Students with Disabilities

Recent Changes in Proficiency Rates for Students with Disabilities as Reported to Federal Sources

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Figure 1. Proficiency Data for Math and Reading for the 41 States That Provided Three Years of Usable Proficiency Data Ending with 2007-08 School Year.

- States who reported an increase in performance for 2007-08 that was greater than their increase in performance for 2006-07 were coded as "increased improvement." For math, 17 states showed increased improvement in 2007-08. Those states on average have increased their proficiency from a baseline of 33.8% to 40.6%.
- For reading, 17 states (n=11 for both math and reading) showed increased improvement in 2007-08. Those states on average have increased their proficiency from a baseline of 30.7% to 42.1%.
- For reading, 12 states (including 7 for both math and reading) showed decreased improvement in 2007-08 when compared to 2006-07. Those states on average have increased their baseline proficiency from 36.5% to 45.8%.
- For math, 14 states showed a lack of improvement in performance for 2007-08. Those states on average have increased their proficiency from a baseline of 33.7% to just 34.3%.
- For reading, 12 states (including 9 for both math and reading) showed a lack of improvement in performance for 2007-08. Those states on average have increased their proficiency from a baseline of 31.6% to 34.2%.

Introduction

This study reports the findings of a longitudinal analysis of three years of student-level demographic and performance data for four states (Alabama, Hawaii, South Dakota, and Wisconsin). The goal of this analysis was to learn more about the characteristics of low performing students.

Low performing (LP) students were defined as students who scored at the 10th percentile or below on the statewide assessment in any one of the three years.

All states showed that students who were in the LP group in the first year1 did not have had access to grade-level content which is another requirement of the federal regulations.

Three states showed that students who were living in poverty (i.e., qualified for a free/reduced lunch) were more likely to be LP than the overall population.

• More than half (i.e., 55% - 77%) of the student population.
• Except for Hawaii, LP students in the other three states were more likely to be from an ethnic minority than the overall student population.
• Three states showed that students who were not performing at grade level were more likely to be LP than the overall population.

The denominator of the percentages in Figure 2 is the number of students who were in the LP group in the first year.1

Across all states and grade levels approximately 25% (24% - 28%) of the students moved out of the LP group after the first year and did not return.

Many low performing students do not become PLP and student grade did not seem to affect likelihood of becoming PLP. Some low performing students may not have had access to grade-level content which is another requirement of the federal regulations.

Conclusions

Three studies that examined state data to learn more about the characteristics or performance of a historically underserved subgroup.

Three states showed that students who were in the LP group in the first year did not have had access to grade-level content which is another requirement of the federal regulations.

Student Movement out of the Low Performing Group

The data are also disaggregated for those states that showed:
- increased improvement in proficiency rates in 2007-08 (but still improved)
- a lack of improvement.

Three did not provide data for 2007-08, one did not provide data for only 2006-07, and four did not provide data for only 2005-06.

• Across all states and grade levels more than half of the students who were LP in the first year did not become PLP stu.
• Across states and grade levels approximately 25% (24% - 28%) of the students moved out of the LP group after the first year and did not return.

The figure presents the results for reading, but there were similar results for mathematics. There were no clear differences between data at the 5th grade level and data at the 8th grade level.

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