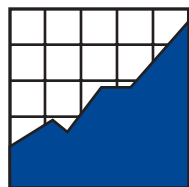


Graduation Exam Participation and Performance (2000-2001) of English Language Learners with Disabilities



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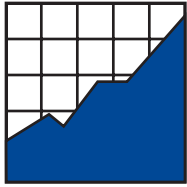
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Kristi Liu • Martha Thurlow • Manuel Barrera • Kamil Guven • Vitaliy Shyyan

June 2005

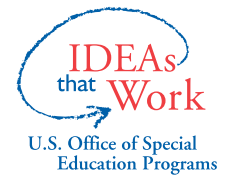
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Overview

The main tenet of the standards movement, according to the National Association of State Boards of Education, is that “Schools, districts and state departments of education, along with students and families, are responsible for developing high levels of knowledge and skills in *all* students” (NASBE, 2002, p. 7). In the past, some groups of students have been left out of educational reform movements because of barriers to high achievement. These might include a perception that English language learners (ELLs)¹ and students with disabilities were not capable of challenging academic content, for example, and inequitable funding in urban schools with high concentrations of minority and low-income students (NASBE, 2002). The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) made it clear that states, districts, and schools are to hold high expectations for all students and work to improve outcomes for low performing groups. A central part of these mandated improvement efforts is using data to identify groups of students who are achieving poorly on statewide tests and find ways to improve instruction for the students so that they might achieve at higher rates in the future.

NCLB requires that accountability data be disaggregated and reported for some specific subgroups of students. According to Thurlow and Liu (2001), one group for which NCLB does not clearly mandate the public reporting of assessment data is students who are limited English proficient and also have disabilities. Students who are not tested, and students who are tested but whose data are not publicly reported, tend to remain invisible inside our educational system (Thurlow & Liu, 2001). Therefore, it is important for students with limited English proficiency and disabilities, a rapidly growing group², to be represented in discussions of standards-based assessment results.

At the present time, fewer than 10 states report large-scale assessment participation or performance data on students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (Albus, Thurlow, Minnema & Anderson, 2004). This report is part of a series aimed at providing an in depth look at one state’s data on the participation and performance of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities in assessments mandated by NCLB. A previous report (Liu, Barrera, Thurlow & Shyyan, 2005) examined data from the 1999–2000 administration of a state graduation test. This report adds to those data with results from the 2000–2001 administration of the graduation test.

¹ Students with limited English proficiency are increasingly referred to as English language learners or ELLs. We recognize that a number of terms are used in the field related to learners of English as a new or second language. We have adopted some of those terms for reference, but have chosen to use language and acronyms compliant with “person first” protocol and to minimize lengthy terms where possible. In this document we use the term “students with limited English proficiency.”

² Zehler, Fleischman, Hopstock, Pendzick and Stephenson (2003) have documented that English language learners with disabilities represent approximately 9% of all ELLs in public schools. Because the total number of ELLs is growing rapidly, it is logical to assume that the number of ELLs with disabilities is also growing.

Background

In Minnesota, Basic Standards Tests (BSTs) are assessments that students must pass to receive a high school diploma. Assessments for the diploma are administered in reading and mathematics for the first time in 8th grade and in writing for the first time in grade 10. In each content area, students must achieve a scale score of 600 or higher by the 12th grade in order to receive a diploma. Tests may be re-taken several times if the students do not meet the passing scale score.

In addition to their use as graduation requirement assessments, BSTs are also used as school accountability measures. Thus, the grade 8 reading and mathematics scores and the grade 10 writing scores were school accountability measures. During the 2000–2001 school year, additional components of the Basic Standards Tests at other grades were in the process of being implemented. This report examines only the participation and performance of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (SLEPD) on the reading and mathematics components of the BST during their first attempt on the grade 8 administration.

The 2000–2001 technical manual for the Basic Standards Tests (Minnesota Department of Education [MDE], 2001) states that in that year exemptions from testing were allowed for some students with limited English proficiency (SLEP). “Students with limited English proficiency must participate in the accountability testing unless they have been in the United States fewer than 12 months. Only these very few LEP students may be exempted from testing” (Appendix C, p. 3). Also, during the time period represented in this report, students with disabilities could be exempted from the tests if the goals and objectives of their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) did not match the content of the state tests.

The data in this report come from the year in which NCLB legislation was passed, but had not yet taken effect. Requirements for alternate assessments for students with severe disabilities and for at least 95% participation of students in a subgroup to be tested for accountability purposes had not yet been implemented.

Accommodations and Modifications

Students who participated in the BSTs in 2000–2001 were allowed some accommodations and modifications. The Minnesota Department of Education defines accommodations as minor changes that do not change the validity, reliability, or security of the test (MDE 2001, p. 5). Modifications are changes in the standard, the test, or the testing circumstances that alter the level of difficulty of what is being assessed (MDE, 2001, p. 6). Accommodations are permitted on the reading and mathematics portions of the test in 8th grade, when the test is used for accountability purposes, and on the writing portion in 10th grade. Modifications are only allowed

for students with disabilities in later retests. When they are used, they result in a student receiving a “pass individual” notation. The data files used for this report did not contain information about whether students received an accommodation or a modification. Therefore, the report does not address this topic. Data in the report represent numbers of students passing the reading or mathematics tests at the “state level,” meaning the state test is taken without modifications.

Method

The Minnesota Department of Education collected the data compiled for this report. After preparing the data files and discarding unusable data, the researchers ran descriptive statistical analyses using the SPSS Information Analysis System. Numbers showing total student enrollment were based on fall counts and may differ from counts of students enrolled on the day of testing several months later. Following the presentation of the results of our analyses of participation and performance data for 2000–2001, we compare the 2000–2001 results to the data from 1999–2000.

Data

Participation in 2000–2001

As indicated in Table 1, in 2000–2001 eighth grade participation of subgroups taking the reading and mathematics BSTs ranged from 88% to 97%. At the time, these rates were considered to be relatively high. The 95% participation requirement for accountability for all subgroups that was implemented under NCLB in 2001 had not yet taken effect. Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (SLEPD) had the lowest participation rates with 88% in both reading and mathematics. Students with limited English proficiency (SLEP) and students with disabilities (SD) had slightly higher percentages of participation (90%–91%). The total group of 8th grade students had the highest percent participating with 97%. This was nearly 10% higher than that of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. For each group, the percentage of students participating in reading versus mathematics was similar.

Participation of Students by Disability Category

Table 2 shows the participation of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (SLEPD) and all students with disabilities (SD) according to the students’ primary disability category. When looking at these data, readers are cautioned to keep in mind that some disability categories were quite small in size. Also, there were no students with limited English proficiency and deaf-blindness in this particular year.

In both the total group of students with disabilities and the students with limited English profi-

Table 1: Eighth Grade Participation for the 2000–2001 BST Reading and Mathematics Tests

	Reading 2000–2001			Mathematics 2000–2001		
	Enrolled	Tested		Enrolled	Tested	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
SLEPD	302	267	88%	302	265	88%
SLEP	2,586	2,350	91%	2,586	2,360	91%
SD	8,500	7,706	91%	8,500	7,667	90%
ALL	66,513	64,391	97%	66,513	64,213	97%

Key: SLEPD = students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; SLEP = students with limited English proficiency without disabilities; SD = students with disabilities without limited English proficiency; ALL = all 8th grade students

ciency and disabilities there was a great deal of variation in participation rates across disability categories. Participation in individual categories ranged from 0% to 100%. For both groups, students with speech/language impairments had the highest participation rates in reading (96% of SLEPD and 97% of all SD) and mathematics (93% of SLEPD and 96% of all SD). Students with specific learning disabilities also had comparatively high participation rates in both reading (94% of SLEPD and 96% of SD) and mathematics (93% of SLEPD and 96% of SD). Students with autism (65%–67% of SD and 0% of SLEPD), students with Mild-to-Moderate Mental Impairments (67%–69% of SD and 50%–57% of SLEPD) and students with Moderate-to-Severe Mental Impairments (11%–17% of SD and 20% of SLEPD) had the lowest participation rates.

For the most part, the total group of students with disabilities in any given disability category tended to participate at somewhat higher rates than students with limited English proficiency and disabilities in the same category. Anywhere from 1% to 10% higher participation rates for the total group of students within a particular disability category was typical. There were two exceptions, however. For students with moderate-severe mental impairments and students who were deaf or hard of hearing, greater percentages of limited English proficient students with disabilities took the test than did the total population of students with disabilities in that same category.

Figure 1 shows the information from the top half of the table in reverse; the percent of the students with limited English proficiency and disabilities, by disability category, who did *not* participate in the 2000–2001 BSTs for Reading and Mathematics. The graphic highlights the fact that those students with limited English proficiency and mild-moderate or moderate-severe mental impairments were the least likely to participate in the statewide test of basic skills. The same was true for students with autism in this particular year, but the data represent only one student.

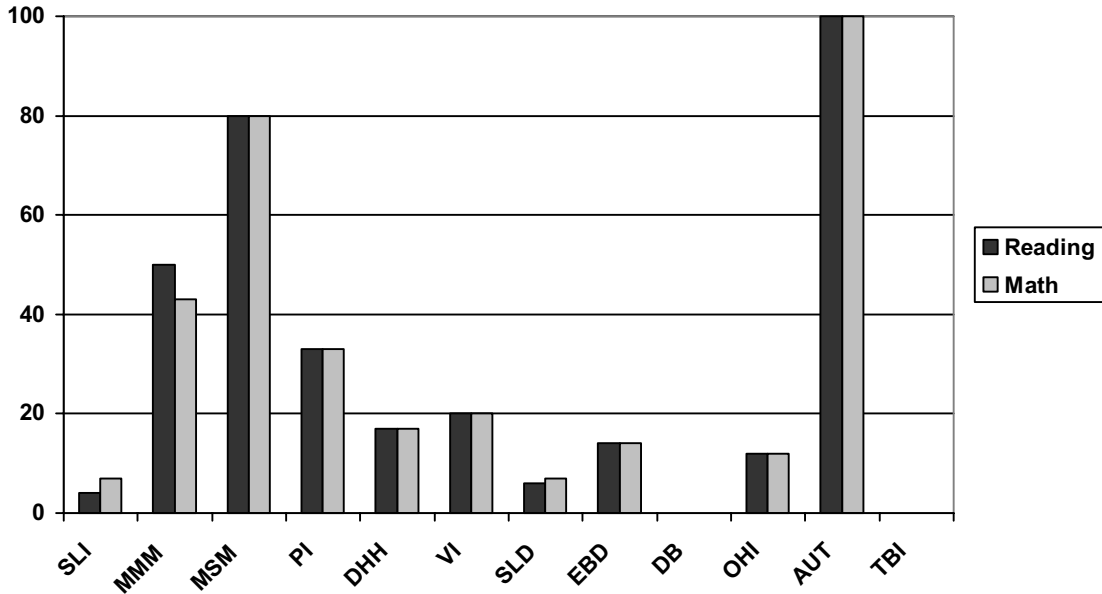
Key: SLI= Speech Language Impairment; MMM = Mild-to-Moderate Mental Impairment; MSM= Moderate-to-Severe

Table 2: Participation of all 8th Grade Students with Disabilities and Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities in the 2000–2001 BSTs for Reading and Mathematics

Disability Group		READING			MATHEMATICS		
		Enrolled	Tested		Enrolled	Tested	
			Number	Percent		Number	Percent
SLEPD	Speech/Language Impaired	28	27	96%	28	26	93%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	14	7	50%	14	8	57%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	5	1	20%	5	1	20%
	Physically Impaired	3	2	67%	3	2	67%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	23	19	83%	23	19	83%
	Visually Impaired	5	4	80%	5	4	80%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	192	180	94%	192	178	93%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	22	19	86%	22	19	86%
	Deaf-Blindness	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
	Other Health Impaired	8	7	88%	8	7	88%
	Autistic	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
Traumatic Brain Injury	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	
ALL	Speech/Language Impaired	550	531	97%	550	530	96%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	587	403	69%	587	392	67%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	168	17	10%	168	19	11%
	Physically Impaired	102	78	77%	102	77	75%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	146	136	93%	146	138	95%
	Visually Impaired	24	21	88%	24	20	83%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	4,314	4,126	96%	4,314	4,117	96%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	1,958	1,805	92%	1,958	1,791	91%
	Deaf-Blindness	1	0	0%	1	0	0%
	Other Health Impaired	784	740	94%	784	734	94%
	Autistic	142	95	67%	142	93	65%
Traumatic Brain Injury	26	21	81%	26	21	81%	

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL SD = All students with disabilities including SLEPD

Figure 1. Percent of 8th Grade Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities Not Participating in the 2000-2001 BSTs for Reading and Mathematics



Mental Impairment; PI= Physical Impairment; DHH = Deaf/Hard of Hearing; VI= Visual Impairment; SLD= Specific Learning Disability; EBD=Emotional/Behavioral Disorder; DB= Deaf-Blind; OHI= Other Health Impairment; AUT= Autistic; TBI=Traumatic Brain Injury

Participation of Students By Language Group

Table 3 presents participation data as a function of home language. Students from the state’s largest three home language groups are shown. The 2000–2001 participation rates for a particular language group tended to be similar regardless of whether the total language group was examined or just those students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. In both cases, Hmong students had the highest participation rates, followed by those students from Spanish speaking backgrounds. Somali students had the lowest participation rates of the three groups.

Participation rates for reading versus mathematics tended to be similar for most groups. Somali students with limited English proficiency and disabilities had the largest difference in the percentage of students participating in reading (71%) versus mathematics (86%). However, this large difference in percentage was the result of a small number of students.

Performance in 2000–2001

In this section we examine student performance based on the percentage passing at the state-determined passing rate. Table 4 illustrates that, of the four groups examined, students with limited English proficiency and disabilities were the least likely to pass either the reading or the mathematics tests (10% and 12%, respectively).

Table 3: Percent of Language Minority Students Participating in 2000–2001 BSTs for Reading and Mathematics

	Language Group	Reading			Mathematics		
		Enrolled	Tested		Enrolled	Tested	
			Number	Percent		Number	Percent
SLEPD	Hmong	137	124	91%	137	123	90%
	Spanish	102	88	86%	102	87	85%
	Somali	7	6	86%	7	5	71%
ALL	Hmong	1,548	1,491	96%	1,548	1,479	96%
	Spanish	1,014	875	86%	1,014	891	88%
	Somali	268	213	80%	268	206	77%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL = 8th grade students who are Hmong, Spanish or Somali speaking regardless of proficiency level

For any one group, the percentage of students passing reading typically varied little from the percentage passing mathematics, approximately 1%–7% difference between the two content areas. There was no consistent directionality to the difference.

Table 4. Percent of 8th Graders Passing the 2000–2001 BSTs for Reading and Mathematics

	Reading			Mathematics		
	Tested	Passed	Percent Passing	Tested	Passed	Percent Passing
SLEPD	267	27	10%	265	32	12%
SLEP	2,350	811	35%	2,360	838	36%
SD	7,706	2,935	38%	7,667	2,395	31%
ALL	64,391	50,747	79%	64,213	46,205	72%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; SLEP = Students with limited English proficiency without disabilities; SD = Students with disabilities without limited English proficiency; ALL = All 8th grade students

Performance of Students by Disability Category

Table 5 provides more detailed data about which students with disabilities were more likely to pass the reading and mathematics tests at the state level on their first attempt in 8th grade. The reader should be aware that the small numbers of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities who were tested in certain disability categories did not allow performance data to be disaggregated for those categories (e.g., moderate-severe mental impairments, physical impairments).

Table 5. Percent of All Students with Disabilities and Students Who Are Limited English Proficient with Disabilities Passing the 2000–2001 BSTs for Reading and Mathematics

	Disability Group	Reading			Mathematics		
		Tested	Number Passed	Percent Passed	Tested	Number Passed	Percent Passed
SLEPD	Speech/Language Impaired	27	5	19%	26	9	35%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	7	*	*	8	*	*
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	1	*	*	1	*	*
	Physically Impaired	2	*	*	2	*	*
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	19	3	16%	19	1	5%
	Visually Impaired	4	*	*	4	*	*
	Specific Learning Disabilities	180	15	8%	178	14	8%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	19	2	11%	19	2	11%
	Deaf-Blindness	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Other Health Impaired	7	*	*	7	*	*
	Autistic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Traumatic Brain Injury	1	*	*	1	*	*	
All SD	Speech/Language Impaired	531	276	52%	531	267	50%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	403	10	2%	403	2	<1%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	17	0	0%	17	1	6%
	Physically Impaired	78	41	53%	78	32	41%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	136	54	40%	136	48	35%
	Visually Impaired	21	11	52%	21	15	71%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	4,126	1,347	33%	4,126	1,155	28%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	1,805	799	44%	1,805	582	32%
	Deaf-Blindness	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
	Other Health Impaired	740	339	46%	740	239	32%
	Autistic	95	51	54%	95	48	51%
Traumatic Brain Injury	21	7	33%	21	6	29%	

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL SD = Students with disabilities including SLEPD; * = Data not disaggregated because fewer than 10 students tested in this category

One characteristic that stands out from the performance data is the amount of variation in the percentage of students from particular disability groups who passed either the reading or mathematics tests. For students with limited English proficiency and disabilities, 0%–19% passed reading and 0%–35% passed mathematics. For the total population of students with disabilities,

the variation is even greater. The percentage of these students passing ranged from 0%–54% in reading and 0%–71% in mathematics.

The percentages of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities who passed either the reading or mathematics test was often quite a bit smaller than the percentage passing from the total group of students with disabilities. The data were sufficient to document the gap in four disability categories. Students with limited English proficiency and speech language impairments, specific learning disabilities, emotional-behavioral disabilities, and those who were deaf and hard of hearing all had a 15%–33% lower percentage passing reading or mathematics than their non-limited English proficient peers in the same disability category.

There were some consistent patterns of performance that were evident across the general population of students with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency and disabilities. Students with speech-language impairments were among the highest achievers in both the total population of students with disabilities (52% passed reading and 50% passed mathematics) and for students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (19% passed reading and 35% passed mathematics). Of the few groups that had disaggregated data, students with limited English proficiency and learning disabilities had the smallest percentage of students passing the test (8% for both reading and mathematics). Of particular note is that students with specific learning disabilities had relatively low percentages of students passing in both the total population of students with disabilities (33% passed reading and 28% passed mathematics) and those with limited English proficiency and disabilities (8% passed reading and mathematics).

There were differences between the percentage of students passing reading and mathematics, but the direction of the difference was not always the same. For students with limited English proficiency and disabilities, most of the groups with disaggregated data had the same or slightly smaller percentage of students passing reading than mathematics. This pattern was similar to what was observed in the data for the total population of students with disabilities as well. The only exception was students with limited English proficiency and speech language impairments. Sixteen percent more of these students passed the mathematics test than the reading test. In the total population of students with disabilities, those with moderate-severe mental impairments and those with visual impairments were more likely to pass mathematics than reading.

Performance of Students by Language Group

Next we examined the performance of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities by language group. The data in Table 6 show that all Hmong students (ALL) and Hmong students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (SLEPD) were the most likely of the three language groups to pass the test (43% for reading and 46% for mathematics for All Hmong and 9% for reading and 16% for mathematics of Hmong students with limited English proficiency and disabilities). The number of Somali students with limited English proficiency

and disabilities was too small to make any inferences about performance.

For the Hmong-, Spanish-, and Somali-speaking students with limited English proficiency and disabilities there was not a consistent directionality of better performance on reading versus mathematics. Hmong students were more likely to pass the mathematics than the reading test. In contrast, Spanish- and Somali-speaking students were more likely to pass reading than mathematics. This pattern was also evident in the total population of Hmong- and Spanish-speaking students. The number of Somali students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (SLEPD) was fewer than 10 so their performance data are not provided here.

Table 6: 2000–2001 8th Grade BST Reading and Mathematics Performance of Students who are Language Minority and Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities

	Language Group	Reading			Mathematics		
		Tested	Passed	Percent Passed	Tested	Passed	Percent Passed
SLEPD	Hmong	124	11	9%	123	20	16%
	Spanish	88	7	8%	87	5	6%
	Somali	6	*	*	5	*	*
All	Hmong	1,491	637	43%	1,479	674	46%
	Spanish	875	324	37%	891	251	28%
	Somali	213	41	19%	206	29	14%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL = 8th grade students who are Hmong-, Spanish-, or Somali-speaking regardless of proficiency level; * = Data not disaggregated because fewer than 10 students tested

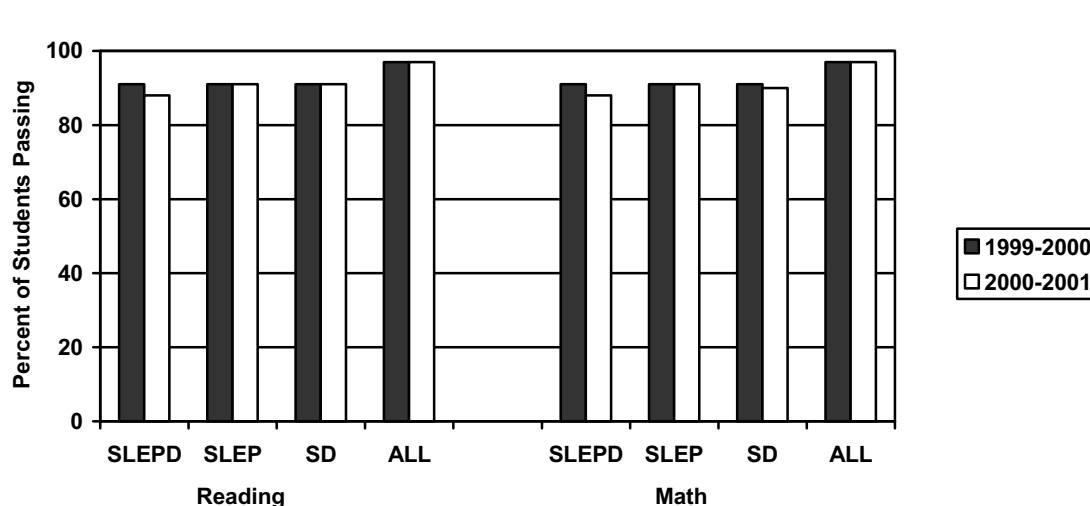
Comparison across Years 2000–2001 and 1999–2000

The figures that follow place the 1999–2000 data next to the 2000–2001 data for the purposes of descriptive comparison. Two years of data are not enough to establish any trends in performance. Still, this preliminary look at how students did over a two-year period can form the basis for further work on trends when sufficient data are available. Tables with more detailed data are presented in Appendix A.

Participation

Participation in the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 Basic Standards Tests for students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (SLEPD) compared to the other three groups that we discuss here (SLEP, SD, and ALL) is shown in Figure 2. In both reading and mathematics, there was a noticeable decline in the percentage of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities who participated in a content test from one year to the next. In contrast, for the other groups shown in the figure (SLEP, SD, and ALL) there were relatively small changes in the percent of

Figure 2. Comparison of Percentage Tested Across Groups for 1999-2000 and 2000-2001



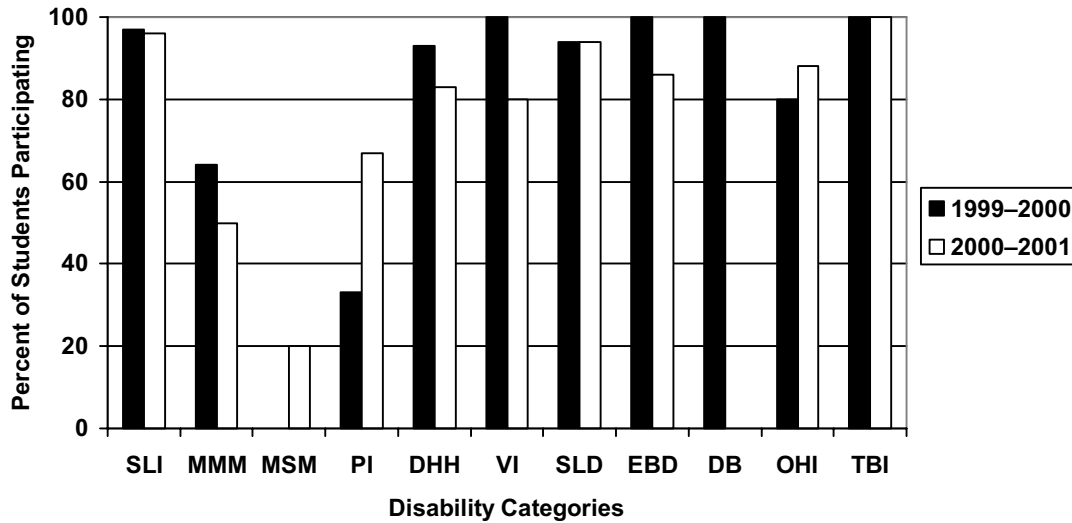
Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; SLEP = Students with limited English proficiency without disabilities; SD = Students with disabilities without limited English proficiency; ALL = All 8th grade students

students participating in a content test from one year to the next. Overall participation rates for reading versus mathematics were similar across years.

Participation of Students by Disability Category

The 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 reading test participation rates by disability category are shown in Figure 3. Participation varied across groups and years. Students with limited English proficiency and speech language impairments, specific learning disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries had consistent reading test participation rates across the two years. Students with limited English proficiency who had mild-moderate mental impairments, those who were deaf and hard of hearing, and those who were visually impaired had lower participation rates in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000. Students with limited English proficiency and moderate to severe mental impairments, physical impairments, and other health impairments had higher participation rates in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000. Some of this variability, particularly for the categories of moderate-severe mentally impaired, physically impaired, visually impaired, other health impaired, and traumatic brain injury, is due to small numbers of students in the groups. Students with limited English proficiency and autism are not included in the figure because there were none tested in either year.

Figure 3. Comparison of 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Reading Test Participation Rates for Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities



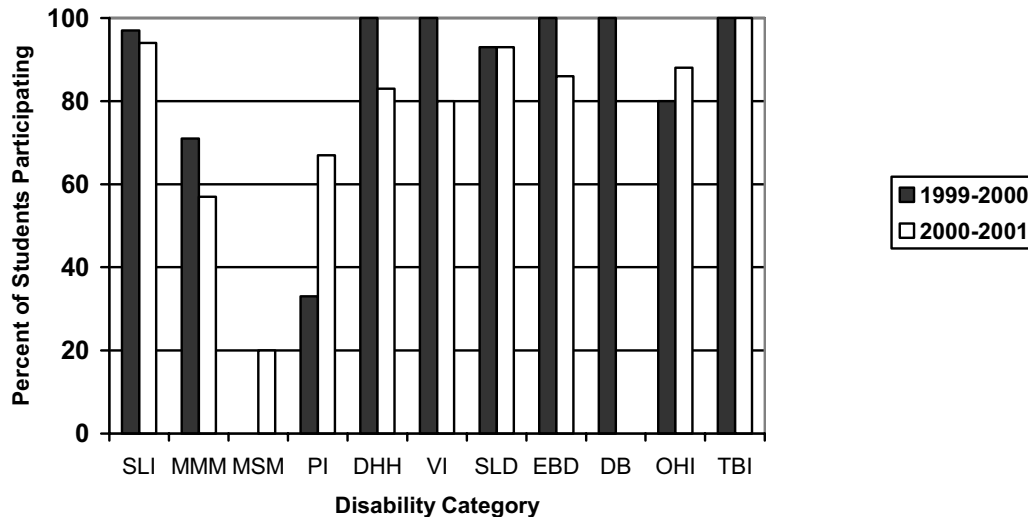
Key: SLI= Speech Language Impairment; MMM = Mild-to-Moderate Mental Impairment; MSM= Moderate-to-Severe Mental Impairment; PI= Physical Impairment; DHH = Deaf/Hard of Hearing; VI= Visual Impairment; SLD= Specific Learning Disability; EBD=Emotional/Behavioral Disorder; DB= Deaf-Blind; OHI= Other Health Impairment; TBI=Traumatic Brain Injury

Figure 4 shows the percentage of students in the various disability categories who participated in the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 mathematics tests. As with reading, there was a great deal of variability in participation rates across the two years and no clear directionality by content area that held true for all groups. As with reading, the most consistent mathematics participation rates across years can be seen for students with limited English proficiency and learning disabilities as well students with limited English proficiency and traumatic brain injuries. Decreases in the percentages of students participating can be seen for students with limited English proficiency and speech language impairments, mild-moderate mental impairments, those who were deaf and hard of hearing, those with visual impairments and those with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Increases in the percentage of students participating were observed for students with limited English proficiency and moderate-severe mental impairments, physical impairments, and other health impairments. Students with limited English proficiency and autism are not included in the figure because there were none in 1999-2000 and the one autistic student in 2000-2001 was not tested.

Participation of Students by Language Group

Figure 5 compares the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 reading participation rates for students by language groups. All groups showed changes in participation rates across the two-year time period, but there was no consistent directionality to the change and the size of the difference varied by group. Four of the six groups shown (All Hmong, All Spanish, SLEPD Spanish, and SLEPD

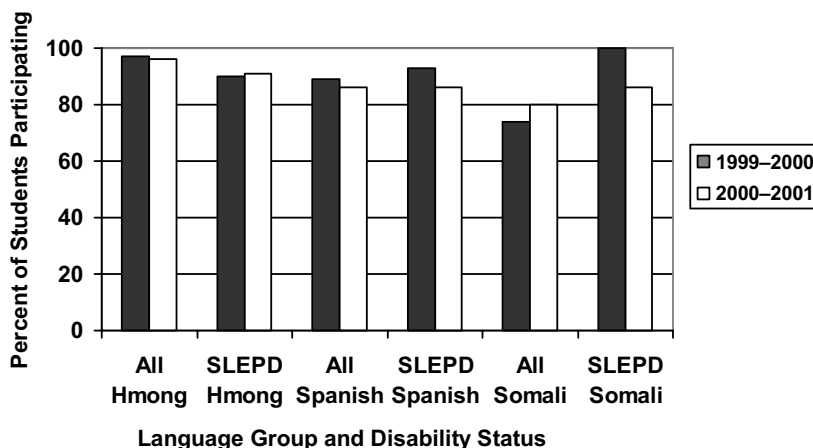
Figure 4. Comparison of 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Mathematics Test Participation for Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities



Key: SLI= Speech Language Impairment; MMM = Mild-to-Moderate Mental Impairment; MSM= Moderate-to-Severe Mental Impairment; PI= Physical Impairment; DHH = Deaf/Hard of Hearing; VI= Visual Impairment; SLD= Specific Learning Disability; EBD=Emotional/Behavioral Disorder; DB= Deaf-Blind; OHI= Other Health Impairment; TBI=Traumatic Brain Injury

Somali) showed decreases in the percentage of students taking the reading test in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000. Somali students with limited English proficiency and disabilities showed the largest decrease in the percentage of students participating in the reading test across the two-year period. Two groups (SLEPD Hmong and All Somali) showed increases in the percentage of students taking the reading test in 2000–2001 compared to 1999–2000.

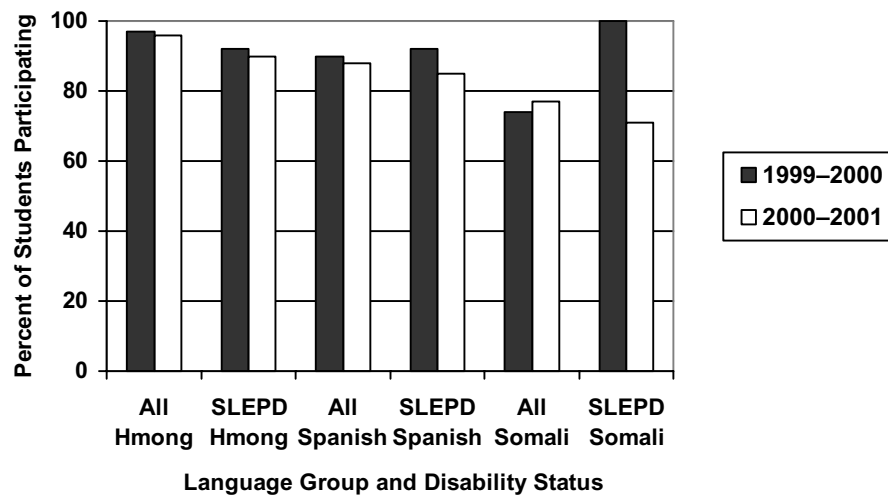
Figure 5. Comparison of 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Reading Test Participation by Language Group and Disability Status



Key: SLEPD= Students with limited English proficiency and a disability; ALL = All Hmong-, Somali-, or Spanish-speaking students regardless of language proficiency

The same type of information is provided for mathematics tests in Figure 6. Most language groups, except the total population of Somali-speaking students, showed a decrease in the percentage of students participating in the 2000–2001 mathematics test. The change in the percentage of students passing the 1999–2000 versus the 2000–2001 mathematics test was relatively small for all groups except Somali students with limited English proficiency and disabilities.

Figure 6. Comparison of 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Mathematics Test Participation by Language Group and Disability Status



Key: SLEPD= Students with limited English proficiency and a disability; ALL = All Hmong-, Somali-, or Spanish-speaking students regardless of language proficiency

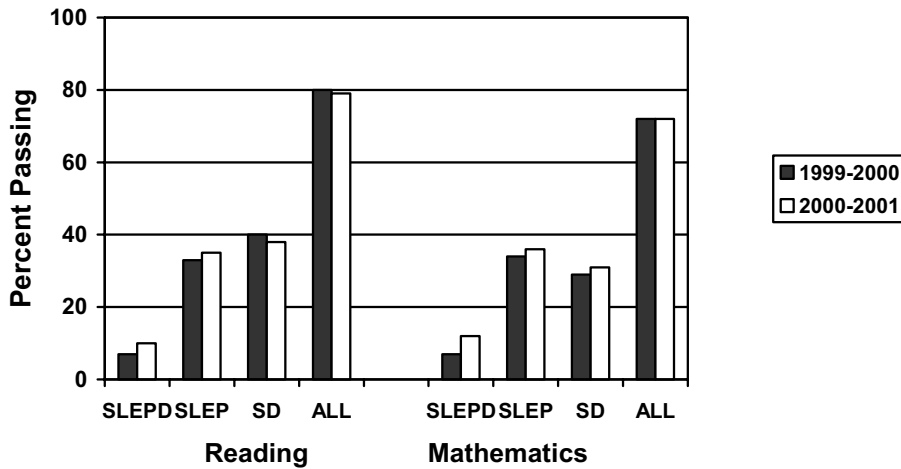
Performance

Figure 7 shows the percent of students passing the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BSTs by subgroup. Within a subgroup, the percentage of students passing the test from one year to the next was fairly similar for most groups in both reading and mathematics. Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities showed the largest increase in the percentage of students passing reading and mathematics in 2000–2001. The increase in the percentage of these students passing mathematics was slightly larger than the increase in the percentage passing reading.

Performance by Disability Category

Figure 8 shows 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 reading performance by disability category for students with limited English proficiency and disabilities in those groups with enough data to disaggregate. For three of the four groups shown, there was a slightly larger percentage of students passing the reading test in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000 (Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Specific Learning Difficulty, and Emotional/Behavioral Disorder). The fourth group (Speech Language

Figure 7. Comparison of 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Performance for Reading and Mathematics

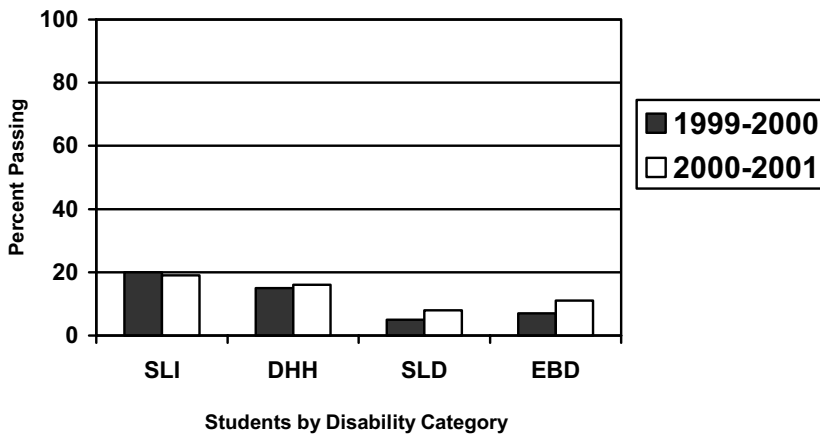


Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; SLEP = Students with limited English proficiency without disabilities; SD = Students with disabilities without limited English proficiency; ALL = All 8th grade students

Impairment) showed similar percentages of students passing the reading test in both years.

Among the groups that had disaggregated data, students with limited English proficiency and learning disabilities were the least likely to pass the reading test in both of the years shown.

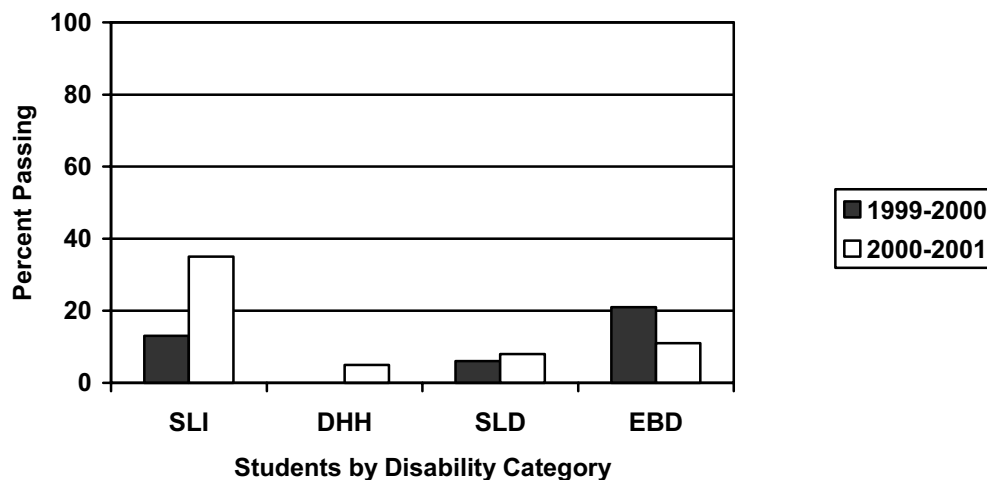
Figure 8. Students with Limited English Proficiency and a Disability Passing the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Reading Test



Key: SLI= Speech Language Impairment; DHH = Deaf/Hard of Hearing; SLD= Specific Learning Disability; EBD=Emotional/Behavioral Disorder

Figure 9 shows similar data on the mathematics performance of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities, by disability category, in 1999–2000 and 2000–2001. There were observable differences in the percentages of students passing within a disability category, but there was no clear directionality to the differences. Students with limited English proficiency and speech language impairments, along with students with limited English proficiency who were deaf and hard of hearing, passed the mathematics test in greater numbers in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000. The increase in the percentage of students with speech language impairments who passed was striking. In contrast, a smaller percentage of students with limited English proficiency and emotional/behavioral disorders passed the test in 2000–2001 than passed it in 1999–2000.

Figure 9. Students with Limited English Proficiency and a Disability Passing the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Mathematics Test

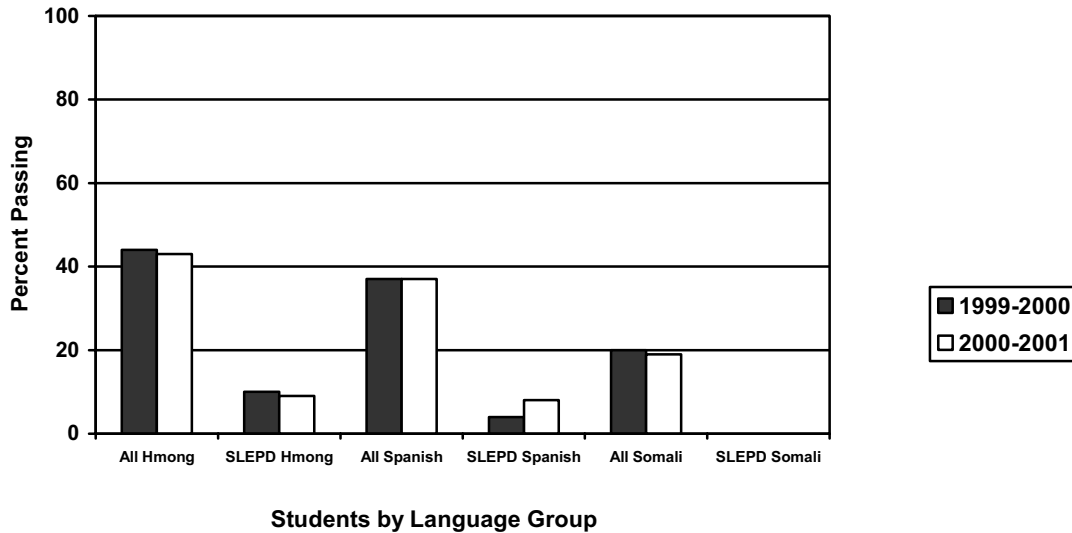


Key: SLI= Speech Language Impairment; DHH = Deaf/Hard of Hearing; SLD= Specific Learning Disability; EBD=Emotional/Behavioral Disorder

Performance by Language Group

Figure 10 shows the percentage of students passing the reading assessments in 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 by language group. In most of the groups shown, percentages of students in each of the three main language groups who passed the reading test, including those with limited English proficiency and disabilities, varied little across the two years. The exception was Spanish-speaking students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. A larger percentage of these students passed the reading test in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000. Fewer than 10 Somali students with limited English proficiency and disabilities were tested and their performance data were not disaggregated.

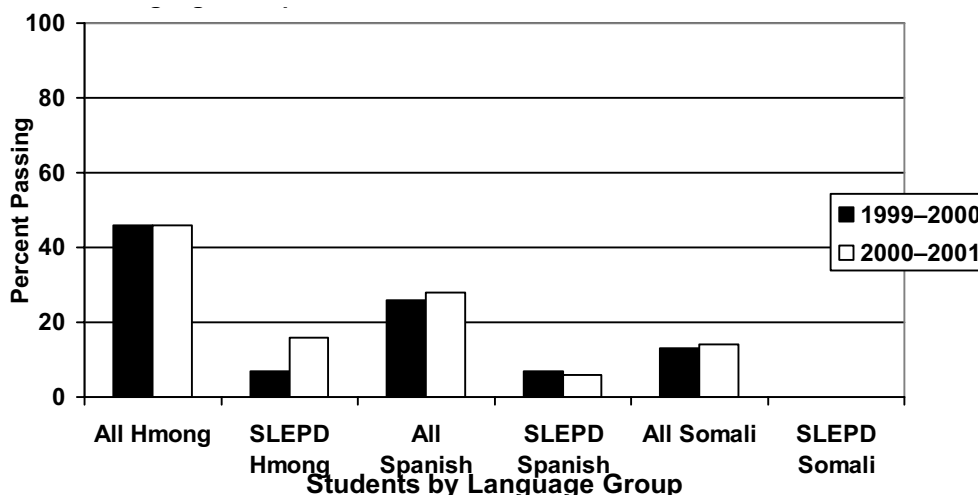
Figure 10. 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Reading Performance for Students with Limited English Proficiency by Language Group



Key: SLEPD= Students with limited English proficiency and a disability; ALL = All Hmong-, Somali-, or Spanish-speaking students regardless of language proficiency

Figure 11 contains performance data for the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 mathematics test by language group. Four of the six groups shown had the same, or slightly higher, percentage of students participating in the mathematics test from one year to the next. The exception was Spanish-speaking students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. This group of students showed a slight decrease in the percentage of students passing the mathematics test in 2000–2001 compared to 1999–2000.

Figure 11. 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 Mathematics Test Performance for Students with Limited English Proficiency and a Disability by Language Group



Key: SLEPD= Students with limited English proficiency and a disability; ALL = All Hmong-, Somali-, or Spanish-speaking students regardless of language proficiency

For most groups, the difference in the percent of students passing in 1999–2000 versus 2000–2001 was small. The one exception was Hmong students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. Roughly 10% more of these students passed the mathematics test in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000.

Summary of Findings

The data on the participation and performance of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities that are presented in this report are important because they are among some of the first that have been publicly reported and analyzed. Despite their importance, they still must be viewed with some caution, particularly when considering data by disability category, because of the limited number of students.

Participation in 2000–2001

In 2000–2001, students with limited English proficiency and disabilities (SLEPD) had the lowest participation rates of all the groups discussed (SLEP, SD, and All 8th graders) in this report for both reading and mathematics. Participation rates for this group were slightly under 90%, but the rates were 9% lower than the participation rates for the total group of 8th grade students.

Within disability categories, students with limited English proficiency and disabilities tended to participate at lower rates than their peers in the total group of students with disabilities in that same disability category. Participation rates by disability category varied and were impacted by small numbers of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. Typically, students with speech/language disabilities and learning disabilities had the highest participation rates for students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. Students with autism, mild-moderate mental impairments, and moderate-severe mental impairments had the lowest participation rates. In a few categories, participation rates were different in reading versus mathematics. However, in most cases the participation rates for students in a particular disability category were the same for both subjects.

There was no consistent pattern of participation across all language groups and content tests. Hmong students with limited English proficiency and disabilities tended to have the highest participation rates of the three language groups examined. They were followed by Spanish-speaking students and, finally, by Somali students.

Performance in 2000–2001

Of the four groups examined, students with limited English proficiency and disabilities were the least likely to pass either the reading or the mathematics tests. The passing rate was approximately 10%–12% for students with limited English proficiency and disabilities, which was

at least 20% lower than the passing rate for either students with disabilities or students with limited English proficiency. This disparity grew even larger when students with limited English proficiency and disabilities were compared to the total student population.

Small numbers of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities in some disability categories limited the observations that could be made about performance. There were enough students to provide data showing that students with limited English proficiency and speech/language impairments had the highest percentage passing of all the disability categories. Students with mild-moderate mental impairments along with students with learning disabilities had the lowest percentage passing.

In general, the percentage of the Hmong-, Spanish-, and Somali-speaking students with limited English proficiency and disabilities who passed the BSTs was typically 20% to approximately 35% lower than the percentage of all students from the same language group who passed the tests. In general, the percentage of Hmong students with limited English proficiency and disabilities passing either the reading or mathematics test was the highest of all three groups of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. There was no consistent pattern of better performance in one of the two years that held true across each of the three language groups and for both content tests. The number of Somali students with disabilities was too small to disaggregate performance data.

Participation Compared Across Two Years

Participation rates for students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and the total student population tended to be similar in 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 for both reading and mathematics. Even so, students with limited English proficiency and disabilities had the most noticeable decrease in the percentage of students participating.

When data were examined by disability category, there was a great deal of variation in participation rates for students with limited English proficiency and disabilities in both years. In reading, students with limited English proficiency and speech-language impairments, learning disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries had consistent participation rates across the two years. In contrast, students with limited English proficiency and mild-moderate mental impairments, visual impairments, and those who were deaf and hard of hearing had lower participation rates in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000. Students with moderate-severe mental impairments, physical impairments, and other health impairments had higher reading participation in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000. In mathematics, those with limited English proficiency and learning disabilities or traumatic brain injury had the most consistent participation rates across years. Students with limited English proficiency and speech language impairments, mild-moderate mental impairments, visual impairments, emotional-behavioral disabilities, and those who were deaf and

hard of hearing had lower mathematics participation rates in 2000–2001. Students with limited English proficiency and moderate-severe mental impairments, physical impairments, and other health impairments showed an increase participation rates in mathematics for 2000–2001.

When we examined data by language group and disability status there was no common pattern of increased performance on the reading test in one year compared to the other. Hmong students with limited English proficiency and disabilities had slightly increased participation rates in reading for 2000–2001 while Spanish-speaking and Somali students with limited English proficiency and disabilities had decreases in the percent of students participating. In mathematics Hmong-, Spanish-, and Somali-speaking students with limited English proficiency and disabilities all had lower participation rates in 2000–2001 than in 1999–2000. The decrease was most noticeable for Somali students with limited English proficiency and disabilities.

Performance Compared Across Two Years

Compared to students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and the total 8th grade population, students with limited English proficiency and disabilities were the least likely to pass either the reading or the mathematics test in either year.

When data were examined by disability category, certain patterns could be seen in those disability categories with large enough numbers of students. Students with limited English proficiency and speech-language impairments had the highest percentage of students passing either reading or mathematics. Typically, the percentage of students in a disability category who passed mathematics versus reading was the same or slightly different. Exceptions to this pattern were noted for students with speech-language impairments who had a noticeable increase in the percentage of students passing mathematics in 2000–2001 compared to 1999–2000.

Typically, there were small changes in the percentages of Hmong-, Spanish-, and Somali-speaking students with limited English proficiency and disabilities who passed the reading and mathematics test in either year examined. However, there was no consistent directionality to the changes. A slightly lower percentage of Hmong students passed the reading test in 2000–2001 while a slightly higher percentage of Spanish-speaking students passed the reading test that same year as compared to the previous year. A slightly higher percentage of Hmong- and Spanish-speaking students passed the mathematics test in 2000–2001 compared to the previous year. In both years, the numbers of Somali students with limited English proficiency were too small to disaggregate data.

Discussion and Conclusion

There were very small numbers of Somali students with limited English proficiency and disabilities that were enrolled in the years covered by this report. One important contextual factor

to understand in interpreting these results is that Somali students are among the most recent immigrants to Minnesota. At the time these data were collected, many Somali students may have been so new to the United States that teachers were not yet referring them for special education assessment in the belief that they needed time to learn English first. Somali students might also have qualified for the short-term exemption from testing due to their recent arrival in the United States.

Although disaggregating statewide assessment data for students who have both limited English proficiency and disabilities is not currently mandated by NCLB, there are advantages for educators in having these data available to them. This report has shown that while students with limited English proficiency and disabilities tended to pass the statewide tests at lower percentages than their peers who were in the larger groups of all students with disabilities or all students with limited English proficiency, it was not true that all students with limited English proficiency and disabilities were performing poorly. Some of these students passed this state's 8th grade tests of basic skills in reading and mathematics at the state-determined level on their first attempt. Clearly, these are success stories that should be celebrated. However, this examination of the data shows that as recently as 2000–2001 there was a much larger group of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities who required increased support in order to achieve proficiency on basic skills. A closer examination of the standards-based instruction that these students receive in the classroom and how it aligns with the state content standards assessed by the test may be in order.

One such group that warrants close attention is students with limited English proficiency and learning disabilities. These students had relatively high percentages participating in the BST content tests, but relatively low percentages passing either reading or mathematics. Students with limited English proficiency and learning disabilities are one of the larger groups of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities. Therefore, changes in instruction and assessment policies and practices to support increased academic achievement could have a relatively large impact on the performance of the total group of students. Based on the data, immigrant and refugee students who are the more recent arrivals to the state, such as Somali students with learning disabilities, may be among those most likely to benefit from this additional support.

Armed with data like these, educators can begin to take a closer look at policies and practices affecting the grade-level, standards-based achievement of students with limited English proficiency and disabilities.

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Appendix A

Table 1. Eighth Grade Participation for the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Reading Tests

	Reading 1999–2000			Reading 2000–2001			Percent Change
	Enrolled	Tested		Enrolled	Tested		
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent	
SLEPD	221	201	91%	302	267	88%	-3%
SLEP	2,065	1,888	91%	2,586	2,350	91%	0%
SD	8,599	7,824	91%	8,500	7,706	91%	0%
All	68,012	65,976	97%	66,513	64,391	97%	0%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; SLEP = Students with limited English proficiency without disabilities; SD = Students with disabilities without limited English proficiency; ALL = All 8th grade students

Table 2. Eight Grade Participation for the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Mathematics Tests

	Mathematics 1999–2000			Mathematics 2000–2001			Percent Change
	Enrolled	Tested		Enrolled	Tested		
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent	
SLEPD	221	202	91%	302	265	88%	-3%
SLEP	2,065	1,887	91%	2,586	2,360	91%	0%
SD	8,599	7,794	91%	8,500	7,667	90%	-1%
All	68,012	65,911	97%	66,513	64,213	97%	0%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; SLEP = Students with limited English proficiency without disabilities; SD = Students with disabilities without limited English proficiency; ALL = All 8th grade students

Table 3: Participation of Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities Compared to Participation of All Students with Disabilities, by Disability Category, in the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Reading Tests

	Disability Group	1999–2000			2000–2001		
		Enrolled	Tested		Enrolled	Tested	
			#	%		#	%
SLEPD	Speech/Language Impaired	31	30	97%	28	27	96%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	14	9	64%	14	7	50%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	2	0	0%	5	1	20%
	Physically Impaired	3	1	33%	3	2	67%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	14	13	93%	23	19	83%
	Visually Impaired	1	1	100%	5	4	80%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	134	126	94%	192	180	94%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	14	14	100%	22	19	86%
	Deaf-Blindness	2	2	100%	0	0	0%
	Other Health Impaired	5	4	80%	8	7	88%
	Autistic	0	0	0%	1	0	0%
Traumatic Brain Injury	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	
All SD	Speech/Language Impaired	527	518	98%	550	531	97%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	599	430	72%	587	403	69%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	162	12	7%	168	17	10%
	Physically Impaired	120	99	83%	102	78	77%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	160	148	93%	146	136	93%
	Visually Impaired	21	21	100%	24	21	88%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	4,258	4,091	96%	4,314	4,126	96%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	2,133	1,956	92%	1,958	1,805	92%
	Deaf-Blindness	8	6	75%	1	0	0%
	Other Health Impaired	681	641	94%	784	740	94%
	Autistic	117	77	66%	142	95	67%
Traumatic Brain Injury Disabled	34	26	77%	26	21	81%	

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL SD = All students with disabilities including SLEPD

Table 4: Participation of Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities Compared to Participation of All Students with Disabilities, by Disability Category, in the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Mathematics Tests

	Disability Group	1999–2000			2000–2001		
		Enrolled	Tested		Enrolled	Tested	
			#	%		#	%
SLEPD	Speech/Language Impaired	31	30	97%	28	26	93%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	14	10	71%	14	8	57%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	2	0	0%	5	1	20%
	Physically Impaired	3	1	33%	3	2	67%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	14	14	100%	23	19	83%
	Visually Impaired	1	1	100%	5	4	80%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	134	125	93%	192	178	93%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	14	14	100%	22	19	86%
	Deaf-Blindness	2	2	100%	0	0	0%
	Other Health Impaired	5	4	80%	8	7	88%
	Autistic	0	0	0%	1	0	0%
Traumatic Brain Injury	1	1	100%	1	1	100%	
ALL SD	Speech/Language Impaired	527	516	98%	550	530	96%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	599	421	70%	587	392	67%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	162	11	7%	168	19	11%
	Physically Impaired	120	96	80%	102	77	75%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	160	149	93%	146	138	95%
	Visually Impaired	21	21	100%	24	20	83%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	4,258	4,093	96%	4,314	4,117	96%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	2,133	1,948	91%	1,958	1,791	91%
	Deaf-Blindness	8	6	75%	1	0	0%
	Other Health Impaired	681	634	93%	784	734	94%
	Autistic	117	75	64%	142	93	65%
Traumatic Brain Injury	34	26	77%	26	21	81%	

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL SD = All students with disabilities including SLEPD

Table 5: Percent of Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities and All Students, by Language Group, Participating in 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Reading Tests

	Language Group	1999–2000			2000–2001		
		Enrolled	Tested in Reading		Enrolled	Tested in Reading	
			Number	Percent		Number	Percent
SLEPD	Hmong	111	100	90%	137	124	91%
	Spanish	60	56	93%	102	88	86%
	Somali	3	3	100%	7	6	86%
ALL	Hmong	1,365	1,326	97%	1,548	1,491	96%
	Spanish	857	766	89%	1,014	875	86%
	Somali	185	137	74%	268	213	80%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL = 8th grade students who are Hmong-, Spanish-, or Somali-speaking regardless of proficiency level.

Table 6. Percent of Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities and All Students, by Language Group, Participating in 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Mathematics Tests

	Language Group	1999–2000			2000–2001		
		Enrolled	Tested in Mathematics		Enrolled	Tested in Mathematics	
			Number	Percent		Number	Percent
SLEPD	Hmong	111	102	92%	137	123	90%
	Spanish	60	55	92%	102	87	85%
	Somali	3	3	100%	7	5	71%
ALL	Hmong	1,365	1,325	97%	1,548	1,479	96%
	Spanish	857	773	90%	1,014	891	88%
	Somali	185	137	74%	268	206	77%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL = 8th grade students who are Hmong-, Spanish-, or Somali-speaking regardless of proficiency level

Table 7. Percent of 8th Graders Passing the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Reading and Mathematics Tests

	Passing Reading				Passing Mathematics			
	1999–2000		2000–2001		1999–2000		2000–2001	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
SLEPD	15	7%	27	10%	14	7%	32	12%
SD	3,103	40%	2,935	38%	2,267	29%	2,395	31%
SLEP	622	33%	811	35%	643	34%	838	36%
ALL	52,567	80%	50,747	79%	47,305	72%	46,205	72%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; SLEP = Students with limited English proficiency without disabilities; SD = Students with disabilities without limited English proficiency; ALL = All 8th grade students

Table 8. Percent of Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities Compared to All Students with Disabilities, by Disability Category, Passing the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Reading Tests

	Disability Group	Passing 1999–2000		Passing 2000–2001	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
SLEPD	Speech/Language Impaired	6	20%	5	19%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	*	*	*	*
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	*	*	*	*
	Physically Impaired	*	*	*	*
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	2	15%	3	16%
	Visually Impaired	*	*	*	*
	Specific Learning Disabilities	6	5%	15	8%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	1	7%	2	11%
	Deaf-Blindness	*	*	*	*
	Other Health Impaired	*	*	*	*
	Autistic	*	*	*	*
	Traumatic Brain Injury	*	*	*	*
All SD	Speech/Language Impaired	264	51%	276	52%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	17	4%	10	2%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	0	0%	0	0%
	Physically Impaired	56	57%	41	53%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	50	34%	54	40%
	Visually Impaired	11	52%	11	52%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	1,508	37%	1,347	33%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	892	46%	799	44%
	Deaf-Blindness	*	*	*	*
	Other Health Impaired	282	44%	339	46%
	Autistic	40	52%	51	54%
	Traumatic Brain Injury	11	42%	7	33%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL SD = All students with disabilities including SLEPD

Table 9. Percent of Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities Compared to All Students with Disabilities, by Disability Category, Passing the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Mathematics Tests

	Disability Group	Passing 1999–2000		Passing 2000–2001	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
SLEPD	Speech/Language Impaired	4	13%	9	35%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	*	*	*	*
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	*	*	*	*
	Physically Impaired	*	*	*	*
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	0	0%	1	5%
	Visually Impaired	*	*	*	*
	Specific Learning Disabilities	7	6%	14	8%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	3	21%	2	11%
	Deaf-Blindness	*	*	0	0
	Other Health Impaired	*	*	*	*
	Autistic	*	*	*	*
Traumatic Brain Injury	*	*	*	*	
ALL SD	Speech/Language Impaired	231	45%	267	50%
	Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate	6	1%	2	<1%
	Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe	0	0%	1	6%
	Physically Impaired	34	35%	32	41%
	Deaf-Hard of Hearing	46	31%	48	35%
	Visually Impaired	12	57%	15	71%
	Specific Learning Disabilities	1,130	28%	1,155	28%
	Emotional/Behavioral Disorders	610	31%	582	32%
	Deaf-Blindness	*	*	*	*
	Other Health Impaired	183	29%	239	32%
	Autistic	34	45%	48	51%
Traumatic Brain Injury	6	23%	6	29%	

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL SD = All students with disabilities including SLEPD; * = Fewer than 10 students tested; therefore, data not disaggregated

Table 10: Percent of Students with Limited English Proficiency and Disabilities and All Students, by Language Group, Passing the 1999–2000 and 2000–2001 BST Mathematics and Reading Tests

	Language Group	Passing Reading				Passing Mathematics			
		1999–2000		2000–2001		1999–2000		2000–2001	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
SLEPD	Hmong	10	10%	11	9%	7	7%	20	16%
	Spanish	2	4%	7	8%	4	7%	5	6%
	Somali	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ALL	Hmong	583	44%	637	43%	607	46%	674	46%
	Spanish	285	37%	324	37%	202	26%	251	28%
	Somali	28	20%	41	19%	18	13%	29	14%

Key: SLEPD = Students with limited English proficiency and disabilities; ALL = 8th grade students who are Hmong-, Spanish-, or Somali-speaking regardless of proficiency level