntsville, credits one requirement of the federal No Child Left Behind Act for the consistent top scores of over half of the state’s 29 colleges that offer teacher preparation programs. ... ‘It has been a difficult process because we had to dissect down every category of teacher preparation. We now know, however, that we can go into an underperforming school and look at the needs of an individual class and address those needs.’ New guidelines forced the state to re-align approaches to teaching, and Caylor said the teacher preparation program scores reflect that. ... State Superintendent of Education Joe Morton said to the average parent of a child in grades K-12, the program grades show that new teachers leave their college classrooms with the knowledge they need to help their students learn effectively.... Fifteen of the programs earned an A, 11 a B, one a C and one an F.” (*Decatur Daily*, 5/27/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Alaska



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in third-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points
 - The Alaska Native-white achievement gap in third-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The Alaska Native-white achievement gap in third-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
(*Alaska Report Card*)
- “The Anchorage School District is being nationally recognized for higher-than-average reading and math scores. Anchorage is one of three cities nationwide to outperform the rest of their respective states in standardized reading and math scores.... Albuquerque, New Mexico and San Francisco, California, rounded out the top three cities for above-average standardized test scores.” (KTUU-TV Anchorage, 3/29/05)
- “A serving of SPRITE or COLA might help jump-start struggling students and improve student learning throughout the district, say Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District officials. SPRITE and COLA are summer school programs aimed at students in kindergarten through second grade who are at risk of academic failure.... SPRITE serves students who struggle with early reading skills but who don’t qualify for special education.... Though it’s a summer program, SPRITE began in April with a series of Saturday sessions. Some 369 students throughout the district are participating. Teachers work with groups of about six to eight students to develop individual lesson plans. The lessons, though, will be delivered by parents over the summer.... COLA includes special education students and will teach both reading and math skills.... Unspent federal funds, which the district was required to set aside to cover the cost of transportation for students who chose to leave a failing school and attend a passing school within the district, as mandated by No Child Left Behind, will cover the cost of SPRITE.” (*Anchorage Daily News*, 5/4/05)
- “Twenty-two experienced Alaska teachers left classrooms this year to travel to rural communities to provide full-time support to about 370 first- and second-year teachers. As the mentoring program wraps up its first year, participants said that it’s keeping new teachers in classrooms and that cutting the high teacher turnover will help kids. Education Commissioner Roger Sampson said it’s already working: Every school year, about 15 new teachers leave Alaska at winter break and never come back, he said. ‘This year, that number was zero. That’s pretty compelling evidence.’ Nationally, about half of teachers new to the industry leave the profession in five years or less. ... Alaska has about 750 first- or second-year teachers each year. Teachers in the program get weekly or daily contact with mentors by phone or e-mail, plus once-a-month visits. ... Thirty-one Alaska school districts participated in the program this year, and more want to come on board, Sampson said. He said the program will grow modestly next year and continue to be funded by grants and federal dollars.” (*Anchorage Daily News*, 5/23/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Arizona



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Third-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 14 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in third-grade reading narrowed by seven percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in third-grade mathematics narrowed by 11 percentage points
 - The American Indian-white achievement gap in third-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The American Indian-white achievement gap in third-grade mathematics narrowed by 12 percentage points

(*Arizona Report Card*)
- “A Bullhead City elementary school decided to exceed expectations instead of merely meeting them. Diamondback Elementary School Principal Joe Buzzelli said the Bullhead City school board instructed its Superintendent Ted Thadler to establish a program that set goals in accordance with No Child Left Behind to comply with Arizona standards for the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Thadler said he is proud of Buzzelli and his staff. ‘We went beyond the minimum; we made AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) at all our schools.’ ... Buzelli said he and his teachers developed grade-level goals for the core subjects in August. They recently completed their compilation and presented them to the board.” (*Mohave Daily News*, 5/27/05)
- “Yuma’s Pueblo School received state recognition...for its reading achievements in a new program launched by the state superintendent of public instruction this year.... Superintendent Tom Horne began a ‘Spotlight on School Success’ program this year that recognizes 15 schools statewide for achievements in different areas including dropout prevention, school improvement, best practices and Reading First – a national drive to promote early reading in students funded by the federal government. Pueblo, in the Crane School District, received the Reading First honor due to its growth in reading scores during the past two school years.... Pueblo was one of Crane’s schools that received a Reading First grant and has been able to implement new reading practices such as reading coaches and diagnostic tools. For 2003-2004, 62 percent of Pueblo’s students passed the reading portion of the AIMS test, which was four percent higher than the district average.” (*Yuma Sun*, 4/12/05)
- “Just three years ago, seven of the 10 Phoenix Union comprehensive high schools were identified as ‘underperforming,’ mostly due to the students’ low scores on the AIMS tests. As someone who had taught in the district for 18 years and at five of the campuses, I was not surprised by the label. At the time, I felt the district could do better. Students respond well to the truth. If they aren’t working hard enough, they need to be told that, and told it often. In other words, the kids must be pushed every day. In this case, it meant telling entire student bodies that they could and must do better. ... Some people don’t like the state’s system of labeling failing schools, and the AIMS tests in particular. However, these measures, as well as other academically demanding programs, have made an impressive difference to the students in the Phoenix Union high schools. For the past two years, all 10 Phoenix Union comprehensive high schools, including those seven schools identified previously as ‘underperforming,’ have scored ‘performing.’” (Johanna Haver, *Arizona Republic*, 5/6/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Arkansas



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by 12 percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 16 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
(*SchoolMatters.com*)
- “Little Rock’s Brady Elementary School showed the most improvement on combined [Iowa Test of Basic Skills, or ITBS] results in reading comprehension, math concepts, and math problems. Fifth-graders in the year just ended scored at the 44th percentile, up 23 points over the average scores earned by fifth-graders the previous year. Fulbright Elementary School improved 20 points, putting the average at the 74th percentile – which was the highest in the district. Terry Elementary School also improved 20 points over the 2003-04 school year, scoring at the 68th percentile . . . Twenty-nine of Little Rock’s 34 elementary schools demonstrated gains on the ITBS, as did four of five high schools in literacy.” (*Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, 6/27/05)
- “About 70 percent of the children attending Oakland Heights [Elementary School] are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Most of the school’s 380 or so K-4 students are white, but about 15 percent are African-American and another 15 percent Latino, part of a rapidly growing population of Mexican and Central American families who began arriving in Russellville only a few years ago. Parents at Oakland Heights – except for the few who are self-employed in fields such as car repair and carpentry – generally process chickens at the nearby Tyson plant or make frozen dinners at the ConAgra plant. . . . To give a sense of what those demographics usually mean in Arkansas, [there’s] a 27-point gap between white and African-American students. But, at Oakland Heights, gaps have narrowed significantly. For example, 80 percent of all students met or exceeded state reading standards in 2004 – 81 percent of the white students, 74 percent of the African-American students, 82 percent of the Latino students and 78 percent of the poor students. . . . Oakland Heights has a higher percentage of students in some subgroups meeting or exceeding standards than the rest of the state.” (Achievement Alliance’s *Alliance Alert*, 5/23/05)
- “A dozen teachers from nine area high schools participated Wednesday in a roundtable discussion at the Springdale school district office, as part of the federal Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative. They shared concerns about professional development, preparing students for the next grade and for after high school and having enough time to meet with other teachers or attend workshops. . . . The initiative, formed under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, is focusing on high school issues during its second year. . . . ‘Just like everyone else, we want to increase our test scores,’ said Sherry Bell, a Lincoln High School English teacher. ‘Improving our reading skills—that’s what everybody’s concerned about.’ Michael Shepherd, a Springdale High School social studies teacher, said the teachers wanted to focus on ‘relevant’ professional development that keeps students’ needs in mind. . . . ‘It’s a great thing the federal government is doing to talk to the masses and talk to the people in the trenches,’ he said. The major goals of the Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative are to increase graduation rates and better prepare students for college and the work force.” (*Springdale Morning News*, 3/31/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in California



- Between 2003 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by eight percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by five percentage points
(*California Report Card*)
- “Every one of the 700 students at John F. Kennedy Middle School, 10 miles from the Mexican border, receives free or discounted lunches because of their families’ low incomes, and two-thirds have limited English skills. The El Centro campus offers after-school and Saturday classes for students falling behind and evening computer lab hours for students and parents. The school holds evening workshops so parents can learn about homework expectations and the college application process. These and other efforts persuaded a national organization focused on middle school education to honor Kennedy as one of a handful of Schools to Watch.... Kennedy is one of four California middle schools – there are 15 across the nation – to be so honored by the National Forum this year.” (*Los Angeles Times*, 5/11/05)
- “Education is a group effort at Monroe Elementary School. Teachers work together and share techniques. They meet regularly to analyze test data not just for their classes but for the entire grade level. And, they get parents involved through monthly newsletters and training conferences. ‘Everyone is responsible for all the kids at the school,’ Principal Rob Murphy said. ... The school’s progress earned it in May the state’s 2004-05 Title I Academic Achievement Award because its ranking on the statewide Academic Performance Index improved at twice the expected rate. The state sets an API goal of 800 on a scale of 200 to 1,000 for each school. The index is based on student performance on standardized tests and testing participation rates. The school started with a base 711 API score and was expected to grow to 715. Instead, it reached 735 in two years. But what caught the state’s attention was the academic growth among poor students at Monroe, which receives federal Title I dollars based on the high percentage of low-income students. The goal for the low-income students was 684. Instead, they hit 712. ‘That’s what we want to see. It means the achievement gap is narrowing,’ said Betsy Sample, Riverside Unified’s director of special projects.” (*Riverside Press-Enterprise*, 7/6/05)
- “A year before No Child Left Behind passed, North Tamarind Elementary School was honored for its students’ successes. But when the federal law went into effect, the barometer to measure success changed. North Tamarind became labeled a Program Improvement (PI) school.... North Tamarind is in year four of program improvement because some of its Spanish-speaking students are not scoring high enough on the state’s standardized language test, which is written in English. Fifty percent of the school’s students speak Spanish. ... North Tamarind Principal Jason Angle said the staff didn’t consider any option except restructuring how they provide education. ... Teachers began implementing [new strategies] a few weeks ago by dividing the children into groups based on their language abilities to work on listening, speaking, reading and singing. ‘They feel more successful already,’ [fifth grade teacher, John] Johnson said. ... ‘We are going to meet these goals one kid at a time,’ Angle said.” (*Riverside Press-Enterprise*, 5/30/05)

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)

NCLB Making a Difference in Connecticut



- Between 2001 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
(*Connecticut Report Card*)
- “Charter schools...have achieved great results in bringing up the Connecticut Mastery Test scores of urban under-achievers. Results from 2003 show that: at New Haven’s Amistad Academy, where 98 percent of students are African American or Hispanic, math and reading scores have risen to triple those of neighboring public schools and equal to scores in Greenwich; at Highville Mustard Seed Academy, also a New Haven-area charter middle school, nearly 70 percent of its largely minority student body scored at mastery level; at Common Ground, a charter high school for students with high-risk behavior, dropout rates are lower and college participation is higher than in New Haven high schools; and, all graduates of the Bridge Academy in Bridgeport, a college preparatory high school with a 96 percent minority enrollment, were accepted at two- or four-year colleges.” (*Hartford Courant*, 6/13/05)
- “[First Lady Laura Bush] will receive an invitation soon to visit Bloomfield’s Laurel School. Dr. G. Reid Lyon, chief of the child development and behavior branch at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), made the announcement at Laurel School during a visit on May 4. ... Lyon was at the school to observe first-hand the current reading program for kindergarten and first-graders in Bloomfield and came away very enthused and impressed with what he saw. ‘They are doing everything that our research shows must be done in order to teach children to read,’ he noted. ... The data showed 34 to 41 percent of first-graders deficient in the 2000-2002 period being reduced to 9 percent, 14 percent and 6 percent in the last three rating periods. Grade two results of 26 percent, 9 percent and 16 percent in the first three tests were down to 9 percent, 3 percent and 10 percent in the last three rating periods. ‘This is a truly professional program,’ Lyon told the teachers, adding, ‘What I see here is what we normally see in an affluent suburb.’ ‘This is not a program only at Laurel School,’ [Bloomfield Superintendent David Title] said, ‘We have implemented the same program with the same teacher dedication in all three elementary schools. Our teachers believe these kids can succeed.’” (*Bloomfield Journal*, 5/6/05)
- “Danbury schools are doing a pretty good job of educating black students...according to an analysis of test scores of the city’s fourth- and 10th-graders. Danbury’s black 10th-graders were among the top five scoring groups in reading and writing on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test compared to 22 school districts with at least 40 black students. ... A newly written curriculum at all grade levels, new technology, a new teacher evaluation process, and granting teachers common planning time and more teacher training are some of the new strategies.” (*Danbury News*, 6/21/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Delaware



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade reading proficiency increased by seven percentage points
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 10 percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by seven percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by nine percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by 14 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by 13 percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by nine percentage points
(*Delaware Report Card*)
- “Etta J. Wilson Elementary School in Pike Creek is one of the schools that has made progress. [The school] has 508 students in kindergarten through fifth-grade. Fifty-one percent are minorities. A [recent] study showed Wilson Elementary closed the achievement gap for black students by 44 percentage points in reading and 49 percentage points in math from 2001 to 2004. Only 30 percent of black students in third grade at Wilson Elementary passed the reading test in 2001, but 82 percent passed in 2004. Dave Wooley, a parent of first- and second-grade daughters at Wilson, said the news is a phenomenal achievement on behalf of the students and teachers at the school. As a black parent, he welcomed the shrinking gap. ‘It simply states that we’re moving in the right direction and we should be celebrating our differences and using them as an academic tool to empower children,’ he said.” (*Wilmington News Journal*, 4/22/05)
- “Frankford Elementary in Frankford, Delaware, is, by any standard, demographically tough. With 79 percent of the children meeting the standard for free and reduced-price meals and most of the rest hovering near the standard, it is fair to say that almost all of the kids are poor. Thirty-six percent of the students are white, 36 percent black, and 28 percent Latino. Many of the Latino children are very recent immigrants from Mexico, the children of agricultural workers who themselves have had little education. Twenty-two percent of the students are considered to be special education students. ... When [Principal Sharon Brittingham] arrived seven years ago, the school was very low-achieving, with scores that tracked the demographics. But last year, 97.5 percent of the fifth-graders met Delaware’s state reading standards – including 100 percent of boys, 100 percent of the African-American students, and 100 percent of the low-income students. Half of the fifth-graders with disabilities met state math standards, and a third of them met the writing standards. ‘It is a hard process, but it’s achievable,’ said Brittingham. ‘But first you have to believe it’s achievable.’” (*Achievement Alliance’s Alliance Alert*, 4/11/05)
- “Although Milford [School District] is the state’s eighth most diverse school district, it ranked No. 3 in the percentage of its students meeting state standards in 2005. ... Only [Milford] and the Indian River School District...rank among the state’s top five districts in performance despite a middle ranking in terms of diversity. The district will begin using a new testing system during the 2005-2006 school year to track individual students’ performance and target specific instruction to the students who need it.” (*Newszap.com*, 8/3/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in District of Columbia



- Between 2004 and 2005 (latest available data):
 - Elementary reading proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in elementary reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in elementary reading narrowed by six percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in elementary mathematics narrowed by five percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in elementary reading narrowed by five percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in elementary mathematics narrowed by seven percentage points

(D.C. Report Card)
- "Elementary students in D.C. public schools continued to make progress in reading and math this year.... The results showed that 50.1 percent of elementary students...scored at the proficient level in reading and that 57.9 percent of elementary children...were rated proficient in math. ... The number of D.C. schools meeting their one-year academic benchmark increased this year from 63 to 72, according to the results." *(Washington Post, 8/8/05)*
- "The KIPP DC: KEY Academy, the first KIPP school in the Washington area, opened in 2000 and has 320 students in grades 5 through 8. It has the highest math scores in the city, though more than 80 percent of its students come from black families poor enough to qualify for federal lunch subsidies. ... KIPP students are in school at least nine hours a day, compared with fewer than seven hours in regular public schools. Three weeks of summer school are mandatory. Students are urged to call teachers at home if they have questions about homework. Those who do not complete homework are disciplined. Good work and behavior are rewarded with points toward items from the student store and school trips, from which students with few points are excluded. Teachers are trained to be very active in their classrooms, involving all children in lessons and taking points off from those who do not pay attention." *(Washington Post, 8/11/05)*
- "Nine months into the experiment, it is too early to know how the nation's first federally funded voucher program is affecting the academic achievement of the hundreds of D.C. children who won the private school scholarships. But spending time with the Hammonds provides a glimpse of the benefits...that the program entails for one family. Thanks to their federal vouchers, the four children are getting a free education at a school where annual tuition normally would cost \$4,500 for each of them – a total of \$18,000, which is more than [Nikia] Hammond's annual income. And Hammond is impressed by the differences between the Baptist-oriented Nannine Burroughs and the public school her children attended the previous year – smaller classes, more enthusiastic teachers and fewer discipline problems. ... Hammond said she is determined to take full advantage of the voucher program, no matter what the difficulties. 'I am just focusing on what I am doing it for, to pull myself up and to pull my children up,' she said." *(Washington Post, 5/30/05)*

NCLB Making a Difference in Florida



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest available data):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by 16 percentage points
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by nine percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points

(Florida Report Card)
- “Jamie and Marc Newberry could ride their bikes to school. Instead, they took a 30-minute bus ride across town to a better school, Pelican Marsh Elementary. ‘I feel my kids are getting a much better education,’ said their mother, Michele Newberry. Her children were among the 400 this school year who transferred to a better-performing school, thanks to the federal No Child Left Behind Act. ... In Immokalee, the federal No Child Left Behind law has helped many. Last month, Immokalee High students received tutoring from Enterprise Company officials...who oversaw a new computer home-tutoring program. Each teen received a computer with tutorial programs and access to ‘virtual classrooms,’ where students could ask questions in ‘real time’ with a teacher via chat rooms. ... ‘I think NCLB is a wonderful thing because it forces everybody to look at those subgroups, and it was easy for them to get lost before,’ [district coordinator Dale] Johnson said. ... For the Newberry family, the law allows more educational freedom. ‘They were both very good students but now they’re more challenged and above grade level,’ Newberry said about her [kids].” (Naples Daily News, 6/6/05)
- “Since Mollie Ray [Elementary] made headlines in 2002 for receiving its second failing grade in four years, the Pine Hills school and its staff have done many of the right things to improve student achievement. For example, parents were expected to read to their children for 20 minutes each night and sign off in the morning verifying homework assignments had been finished and free tutoring was provided before and after school for struggling students. Ninety-nine percent of Mollie Ray’s students are poor – but it seized an A on the state’s annual report card.” (Orlando Sentinel, 6/13/05)
- “In the first years of the charter district, Volusia [County’s] schools weren’t much different from years before. ... Then [Woodward Elementary principal] Joanne Rodkey read an article about teachers volunteering to teach an extra hour a day because they couldn’t cover their subjects... . So she asked [teachers] if they would be willing to spend one more hour every day to teach math, science, reading and writing. They said ‘yes.’ Then parents said ‘yes.’ Then the school board said ‘yes.’ Seven teachers at Woodward started the longer day in the middle of the 2002 school year. Next year, every student at Burns-Oak Hill and Westside elementaries will attend school for the extra hour. Some 155 teachers at nine schools will participate. Teachers and principals have since started over, developing creative solutions to help students boost their academic achievement. ... Students who were taught the extra hour (that equals an additional 40 school days) scored better on standardized tests than other children.” (Daytona Beach News-Journal, 6/6/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Georgia



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 - 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)

NCLB Making a Difference in Hawaii



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest available data):
 - Fifth-grade reading achievement increased by 13 percentage points
 - Fifth-grade mathematics achievement increased by four percentage points
(*Hawaii Report Card*)
- “So far this school year, 4,328 students statewide have signed up for tutoring – a 77 percent jump over the 2,447 tutored last year through the No Child Left Behind Act, according to Butch Adams, special programs management specialist for the Department of Education. That follows a similar increase the previous year. Administrators at public schools across the state have sent letters home, made personal phone calls and even knocked on doors to encourage parents to let their children participate. ‘The bottom line is we’ll do whatever it takes to provide this opportunity for our students,’ said Stanley Kayatani, principal of Kalihi Kai Elementary, where 250 students are being tutored, about a third of the student body. ‘We do a lot of following up with parents.’ ... Schools that have managed to link lots of students with tutors say it makes a difference. At Laie Elementary School, tutoring was one of several factors that helped the campus get off the list of low-performing schools...”
(*Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, 3/23/05)
- “The state Board of Education...approved a \$7.9 million plan to help 20 struggling schools improve test scores and comply with other federal No Child Left Behind Act standards. Under the ‘restructuring’ plan, the [state] Department of Education will hire three companies to train teachers and overhaul curriculum at the affected schools. ... The effort will be the most intense remedy that the state has applied yet for the schools under the No Child Left Behind Act.... The companies—Edison Schools Inc., the National Center on Education and the Economy, ETS Pulliam—are expected to work mostly with school staff rather than directly with students. The goal is to set and meet benchmarks for student achievement and ensure that curriculum and teaching match the goals. Two dozen staff members of Kahului School, one of the affected schools, appeared at [the] board meeting at Kihei Elementary School as an expression of their commitment to academic improvement. ... Principals at some of the target schools earlier said they would welcome the extra help.” (*Honolulu Advertiser*, 5/7/05)
- “As the national focus on technology in schools shifts from computers in the classroom to tracking student achievement under the No Child Left Behind Act, Hawaii, like other states, is working to stay abreast. ... ‘I think this is a nationwide trend—and not just in education,’ Rod Moriyama, the state Department of Education’s assistant superintendent for technology, said of the move toward accountability. ‘We are looking more and more at data and data-driven decision-making.’ Moriyama said the DOE is moving toward a statewide tracking system that will give teachers instant access to a student’s past academic performance, attendance history, test scores, and demographic data. ‘They’ll have that information at their fingertips,’ he said. ‘As we get the system in place, we’ll develop longitudinal data—they’ll be able to see how that student did all the way back to kindergarten.’ ... ‘We have to be able to see which approaches were tried so we can decide which approaches to use,’ he said. ‘It’s the belief that every child can learn. What are you doing to bring him up to his potential? This can really change the face of education,’ he said, ‘and that is what is so exciting.’” (*Honolulu Advertiser*, 5/6/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Idaho



- Between 2003 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by 11 percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 13 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by 11 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by nine percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by seven percentage points

(Idaho Report Card)
- “Five years ago, when the state began testing students, only 29 percent of American Indian third graders [in Idaho] were reading at their grade level. The most recent scores show that half of all American Indian students are reading at grade level.” *(Associated Press, 3/15/05)*
- “Molding young minds—it’s the job of educators all over the state. But at Gate City Elementary, Principal Janice Green says it’s not just about teaching; it’s about creating a desire in each student to love learning. ‘The key things we have worked on to be a merit school are academic—very strongly on our academic skills, making sure students are gaining the knowledge that they need. We’ve also worked on becoming a safe school, putting in place the things that make children feel comfortable.’ For the first year, Gate City has been awarded the status of a state merit school—a title that has brought a lot of pride and raised the bar. ... Part of the eligibility to be a merit school is showing improvements on the ISAT [Idaho Standards Assessment Test].... To help students excel on the test, reading programs like accelerated reader have been implemented, which Media Generalist Jodie Kelley says really improves reading and comprehension skills. ... These young minds, without question will continue to grow, but administrators and educators say they continue to keep the title of merit, giving their students the education that will take them wherever they want to go. Lewis and Clark Elementary in Pocatello has also been deemed a merit school for their continued improvements in education.” *(KPVI-TV Boise, 4/20/05)*
- “Jefferson Elementary School students got to pat themselves on the back Thursday. The school is one of only 10 in the state the Idaho Department of Education deemed a Distinguished School in Reading. Jefferson County School District Superintendent Ron Tolman presented the school with a framed certificate from the education department Thursday. At the assembly, the top reader in each grade spoke for one minute about what he or she gets from books, Principal Teri Powell said. ... This is the first year the education department has given the awards. Distinguished schools made the most progress toward closing an achievement gap between two specific groups of kids. This year, economically disadvantaged kids made the biggest gains. Jefferson students spend 40 minutes each day on reading lessons and an additional 40 minutes with personal instruction, Powell said. Parents are also urged to practice reading with their kids for 20 minutes every night. ‘It takes everybody for a school to meet No Child Left Behind,’ Powell said. ‘The kids have to care and the parents have to be willing to help us at home because we don’t have enough time to practice in school.’” *(Idaho Falls Post Register, 3/18/05)*

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)

NCLB Making a Difference in Indiana



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Third-grade reading proficiency increased by three percentage points
 - Third-grade mathematics proficiency increased by six percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in third-grade reading narrowed by five percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “The latest statewide testing results for grades 4, 5 and 7 are encouraging, especially with those scores counting for the first time toward federal No Child Left Behind standards of progress, the state schools superintendent said Wednesday.... The results were divided into categories of pass, indicating strong academic performance; pass-plus, showing exemplary performance; and did not pass. In fourth grade, 73 percent of almost 77,000 students who were tested achieved pass or pass-plus scores in both math and English/Language Arts. In grade 5, in which science also was tested, 72 percent passed both English and math and 62 percent passed science. Among seventh-graders, 73 percent passed math and 68 percent passed English. ‘The test results show strong academic performance for the majority of students,’ [schools chief Suellen] Reed said. ‘The results can be used to identify those students who need extra instructional assistance to reach the standard.’” (*Associated Press*, 2/16/05)
- “Educators in East Allen County Schools greeted news from the state Wednesday that Meadowbrook Elementary was no longer on ‘School Improvement Status....’ Meadowbrook...landed on the state’s list three years ago after failing to meet state targets in reading and math for two consecutive years. During that time, the school restructured its staff, increased professional development, changed its curriculum, offered tutoring to students and allowed them to transfer to higher-performing schools in the district. Because it’s a Title I school, Meadowbrook received about an additional \$200,000 per year to put some of those ‘corrective actions’ into place.... Teacher and student performance were monitored more closely. The school tested students throughout the year and required those failing to meet targets to attend summer school. Central administrators doubled their time evaluating teachers in the classroom. Their efforts paid off when the school met state targets for the first time last year. Meadowbrook third-graders scored above the state average in math, with 83 percent passing. That is about a 20 percent increase from four years ago. In English/Language Arts, 61 percent of students this year met targets, which is up 14 percent from five years ago.” (*Fort Wayne News Sentinel*, 6/9/05)
- “Stephen Foster School in Indianapolis is about 85 percent low-income and nearly 65 percent minority. The school watched its sixth-graders improve from 53 percent passing both [reading and math] tests in 2000 to all of them passing last year. Third-graders also improved from 61 percent passing in 2000 to 69 percent last year. ‘It’s just continual work, work, work,’ Principal Sharon Heathcock said. ... ‘You simply can’t make excuses. When they come here, they know we’re about business.’” (*Indianapolis Star*, 7/5/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Iowa



- “One Ankeny school is offering additional assistance to students who do not require special education classes, but need extra help. Northview Middle School administrators are blurring the lines between their traditional and special education programs, cross-training teachers who provide specialized before- and after-school instruction and offering an additional reading course to children with lower test scores. ‘We need to start taking a different look’ at those students barely meeting proficiency levels, Northview Principal Scott Osborn said, ‘to see if there are some things we could do. If students don’t master these basic skills while [here] at Northview,’ Osborn said, ‘it’s much more difficult for them to do high school.’ District officials said the additional assistance should be offered at all Ankeny schools within three to four years. ‘We just decided we needed to support more kids’ with additional resources, said Pat Sievers, executive director of special programs for Ankeny schools.... Ankeny was placed on the watch list last year for eighth- and 11th-grade special education reading scores from the 2002-03 school year. The district has since improved those groups’ marks and been removed from the list.” (*Des Moines Register*, 3/1/05)
- “While many districts in Iowa have seen success, Davis County wanted to make a big deal out of the scores in order to get students pumped up about academics. ... Current math proficiency is at 81 percent. Reading is at 86.9 percent. Elementary Principal Linda Perry said the reading score is a big jump – six years ago, proficiency was at 58.3 percent. ‘The thing I feel strongly about is that each child is improving. They may not even be proficient, but have gone up two grade levels,’ she said. But most of the kids are proficient, and Perry believes she knows why. ‘We went to a guided reading [and math] program...research-based programs using best practices,’ she said. ‘We have a very active professional development program...’ Little tests before the big test may also be a factor. ‘We do a lot of assessment, and analyze the data,’ she said. ‘The big difference is we use that data to meet the needs of...individual students.’” (*Ottumwa Courier*, 5/28/05)
- “The Mid-Prairie School District has seen fairly steady scores over the past five years. However, scores for eighth-grade students jumped this year from the 59th percentile in 2003-2004 to the 80th percentile for the core subjects of reading and math and 85th for the composite of all subjects. Gary Curtis, the guidance counselor at Mid-Prairie Middle School, attributed the increase to emphasizing the importance of the tests to students and to a stronger class academically.... The Washington School District has made use of a consultant to help with math instruction and regular meetings between assistant superintendent and curriculum director Julie Grotewold and teachers to help with student achievement, Superintendent Dave Schmitt said. That has led to math scores rising to the 79th percentile this year, up from just below the 76th percentile last year for eighth-graders. ‘We’re very encouraged with this year’s progress,’ Schmitt said. ‘We will just keep doing our best. We are constantly evaluating our teachers...constantly meeting.’” (*Iowa City Press-Citizen*, 2/28/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Kansas



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade reading proficiency increased by 10 percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 13 percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by nine percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points

(Kansas Report Card)
- “Two years ago, [Hutchinson’s] Lincoln Elementary [School] was named a school ‘in need of improvement’ because of low state assessment test scores and its impoverished neighborhood. But on Thursday, Lincoln students, staff and teachers were told the school was one of 25 finalists for the National School Change Award, given to schools that go from underperforming to exemplary.... New teaching strategies, adult volunteers and school leadership are being credited for the school’s increased student achievement, higher assessment scores and improved student social skills. ‘I think the most important thing is that the staff has learned to work together, from the bottom on up,’ fourth-grade teacher Lynda McCue said. ‘That means the kindergarten teacher has to do the job to get her class ready for first grade, and when the students enter my class, they need to be ready to be in fourth grade.’ The school also has an integrated curriculum so everything students learn in one classroom is reinforced elsewhere. And McCue said students spend a lot of time preparing for state assessment tests required by the federal No Child Left Behind legislation. ... Lincoln’s students failed to meet state testing benchmarks in the 2002-03 school year, but they scored a 100 percent proficient or better rating in 2003-04. The preliminary results for 2004-05 show Lincoln scoring 95 percent proficient or better in reading and 89 percent in math – almost 30 percentage points higher than the state-mandated benchmark.” *(Associated Press, 5/27/05)*
- “Olathe students have exceeded state benchmarks this year, according to preliminary results presented to the school board. ... The report showed that 84.6 percent of students scored proficiently or better in reading, exceeding the state’s target of 58 per-cent. Last year, 72.7 percent of students met benchmarks in reading. In math, 83.7 percent of Olathe students scored proficiently or better, surpassing the target of 46.8. Last year, 73.2 percent scored proficiently or higher in math. ... Among student subgroups, administrators said English language learners showed the most improvement in reading with 92.7 percent of them reaching proficiency or higher. ... Numbers show that more than 80 percent of Hispanic, Asian and white students met proficiency. About 71.8 percent of black students met benchmarks.” *(Kansas City Star, 6/4/05)*
- “One year does not a trend make, but the rise in Wichita public school test scores deserves cheering. The preliminary 2005 state test scores show increases in all but one grade level subject – 10th-grade math. And some of the increases were dramatic, such as a 13-point gain in fifth-grade reading. Also, the achievement gap between white and black students narrowed significantly on half the tests.” *(Wichita Eagle, 6/6/05)*

NCLB Making a Difference in Kentucky



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by seven percentage points
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 12 percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by five percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “Top scoring Kentucky schools with large numbers of poor children succeed because teachers believe all children can learn and they repeatedly test kids’ progress, a new study shows. ... The [Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence] review focused on eight elementary schools that had 50 percent or more low-income students and moderately high state test scores. The schools all had improved scores over time. Those schools also had little differences – fewer than 15 points – in achievement levels between white and African-American students and between low- and middle-income students. ... The study recommended that other schools replicate the characteristics found in the eight successful schools, including high expectations for students and staff. (*Lexington Herald-Leader*, 2/4/05)
- “Every public school is expected to score at least 100 on the state’s proficiency measure by 2014. Johnson Elementary School is a decade early. The school’s Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) score was 101.6 for the two school years from 2002-2004, comfortably ahead of its state goal of 96.8. Johnson is the first Northern Kentucky school and one of only 23 in the state to reach the proficiency goal, a composite of factors including test scores, attendance and writing portfolios.... Johnson has 315 pupils, 18 classroom teachers, seven specialty teachers and eight assistants. The school’s CATS score ranks 13th out of 743 elementary schools in the state.” (*Cincinnati Enquirer*, 2/7/05)
- “The [Jefferson County school] district says it has a plan to improve those deficiencies and others at six schools that rank in the state’s lowest achievement category. It includes strengthening oversight of classroom teaching and council meetings; giving such schools priority in hiring top educators; and ensuring that the schools use strategies to close achievement gaps. ‘We’ve already poured a lot of resources into these schools,’ said Ken Draut, director of planning. ‘This gives us even more oversight and accountability.’ Four of five board members present at a meeting...approved the changes as part of a larger, 205-page districtwide improvement plan.... A team of 24 educators and parents spent 1,300 hours visiting 20 current and former low-performing schools, reading documents and conducting interviews as they examined academics, learning environment and efficiency. Overall, the district met or exceeded state standards on 50 of 55 measures. It got high marks for the quality of its curriculum, for ongoing teacher training and for efforts to boost student attendance. The plan will ‘give us some specific things we can count on from the district,’ said Jan McDowell, principal of Thomas Jefferson Middle School. ... There will be better monitoring of whether schools are using plans for closing achievement gaps.” (*Louisville Courier-Journal*, 6/14/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Louisiana



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by three percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by three percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “Louisiana’s public school students, including those across the metro New Orleans area, generally continued to improve in the classroom, according to the latest results of standardized tests. State education officials released the results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, which compares students’ skills in reading, math, social studies, science, and the use of reference materials with those of a control group representing students nationwide. The tests are taken in the third, fifth, sixth, seventh and ninth grades. Louisiana students in all but one of those grades did better in the 2005 exam than their predecessors did in the previous year. The exception was the state’s third-graders, who collectively scored the same as last year. In the past two years, statewide scores rose in every grade.... In Plaquemines Parish, scores improved in every grade except the ninth, where they stayed flat. In two years, every grade improved, sixth-graders dramatically so.” (*New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 5/17/05)
- “Schools like Rusheon Middle School that have racially diverse enrollments and students from a variety of economic circumstances are turning to extras like Sci-Port’s PASS program to improve test performance among all students, not just white children from middle- to upper-income families. Three years ago, the No Child Left Behind Act focused attention on the performance of poor, minority students. The gap between those children and students from white, wealthy families is declining locally and statewide.... Principals ‘had to give us school improvement plans. They have to tell us why they need a program,’ [Caddo schools superintendent Ollie] Tyler said. ‘We didn’t let them spend the Title I money on anything that wasn’t data-driven.’” (*Shreveport Times*, 3/23/05)
- “Concordia Parish schools sank 3.2 million of federal government dollars into a reading program this year hoping for drastic results. They got them. Cap and gown-clad Hunter Smith, 6, graduated into first-grade at his Monterey school. But less than five months ago, Hunter’s teacher didn’t know if he’d pass kindergarten. The improvement in Hunter’s reading was drastic. ‘It went from bringing home everything with Xs to just bringing home 100s,’ Hunter’s mom Nancy Smith said. Hunter, who told his mom that his brain clicked, improved his score in one Reading First test by 69 points.” (*Natchez Democrat*, 5/27/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Maine

- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available), fourth-grade mathematics achievement increased by nine percentage points. (*Education Trust*)
- “Aiming to improve student performance by highlighting school systems that are doing well, Standard & Poor’s has analyzed the 111 school districts in Maine that serve students in kindergarten through grade 12. According to the findings, nine school systems scored better on the reading and math portions of the Maine Educational Assessment in 2001-02 and 2002-03 than those with similar numbers of low-income students. In northern and central Maine, the ‘outperforming’ school systems are in Bangor, Easton, Guilford and Fort Kent. The other cited schools are in Cape Elizabeth, Cumberland, Falmouth, Scarborough and Yarmouth. ... Pondering Bangor’s recognition...Superintendent Robert Ervin quickly came up with a number of reasons for the school system’s success. Bangor focuses on strong intervention programs in basic skill areas; sets clear performance expectations for every class for every subject; continually evaluates what students know and what the next instructional steps must be; and perpetuates an attitude that ‘all children are capable of high achievement and that no child will fail in our schools,’ he said.” (*Bangor Daily News*, 5/26/05)
- “The [York] school district is making Adequate Yearly Progress in meeting requirements set by the federal No Child Left Behind Act... This year, however, every grade level and subgroup within the school system made AYP. According to [York Superintendent of Schools Henry] Scipione, this places the district above the levels of AYPM [Adequate Yearly Progress Monitor] and Continuous Improvement Priority District Status (CIPDS). Schools rated in the CIPD category must work even harder in order to improve students’ test scores and meet NCLB act requirements.” (*Foster’s Daily Democrat*, 2/17/05)
- “Created through the federal education reform law, No Child Left Behind, Early Reading First programs across the country aim to address the growing concern that many children begin kindergarten without the proper foundational skills to succeed. The Early Reading First project in Belfast, called the Alphabet Soup Curriculum, was established in 2003 by Waldo County Preschool and Family Services as one of 30 pilot programs in the nation – and the only one in New England – to receive a \$2 million No Child Left Behind grant. ... [And] recent studies by the Center for Research and Evaluation at the University of Maine indicate that children in the Waldo County Preschool project have dramatically improved their literacy skills, said [Drew] Sullivan, [project director of the preschool program].... In the fall of 2004, 115 children entering the early reading program were tested and, as a group, were found to have lower than average reading skills. But when they were re-tested in the spring of 2005, they had caught up or even exceeded those children from the first group. The second year’s data showed a 100 percent improvement in overall pre-reading skills. The results are even more remarkable given that 46 percent of children in Early Reading First have been diagnosed as having special needs, and 50 percent are from low-income families. That puts them at risk of being behind in literacy skills, said Sullivan.” (*Bangor Daily News*, 6/20/05)



NCLB Making a Difference in Maryland



- Between 2003 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 14 percentage points
 - Fifth-grade reading proficiency increased by eight percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by seven percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points
 - The Latino achievement gap in fifth grade reading narrowed by six percentage points

(*Maryland Report Card*)
- “There was good news [from this year’s Maryland School Assessment tests] all around at Arbutus Elementary School, where scores jumped significantly in almost every category. ... Eighty-six percent of fifth-graders at the school scored as advanced or proficient readers, compared with last year’s 65 percent. ... There was similar good news in math, where 75 percent of students scored at the advanced or proficient level, compared with last year’s 52.5 percent. ... The school also showed considerable success in closing the achievement gap between some minority children and their white counterparts. Eighty-six percent of African-American students scored at advanced or proficient levels on the reading exam, while 71.4 percent of fifth-graders scored at the proficient rate on the math exam. [Principal Karen] Benny attributed the school’s success on the statewide exam to lots of parental involvement and the effective use of test data.” (*Arbutus Times*, 6/30/05)
- “At Bryant Woods Elementary in Columbia, teachers and administrators see the latest statewide test results as a sign that they are moving closer to their goal of narrowing the academic gap between minority and white pupils. The school – where half of the population is African-American and where many are from low-income families – saw combined scores for third- and fifth-grade black pupils in reading or math increase at least 10 percentage points over a three-year period. And, taken as a group, third- and fifth-grade pupils who receive free or reduced-price lunches have made solid improvements on the Maryland School Assessment since 2003, according to data released last week. Their combined score in reading and math jumped 7 percentage points each to 64 percent and 59 percent, respectively.” (*Baltimore Sun*, 6/13/05)
- “Rock Hall, Maryland, is small-town America. Flanked by the Chesapeake Bay on the west and farmland on the other three sides, it is bright and sparkling.... A few people are working to nurture the nascent tourism trade, but most adults are unemployed.... Sixty-two percent of the children qualify for the federal free- and reduced-price lunch program, which is another way of saying they are poor.... But here’s one thing they can be certain of – they will be taught to read. All but a handful of Rock Hall’s third graders met or exceeded state reading standards last year, and there is a plan in place to get those few who didn’t meet the standards up to standard.... Rock Hall stands out, in fact, as having among the best statistics of schools in the state.” (Achievement Alliance’s *Alliance Alert*, 3/28/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Massachusetts



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by three percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “Boston is touted in education circles as an example of the incremental progress that accompanies stable leadership and systemic reform. Test scores have gradually improved districtwide, and the gap between city and state scores has narrowed. In 2001, 40 percent of Boston’s 10th-graders failed the English language arts portion of the state’s standardized test; by 2004 that figure had dropped to 25 percent. In math, the drop was from 47 percent to 27 percent.” (*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 1/19/05)
- “A federal reading program has helped third-graders at Brayton and Sullivan elementary schools make headway on this month’s MCAS test results. ... ‘We did exceptionally well this year,’ added Superintendent James E. Montepare. ‘Sullivan soared past the state’s reading averages [and] Brayton improved.... It shows that our reading initiatives are finally taking hold, and we’re looking to continue with this great progress.’ ... At Sullivan, 69 percent of the students achieved proficiency, up from 55 percent last year and 46 percent in 2003. Also, 4 percent fell in the warning category this year, compared to 11 percent in 2003. At Brayton, 57 percent of students attained proficiency, up from 47 percent last year and 46 percent in 2003. Also, seven percent fell in the warning level, compared to 11 percent in 2003. For two years, the five-year Reading First program has provided Brayton and Sullivan schools with \$400,000 for reading materials, laptops, computer software, reading consultants and teacher coaching by professors from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst’s school of education’s psychology program.” (*Berkshire Eagle*, 6/23/05)
- “Four South Shore towns are among the state’s 29 ‘outperforming school districts’ in an unofficial ranking announced recently by Standard & Poor’s School Evaluation Services. Hingham, Norwell, Scituate, and Sharon got the distinction because higher percentages of their students scored proficient or better on MCAS reading and math tests than other towns with similar levels of student poverty. (This is Standard & Poor’s first ranking of outperforming districts. The analysis was conducted over the previous two years.) ... In Norwell, Superintendent Donald Beaudette said the town’s students score high on the MCAS tests because the town has good schools and supportive families. ‘We have consistently been performing at a high level,’ Beaudette said. ‘This is no big surprise to us. We’ve done a good job in selecting top-flight teachers and having them share a strong commitment’ to education. To maintain its performance, Norwell’s district often compares itself to the test scores in other towns with similar socioeconomic profiles, Beaudette said.” (*Quincy Patriot Ledger*, 7/6/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Michigan



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by eight percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by four percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “Fourth- and seventh-graders in public schools did better in reading on the MEAP tests this year.... Seventy-three percent of seventh-graders statewide met or exceeded state standards in reading, up from 61 percent in 2004. Fourth-graders meeting or exceeding the standards rose three percentage points to 82 percent.... ‘I am encouraged by the improvement in reading scores,’ State Board of Education President Kathleen Straus said. ‘Reading is the foundation of all learning and I look forward to its impact on greater achievement in other curriculum areas.’” (*Associated Press*, 5/7/05)
- “Bunche Elementary School was once considered one of the worst schools in the [Flint] district. Its test scores at rock bottom, in 2000 it became one of three Flint schools to receive the dreaded ‘reconstitution’ order, which basically meant it had to make major changes – and fast. But this year, by the final week before summer break, Bunche was celebrating... When the new AYP list is released, possibly later this month, Bunche...will have met AYP for the first time in at least five years. ... This year’s fourth-graders were the first group to go through all of the programs [reading library, uniforms, etc.] the Bunche staff started five years ago. The results are clearest in the fourth-grade MEAP tests taken in January: remarkable gains in math, reading and writing and exceeding state and Genesee County averages in all three categories. The scores ranked them in the top five among the 27 elementary schools in the district.” (*Flint Journal*, 7/10/05)
- “Jefferson-Barns, along with three other Westland schools, benefits from a federal grant called Reading First, which is part of the No Child Left Behind legislation.... Parents and principals said even strong readers benefit from the Reading First approach. Teresa Worthy, whose daughter, Stephenie, is in third grade, said she is continually impressed by the vocabulary her daughter is building with the intensive reading instruction. She has also worked as an aide throughout the Wayne-Westland district and can point to the importance of early reading intervention when she sees students struggling when they are older. ‘The time is well-served by spending that much time on reading,’ she said. ‘It’s going to do nothing but help in other subjects.’ ... Early statewide test results show the program is making an impact. For example, third-graders reading at grade level went from 19 percent to 29 percent after the first year of the grant, based on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.... Johnnye Summerville, principal at Elliott Elementary in Westland, said Reading First has forced teachers and staff at their school to really focus on achieving the goal. ‘We’ve taken unnecessary things out of the curriculum,’ she said.... Summerville said students translate the skills they learn through Reading First into other areas of the curriculum, such as science and social studies. ‘Integration is the key word,’ she said.” (*Detroit News*, 3/7/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Minnesota



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by five percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “Nearly 85 percent of eighth-graders passed a key state reading test this spring, an all-time high. Just under three-quarters passed the math exam. The results released by the Minnesota Department of Education bode well for the Class of 2009.... The passing rate on this year’s writing test, given in 10th grade, held steady at 91 percent. ‘The headline here is Minnesota schools are doing a good job of getting their children ready for basic math and basic reading,’ said Tim Vansickle, the director of statewide testing. ‘They must be focusing their efforts in the right places.’ Even stubborn achievement gaps among whites and ethnic minorities narrowed....” (*Associated Press*, 4/4/05)
- “[Minneapolis Superintendent Thandiwe] Pebbles set an ambitious goal of cutting [achievement] gaps by 10 percentage points this school year. The district met that target in the basic skills reading test for Asian and Hispanic students, who posted impressive gains. It also came close in reading for students from families poor enough to qualify for subsidized lunches. ... [Nellie Stone] Johnson’s eighth-graders boosted their passing rate for reading from 23 percent last school year to 49 percent this year. [Lucy Craft] Laney’s pass rate jumped from 41 percent to 66 percent.” (*Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 4/25/05)
- “Five years ago, Dayton’s Bluff was known as the worst school in St. Paul and one of the worst in Minnesota. Located on the eastern side of the city, surrounded by a neighborhood of wood-frame houses where the occasional crack house is easily spotted and two murders were reported in two weeks, nine out of ten children could not read on grade level.... Today the school is very different. In 2004 more than 8 of 10 students at Dayton’s Bluff met or exceeded the state reading standards and the school is poised to post even higher gains for 2005. Classrooms are calm, students work hard, and last year no teacher left to teach at another St. Paul school. Perhaps most striking is that in math, Dayton’s Bluff’s third graders – who are mostly poor African-American and Hmong children – slightly outperformed White Minnesotan third graders. To understand how significant that is, it is helpful to know that White Minnesotan elementary school students outscore White children in the rest of the nation in math. But African American children in Minnesota lag behind not only White Minnesotans but also behind many African American children in the country.... ‘It is so important to dispel the myth that these children can’t learn to high standards,’ says the principal, Von Sheppard.” (*Achievement Alliance’s Alliance Alert*, 5/9/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Mississippi



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by eight percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by five percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points

(Education Trust)
- “[Oak Grove High School] was recognized during the Mississippi Department of Education meeting in Jackson for being one of only four schools in the state and less than 300 schools nationwide named as a No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School. Oak Grove schools also have the unique distinction of being the only school system in the state and one of only a handful nationwide to earn the title all three years since the program began, according to principal Wayne Folkes.... Folkes said Oak Grove earned the award because of its high test scores in recent years. ‘In English, math, social studies and science, our test scores have been in the top 5 percent of the state on a continuous basis and that says a lot for what teachers are doing in the classrooms,’ Folkes said.” *(Hattiesburg American, 2/19/05)*
- “A group of Jackson parents who received training to be effective leaders is putting the finishing touches on projects to improve their children’s schools. Jackson Parents for Public Schools created the parent institute, which began training parents in August over three two-day sessions.... For his project, Don Purvis, whose daughter is a first-grader at Walton Elementary, is formalizing work he already was doing. Purvis is organizing Walton Elementary dads into tutors and mentors for any child who needs an adult, but particularly boys, at the 600-student school. His goal is to improve school test scores not just by remediating, but by addressing other issues children may have that teachers may not be able to address.... ‘You may be able to reach a kid one way that you can’t another,’ he said. ‘We’ll come in and do whatever is necessary to keep the kids actively involved in the education process.’” *(Jackson Clarion-Ledger, 1/3/05)*
- “Students at Northwest Rankin Middle School are getting a little help from new friends who not only have good listening ears but a knack for giving solid advice. Adult mentors are part of a new project this spring from DREAM Inc., which stands for Developing Resources for Education in America. The Pearl-based non-profit group promotes healthy lifestyles and quality of life through education. DREAM is seeking volunteers to donate one hour a week to serve as mentors to about 100 students at Northwest Rankin Middle as part of the Transitions Mentoring Project. The three-year program is funded by more than \$500,000 in grant money from the U.S. Department of Education. Adult mentors are needed to help students get through the turbulent years of adolescence.” *(Jackson Clarion-Ledger, 3/28/05)*

NCLB Making a Difference in Missouri

- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available), the black-white achievement gap in third-grade math narrowed by six percentage points. (*Education Trust*)
- “Younger students saw the biggest academic gains in the first year of West Boulevard Elementary School’s transformation into a model school, Principal Vickie Robb told the Columbia Board of Education last night. ... Second- and third-graders got more reading and literacy help, including small group work and time using a computer program for language development. Robb plans to offer more help for fourth- and fifth-graders next year. ... In fall 2004, no students in kindergarten through second-grade earned top scores on writing assessments. By spring, nearly 50 percent of kindergartners, 20 percent of first-graders and more than 10 percent of second-graders scored in the highest categories. A standardized reading test showed that 76 percent of first-graders were reading at grade level this spring, compared with 37 percent last fall. Seventy-five percent of third-graders who were below grade level made a full year’s gain in reading skills.” (*Columbia Daily Tribune*, 6/15/05)
- “Bel-Ridge Elementary School is among 12 schools statewide recognized by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as a ‘Gold Star’ School. ... Gold Star Schools meet the same criteria as the No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon schools. ... Bel-Ridge students have consistently exceeded the state goals of the number of students scoring in the top two levels of the MAP, which determines AYP status. During the 2002 school year, the goal was set at 8.3%, and Bel-Ridge achieved 12.5%; in 2003, the state’s goal was 9.3%, and Bel-Ridge achieved 23.1%; in 2004, the state’s goal was 10.3%, and Bel-Ridge achieved 53.1%.” (*Normandy School District Advocate*, Spring 2005)
- “The [St. Louis Public Schools] has made some headway at the elementary level, where the percentage of third-graders testing proficient or advanced in communication arts has more than doubled over the past five years. The same is true for fourth-grade math scores. The biggest boosts in both categories came last year. Thirty-nine of the district’s 56 elementary schools met the state’s academic progress goals last year, up from just 22 the year before.” (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 3/6/05)



NCLB Making a Difference in Montana

- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available), the Native American-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points. (*Montana Report Card*)
- “Two Fort Belknap-area schools received achievement awards Thursday from state School Superintendent Linda McCulloch. The Lodge Pole Elementary School on the southern end of the reservation and the Harlem Junior High School just outside the reservation’s northern boundary each received a Certificate of Academic Achievement Reward for Title I Schools. The schools, among six districts to be recognized statewide, were rewarded for working themselves off the state’s below-standards list. ‘These schools have diligently reviewed and revised their plans and efforts to incorporate the most effective, scientifically research-based methods into their teaching,’ McCulloch said as she announced the awards at the Title I Conference at the Heritage Inn in Great Falls. ‘I’d say they have put 110 percent of their hearts, minds and souls into making the improvement they have.’ The schools each will receive an award of \$10,000 to \$25,000, funded by the federal No Child Left Behind program. The exact amounts will be based on the schools’ enrollments.” (*Great Falls Tribune*, 02/25/05)
- “District calculations show Great Falls students scored well above the state average on the NCLB tests. In fourth grade reading, 77 percent of Great Falls students scored proficient or better, compared to a state average of 65 percent. In fourth grade math, 62 percent of Great Falls students scored proficient or better, compared to 45 percent statewide. ... Superintendent Bryan Dunn said he’s proud of the effort and improved success by district students, teachers, and principals. But he noted that the federal law keeps ‘raising the bar higher and higher’ until 100 percent of students at each grade level and demographic subcategory can read and do math at their grade level by 2014.” (*Great Falls Tribune*, 3/15/05)
- “In response to the law, Havre schools have spent a lot of time revamping reading classes. Havre test scores in math have been consistently high, while doing less well in reading. The elementary and middle schools have each implemented a new reading program that targets students at the lowest reading level and that gives all students more semesters of reading class over time. The schools also use the same company’s reading materials in all grades through middle school, so that there is more consistency in teaching methods. Jacki Kannberg, an English and social studies teacher at the middle school, said all the Havre schools are getting back to basics with reading as a result of the law. She’s seen that reflected in the students’ skills, both as they enter and leave the middle school. ... Havre administrators and teachers have reason to be satisfied with the school’s response to No Child Left Behind. Each of the three Havre grades evaluated last year satisfied the law’s three components – attendance, test participation and test performance.” (*Havre Daily News*, 1/21/05)



NCLB Making a Difference in Nebraska



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by five percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by seven percentage points
(*Nebraska Report Card*)
- “Using a [federal] Reading First grant, Gering School System implemented a new direct instruction reading program called Reading Mastery. Instead of focusing on grade levels, the program places students in groups based on their reading level. Tests (that usually take only a few minutes) determine if a student has mastered a level and can move up. ... ‘All of our kindergartners (across the district) left kindergarten reading,’ Gering Public School System’s Reading First Coordinator Andrea Boden added. There were a total of 137 kindergartners in the Gering School System this last year, and out of those 85 of them were reading at Reading Mastery level two. As a result of the new program, ‘Special Education referrals dropped by 80 percent this year. A year ago, we had about 25 referrals; this year we only had five.’ Also, the gap between the different demographic groups has narrowed dramatically with the new reading program. In the winter of 2004 there was a 20-percentage point gap; this winter, the difference in scores had narrowed to one percentage point, according to Boden. ‘That is the purpose of Reading First – to level the playing field.’” (*Gering Courier*, 7/1/05)
- “Just hearing the word ‘math’ can make some kids stick out their tongues in disgust, but not eighth-graders Jazmyn DeBose and Sara Perkins. They’re beginning to like it.... The girls are two of about 10 students in a special course that is helping struggling kids learn math at the Lincoln school district’s Culler Middle School. The class, in its second year, is offered districtwide to students in sixth- through eighth-grades. They give up an elective to take it but still must take their regular math class. Programs like this are part of an effort by schools to ensure that students have the skills needed to advance through high school.... In the Lincoln Public Schools program, there’s no pressure, no grade. Students get to leave the class when their work is equal to a grade of B or above. The district created ‘Math Intervention’ because scores revealed some students had trouble solving equations with fractions and decimals and other such computations. Students who need such programs are found through their assessment data. Teachers use the data to identify which skills their students lack, then focus their lessons to help children become proficient, the federal benchmark of achievement.... Lincoln appears to have had success. ... This year, 275 seventh-graders and 280 eighth-graders took math intervention, down from 370 seventh-graders and 400 eighth-graders last year. Sixth-grade participation is fairly steady: 330 this year and 350 last year.” (*Omaha World-Herald*, 5/22/05)
- “Luis Garcia had been struggling. His grades in four classes were near the failing mark. But with help from an after-school tutoring program, the Schuyler Central High School sophomore has seen his grades improve. For the past two weeks, Garcia has attended tutoring sessions where he can get one-on-one attention from teachers. He said it is simpler to concentrate on his homework and studies while he is at school, unlike at home. ... The tutoring program at Schuyler is in its second year and is designed to help students like Garcia. ... Funded through a U.S. Department of Education grant, the project is geared toward assisting minority groups and economically disadvantaged students. But anyone at the school can take advantage of the program.” (*Columbus Telegram*, 3/10/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Nevada



- “Dan Phillips began his job as principal of Cortney Middle School two years ago under less than ideal conditions. Phillips took over a school on the watch list because its students did not meet...standards on the Iowa Basic Skills Test, an exam comparing Nevada students with students around the country. Seventh-graders taking the test in 2002 failed to meet proficiency by about 10 percent on average in English and less than 5 percent in math. None of the 375 students in the school who were identified by the district as having deficiencies learning English managed to pass the English or the math portion of the exam.... ‘It took me a good two or three months to assess what was going on in classrooms and formulate a plan of action,’ Phillips said. That plan included adopting a strategy called High Quality Sheltered Instruction to streamline objectives, bring consistency in teaching strategies and emphasize literacy and language development.... The same students who failed the Iowa test the year before faced another round of testing in the spring of 2003. But this time, the results were much different. When eighth-graders took the Criterion Reference Test, an exam administered by the state, the school met the proficiency rate in English by more than 10 percent and the math standard by nearly 9 percent. But Phillips said the most surprising statistics came from the students with English deficiencies. The group that didn’t have a single student pass either portion of the exam now passed both sections.” (*Las Vegas Review-Journal*, 2/11/05)
- “In 2002 Reno’s Anderson Elementary School was one of twelve state schools failing to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets twice in a row and one of just two schools to fail AYP in three consecutive years. Only 22% of the school’s 3rd graders were proficient on state reading exams, and a mere 9% of the 6th graders proficient on district reading tests. [Flash forward.] In 2003-2004, the implementation year of the comprehensive school-wide plan, the numbers demonstrated a remarkable turnaround. Anderson surpassed its AYP requirements, increasing the percentage of proficient students by 10%-51% in every subcategory. In fact, the achievement was so high, Anderson joined an elite group of just nine Washoe County elementary schools that earned ‘High Achieving’ status and Anderson was the only Title I school to earn this distinction.” (www.schoolsmovingup.net, 2004)
- “Bracken Elementary School became the first school in Clark County to remove itself from the Needs Improvement List. The primary language of more than two-thirds of Bracken’s students is not English. Principal Kathleen Decker said the school got off the list by focusing on the English Language Learning program.” (*Las Vegas Review-Journal*, 7/29/05)
- “The Agassi College Preparatory Academy’s middle school is the only school in Clark County labeled ‘exemplary’ by the state for exceeding federal standards. ... It achieved that status because students exceeded federal standards by at least four percent, while decreasing the percentage of students who didn’t meet federal standards the previous year by at least four percent.” (*Las Vegas Review-Journal*, 8/3/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in New Hampshire



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Third-grade mathematics proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in third-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points
 - The poor-not poor achievement gap in third-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “Concord School District’s Superintendent Dr. Christine Rath said she can think of several factors that may be making a difference in the 10th-grade NHEIAP [New Hampshire Educational Improvement and Assessment Program] results at Concord High School, which increased from 75 to 86 percent in students scoring basic or above in reading, and also went up in math, from 75 to 79 percent basic or above. Rath said students who are currently in high school were introduced to a new math program initiated when they were in the third- and fourth- grades, which places a greater emphasis on problem-solving skills and understanding mathematical language. ... In reading, Rath believes a combination of many tools, including a district-wide literacy initiative implemented in every school over the past four years, has had an impact in moving 10th-grade students from the novice category into higher levels. The 2004 results show the amount of Concord High School students scoring novice dropped by almost half, down from 24 percent last year to 13 percent this year, and the number of students in the basic category increased from 27 to 40 percent.” (www.ed.state.nh.us, 2004)
- “Barbara Szabunka, the 2005 Elementary School Principal of the Year, has been an educational leader focused on student achievement for more than 13 years. She is the instructional leader at Horne Street School in Dover that meets No Child Left Behind highly qualified status and is a truly family oriented educational institution. One of Barbara’s greatest achievements was in asking difficult questions and demanding high levels of student achievement that far surpassed expectations. As a result, student reading scores climbed with the adoption of a new language arts and reading curriculum.... Under the leadership of Barbara Szabunka, the Horne Street School is a model community of teaching and learning that includes the faculty, children and parents. Parents often comment on the positive feeling they experience at the school.” (*Manchester Union Leader*, 6/5/05)
- “The Newfound Regional School District has begun several programs in recent years to improve literacy among elementary school students. Teachers evaluate children individually three times a year. The elementary schools recently hosted literacy nights where parents of kids in kindergarten through second-grade learned about ways to help their children in areas like word study, comprehension, and writing. Administrators and teachers are planning an elementary summer reading program.... Also, the district is reaching out to children who have not even enrolled there yet. It hosted an early childhood literacy day about a month ago. Families learned about nutrition, safety, and ways to encourage literacy. Kids heard readings and got a book to take home. Instead of the kindergarten screenings this May, children will go through the new ‘Kindergarten Connections’ program, where they will be tested more extensively than in the past and where parents learn about [truly] helping their kids learn to read.” (*Concord Monitor*, 5/23/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in New Jersey



- Between 2003 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading and mathematics proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by six percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points

(New Jersey Report Card)
- “New Jersey’s students made gains on all but one of the state’s seven exams last year, with notable improvements in eighth-grade math and fourth-grade language arts. After several years of poor performance, 61.7 percent of eighth-graders passed the math exam last spring, up from 56.7 percent the year before. Students earning advanced scores on the Grade Eight Performance Assessment, or GEPA, math exam jumped to 20 percent, from 15.9 percent in 2003. For high school juniors, the advanced-scoring rate in math also increased, to 24.5 percent from 19.5 percent.... The progress in math was of particular interest to educators who have been working to improve the state’s lackluster scores.” *(Bergen Record, 2/3/05)*
- “For Isaiah Pitts, passing the High School Proficiency Assessment test means one thing: ‘I can graduate,’ said the 17-year-old special needs student at Brick Township Memorial High School. ... Nearly 70 percent of the 76 special education students who took the literacy portion of the 11th-grade test and 64 percent of the 77 students who took the math portion passed, compared with rates of 44 percent and 21 percent last year. ... Working by rotation, two at a time, the district’s special education teachers staff a Help and Homework Center, providing the students with the help they need. ... Superintendent Thomas L. Seidenberger said he believes that when a school achieves success like Brick Memorial’s, it is in the district’s best interest to discuss the school’s approach to determine whether it can be used elsewhere.” *(Asbury Park Press, 6/23/05)*
- “As state officials seek to repeal New Jersey’s controversial alternative high school test, Newark has proposed its own plan that would maintain the exam but add a serious set of conditions on students. Administrators of New Jersey’s largest school system...unveiled a program that would require thousands of students who take the alternative test to go through tutoring, summer school, and other remedial classes – or face the prospect of not receiving a diploma. Parents or guardians would also be required to sign ‘contracts’ committing their children to the plan. ... ‘Even when we were making the tutoring and summer programs available, we had youngsters who do not attend,’ [Superintendent Marion] Bolden said. ‘We needed to take a much more aggressive course.’” *(Newark Star-Ledger, 5/31/05)*

NCLB Making a Difference in New Mexico



- Between 2003 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by five percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by four percentage points

(Education Trust)
- “Alamo Navajo elementary students have shown ‘remarkable improvement’ on their spring 2005 reading assessments compared to their performance at the beginning of the school year, announced Lynann Barbero, Reading First Program technical advisor. The latest of three reading assessments concluded that the vast majority of kindergarten to third-graders are reading at their grade level and are, theoretically, able to compete with peers of the same grade of any school in the nation.... Three years ago, 60 percent of its elementary students were categorized as needing ‘intensive’ instruction, with only 15 percent of the students reading at the grade level. By May of this year, 50 percent of these same students are at grade level. Alamo is one of eight BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs]-funded schools that have achieved the key goal of more than 50 percent of their students reading at grade level.” *(El Defensor Chieftain, 5/19/05)*
- “[At Carlsbad Municipal Schools, such as] Carlsbad High School and Alta Vista and P.R. Leyva middle schools, ...the majority of students exceeded the state’s No Child Left Behind goals.... Among Carlsbad fourth graders, 61 percent were considered proficient in reading and 72 percent in mathematics in the 2003-04 school year – up from 52 percent and 64 percent in reading and math respectively in the 2002-03 year. The Carlsbad fourth graders did better than state averages, which were 49 percent in reading and 55 percent in mathematics.... Of the juniors at Carlsbad High School, 67 percent were proficient in reading, and 60 percent were proficient in mathematics. Statewide, 55 percent of juniors were proficient in reading, and 45 percent were proficient in mathematics.” *(Carlsbad Current-Argus, 3/13/05)*
- “Five schools – Dolores Gonzales Elementary in Albuquerque, Chimayo Elementary in Espanola, Booker T. Washington Elementary in Las Cruces, Katherine Gallegos Elementary in Los Lunas, and Enos Elementary in Taos – were invited to Santa Fe on Thursday for recognition at a Just for Kids Institute. ... Each of the schools honored at the reception are listed as Title 1, or schools with a high population of poverty. The award was determined from the TerraNova scores from the 2002-03 and 2003-04 school years. The students’ 2003 scores were about 15 percent above the average 50 percent score nationally. The 2004 scores were about 25 percent higher.” *(Valencia County News-Bulletin, 6/25/05)*

NCLB Making a Difference in New York



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade mathematics achievement increased by 11 percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by five percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by 10 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by 10 percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “The number of fourth-graders reading and writing at grade level in New York State surged this year, propelled by striking gains in four large urban districts – including New York City’s. Among the big districts, Rochester had the largest increase, up 14.9 points. Syracuse gained 12 points. Yonkers was up 11.4 points. Statewide, 70.4 percent of fourth-graders met standards, an increase of 8.2 points.” (*New York Times*, 5/19/05)
- “Citywide, the gains on this year’s standardized reading and math tests were so outsized – particularly among fifth graders, who improved 19.5 percentage points in reading and 15.2 percentage points in math – that they left some education experts...skeptical.... But in interviews at P.S. 45 and other schools across the city with large increases in test scores, principals, teachers, parents, and students offered this most basic explanation: they worked hard. Even at these schools, educators and parents said the changes of the past three years had been tumultuous. But they also said the efforts had begun to ‘pay off.’ Principals and teachers described a relentless focus on literacy and math and a ceaseless scrutinizing of tests, quizzes, and writing samples to understand which skills the students had mastered and which lessons had somehow fallen short.” (*New York Times*, 6/13/05)
- “For decades, District 9, a roughly two-square-mile area just north of Yankee Stadium, was a tale of woe common to many places in the city – only more woeful. The local school board had a history of corruption stretching back to the 1970’s. In 1988, an elementary school principal was arrested and charged with possessing cocaine. In 1991, a school board vice president was charged with threatening staff members with a gun. And, for many years, the reading scores were the worst in the city. Six years ago, when New York State introduced a new reading and writing exam, only 17.1 percent of District 9’s fourth graders scored at grade level. Now, District 9 is once again focused on the number 17.1, but for a different reason – it represents the district’s outsized percentage point gain in fourth-grade reading scores. That jump brought the number at grade level to 47.6 percent, still low but hardly last.” (*New York Times*, 5/20/05)
- “Four elementary schools in Rochester were named Thursday to the state’s list of those that showed the most academic improvement during 2004-05 testing. ... School 33, the one with the highest poverty rate [96%], has seen continuous improvement on the English/Language Arts test for six straight years. This year, 81 percent of the fourth-graders passed, up 10 percentage points from the year before and up 62 points since 1999.” (*Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*, 6/1/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in North Carolina



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by six percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by seven percentage points
 - The state's poor-not poor achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
 - The state's poor-not poor achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by seven percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “Irving [Elementary School] was one of two schools in North Carolina to be recognized nationally as a ‘Title I Distinguished School’ by the National Association of State Title I Directors. ... The other N.C. school, Rutherford College Elementary in Burke County, was recognized for overall student achievement. ... Irvin, with 55 percent of its students getting free or reduced-price lunches, seems to be doing something right, based on the numbers. In third-grade reading, the percentage of Hispanic children at or above grade level improved from 12.5 percent two years ago to 63.2 percent in 2004. In third-grade math, the percentage increased from 25 percent to nearly 79 percent in 2004.” (*Charlotte Observer*, 12/9/04)
- “The fourth-grade scores in Brunswick County made the most significant gains this year. The percentage of fourth-grade students who made proficient scores increased from 34.2 percent to 45.4 percent this year. The school district has made a concerted effort to place more reading and writing specialists in its elementary schools this year with its federal Title I funding, as part of the No Child Left Behind Act. At the seventh-grade level, 44.9 percent of Brunswick County students made proficient scores this year, compared with 41.1 percent last year.... ‘Writing is an essential skill for success,’ State Board of Education Chairman Howard Lee said in a news release. ‘North Carolina students and teachers are making progress in this key area, and we expect that a positive trend line will continue for our students in future years.’” (*Myrtle Beach Sun News*, 6/18/05)
- “Amid [the] national criticism of the No Child Left Behind Act, Rockingham County School leaders present and future say the federal legislation has had a positive effect on boosting student test scores.... During [NCLB’s] three-year span, Rockingham County Schools has seen an overall jump in the percentage of its students who test at grade level. The achievement gap between black and white students has narrowed and the district’s four-year graduation rate has increased from 58 percent to 67 percent. District superintendent Walter Bromenschenkel said he credits those academic improvements in large part to the accountability measures the No Child Left Behind Act has imposed on all classrooms.... ‘We have embraced that initiative,’ he said. ‘It’s not about reducing local and state controls on education. It’s about forcing schools to be more attentive to the product for which they’re charged, and that’s quality education.’” (*Eden Daily News Online*, 5/22/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in North Dakota



- “The Napoleon School District, in south central North Dakota, was one of 36 nationwide that was cited as a case study for the [Center for Education Policy] report released Wednesday. The report also includes surveys of education officials from 49 states and 314 school districts.... [Napoleon Superintendent Jon] Starkey said the district has made some changes to its curriculum under the No Child Left Behind law, with some positive results. ‘The reality is that we’ve had to deal with it. I’d say for the teachers in Napoleon, it’s made them better,’ he said. ‘And it’s raised student achievement.’” (*Associated Press*, 3/24/05)
- “Minot State [University]’s Diagnostic and Remediation Center was started last October to give schools a closer [supplemental education services] option, said Joyce Hoadley, the center’s director. During the fall semester, about 20 tutors, mostly junior- and senior-year elementary education majors, helped 50 New Town students with reading and math. Besides giving school children a closer tutoring center, it lets university students practice what they learned in their education classes. Tutors develop lesson plans tailored to a student’s weaknesses, and teach one-on-one or in small groups, Hoadley said. Working in the center is not required, and tutors don’t get college credit, but the jobs are paid. The program is already using substitute teachers to augment its student tutors. ... The [Selfridge] school district is spending its supplemental services money on its own three-week summer program. About 15 students will spend their mornings working on reading and math, along with an occasional field trip.” (*Associated Press*, 6/6/05)
- “Bismarck State College is hosting the first of three summer institutes to help physics teachers in rural communities upgrade qualifications to meet mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act. The training provides hands-on instruction in new technological and pedagogical approaches for middle or high school teachers to teach physics. BSC is one of 30 regional sites in the United States funded by the National Science Foundation to host the Physics Teaching Resource Agents Summer Institute. Instruction includes use of a calculator and computer software for data acquisition and analysis, video analysis and simulation.... The NSF grant allows each teacher a stipend, free room and board, travel reimbursement and supplies used in the classroom. Participants can earn two graduate credits each year from Minot State University for a \$100 fee and attendance at a one- to two-day follow-up session during the school year.” (*Bismarck Tribune*, 6/3/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Ohio



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by 21 percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by six percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by 10 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by four percentage points

(Ohio Report Card)
- “Reading Central Community Elementary is so academically successful that the state is paying researchers to study how they do it.... More than half the students qualify for free or low-price lunches. Many come from homes without computers or phones. Yet the school has achieved a statewide Excellent rating. This school and 12 others in Greater Cincinnati are among 102 rated by the Ohio Department of Education as Schools of Promise. They’re known for their successes in closing the achievement gap among students from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic backgrounds.... ‘It’s clear to us that achievement is possible, regardless of where you live, the color of your skin or the size of your parents’ bank account,’ said Mitch Chester, assistant state schools superintendent.... Connie Garafalo, principal at Reading Central Community Elementary, recalled decades ago when teachers went only by their gut instincts that a student wasn’t learning. ‘Unfortunately, that’s kind of why we’re in the situation that we are in now with accountability. Show me on paper. We’ve got teachers now making graphs, graphing students, progress monitoring. It’s awesome to see. Everybody’s doing this,’ she told a group of visiting educators.” *(Cincinnati Enquirer, 5/16/05)*
- “At Gilbert A. Dater High School, a Cincinnati Public School with a 47 percent disadvantaged population, the school’s graduation rate last year was 92 percent, in a district where the graduation rate is 72 percent. More than 90 percent of Dater seniors went on to college last year.... ‘We really are kind of a throwback to the 1950s,’ principal Beverly Eby said. ‘We are truly a high school that people remember what a high school should be, where everybody knows everybody, where a principal actually knows who you are and goes to your events. We set up mission statements that weren’t just words. ... We have no throwaway kids here. That’s the important thing. It’s really one of the biggest things that’s made us successful. All staff people, not just teachers, have a vested interest, from the custodians to the secretaries.’” *(Cincinnati Enquirer, 5/16/05)*
- “Over 100 Wood County students are taking part in the first phase of a pilot program that gives youngsters with difficulties in reading or mathematics the opportunity to improve their skills through live, online tutoring sessions. Those who complete the 40 one-hour lessons get to keep the new computer. Nationwide, three agencies were selected to participate in the five-year, \$5.3 million project funded by the federal Department of Education.” *(Toledo Blade, 6/2/05)*

NCLB Making a Difference in Oklahoma



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade reading proficiency increased by seven percentage points
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 13 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 five percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by 11 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The American Indian-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The American Indian-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by four percentage points

(Oklahoma Report Card)
- “Two years ago, [Hutchinson’s] Lincoln Elementary School was named a school ‘in need of improvement’ because of low state assessment test scores and its impoverished neighborhood. But recently, Lincoln students, staff and teachers were told the school was one of 25 finalists for the National School Change Award, given to schools that go from underperforming to exemplary.... New teaching strategies, adult volunteers and school leadership are being credited for the school’s increased student achievement, higher assessment scores and improved student social skills. ... The preliminary results for 2004-05 show Lincoln scoring 95 percent proficient or better in reading and 89 percent in math – almost 30 percentage points higher than the state-mandated benchmark.” *(Associated Press, 5/27/05)*
- “The [Tulsa] school district reported its highest percentage of fifth-graders scoring [proficient] in math and reading during the last five years. The percentage of Tulsa fifth-graders who demonstrated proficiency in math has increased steadily from 58 percent in 2001 to 75 percent in 2005. This year’s gain was seven percentage points. In reading, 70 percent of fifth-graders in the district demonstrated proficiency, compared with 66 percent in 2004. ... Tulsa district officials pointed to significant gains in fifth-grade scores at Anderson, Bryant and Mark Twain elementaries. ... Anderson’s scores have rocketed from among the district’s lowest to among its highest in the past three years. Its fifth-grade math proficiency rose from 20 percent in 2003 to 80 percent last year and now 88 percent. Its reading proficiency jumped from 27 percent in 2003 to 73 percent last year and 94 percent this year – the third-highest percentage in the district.” *(Tulsa World, 6/9/05)*
- “In a demographic shift that is ahead of the state as a whole, but representative of many small towns in the region, Hispanics make up 27 percent of the total enrollment in the 800-student Hennessey school district, up from 18.2 percent in the 2000-01 school year. ... In response to those changes...the district is one of four in Oklahoma – and one of the few rural school districts in the region – to launch a two-way language immersion program.... And the effort is paying off: the district’s English language learners have surpassed state and federal goals for English proficiency, and English language learners in the program are faring better...on standardized tests than other minority children in the school’s traditional classes.” *(Education Week, 5/4/05)*

NCLB Making a Difference in Oregon



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by nine percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by six percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by 10 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by five percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by 11 percentage points

(Oregon Report Card)
- “White City Elementary students and teachers have discovered something important — that when the whole school works together, every child can master reading and math. A schoolwide reading program with lots of work in small groups and a focus on improving student attendance and behavior has helped boost performance on state tests — and attracted officials’ attention, Principal Jay Sparks said.... In the past two years, White City Elementary has earned a ‘strong’ rating on the Oregon school report card and met achievement targets under the federal No Child Left Behind education law. It’s accomplished that despite the fact that 76 percent of its students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, a federal measure of poverty, Sparks reported. Of its 467 students, 35 percent are Hispanic and 30 percent are learning English as a second language. Nearly half of the students come from single-parent or blended-family households. About 30 percent of the kids move during the year. ‘Home life is not good for some of these kids,’ said Kim Saiz, an instructional assistant. ‘School is a safe place. We don’t just care about the scores; we care about the kids.’... ‘It’s the schoolwide things that make the difference,’ Sparks said. ‘It takes the whole team.’” (Medford Mail Tribune, 3/14/05)
- “The Hillsboro School District is proposing an ambitious five-year road map for governing itself, emphasizing restored community trust, academic achievement and outreach programs to Latino students. ‘It’s a real opportunity for renewal,’ said Superintendent Jeremy Lyon, who is finishing his first year in Hillsboro. ... One of the two overarching objectives is: ‘All students will meet or exceed district and state standards by 2011.’ The goal puts the district three years ahead of the No Child Left Behind Act.” (Oregonian, 6/2/05)
- “Four years ago, Southeast Portland’s Hosford Middle School was tanking. Neighborhood families opted for other schools. Long-standing teaching methods didn’t work for the school’s increasingly low-income and ethnically diverse population. The school had lost 40 percent of its enrollment in just six years. Test scores hit bottom, with less than a third of students meeting academic benchmarks. The school’s veteran teaching force made a decision: Rather than see their school close or have outsiders dictate how to fix the problem, they would remake their school’s structure, schedule and teaching methods. Although experienced teachers would have to change their ways, they agreed to consider any change that would deliver results. By and large, it worked. Tonight, Hosford will be singled out by State Superintendent Susan Castillo as the only ‘promising’ star among Oregon middle schools at a gala Closing the Achievement Gap awards dinner. ... The single most dramatic step behind Hosford’s success is a new approach to teaching reading and writing. Students from across all three grade levels are grouped according to their reading and writing skills. For two consecutive class periods per day, they get highly structured literacy lessons pitched right to their level.” (Oregonian, 4/29/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Pennsylvania



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade reading proficiency increased by six percentage points
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by nine percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by four percentage points

(*Pennsylvania Report Card*)
- “This year, Philadelphia schools began measuring test performance over time. For example, officials look at how 2002 second graders did in 2003 as third graders, in 2004 as fourth graders, and in 2005 as fifth graders. And the results, said Paul Vallas, the district’s chief executive officer, show that students improved from 2002 to 2005 in 23 of 26 categories, including reading, language arts, and math. Percentage point increases reached double digits in 12 categories and more than 20 percent in three categories, Vallas said. Results were based on the TerraNova exam, a standard test. ‘I think it shows that the reforms are working. Clearly, the move to standardize the curriculum and to increase the amount of instructional time on task is having an effect,’ Vallas said, noting the district’s summer school, after-school, and Saturday programs.” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 6/22/05)
- “In 2002, Burgwin Elementary School in Pittsburgh – where more than 83 percent of students receive free or reduced-price lunch and, therefore, are considered low-income – was in crisis. It had been earning some of the worst test scores in the state. Teachers’ morale was suffering. The vast majority of fifth-grade students were graduating to sixth grade without being proficient in reading, writing and math. So when principal Cindi Muehlbauer took over in fall 2002, she brought a no-excuses attitude, a dream that Burgwin’s students could become exceptional scholars and a plan she hopes will boost achievement for years to come. ... The result, teachers say, is a school that has been ‘100 percent transformed.’ Nearly all the kindergarten and first-grade students can read and do math proficiently, their teachers say, and the older children’s test scores have leaped since 2002. Math scores rose from 5.9 percent of students being considered proficient in 2002 to 34.1 percent the following year to 35.3 percent last year. Reading scores rose from 7.9 percent of students being considered proficient in 2002 to 22.7 percent the following year to 29.4 percent last year. In all but last year’s math score, which met state standards, the results fell short of state thresholds but still were considered passing because they improved so dramatically.” (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 6/21/05)
- “An honors program for minority ninth-graders and grade-level teacher teams are two approaches that Scranton High will use to close the achievement gap between whites and minorities. The school is creating its own version of the successful strategies observed during a state-sponsored trip to Pompano Beach High School in Florida over the winter.... A major finding was that many low-achieving students were not finishing homework because of poor study habits and organization. To address that problem, the district has started ‘structured’ study skills classes. Teachers supervise students as they work on homework, making sure they finish certain tasks and receive help.” (*Scranton Times & Tribune*, 6/1/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Rhode Island



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by four percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by seven percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by seven percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by five percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by three percentage points
(*Education Trust*)
- “The state Department of Education has hired eight outside experts to go into Providence’s six troubled middle schools and two high schools to help them improve student achievement. ... These so-called turn-around specialists will not take over the schools or replace the existing principals, nor will they tell the schools how to improve. Rather, they will work with the school’s staff to identify weaknesses in discipline, instruction or teacher training, then come up with ways to solve the problems. ... Perry Middle School will serve as a model for the new turn-around team. In January 2004, Perry became the first school in Rhode Island to be classified as needing corrective action. ... Three new principals or deans worked closely with a group of committed teachers to improve school climate. They brought in an outside expert to help them deal with disciplinary issues. Working together, faculty and staff began an extensive after-school program to give struggling students a chance to catch up.” (*Providence Journal*, 7/8/05)
- “By conventional standards, [Providence’s] Sullivan School might hardly be thought to have the makings of success, with eight out of 10 students living in poverty and two out of three of their mothers lacking a high school diploma. However, a recent report of the state’s school accountability program says that it is exactly these students – all 219 of them – who are ‘strongly developing problem-solving skills’ and ‘understand the power of words.’ ... Between 2000 and 2004, achievement in most categories tested by the state has risen dramatically. For example, the proportion of students who achieved or exceeded standards for basic mathematical skills doubled, from 23 percent to 57 percent...” (*Providence Journal*, 6/2/05)
- “Rhode Island and 12 other states have signed onto a broad effort to transform the traditional high school, raising the bar on academics while ensuring that more students remain engaged long enough to graduate. ... This year, 1,100 eighth- graders in Providence – more than half of a class of 2,000 from nine middle schools – have signed on as Rhode Island Scholars, up from about 700 during the initial effort last spring, according to Hillary Salmons, vice president of the Education Partnership. In Portsmouth, there are 130 Rhode Island Scholars out of a class of 263. In West Warwick, 89 of 299 have signed up, and in Westerly, 122 out of 297 eighth-graders have pledged to ask for the most rigorous courses. Businessmen and women and professionals, working with school officials in each of the school districts, are expected to develop their own approaches to maintaining students’ commitment to a challenging curriculum, Salmons said, and helping those falling behind to catch up.” (*Providence Journal*, 3/4/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in South Carolina

- Between 2003 and 2004 (latest data available), fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by six percentage points. (*South Carolina Report Card*)
- “Hundreds of hours of after-school tutoring sessions, parent-teacher meetings and monitoring students’ progress have paid off for Charleston County’s Orange Grove Elementary School. The West Ashley school, along with 131 others across the state, has reduced the academic achievement gap between its white students and at least one of its historically under-achieving groups, which include blacks, Hispanics and students who receive free or reduced lunches, according to a study released Friday. ... Orange Grove’s black students, about 60 percent of the school’s population, scored at a higher level than a majority of students statewide on the math portion of the 2004 Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test. It’s the third consecutive year the school has been recognized for some of its students’ high achievement.” (*Charleston Post and Courier*, 6/11/05)
- “The S.C. Education Oversight Committee will recognize five York County schools on Monday as being among the state’s best for improving 2004 test scores in at least one disadvantaged demographic group. In Rock Hill, Rosewood Elementary, and in Clover, Bethany, Bethel and Griggs Road elementary schools and Crowders Creek Elementary and Middle School, were singled out for ‘reducing the achievement gap.’ Out of 833 elementary and middle schools looked at statewide, 132 will be recognized for improving scores for black children and those living in poverty on the 2004 English/language arts and math sections of the PACT test, a standardized test given each spring to S.C. students in grades three through eight. ... In 2004, Bethany’s students on free and reduced lunch tested in the top 25 percent of children achieving the highest level – proficient and advanced – in English/language arts across the state. Bethel and Griggs Road students on assisted lunch did the same in math, while black students at Crowders Creek scored in the top 25 percent of those achieving basic and above levels in math across the state.” (*Rock Hill Herald*, 6/11/05)
- “The federal Department of Education cited Greenville Technical College’s Charter High School as one of the top 15 charter schools among the nation’s more than 3,300.... Officials signed out the program that allows students to take college-level courses for credit while still in high school. Some will receive high school diplomas and college associate degrees concurrently.... All tenth-graders passed the standardized language arts test, and the school had the second best math scores in South Carolina, trailing only a Charleston magnet school.” (*Greenville News*, 5/6/05)



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)

NCLB Making a Difference in Tennessee



- Between 2003 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - K-8 reading and mathematics proficiency increased by three percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in K-8 mathematics narrowed by four percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in K-8 reading narrowed by three percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in K-8 mathematics narrowed by three percentage points

(*Tennessee Report Card*)
- “Hamilton County School Board Chairman Chip Baker and Superintendent Jesse Register have issued a brief year-end summation that certainly deserves consideration by all good residents. In brief, they report: academic achievement continued to trend upward for the third year, as measured by state tests; the number of schools meeting all No Child Left Behind requirements increased from 40 to 53; and Chattanooga is the only mid-size city in our country that can claim major achievement initiatives by multi-million dollar private investments at all levels – elementary, middle and high school. ‘These kinds of achievements,’ Mr. Baker and Dr. Register emphasized, ‘do not occur overnight and are the result of years of work by teachers and school leadership teams.’” (*Chattanooga Times Free Press*, 5/28/05)
- “Metro [Nashville’s] school-level achievement results released Tuesday show double-digit gains in many schools, including some of the city’s most challenged. Principals and parents have been calling non-stop since Metro released positive district test scores last week to find out how their individual schools fared. ... Fifty-two Metro schools increased 10 percent or more in reading, while schools like Bellshire, Glengarry, and Warner increased by 24 percent or more. Madison, a K-12 school for students receiving special education services, had six times the percentage of students testing proficient in science and tripled the percentage proficient in reading. ... District leaders are excited about gains made by lower socio-economic schools, some of which outperformed their higher socio-economic peers. Bordeaux Enhanced Option, for example, has 87 percent of students economically disadvantaged and posted more than 20 percent gains in science and social studies. Kirkpatrick Enhanced Option, with 96 percent of students economically disadvantaged, increased 17 percent in reading and math, 19.3 percent in science, and 20 percent in social studies.” (*Nashville City Paper*, 6/29/05)
- “Good news, indeed, for the Smithson-Craighead Academy in the latest TCAP scores. Nashville’s first charter school had struggled the first year, and some were predicting its demise. But the latest scores show that the hard-working teachers and administrators at Smithson-Craighead are making a difference and their approach to teaching at-risk children is working. The school was chartered to help children who had been in low-performing schools. The first year was rocky, with test scores not showing that the school was making a tremendous difference. ... This year Smithson-Craighead’s success is clear. The scores show that the percentage of students testing proficient jumped 28 percent in reading, 24 percent in math, 19.7 percent in science, and 20 percent in social studies.” (*Nashville City Paper*, 7/5/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Texas



- Between 2003 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by three percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 11 percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by five percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade mathematics narrowed by seven percentage points

(Texas Report Card)
- “More than 40 percent of the students in Texas public schools are Hispanic. ... About 80 percent of Hispanics passed the reading test this year, compared with about 60 percent in 2003 [increase of 20 points]. The percentage of Anglo students who passed this year was 93 percent, up from 85 percent in 2003 [increase of eight points].” (Houston Chronicle, 6/17/05)
- “Once mostly rural and white, the Aldine Independent School District is now mostly urban, Hispanic, and poor. Aldine has succeeded in moving Spanish-speaking students into English-speaking classes at an earlier age and assuring that regular and bilingual teachers teach the same lessons. Data also drive almost every decision the district makes. Administrators make extensive use of a data analysis program called Triand that allows them to break down test results and pinpoint weaknesses in the curriculum. ... Triand gives teachers and administrators detailed reports on the specific questions that students missed on state exams. At the classroom level, the reports show teachers which skills students need to review. When analyzed schoolwide or districtwide, patterns in the data show weaknesses in the curriculum and which schools need more resources.” (Dallas Morning News, 6/13/05)
- “Look at Julia Frazier Elementary School, which earned another coveted exemplary rating. Frazier consistently ranks among the elite of Texas elementary schools, even though it sits in one of Dallas’ poorest neighborhoods. If Frazier can succeed year after year, so can other schools. Learn from success. Frazier has benefited from an excellent preschool program, strong principals, stable teaching corps and devoted corporate support. Texas Instruments employees long have helped Frazier students develop their skills.” (Editorial, Dallas Morning News, 8/5/05)
- “The Thrall school district in Williamson County saw substantial improvement over last year, when 55 percent of fourth-graders passed math. As fifth-graders, 93 percent passed the test, said Denise Carter, principal of Thrall Elementary. She attributed the gains to intensive teacher training, student tutorial sessions and a sharper focus on students’ weak spots. ‘It was really knowing the kids, knowing what each kid needed and working to get them what they needed,’ Carter said. ‘The hard work shows.’” (Austin American-Statesman, 6/10/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Utah



- “Until the No Child Left Behind federal program, Utah’s public schools weren’t truly accountable. Utah has had statewide testing programs for many years, but the test results were little but a snapshot of academic performance. There were no carrots to reward top-performing schools or schools that have demonstrated substantial improvement. Likewise, there were no penalties for schools that perform poorly, aside from the sting of making the test results public. ... [I]t is difficult to argue with the academic progress that has been made in Utah under NCLB. Many schools that had traditionally had poor scores on statewide assessments met the challenge presented by the AYP standards. School administrators and faculty committed to do whatever it took to improve academic achievement and student success. As one principal in the Salt Lake School District explained, ‘It’s not as if we weren’t working hard; we [just] might not have been working as smart as we needed to be.’” (Editorial, *Deseret Morning News*, 4/10/05)
- “Some schools have made extraordinary efforts to improve academic achievement and school climate. For example, Ogden’s Central Middle School teachers and administrators visited children at home, asked parents to sign compacts with the school to help children do well in class and held regular faculty meetings to identify students who weren’t showing up to school. That broader commitment to students and the school community means Central Middle School is working its way off the ‘school improvement list.’” (*Deseret Morning News*, 4/10/05)
- “We [school officials] acknowledge that there are demographic challenges in West Valley, such as non-English speakers, immigrant children with no previous formal education, poverty and high crime rates. We have been focusing our expertise on applying proven interventions to mitigate these challenges and have been making measurable progress. ... The bottom line: Students in West Valley schools have improved to the point that their schools received only 13 academic progress ‘no’s’ out of an overall 1,040 possible scores. Our minority students are closing the academic gap between themselves and non-minority students. We’re helping them do it in West Valley City and across the district in a variety of ways:
 - Each elementary school has one or more reading specialists working with first-graders not yet reading at grade level.
 - Four Reading First schools (one in WVC) receive federal funds to help all K-3 students become proficient readers through scientifically based approaches and assessments.
 - The best way to close the education gap is to narrow it early. We have placed at least one preschool classroom in every Title I elementary school, increased sessions from 143 to 222 this year, and we target kindergarten readiness among our children of poverty.
 - More than 1,100 Granite District teachers have received their English as a Second Language endorsements.
 - Schools have established literacy programs for parents. Parents who read are better resources for children learning to read.
 - ‘After school’ programs provide tutoring in math and reading at the elementary level, and secondary students have ‘credit recovery’ options to make up courses necessary for high school graduation.”(*Salt Lake Tribune*, 6/11/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Vermont



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade mathematical concepts proficiency increased by eight percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematical problem-solving proficiency increased by 18 percentage points
(*Vermont Report Card*)
- “Students who are native speakers of languages other than English in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont will soon begin taking a new standardized test designed to prove their understanding of English is improving. ... The test was designed by a 10-state consortium and has oral and written components. ... Michael Hock, testing director for the Vermont Department of Education, said the testing will help improve the services provided those very students. ‘We haven’t had much good data in the past to be able to determine whether those students are making progress,’ Hock said. ‘We’re hoping that this will provide information on individual students.’” (*Associated Press*, 1/19/05)
- “Catamount Elementary School and the Concord School are making progress toward getting off the state watch list for underperforming schools. The Bennington elementary school and the K-12 school in Concord were two of the 39 schools reported to have not made adequate yearly progress, according to the state. On Thursday, after the schools had submitted updated information, the schools learned they had met the standards for yearly progress. The updated data showed Concord’s graduation rate exceeded the required 75 percent. Test results at Catamount showed the school had met the standard in English/language arts for low-income students. Bennington Supervisory Union Superintendent Wes Knapp said he was ‘thrilled’ because the school had the highest rate of free and reduced lunch students in the district. The teachers have been really committed ‘to bringing these students up to speed,’ he said.” (*Associated Press*, 12/17/04)
- “As principal Joyce Stone tells it, Colchester High School hit rock bottom seven years ago. Test scores were sinking. Six students were expelled. Fights and bomb threats put everyone on edge. ‘We ended the year with metal detectors and a lockdown,’ said Stone, who was then assistant principal. ‘It was a very, very low point for this school.’ Since then the suburban school on Laker Lane has embarked on a makeover – dropping its ninth and 10th grade honors program in favor of teaching to students’ different academic abilities within the same class – that might provide lessons for other school districts in an era when both national and state leaders are pressuring high schools to better educate students.... Between 1998 and 2004, reading proficiency scores on state-mandated standardized tests nearly doubled. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard in solving math problems increased from 16 to 48 percent. The dropout rate has fallen from six to less than one percent and expulsions are rare.... Also, as Colchester de-emphasized ‘tracking,’ it opened the door wider to Advanced Placement [AP] classes. Enrollment increased in these courses significantly, and hit 212 students this year. ‘We have several kids in AP classes who would have been in the lower track, without a doubt,’ [English teacher Bill] Rich said.” (*Burlington Free Press*, 3/22/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Virginia



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fifth-grade reading proficiency increased by seven percentage points
 - Fifth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by 10 percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by eight percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by 11 percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade reading narrowed by seven percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fifth-grade mathematics narrowed by four percentage points

(*Virginia Report Card*)
- “A four-year assessment of Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) scores shows that the achievement gap between black and white students in the Newport News Public Schools has grown smaller in core subject areas. An analysis of scores from 2001 to 2004 indicates that the performance gap between black and white students on SOL tests narrowed an average of six percentage points in the elementary schools, eight percentage points in the middle schools and nearly six percentage points at the high schools. ... An independent audit released last summer cited the school system for failing to take steps to reduce the racial achievement gap. Since then, officials have strengthened literacy and math instruction, monitored student progress more regularly and encouraged more students to take SAT preparation courses. ... Superintendent Marcus Newsome noted that black students are catching up to white students academically while both groups are showing improvement, a trend that officials want to continue.” (*Newport News Daily Press*, 7/1/05)
- “Over six years, [Norfolk’s] Lake Taylor’s pass rates increased in several subjects, including as much as 60 percentage points in algebra. ... ‘Our curriculum includes SOL standards, but it also includes other things above and beyond [Standards of Learning],’ [Superintendent of Schools Denise K.] Schnitzer said. Ultimately, she said, the [Standards of Learning] have been helpful to Norfolk by reinforcing the notion that all children can learn. ‘We’ve always served some students well,’ she said. ‘We’re serving more students better now.’” (*Virginian-Pilot*, 5/8/05)
- “Large urban schools...showed gains in math and reading scores since 2003, especially in elementary grades, according to a report released by the Council of the Great City Schools. ... One of the success stories cited was the Richmond system, where the rate of improvement was greater than for Virginia students generally in math and English tests given in the third-, fifth- and eighth-grades. Deborah Jewell-Sherman, the city’s school superintendent, said the system set academic targets that were ‘far more aggressive than anything the district had experienced in the past.’ Richmond’s curriculum was brought into line with state requirements, she said. Teachers were retrained so they understood what needed to be taught. ... Classes are constantly being assessed. Students who are falling behind are assigned to morning, afternoon and Saturday remedial programs.” (*Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 3/29/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Washington



- Between 2002 and 2004 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by nine percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by eight percentage points
 - The black-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by four percentage points
 - The Hispanic-white achievement gap in fourth-grade reading narrowed by three percentage points
(*Washington Report Card*)
- “The image of Bellevue as a haven for white, affluent families still lingers around Puget Sound. But the reality is that more than 60 languages are spoken in Bellevue’s schools. Nearly 18 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.... The district has consistently made national headlines for its rigor – with more than 80 percent of students now taking college-level courses before they graduate. There are [also] signs of progress for Latino students, who account for about eight percent of the district population. Nearly 60 percent of the Latino graduates last year took college-level courses. The number has shot up significantly in the past several years.” (*Seattle Times*, 5/26/05)
- “Elementary schools in Kennewick, Pasco and Richland are being rewarded financially for narrowing the achievement gap between minority and white students. State Superintendent Terry Bergeson on Friday announced \$736,000 in cash will be awarded to 55 schools and 12 districts that showed continuous academic improvement by minority students. ... ‘They are making important strides in closing the performance gap between white students and their minority peers, which is an essential focus of our work in public education,’ Bergeson said in announcing the awards. ... At Westgate, Principal Dorothy Fanning said her school has logged an improvement in the achievement gap since the 2001-02 school year. The school, which houses the district’s English as a Second Language program, has about 400 students. Minorities comprise 48 percent of the population, and Fanning said 50 percent speak a language other than English at home. ... The results have been significant. In 2001-02, 25 percent of Hispanic fourth-graders passed the WASL [Washington Assessment of Student Learning] while 34 percent of the overall population received passing marks. By 2003-04, 78.9 percent of Hispanics passed, while 70 percent of the overall population achieved as highly.” (*Tri-City Herald*, 6/20/05)
- “When Principal Gary Tubbs opened The New School in South Seattle three years ago, he expressed his wish for a successful school by coloring in one eye of a daruma doll, a Japanese good luck charm. Tubbs has since colored in the doll’s other eye to celebrate a dream realized: a school where students take charge of their own learning; where teachers talk openly and frequently about what’s working and what’s not; and where more than 88 percent of second-graders, most of them poor and minority, were reading at grade level this spring, up from 44 percent last fall. ... The New School, designed to be a small, pre-K-8 school, boasts class sizes of 17 students, a longer school year, home visits by school staff and a full-day pre-kindergarten program. Accommodating preschool through second-grade until this fall, when it adds third-grade, the school has a wait list. ... Teachers are expected to continuously evaluate students’ growth through class work, and each teacher assesses his or her students in December and March before second-graders take the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) in April. All the test results are used for improvement.” (*Seattle Times*, 7/5/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in West Virginia



- “The State Board recognized a need for professional development in the area of reading and as a result it launched ‘Reading for All,’ which focuses on three phases: Learn to Read for grades K-4; Read to Learn for grades 5-12; and Read to Succeed which continues through adulthood. The state board also created the West Virginia Reading Academy. It has provided intensive professional development in reading to K-3 principals and educators for more than five years. During its first four years, approximately 500 educators representing 100 schools have participated. One year later, the Department of Education’s Reading Cadre was formed. Within a few months, this group of dedicated teachers delivered reading professional development to Regional Education Service Agencies, counties and schools throughout West Virginia. The training was tailored to the reading needs of the particular county or school served.... This month [West Virginia] wrapped up the third annual Reading Research Symposium, which sparked...educators’ minds with new research on effectively teaching our children to learn to read. Wayne Elementary received the 2003 Exemplary Reading Program Award from the International Reading Association and the West Virginia Reading Association. More recently, West Virginia was one of only two states in the nation to receive the prestigious International Reading Association’s Five Star Policy Award by demonstrating that it guarantees quality education and student achievement by implementing excellent reading policies, programs and initiatives.” (*Charleston Daily Mail*, 3/28/05)
- “When former Principal Carol Thom decided to give single-sex classes a try at Stonewall Jackson Middle School last fall, she was hopeful the experiment would increase student achievement. Thom, now the director of professional development for Kanawha County schools, says preliminary results have been so promising she’s tracking the school’s progress for her dissertation and working to develop teacher training programs for other schools. ... After only one semester, the number of the school’s 600 students making A’s jumped from 30 to 36 percent. At the same time, the number making D’s and F’s declined 10 percent, from 24 to 14 percent. ... Stonewall Jackson, in a racially mixed area on Charleston’s West Side where about 70 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, was the first public school in West Virginia to segregate students by gender. Students in grades six through eight are separated for classes in English, math, science and social studies. Other courses, including art, physical education and band, are mixed. Next year, the single-sex concept will be expanded to health and gym.” (*Charleston Gazette*, 6/19/05)
- “Earlier this week, Kanawha school board members lauded Sissonville [High School] Principal Calvin McKinney for mandating that students take math and science courses. ... With 140 seniors this school year, and one of the lowest graduation rates in the county, the school has all but six students enrolled in math and 100 percent enrollment in science. That’s the highest percentage of all eight high schools in Kanawha County. ... Sissonville also had the second lowest number of graduates in remedial college courses in 2003 behind George Washington High.” (*Charleston Gazette*, 12/9/04)

NCLB Making a Difference in Wisconsin



- “A record 84.7 percent of third-graders in Wisconsin public schools scored as proficient or advanced in reading this year, the state Department of Public Instruction said this month. The agency said the percentage was up 2.5 points from 2004 and 22.6 points from 1998, the first year Wisconsin Reading Comprehension Test scores were reported at the minimal, basic, proficient and advanced proficiency levels. Only 8.8 percent of students scored at the minimal and basic proficiency levels this year, compared with 25.9 percent in 1998. ... The percentage of black third-graders rated proficient or advanced increased from 46 percent in 1998 to 69 percent this year, while the percentage of white children at those levels rose over the same period from 71 percent to 92 percent. Hispanic third-graders also showed large improvement. In 1998, 45 percent were rated as proficient or better on the test, compared with 70 percent this year.” (*The Associated Press*, 7/14/05)
- “Results compiled by researchers for Milwaukee Public Schools show that, compared with five years ago, the gap between Milwaukee and the state as a whole has declined in reading for fourth-, eighth-, and tenth-graders and for math for fourth-graders.... The smallest gap now is 20 percentage points in fourth-grade reading, with 62 percent of MPS students proficient and 82 percent of state students proficient.” (*Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, 5/24/05)
- “Students in Oshkosh matched or outperformed their statewide peers in most grades or subjects on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination achievement tests, according to test scores released by the state Tuesday. Eighty-five percent of fourth-graders in Oshkosh scored proficient or better in reading compared with only 82 percent statewide. Also, 79 percent of fourth-graders scored proficient or better in math, compared to 72 percent statewide. Oshkosh eighth-graders made the biggest improvement, jumping from 71 percent proficient in math on 2003’s test to 82 percent this year. Tenth-graders also made gains from 68 percent to 76 percent proficient in reading this year.... ‘The district has been working hard to reinvigorate our curriculum. We’ve refocused and I think we’re starting to see the results of that,’ [Phil Eickstaedt, director of standards and assessment] said.” (*Oshkosh Northwestern*, 5/25/05)
- “The Sheboygan Area School District reported Tuesday that nearly all of its fourth-, eighth- and 10th-grade classes met or exceeded state standards on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concept Exams. ‘We’re performing very well,’ said Jack Westfall, coordinator of assessment for the district. ... District students scored above the state average on the math and reading tests except for eighth-grade readers who fell just below the state average. The district did particularly well in math. All of the middle and high schools and nine of the 12 elementary classes tested above the state average in math. ... In reading, seven of the 12 elementary schools tested at or above the state average with one, Cleveland Elementary, receiving a perfect score. ... ‘Washington, for example, is doing this new Arkansas Model,’ [assistant superintendent of student instructional services Bill] Walter said. ‘They are really spending a lot of time working on reading and having teachers that supporting students. The preliminary information shows that this is going to be very successful.’ The school is also expanding its reading intervention program, Read 180, to include the high schools, all of the middle schools and three elementary schools. ... On the whole there is an upward trend with all of the test scores for both the district and the state, and Westfall said that administrators are hoping it will keep on improving.” (*Sheboygan Press*, 5/25/05)

NCLB Making a Difference in Wyoming



- Between 2002 and 2005 (latest data available):
 - Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased by three percentage points
 - Fourth-grade mathematics proficiency increased by six percentage points

(*Wyoming Report Card*)
- “A few schools showed tremendous growth this year in Wyoming Comprehensive Assessment System (WyCAS) results. Arp Elementary in Laramie County School District #1 now has 84 percent of its students proficient or advanced in math as compared to only 33 percent last year. Arp also showed huge gains in reading, increasing from 29 percent to 84 percent, and in writing, increasing from 21 percent to 62 percent. Powell Middle School results show an 18 percent increase in reading and a 10 percent increase in math.” (*Green River Star*, 7/5/05)
- “Test scores went up for all 11th-graders in the Natrona County School District. Last year, only about 37 percent of Natrona County School District 11th-graders were proficient or above in math. This year, the number jumped to 51 percent. Likewise, proficiency scores increased from 52 percent to 61 percent in writing and from 42 percent to 56 percent in reading. ... At Kelly Walsh, which Deputy State Superintendent Annette Bohling noted as one of the most improved high schools in the state, 56 percent of 11th-graders were proficient or better in math, 65 percent were proficient in writing, and 61 percent passed reading tests. ‘It’s really hard for large schools who have a population as large as Kelly Walsh and Natrona County high schools to have large gains,’ Bohling said. ‘When you’re trying to move a cohort of 300 or 400 students and you see a jump of 18 percent in math or 22 percent in reading, such as at Kelly Walsh, that is extraordinary. That is a real success story for those teachers and those administrators.’ [Kelly Walsh Principal Brad] Diller attributed the successes to teacher training and innovative programs. In math, he said the school is in its second year of a new curriculum that focuses more heavily on problem solving and real-world application of concepts. ... The school also has offered in-service training for teachers to improve the writing curriculum. Teachers in all subjects focus more on writing...and language arts teachers have been working to be more consistent in the grades and feedback they give students on their written work.” (*Casper Star-Tribune*, 5/4/05)
- “The Wyoming Department of Education and Wyoming Public Television...recently wrapped up a two-year partnership that used half-hour TV programs to explain the No Child Left Behind law and how it would affect Wyoming’s schools. ‘Grade A: No Child Left Behind in Wyoming’ aired 14 installments during the 2003-04 school year. Another 14 aired during the 2004-05 school year. The last new show was broadcast in May. ... Each installment was watched in about 5,000 to 6,000 households. ... State schools superintendent Trent Blankenship said he wanted to reach out to Wyoming residents to explain the policy. In sparsely populated Wyoming, which has about 85,000 K-12 students spread over nearly 98,000 square miles, districts found it hard to learn best practices from one another.” (*Education Week*, 6/8/05)