

Commission Staff Research Report

*The State of the
Achievement Gap*

The No Child Left Behind Act's (NCLB) main focus is to help schools address the stubborn achievement gap between high and low performing students. Specifically, the law seeks to hold schools accountable for closing the gaps in achievement between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students, minority and non-minority students, and other key subgroups of children. Signed into law by President Bush in 2002, NCLB is premised on the notion that all children must receive a quality education in order to become equipped with the necessary skills to succeed in college and the workforce.

Proponents of the bill believed that, in order to ensure this result, each state had to develop and implement a system to hold schools accountable. The accountability systems were designed to identify struggling schools, as well as schools that were under serving student populations. Presently, the accountability system requires each state to disaggregate data from assessments in order to determine how different groups of children (Blacks, Whites, Hispanics, students with disabilities, English language learners and students from low-income families) are performing. Without reporting each individual group, poor performance of different groups can be masked by aggregate rather than disaggregate scores.

Under prior law, schools were required to assess once in each of three grade spans: three through five, six through nine, and ten through twelve. NCLB required a new standard for frequency of testing; states are required to test in grades three through eight in both reading and mathematics, as well as once during high school. Increasing the frequency of testing in this manner allows for the ability to observe student performance at more frequent regular intervals.

Since the enactment of NCLB, there have been many debates on the key structural components of the law such as adequate yearly progress (AYP), N-sizes, growth models, and how to include students with disabilities and English language learners in accountability systems. These are all important components of the law; however the debate rarely focuses on the larger and more critical goal of closing the achievement gap.

This paper defines the current achievement gaps as well as whether these gaps have closed or widened in the past few years. The study seeks to uncover the actual gains that states have made and whether gaps in achievement have decreased, remained the same or even increased.

This study analyzes achievement data on assessments for several states between the years 2002 and 2005. Seven states— New York, California, Oregon, Texas, Mississippi, Illinois, and North Carolina —were chosen for this study based on geographic and population diversity. Each state is examined through an analysis of assessment results for grades 3, 5, 8, and high school (with the exception of NY, wherein grades 4, 7, 10 were be examined). The paper looks at the overall achievement in mathematics and reading for different subgroups, as well as compares

achievement between various subgroups over the course of 2002 to 2005 (sometimes 2003 to 2005 due to availability of information).

In addition to looking at achievement gaps in state assessments, this paper includes an examination of the achievement gaps reported by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The achievement gaps found in NAEP data for each state can be found in the Appendix.

Our analysis of the state achievement data found mixed results when it came to gap closure and overall achievement. One theme that is prevalent across all 7 states is - the gap still exists in both state assessments and NAEP results. And those gaps can be quite large between subgroups ranging from 11 to over 40 percentage points. Even though overall achievement on NAEP was below the achievement on state assessments, the achievement gaps on NAEP data were generally comparable to state assessments with a few exceptions.

For this white paper, student achievement data was collected for each of the seven states from information posted on SchoolMatters.com (A service of Standard and Poor's). NEAP data was collected from the National Center for Education Statistics website (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>).

New York

The state of New York educated close to 2.9 million students in its public school system during the 2003-2004 academic school year. New York's student population is diverse, wherein 54% of students are White, 20% are Black, 19% are Hispanic, and 7% are Asian. There are 4,294 schools divided into 726 districts throughout the state; this includes the New York City public school system, the largest school district within the United States, where more than one million students are taught in 1,200 separate public schools. The state of New York houses a number of other large, urban school districts, as well as a vast number of suburban and rural districts.

Grade 4

Overall achievement has increased in both reading and mathematics for fourth graders in New York from 2002 to 2005. With regards to the Black and Hispanic student populations, there have been significant improvements in achievement. In 2002, only 49% of Hispanics were proficient in mathematics; in 2005, 76% of Hispanic students became proficient. Therefore, an increase of 27 percentage points occurred between 2002 and 2005 for proficiency in mathematics among Hispanic students. Similar, but smaller double-digit gains occurred for Hispanic and Black students in reading. However, despite gains of 15 percentage points for Hispanic, and 12 percentage points for Black students, only 57% of Hispanic, and 54% of Black students were proficient in reading by 2005.

The achievement gap in most populations decreased between 2002 and 2005. In 2002, the gap between White and Black students in reading was 32 percentage points and decreased to 25 percentage points in 2005. The gap between White and Hispanic students in 2005 was 22

percentage points (79% Whites and 57% Blacks), which is a 10 point decrease from the percentage gap in 2002.

Some of the greatest overall improvements in closing the achievement gap were shown in mathematics. Black students made the most significant gains in closing the achievement gap between themselves and their White peers, with a decrease from 36 percentage points to 19 percentage points in mathematics. In addition, the achievement gap between White and Hispanic students and the gap between the economically disadvantaged students and the non-disadvantaged students decreased by 12 percentage points.

Despite the double-digit decreases in the achievement gap, Black students still trailed behind their White counterparts by 19 percentage points in mathematics, and 25 percentage points in reading. In addition, English language learners (ELL) trailed non-English language learners by 40 percentage points. The largest achievement gap was between disabled and non-disabled students. Despite closing the achievement gap by 9 percentage points, disabled students still lagged behind non-disabled students by 49 percentage points (77% non-disabled, 28% disabled) in terms of proficiency.

NY Grade 4 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	61.0	74.0	42.0	42.0	74.0	45.0	44.0	14.0	30.0
2003	64.0	75.0	48.0	48.0	78.0	55.0	52.0	12.0	23.0
2004	62.0	73.0	44.0	46.0	78.0	46.0	46.0	21.0	22.0
2005	70.0	79.0	54.0	57.0	83.0	58.0	57.0	31.0	28.0
NY Grade 4 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	67.0	81.0	45.0	49.0	83.0	55.0	51.0	29.0	37.0
2003	78.0	88.0	62.0	66.0	88.0	70.0	69.0	44.0	48.0
2004	79.0	89.0	63.0	66.0	89.0	72.0	68.0	47.0	49.0
2005	85.0	92.0	73.0	76.0	93.0	79.0	77.0	59.0	55.0

Grade 8

Achievement has increased slightly in reading and mathematics for eighth graders from 2002 to 2005. This follows the national trend of achievement, where significant gains occur in earlier grades and trickle off as students get older. Hispanic students had the greatest gains from 2002 to 2005, with an increase of 6 percentage points in reading and 13 percentage points in mathematics.

Following the achievement gains of fourth grade students, the most marked improvements for New York were made by eighth graders in mathematics. Between 2002 and 2005, English

language learners improved 10 percentage points, Black students improved 10 percentage points, and economically disadvantaged students improved 11 percentage points. In spite of such striking improvements, the low percentage of students who are proficient in mathematics remains concerning. In 2005, only 31% of Black students, 36% of Hispanic students, 38% of economically disadvantaged students and 19% of students with disabilities were proficient in mathematics. The same trend follows for reading, where proficiency rates in the same populations ranges from 10% to 28%.

Slight increases in overall performance have nevertheless resulted in small decreases in the achievement gap in 8th grade students. The gap between White and Black students closed 1 percentage point in reading in the four years since NCLB's implementation, and 3 percentage points in mathematics. The gap between Whites and Hispanics has closed in reading and mathematics by 2 and 6 percentage points, respectively. Conversely, gaps have increased between the disabled and non-disabled populations (4 percentage points in both reading and mathematics) as well as in reading for ELL and non-ELL students in reading. Overall, the achievement gap in these populations ranges between 26 and 45 percentage points.

NY Grade 8 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	44.0	57.0	21.0	22.0	58.0	30.0	24.0	3.0	9.0
2003	45.0	56.0	26.0	26.0	59.0	30.0	29.0	2.0	8.0
2004	47.0	58.0	27.0	30.0	64.0	32.0	29.0	5.0	8.0
2005	48.0	61.0	26.0	28.0	62.0	32.0	30.0	5.0	10.0
NY Grade 8 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	48.0	62.0	21.0	23.0	67.0	36.0	27.0	14.0	15.0
2003	51.0	65.0	26.0	28.0	69.0	39.0	34.0	17.0	16.0
2004	58.0	71.0	33.0	37.0	77.0	47.0	39.0	24.0	19.0
2005	55.0	69.0	31.0	36.0	76.0	42.0	38.0	24.0	19.0

High School

High school data in New York does not allow for as clear a picture to be drawn on student achievement as with other grade levels, because assessment data for the 2004-2005 school year has not been posted in a disaggregated format as in previous years. Therefore, analysis has been conducted on the years between 2002 and 2004, rather than between 2002 and 2005.

Overall achievement gains varied for high school students in reading. Blacks and Hispanics improved slightly by approximately 6 percentage points. However, White, American Indian, and economically disadvantaged students' performance decreased slightly from 2002 to 2005. Overall achievement for all populations decreased in mathematics anywhere ranging from 1 to 7 percentage points.

The achievement gaps in high school reading proficiency remain considerable. Despite Black students closing the gap between their White counterparts by 6 percentage points, White students showed a slight decrease in achievement from 2002 to 2004, but still remain 22.5 percentage points ahead of Black students. Hispanic students in 2004 trailed White students by 23.9 points and disabled students trailed non-disabled students by 16 percentage points.

Achievement gaps were as large in mathematics as they were in reading. The gap actually increased between the economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged population by 7 percentage points.

NY High School Cohort - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	76.3	85.7	57.2	54.7	77.1	68.1	64.7	31.9	38.8
2003	73.6	83.5	53.2	52.5	76.7	63.9	57.3	33.3	34.2
2004	77.8	85.2	62.7	61.3	79.6	65.1	63.5	39.0	36.7
2005	78.6	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
NY High School Cohort - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	73.4	83.5	49.4	49.8	82.8	66.7	59.5	46.4	34.9
2003	70.6	82.0	44.8	45.2	80.8	64.7	51.7	44.0	30.6
2004	69.9	79.7	46.1	48.2	80.3	61.3	52.6	45.3	29.3
2005	76.9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

California

California educated approximately 6,413,862 students in its public school system during the 2003-2004 academic school year. Throughout the state, there are 9,171 schools divided into 989 separate school districts. California's student population is one of the most diverse within the country, wherein approximately 45% of students are Hispanic, 32% of students are White, 11% are Asian, and 8% are Black. In addition, approximately 48% of California students have been designated as economically disadvantaged, 25% of students are English language learners, and 11% of the population is comprised of students with disabilities.

Although California's achievement data is available from 2002 through 2005, assessment data for different subgroups has not been disaggregated for the 2001-2002 academic school year. Therefore, gaps and overall achievement will be assessed from 2003 to 2005.

Grade 3

Overall achievement in reading was quite poor for all student populations in the third grade. According to 2005 data, the percent of proficient students in reading ranged from 13% of students with disabilities, to 51% of White students. Since the enactment of NCLB, overall student performance has actually decreased slightly for all student populations, with the greatest decreases in achievement amongst Filipino, American Indian, and economically disadvantaged students (3 to 4 percentage points).

The achievement gaps between student populations were large and did not decrease substantially. In fact, no net change occurred between 2003 and 2005 in the 29 percentage point gap between Black and White students proficient in reading. Similarly, the gap actually increased by 1 percentage point between White and Hispanic students.

Overall performance in mathematics did increase within third grade populations; Black students, Hispanic students, and English language learners improved over the three year period. However, despite measurable growth, the percent of proficient students still remains low. In 2005, only 39% of Black students were proficient, 43% of Hispanic students, and 40% of English language learners.

Because each population grew at approximately the same rate, little to no closure was made for the large achievement gaps that exist. For example, there was no change in the 31 percentage point gap between White and Black students who were proficient between 2003 and 2005. In addition, there was a 10 percentage point increase in the gap between disabled and non-disabled students.

CA Grade 3 - State Test English Language Arts Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	34.0								18.0	12.0	17.0
2003	33.0	52.0	23.0	19.0	56.0	31.0	50.0	30.0	20.0	13.0	15.0
2004	30.0	48.0	20.0	17.0	52.0	28.0	46.0	26.0	17.0	10.0	14.0
2005	31.0	51.0	22.0	17.0	54.0	30.0	46.0	26.0	17.0	12.0	13.0
CA Grade 3 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	38.0								25.0	22.0	21.0
2003	46.0	61.0	29.0	33.0	72.0	45.0	64.0	39.0	34.0	30.0	23.0
2004	48.0	64.0	32.0	36.0	75.0	47.0	67.0	42.0	36.0	32.0	26.0
2005	54.0	70.0	39.0	43.0	80.0	54.0	74.0	48.0	44.0	40.0	29.0

Grade 5

While achievement was low in all populations for fifth graders in reading, some populations did make significant improvements. Proficiency levels of White, Filipino, and the non-economically disadvantaged subgroups increased approximately 10 percentage points. The percentage of proficient Black and Hispanic students increased 7 percentage points by 2005, yet only 30% of Blacks and 27% of Hispanics were proficient in reading.

As a result of the disparities in academic achievement among the different populations, the achievement gaps increased. The gap increased two percentage points between White and Black students, White and Hispanic students, and between economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.

Achievement for all populations was low in mathematics, with the exception of Asian students, of whom 74% were proficient. Black and Hispanic students made measurable gains of 8 and 10 percentage points; however, only 28% of Black and 32% of Hispanic students were proficient.

No measurable progress was made in closing the achievement gaps. The gap between Hispanic and White students decreased 1 percentage point in mathematics, leaving Hispanic students 26 percentage points below the percentage of White students that are proficient. The gap increased between Black and White students, topping out at a 30 percentage point difference.

CA Grade 5 - State Test English Language Arts Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	31.0								14.0	6.0	11.0
2003	36.0	54.0	23.0	20.0	56.0	32.0	50.0	32.0	20.0	9.0	10.0
2004	40.0	60.0	28.0	25.0	63.0	38.0	58.0	34.0	24.0	12.0	13.0
2005	43.0	63.0	30.0	27.0	66.0	40.0	60.0	39.0	28.0	13.0	15.0
CA Grade 5 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	29.0								16.0	10.0	12.0
2003	35.0	49.0	20.0	22.0	63.0	31.0	51.0	28.0	22.0	15.0	12.0
2004	38.0	51.0	22.0	25.0	67.0	34.0	54.0	28.0	25.0	17.0	12.0
2005	44.0	58.0	28.0	32.0	74.0	44.0	63.0	35.0	32.0	22.0	17.0

Grade 8

Overall performance for both mathematics and reading was low for all populations, despite small gains in achievement. The percentage of Black students proficient in reading was 24% and

approximately 14% of Black students were proficient in mathematics. The percentage of Hispanic students proficient in both subjects ranged from 17% to 23%, in 2005.

The achievement gap increased in between most populations. The gaps in reading ranged between 34 and 41 percentage points. The achievement gap between the percent of Black students proficient in reading increased four percentage points, leaving a 34 percentage gap. The biggest gap increase was 7 points, between ELL and non-ELL students, leaving a 41 percentage point gap. Achievement gaps in mathematics proficiency ranged between 25 and 31 percentage points. The largest gap is 31 percentage points, between White and Black students.

CA Grade 8 - State Test English Language Arts Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	32.0								14.0	3.0	5.0
2003	30.0	47.0	17.0	15.0	49.0	23.0	41.0	25.0	15.0	4.0	5.0
2004	33.0	51.0	19.0	18.0	53.0	26.0	45.0	27.0	18.0	3.0	6.0
2005	39.0	58.0	24.0	23.0	58.0	32.0	51.0	35.0	22.0	6.0	8.0
CA Grade 8 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	26.7								14.0	8.3	4.9
2003	29.3	41.8	12.8	15.2	58.4	25.3	38.5	23.5	15.8	10.8	7.0
2004	29.6	42.1	12.2	15.3	58.8	25.5	39.1	24.2	16.7	8.6	6.8
2005	31.3	45.4	14.4	17.8	62.4	27.5	43.4	25.7	18.4	9.7	7.1

High School

Overall achievement declined minimally for most populations in the percent of students proficient in English in the high school cohort. The percent of White students proficient decreased by 1 percentage point, leaving 83% of students proficient. In 2005, only 54% of Black students were proficient in reading, dropping 2 percentage points since 2003.

Between 2003 and 2005, already large achievement gaps continued to increase. The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students increased 7 percentage points, leaving a 31 percentage point gap. Despite an actual 1 percentage point decrease, Hispanic achievement is still 30 percentage points below Whites.

Significant increases were made in overall achievement in mathematics for all populations for the high school cohort (increases range from 14 to 21 percentage points). However, despite an 18 percentage point increase, only 44% of Black students were proficient. The same trend occurred with the Hispanic population, in which the proficiency rate grew 21 percentage points, only to have 51% of Hispanic students proficient.

Large achievement gaps in mathematics decreased incrementally between 2003 and 2005. The achievement gap between White and Black students decreased 1 percentage point, leaving a 36

point gap between White and Black students that were proficient; however, not all gaps closed during this period. The gap between the economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged increased 12 percentage points, and left a 32 percentage point gap.

CA High School Cohort - State Test English Language Arts Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	66.0	84.0	56.0	53.0	73.0	66.0	81.0	68.0	51.0	33.0	28.0
2004	75.0	88.0	62.0	62.0	85.0	71.0	87.0	73.0	60.0	39.0	30.0
2005	65.0	83.0	54.0	53.0	75.0	64.0	81.0	64.0	50.0	36.0	25.0
CA High School Cohort - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	43.0	63.0	26.0	30.0	70.0	41.0	59.0	41.0	31.0	22.0	14.0
2004	74.0	87.0	54.0	61.0	91.0	71.0	87.0	69.0	61.0	49.0	30.0
2005	63.0	80.0	44.0	51.0	86.0	61.0	79.0	59.0	45.0	35.0	23.0

Oregon

The state of Oregon is home to approximately 551,273 students. Within the state, there are 1,208 schools divided between 200 urban, rural, and suburban public school districts. While less diverse than states such as California, New York, and Texas, Oregon still services a relatively diverse student population, of whom 75% of students are white, 13.3% are Hispanic, 4.4% are Asian, and 3% are Black. In addition, 40.1% of students attending Oregon public schools have been designated as economically disadvantaged. The following data on student achievement spans from 2003 to 2005.

Grade 3

Oregon's third graders have seen slight increases in overall academic achievement in reading. Between 2003 and 2005, the greatest gains in achievement occurred with the Hispanic and students with disabilities populations, which saw an increase of 11.6 and 10.5 percentage points, respectively. Both Black and White students made comparable increases of less than 3 percentage points.

Within the three years since No Child Left Behind's initial implementation, Black students have been the only subgroup to see decreases in proficiency levels; between 2003 and 2004, the percent of proficient students decreased by 2.6 percentage points. By 2005, however, Black students once again increased proficiency levels by 5.1 percentage points.

The achievement gaps in reading have made fairly small decreases amongst student populations. The smallest is the decrease in achievement gap between White and Black students, which has lessened by only .9, less than one percentage point. Oregon’s attempt to eradicate the achievement gap has met success: the gap between White and Hispanic students decreased by 10 percentage points, the gap between the White and ELL subgroup decreased by 6.9 percentage points, and the gap between the White subgroup, when compared to the students with disabilities population, has decreased by 8.9 percentage points.

Increases in overall performance were much larger for mathematics than for reading. Hispanic students once again saw the greatest gains, making an impressive increase in proficiency by 18.5 percentage points between 2003 and 2005. The proficiency levels of students with disabilities increased by 15.7 percentage points, increased for Black students by 12.3 percentage points and White students by 6.2 percentage points. Due to such increases in performance, achievement gaps across subgroups saw decreases; the gap between White students and English Language Learners decreased by 6.5, between White and Black students by 6.2, and between the White and Hispanic students by 12.3 percentage points.

Oregon: Grade 3 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	82.0	87.0	77.0	60.0	85.0	78.0			49.0
2004	83.0	87.1	74.4	63.9	87.0	79.2	73.9	59.0	52.7
2005	85.6	88.6	79.5	71.6	90.3	83.5	78.4	67.4	59.5
Oregon: Grade 3 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	78.0	83.0	64.0	55.0	80.0	70.0			51.0
2004	81.9	86.0	71.4	64.0	86.3	74.3	73.1	61.5	57.5
2005	86.2	89.2	76.3	73.5	89.8	83.1	79.7	71.2	66.7

Grade 5

Fifth grade students in Oregon have made increases in proficiency levels in both reading and mathematics since 2003. With regards to reading, only 50% of Hispanic students were proficient in 2003, as compared to 62.8% by 2005—an increase of 12.8 percentage points. Similar gains were made by the students with disabilities subgroup, which grew in proficiency levels by 11.8 percentage points, as well as the Black subgroup by 8.5 percentage points. During the 2004-2005 academic year, economically disadvantaged and ELL students increased in proficiency by 6.3 and 7.5 percentage points, respectively.

Understandably then, the most notable decrease that occurred in achievement gaps between student populations was between the White and Hispanic subgroups, which saw an 8.4 percentage point reduction. Additional decreases, although small, occurred as well: the gap between White students and Black students decreased by 4.1 percentage points; between White students and English Language Learners decreased by 3.4 percentage points, and the gap

between White students and economically disadvantaged students decreased by 2.2 percentage points.

On average, fifth grade students in Oregon had both a higher percentage rate of student proficiency in mathematics than in reading, and also made greater increases in closing the achievement gap in mathematics when compared to reading. Blacks and Hispanics made the most significant gains in achievement; they both improved by 16.9 percentage points. Also making double-digit gains in mathematics was the students with disabilities subgroup, which progressed by 14.2 percentage points. The increase in achievement was much smaller for ELL students, who improved by 8.6 percentage points, as well as for economically disadvantaged students, who improved by only 6.8 percentage points.

Black and Hispanic students experienced a 10.9 percentage point decrease in the achievement gap in mathematics between their White counterparts, the greatest reduction in gaps as compared to other student populations. Despite gains in academic performance, ELL students continue to trail their White peers by 20.8 percentage points, students with disabilities trail their White peers by 30.8 percentage points and economically disadvantaged students trail White students by 10.8 percentage points.

Oregon: Grade 5 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	76.0	81.0	64.0	50.0	79.0	66.0			38.0
2004	76.8	81.3	66.0	55.1	80.8	69.5	65.7	47.5	42.0
2005	81.5	85.4	72.5	62.8	85.5	75.8	72.0	55.0	49.8
Oregon: Grade 5 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	76.0	81.0	59.0	53.0	82.0	67.0			42.0
2004	78.9	82.6	66.5	61.1	85.4	72.2	69.4	57.6	47.4
2005	84.0	87.0	75.9	69.9	90.0	76.8	76.2	66.2	56.2

Grade 8

Similar to other states analyzed in this study, the proportion of students at or above proficiency in reading and mathematics was much lower in eighth grade than for lower grades. In reading, for example, only 36.6% of Hispanic students were proficient in 2005, as compared to 71.6% of Hispanic third graders who were proficient in reading. Likewise, only 44.1% of Black eighth graders met with proficiency in the subject, compared to 79.5% of Black third graders and 72.5% of Black fifth graders who were proficient.

All student groups made gains in overall achievement in reading; however, these increases were marginal. Black and Hispanic students increased 4.1 and 4.6 percentage points respectively,

while ELL students increased only 2.3 percentage points. Thus, in spite of—or perhaps, because of—the very slight gains in overall performance that occurred for eighth graders, the achievement gap between White students when compared to their Black and Hispanic peers, continues to be significant, with a range between 23.2 and 30.7 percentage points. The achievement gap between ELL and White students actually increased, resulting in the achievement gap of 42.9 percentage points.

Overall student performance in mathematics was also markedly low. Only 24.2% of students with disabilities, 33.4% of English language learners, 39.3% of Hispanic students, and 40.4% of Black students were proficient as compared to 67.8% of White students and even 77.5% of Asian students. Nevertheless, gains were made in performance. The greatest increases in proficiency were made by Hispanic students, with an increase of 8.3 percentage points, while students with disabilities made a 7.2 percentage point increase in proficiency. Although Black students made a 4.4 percentage point jump in proficiency, the gap between Black and White students actually increased by .4 percentage points, resulting in an overall achievement gap of 27.4 percentage points. Additional achievement gaps between Oregon’s White students and their minority and disadvantaged counterparts decreased very slightly. Such gaps now range from 27.4 to 43.6 percentage points.

Oregon: Grade 8 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	61.0	65.0	40.0	32.0	66.0	40.0			17.0
2004	60.0	64.4	43.3	33.2	68.4	44.5	42.7	22.1	19.0
2005	62.5	67.3	44.1	36.6	70.6	50.7	47.1	24.4	22.5
Oregon: Grade 8 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	59.0	63.0	36.0	31.0	71.0	40.0			17.0
2004	59.8	64.0	39.3	33.9	74.0	43.4	43.0	28.1	19.8
2005	63.5	67.8	40.4	39.3	77.5	49.2	48.2	33.4	24.2

Grade 10

Overall achievement for Oregon’s tenth grade students shows the lowest rates of proficiency when compared to grades 3, 5, and 8. In 2005, only 13.1% of English language learners and 14.3% of students with disabilities were proficient in reading. Other subgroups did not perform much better: only 26.9% of Hispanic students, 30.3% of Black students, and 36.4% of economically disadvantaged students were proficient in the subject. White students earned the greatest rates of proficiency in reading, with 58.1%.

While numbers for proficiency levels in 2005 across all student populations were quite low, the gaps in achievement between subgroups are quite large in reading. The gap between Whites and Blacks is at 27.8 percentage points, the gap between White and Hispanic students is 31.2

percentage points, and the gap between the White subgroup, when compared to the students with disabilities subgroup, is 43.8 percentage points. There was a .7% increase in the achievement gap between Whites and English language learners, resulting in a 45 percentage point gap.

Proficiency levels for tenth grade mathematics were also quite low in 2005. While there were slight increases in overall performance, the proportion of proficient students remains mediocre for all student populations. For example, only 10.8% of students with disabilities were proficient in mathematics, as compared to 50.7% of White students. The achievement gap increased by .9 percentage points between these two subgroups, resulting in a 39.9 percentage point achievement gap. Other gaps in achievement also increased; the gap between Black and White students increased by .9 percentage points, creating a 28.9 percentage point gap; the gap between White students and English language learners grew by 3.7 percentage points, resulting in a 35.7 percentage point gap; and the gap between White and economically disadvantaged students grew by 3.1 percentage points, resulting in a 35.7 percentage point gap. The only decrease in achievement gaps for Oregon’s tenth grade students in mathematics occurred between the White and Hispanic subgroups, with a decrease of 1.9 percentage points.

Oregon: Grade 10 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	52.0	56.0	26.0	22.0	49.0	35.0			12.0
2004	50.5	54.9	27.1	22.6	51.9	36.8	31.6	10.6	11.6
2005	53.5	58.1	30.3	26.9	57.2	38.9	36.4	13.1	14.3
Oregon: Grade 10 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	45.0	48.0	20.0	17.0	55.0	29.0			9.0
2004	43.2	46.7	18.7	18.5	57.6	25.9	24.7	14.1	8.7
2005	46.6	50.7	21.8	21.6	59.3	30.3	30.0	15.0	10.8

Texas

In 2004, Texas educated over 4.3 million students in its public school system. The state is comprised of 7,035 schools, divided into 1046 school districts throughout the state. The student population is diverse, wherein nearly 44% of students are Hispanic, 39% are White, 14% are Black and 3% are Asian. Approximately 47% of students in Texas have been classified as economically disadvantaged. Data collected on student achievement is from 2003 to 2005.

Grade 3

Overall achievement has increased slightly in reading for third graders. Black students and English language learners grew the most, 7 and 10 percentage points respectively. Despite only slight gains, the percentage of proficient students is quite high, ranging between 87% and 97% .

The achievement gaps in reading were very small amongst student populations. The gap between White and Black students decreased 6 percentage points, leaving an 8 percentage point gap. The gap between Hispanics and White students was 6 percentage points, also down 5 percentage points since 2003. The gaps between disabled and non-disabled and ELL and White students followed the same trends.

Overall achievement in mathematics for third graders painted a very different picture. Student achievement actually decreased between 2003 and 2005 amongst all populations. The percent of proficient Black students decreased by 12 percentage points, White students by 5, Hispanics by 11 and economically disadvantaged by 12 percentage points.

In addition to decreases in student performance, the achievement gap increased in all major comparisons across student populations, with gaps much larger in mathematics than in reading. The gap between White and Black students grew 7 percentage points, increasing the gap to 22 percentage points. The gap increased 6 percentage points between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students.

TX Grade 3 - State Test Reading	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	89.0	96.0	82.0	85.0	95.0	90.0	84.0	77.0	84.0
2004	91.0	96.0	86.0	88.0	96.0	94.0	87.0	82.0	86.0
2005	94.0	97.0	89.0	91.0	98.0	95.0	90.0	87.0	89.0
TX Grade 3 - State Test Math	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	90.0	96.0	81.0	88.0	97.0	92.0	86.0	85.0	86.0
2004	90.0	95.0	81.0	87.0	97.0	91.0	86.0	85.0	84.0
2005	82.0	91.0	69.0	77.0	94.0	85.0	74.0	72.0	75.0

Grade 5

Overall achievement increased slightly for all populations in reading. Black students and students with disabilities made the greatest gains, increasing 9 and 10 percentage points respectively. Despite such small gains, overall achievement across populations was quite impressive, with 94% of White, 78% of Black, and 80% of Hispanic students being proficient.

The achievement gaps decreased slightly in reading between 2003 and 2005, yet most gaps remained in the double digits. For example, the gap between White and Black students decreased by 4 percentage points, leaving a 16 percentage point gap. The largest gap, existing between English language learners and non-English language learners (ELL – 57% and Non-ELL 89%), closed 2 percentage points, leaving a 32 percentage point gap.

Very small increases occurred in achievement on mathematics assessments for 5th graders. Students with disabilities had the most growth, with a change of 5 percentage points. Overall

performance, however, was high for most populations with the number of students proficient in mathematics ranging from 72% for English Language Learners to 97% of Asian students.

As a result of slight increases in overall achievement in mathematics, the achievement gap closed little to none amongst populations. The gap between White and Black students closed only 1 percentage point, leaving the gap at 18 percentage points. It is also important to note that between 2003 and 2005, the achievement gap actually increased 2 percentage points in 2004, but decreased by 3 percentage points in 2005, resulting in the net decrease of 1 percentage point. The gap between economically advantaged and disadvantaged students remained the same.

TX Grade 5 - State Test Reading	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	79.0	89.0	69.0	73.0	91.0	82.0	71.0	48.0	65.0
2004	79.0	90.0	70.0	71.0	91.0	84.0	69.0	42.0	67.0
2005	86.0	94.0	78.0	80.0	94.0	88.0	79.0	57.0	75.0
TX Grade 5 - State Test Math	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	86.0	93.0	74.0	82.0	96.0	87.0	80.0	68.0	74.0
2004	82.0	90.0	69.0	76.0	94.0	84.0	74.0	60.0	67.0
2005	88.0	95.0	77.0	85.0	97.0	90.0	82.0	72.0	79.0

Grade 8

Achievement in 8th grade reading dropped between 2003 and 2005. The most significant change occurred in English language learners, wherein the proficiency levels dropped from 45 to 30 percentage points. The proficiency level of White students dropped by 2 percentage points, as well as Black students by 4 and Hispanic students by 8 percentage points.

The achievement gaps in reading also increased. The most significant increase was between ELL and Black students which dropped 13 percentage points within the three year span, leaving English language learners 56 percentage points behind their non-ELL counterparts.

The same outputs that occurred in reading proficiency were also revealed in mathematics proficiency amongst 8th graders. However, decreases in overall performance were in double digits. Both Hispanic and Black students dropped 13 percentage points in overall achievement, leaving only 44% of Black students proficient, and only 50% of Hispanic students proficient. Also by grade 8 in 2005, only 22% of ELL students were proficient in mathematics.

The achievement gaps in mathematics are large, and have increased over the three year span. Black students trail their White counterparts by 31 percentage points, ELL students trail non-ELL students by 41 percentage points.

TX Grade 8 - State Test Reading	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	88.0	94.0	82.0	83.0	95.0	89.0	82.0	45.0	71.0
2004	89.0	95.0	85.0	84.0	96.0	90.0	83.0	48.0	73.0
2005	83.0	92.0	78.0	75.0	91.0	86.0	75.0	30.0	61.0
TX Grade 8 - State Test Math	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	72.0	84.0	57.0	63.0	90.0	75.0	61.0	32.0	46.0
2004	66.0	80.0	49.0	57.0	87.0	69.0	54.0	28.0	40.0
2005	61.0	75.0	44.0	50.0	86.0	61.0	48.0	22.0	31.0

Grade 10

Overall performance in grade 10 decreased from 2003 to 2005 in reading. Performance dropped for all populations except for students with disabilities. The decrease in proficiency levels averaged about 4 percentage points. Black students had the largest decreases in performance, declining 6 percentage points, leaving only 58% of Black students proficient in reading.

Results in closing the achievement gap varied, with some gaps increasing, decreasing, or remaining the same. The gap between Black and White students increased 2 percentage points, leaving Black students trailing 18 percentage points in students proficient in reading. The gap between disabled and non-disabled students closed 10 percentage points, but the gap remained at 33 percentage points. Decreases in mathematics achievement were more significant than in reading. The decrease in the proficiency level of students ranged from 7 percentage points (Asian) to 25 percentage points (ELL), leaving only 18 percent of English Language learners proficient in reading. Students with disabilities performance decreased by 13 percentage points, leaving only 26% of students with disabilities proficient in reading.

The gaps between populations are large and increased over the three year span. The gap between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged populations increased by 7 percentage points, leaving a 28 percentage point gap in achievement. The largest gap was between ELL and non-ELLs, wherein there is a 55 percentage point difference in the percent proficient in mathematics.

To conclude, Texas follows what is a common national trend; proficiency levels are really high in the earlier grades and achievement gaps are smaller. However, as students get older, overall achievement drops for all populations, and gaps widen.

TX Grade 10 - State Test Reading	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	72.0	80.0	64.0	63.0	82.0	75.0	61.0	23.0	32.0
2004	75.0	84.0	68.0	67.0	86.0	74.0	65.0	24.0	41.0
2005	67.0	76.0	58.0	59.0	80.0	71.0	57.0	20.0	36.0

TX Grade 10 - State Test Math	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	73.0	84.0	59.0	63.0	90.0	75.0	61.0	43.0	39.0
2004	63.0	77.0	45.0	51.0	86.0	66.0	49.0	27.0	29.0
2005	58.0	73.0	38.0	45.0	83.0	64.0	43.0	18.0	26.0

Mississippi

Grade 3

Overall achievement increased in reading for third graders in Mississippi, except for the Hispanic and students with disabilities populations. By 2005, proficiency levels ranged from 74% (English language learners) to 93% (White and Asian students) being proficient in reading. The percent of Hispanic students decreased 6 percentage points, leaving 80% of the population proficient.

The achievement gaps between different populations were mixed; some gaps increased while others decreased. The gap between White and Black students decreased by 7 percentage points, leaving a 16 percentage point gap between the two groups. The gap between disabled and non-disabled students increased 15 percentage points, leaving the highest gap of 25 percentage points.

Overall achievement by 2005 was high for all subgroups. All populations increased, except for Hispanic students, who decreased by 2 percentage points. Black students' achievement increased 10 percentage points, raising the percent of proficient Black students to 80%. The greatest increase in academic achievement—23 percentage points—occurred within the American Indian population.

The achievement gaps between populations both increased and decreased between different populations. The achievement gap between White and Black students decreased by 9 percentage points, leaving only an 8 percentage point difference in achievement. However, in 2002, there was no gap between White and Hispanic achievement, but by 2005, a 3 point percentage gap had occurred. The only double digit achievement gap was 16 percentage points between disabled and non-disabled students, an 8 point percentage increase since 2002.

Mississippi: Grade 3 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	78.9	91.0	68.0	86.0	92.0	53.0	73.0	62.0	69.0
2003	81.1	92.0	71.0	86.0	93.0	82.0	74.0	67.0	76.0
2004	84.0	94.0	76.0	79.0	94.0	87.0	79.0	69.0	69.0
2005	84.0	93.0	77.0	80.0	93.0	77.0	79.0	74.0	62.0

Mississippi: Grade 3 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	85.8	95.0	78.0	95.0	94.0	71.0	82.0	90.0	78.0
2003	88.7	95.0	83.0	93.0	95.0	90.0	85.0	85.0	85.0
2004	92.0	96.0	87.0	93.0	96.0	93.0	89.0	92.0	83.0
2005	92.0	96.0	88.0	93.0	96.0	94.0	89.0	94.0	78.0

Grade 5

Overall achievement increased in reading for most populations between 2002 and 2005, except for Hispanic students and students with disabilities. The percent of students with disabilities that were proficient decreased 9 percentage points, leaving only 51% of the population proficient. Hispanic students dropped 3 percentage points, but still maintained 82% proficiency.

The outcomes of the effort to close the achievement gap in reading have been mixed. Some gaps decreased while others increased dramatically. The gap between Blacks and Whites decreased 8 points, leaving a 16 point gap in the percentage of proficient students. The gap between disabled and non-disabled students increased 19 percentage points, to a high of 37%.

Mississippi: Grade 5 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	77.9	90.0	66.0	85.0	90.0	58.0	71.0	68.0	60.0
2003	84.1	94.0	75.0	84.0	93.0	87.0	78.0	77.0	80.0
2004	86.0	95.0	78.0	82.0	96.0	81.0	80.0	63.0	65.0
2005	85.0	93.0	77.0	82.0	96.0	82.0	79.0	75.0	51.0
Mississippi: Grade 5 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	58.4	76.0	42.0	70.0	88.0	43.0	48.0	49.0	40.0
2003	65.3	82.0	49.0	75.0	92.0	51.0	54.0	52.0	63.0
2004	68.0	84.0	54.0	70.0	91.0	59.0	58.0	61.0	45.0
2005	69.0	83.0	56.0	78.0	93.0	59.0	60.0	76.0	37.0

Grade 8

Overall achievement has increased for all populations in reading and mathematics proficiency. Despite significant increases in achievement, some populations are still lagging behind. In 2005, after gaining 10 percentage points, only 41% of Black students were proficient in reading. English language learners followed the same trend; despite a 21 percentage point increase since 2002, only 50% of English Language learners were proficient in mathematics in 2005.

The outcomes of the effort to close the achievement gap are mixed. The gaps between most populations were already significant in 2002. Some gaps decrease slightly and others increased or remained the same. The gap between Black and White students in reading decreased two percentage points, leaving a 32 percentage point gap. The 28 point achievement gap between the economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged in English proficiency stayed the same. In addition, the smallest gap (9 percentage points) increased 2 points in the four year span.

Mississippi: Grade 8 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	48.4	65.0	31.0	53.0	67.0	25.0	34.0	18.0	15.0
2003	56.7	73.0	40.0	56.0	73.0	55.0	43.0	34.0	42.0
2004	62.0	80.0	43.0	63.0	74.0	61.0	47.0	39.0	24.0
2005	57.0	73.0	41.0	56.0	76.0	46.0	44.0	32.0	17.0
Mississippi: Grade 8 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	45.6	63.0	27.0	56.0	78.0	21.0	31.0	29.0	14.0
2003	48.1	65.0	31.0	49.0	80.0	50.0	35.0	33.0	34.0
2004	60.0	76.0	43.0	60.0	86.0	64.0	46.0	52.0	22.0
2005	53.0	68.0	38.0	59.0	85.0	52.0	41.0	50.0	15.0

High School

Proficiency data was not available for the 2002 for high school cohort. Therefore, analysis will be performed for the years between 2003 and 2005.

Overall achievement in mathematics for the high school was particularly high, especially after increases made between 2003 and 2005. The percent of students proficient ranged between 86.7% (Black students) and 96% (Asian students). One exception in performance occurred within the students with disabilities population, wherein 78% of the population was proficient.

Overall performance in reading was mixed between different populations. Hispanic, American Indian, ELL and students with disabilities decreased in the percent of students proficient, while other populations made small increases. However, overall achievement ranged generally from about 74% (Black) to 91% (White) of students proficient in English. However, students with disabilities and English Language learners fell short, with 42.1% and 58.5% of each categories respectfully being proficient.

The achievement gap in reading between White and Black students decreased nearly 5 percent points between 2003 and 2005, leaving a 17 percentage point gap. However, gap between White and Hispanic student performance actually increased approximately 4 percentage points, leaving a 17 percentage point gap. The gap between economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students decreased by 3 percentage points, leaving a 14 point gap.

The achievement gaps in mathematics were relatively small, and decreased in this 3 year span. The biggest gap closure occurred between the White and Black populations. The gap closed

approximately 10 percentage points, leaving only 9 points between the percent proficient in those populations. The gap also closed 4 points between students with disabilities and non-disabled populations.

Mississippi: High School Cohort - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	78.4	88.7	66.8	78.2	85.8	82.9	68.0	80.9	45.0
2004	83.1	91.8	73.5	83.3	84.8	85.7	74.5	53.8	44.1
2005	82.8	91.2	73.9	76.9	88.4	77.3	74.9	58.5	42.1
Mississippi: High School Cohort - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	81.9	90.7	71.8	87.8	95.9	86.5	73.6	74.7	64.3
2004	90.7	95.7	84.9	95.8	96.0	96.0	86.0	89.1	73.3
2005	91.6	96.0	86.7	93.8	96.0	86.7	87.7	96.0	78.0

Illinois

The state of Illinois houses a relatively large public school system, educating approximately 2,100,961 students within 894 school districts. White pupils represent 57.4% of the state’s student population, Blacks 21.2%, Hispanics 17.7% and Asians make up 3.6% of the student population. Additionally, the percentage of economically disadvantaged students, 36.9%, is on par with the national average, while the percentage of students with disabilities, 15.1%, is slightly above the national average for students attending public schools within a state.

Grade 3

Third grade students in Illinois made increases in overall performance in reading between 2002 and 2005. The largest increases occurred with the economically disadvantaged subgroup, which increased 8.1 percentage points. Other subgroups made comparable increases. Black students gained by 7.1 percentage points, Hispanics by 7.6 percentage points, and students with disabilities by 7.6 percentage points.

Despite these gains in overall performance, reading proficiency levels for disadvantaged and minority students remain quite low for Illinois third graders. For example, only 38.6% of students with disabilities are proficient, trailing their non-disabled peers by 32.6 percentage points. A mere 41.2% of Black third graders are proficient, and thus trail their White peers by 37 percentage points. And, only 48.4% of economically disadvantaged students are proficient, compared to 79.6% of non-economically disadvantaged students, resulting in a 31.2 percentage point achievement gap.

Mathematics performance in 2005 was much higher for Illinois third graders than it was for reading. Here, more than 70% of Hispanic and ELL students were at or above proficient, while nearly 90% of White students and non-economically disadvantaged students were proficient.

Third grade mathematics data also reveal a noteworthy gap between subgroups; while Black students trail their White peers by 34.2 percentage points, Hispanics trail their White peers by only 14.3 percentage points. Thus, the Hispanic population is making some of the greatest gains in proficiency.

Illinois: Grade 3 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi- Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	62.2	76.2	34.1	48.1	81.7	65.7	n.a.	40.3	61.0	31.0
2003	62.0	76.0	34.8	49.4	82.5	59.0	n.a.	41.5	38.0	32.1
2004	65.1	76.9	39.0	55.8	85.3	59.6	71.6	46.2	60.5	35.6
2005	66.6	78.2	41.2	55.7	84.1	70.3	68.8	48.4	58.1	38.6
Illinois: Grade 3 - State Test Mathematics Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi- Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	74.2	87.5	45.4	66.2	92.7	77.1	n.a.	54.4	75.7	51.7
2003	75.7	88.5	48.9	69.3	93.5	78.6	n.a.	57.9	57.0	55.0
2004	79.1	89.7	53.7	76.1	94.7	78.5	85.7	63.3	79.6	59.7
2005	79.3	89.1	54.9	74.8	94.0	77.3	81.9	64.3	79.7	60.1

Grade 5

Increases in overall performance in fifth grade reading have been more significant for some student populations than for others. Between 2002 and 2005, English language learners made increases in proficiency by 12.1 percentage points, whereas the students with disabilities subgroup increased by only 1.9 percent. Similarly, the Hispanic population increased by 10 entire percentage points, whereas Black students increased by only 2.1 percentage points. Thus, the journey to 100% proficiency for fifth grade students has led to mixed successes, at best.

Despite some increases, the achievement gap in reading between White students and other subgroups remains quite high across the board, with upwards of 20 percentage points. Black students trail White students by 35.4 percentage points, Hispanic students trail White students by 20.4 percentage points, and English language learners trail White students by 21.8 percentage points. The largest achievement gap for fifth grade Illinois students in reading is 39.5 percentage points, between disabled and non-disabled students.

As with fifth graders, proficiency rates for mathematics were much larger than in reading. Increases in overall performance were also much larger than for reading, with the greatest gains occurring with English language learners, with an amazing 30 percentage point gain. Also impressive was the 22.9 percentage point jump that Hispanic students made since 2002. Additional gains occurred with Black students who made a 14.2 percentage point gain and economically disadvantaged students who made a 15.9 percentage point gain.

Decreases in achievement gaps occurred between the majority of subgroups; however,

achievement gaps remain high in mathematics. By 2005, the gap between White and Black students was 37.5 percentage points, and 36.9 percentage points between non-disabled and disabled students. The smallest achievement gaps were between White and ELL students at 13.6 percentage points, and between White and Hispanic students at 14.7 percentage points.

Illinois: Grade 5 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi- Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	59.1	72.6	33.4	40.5	75.5	62.3	n.a.	37.5	37.0	24.3
2003	60.4	73.5	35.9	42.2	78.9	64.5	n.a.	40.0	12.3	25.3
2004	60.9	71.7	36.6	49.9	79.6	66.3	63.2	42.2	49.5	24.9
2005	59.8	70.9	35.5	50.5	79.6	62.5	61.7	42.3	49.1	26.2
Illinois: Grade 5 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi- Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	62.8	77.3	32.2	46.3	85.3	63.9	n.a.	40.7	40.3	31.3
2003	68.3	81.3	40.2	55.3	89.0	69.6	n.a.	49.2	28.9	35.2
2004	71.8	82.5	44.1	67.0	91.5	75.8	68.8	54.3	69.4	39.0
2005	73.2	83.9	46.4	69.2	92.2	76.9	74.1	56.6	70.3	41.7

Grade 8

Small increases in overall performance occurred in reading for eighth grade students. Most increases were less than 10 percentage points for subgroups, except the migrant population which had a 39.4 percentage point increase, the largest gains in proficiency uncovered in this investigation. Interestingly, while migrants gained in rates of proficiency, English language learners was the only population to decrease in achievement, by 7.8 percentage points.

Achievement gaps were over 40 percentage points between White and Black students and increased by .3 percentage points, while the gap between economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students increased by .8 percentage points. Astounding achievement gaps continue to exist between Whites and English language learners—47.1 percentage points. Likewise, only 30.9% of students with disabilities, as compared to 82.1% of White students, were proficient in 2005, a gap of almost 50 entire percentage points.

Overall achievement for eighth grade mathematics was quite low. Only 15.1% of students with disabilities, 24.8% of Black students, and 26% of English language learners were proficient. Achievement gaps were over 40 percentage points between White and Black students, White and English language learner students, and between disabled and non-disabled students.

Illinois: Grade 8 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi- Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	68.0	76.8	48.7	50.9	82.8	62.4	n.a.	50.0	42.8	25.3
2003	63.7	73.0	45.3	46.9	79.8	54.6	n.a.	46.0	14.7	19.5

2004	67.1	76.3	48.3	51.3	81.5	72.0	66.5	49.8	28.8	24.2
2005	72.8	82.1	53.7	59.7	86.8	73.7	73.4	56.8	35.0	30.9
Illinois: Grade 8 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Multi- Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	52.5	64.8	22.1	33.3	77.6	44.2	n.a.	28.9	37.5	13.0
2003	53.1	65.8	23.0	35.5	78.8	43.8	n.a.	30.4	17.7	13.0
2004	54.4	66.7	24.6	38.7	81.0	55.4	46.4	32.5	25.2	13.9
2005	54.3	67.3	24.8	39.3	82.3	50.8	52.8	32.3	26.0	15.1

High School

In reading, the majority of the student population made moderate gains in overall performance. Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students increased by 4.4 and 4.6 percentage points, respectively, while Black students made gains of 3.1 percentage points. The English language learner population, however, made a startling decrease in percent proficient, by 18.2 percentage points. This has resulted in a 50.5 percentage point achievement gap between English language learners and White students.

Additional gaps in achievement remain high for student populations when compared to their White peers. After four years of No Child Left Behind, Black students continue to trail their White counterparts by 32.7 percentage points and Hispanic students trail Whites by 27.5 percentage points. Similarly, disabled students trail non-disabled students by 48.8 percentage points.

Eleventh grade mathematics resulted in the lowest rates of student proficiency for the state of Illinois. Compared to 63% of White students, only 18.6% of Black students, 12.4% of students with disabilities, and 30.8% of Hispanic students were proficient. Moreover, overall performance in mathematics has decreased for most student populations. Most notable is the 5.1 percentage point decrease in achievement in English language learners, who in 2002 had a success rate of 30.9%, but in 2005, could only boast of a 25.8% proficiency rate. Understandably, achievement gaps remain quite high for eleventh grade students, with a range of 32.2 percentage points (the gap between White and Hispanic students in mathematics) to 45.2 percentage points (the gap between disabled and non-disabled students).

Illinois: Grade 11 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi- Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	58.2	66.1	32.0	35.9	65.7	57.2		32.8	35.5	17.1
2003	56.4	64.6	31.2	34.3	65.2	51.2		31.8	16.2	15.3
2004	56.8	65.3	31.7	34.5	65.0	52.5	50.5	32.6	12.7	16.1
2005	59.5	67.8	35.1	40.3	71.0	56.5	56.3	37.4	17.3	15.9

Illinois: Grade 11 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi- Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2002	53.6	62.8	19.4	28.8	72.8	52.2		24.0	30.9	13.8
2003	53.3	62.6	20.5	29.4	73.7	47.1		25.0	24.2	12.8
2004	53.1	62.5	20.4	30.7	75.1	44.4	45.1	25.5	26.1	12.1
2005	52.8	63.0	18.6	30.8	75.6	51.1	47.8	25.5	25.8	12.4

North Carolina

Overall achievement increased for all populations in reading for 3rd graders. Groups with lowest performance included ELL (56.7% proficient) and students with disabilities (54% proficient). Other populations had between 71% (Hispanic) and 89% (White) students proficient. Achievement gaps decreased little between 2003 and 2005. The gaps ranged between 33 percentage points (students with disabilities and non-disabled students) and 17.8% (Black and White students).

Overall achievement decreased slightly in mathematics in 3rd grade for most populations. Despite a slight increase in achievement, only 64% of students with disabilities were proficient. The outcomes of the effort to close the achievement gap were mixed. The gap increased 3 percentage points between Black and White students (19 point gap). The gap between students with disabilities and non-disabled students decreased 3 percentage points, leaving a 24 percentage point gap.

Grade 5

Overall achievement in reading increased slightly for all populations. ELL showed the most progress with over a 12 percentage point increase. However, only 65 percent of that population (ELL) was proficient by 2005.

The achievement gap between “target” populations decreased between 2003 and 2005 in reading. The greatest decrease in the gap occurred between ELL and non ELL students. The 11 percentage point decrease left nearly a 29 percentage point gap between the two populations. The gap between White and Hispanic students closed 7 percentage points, leaving a 7 percentage point gap.

Overall achievement in mathematics was mixed with slight increase in some populations and minimal increases in others. The greatest improvement was a 5.7 percentage point increase in students proficient. Despite slight decreases, over improvement was high for most populations. Achievement ranged from 76.8% (ELL) to 95% (Asian students).

The achievement gap decreased in most instances for 5th graders. The gap between White and Hispanic students closed 6 percentage points, bringing the gap down to approximately 9 percentage points. However, the gap between White and Black students increased slightly (less than 1 percentage point), leaving a 12.3 percentage point gap between the two populations.

North Carolina: Grade 5 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Multi-Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	86.0	92.2	77.2	71.2	87.8	77.3	90.1	77.1	52.4	54.2
2004	88.4	93.7	80.5	78.5	91.0	82.9	91.6	81.0	66.1	61.5
2005	88.8	93.8	81.5	79.9	92.6	81.9	92.0	82.0	65.0	63.1
North Carolina: Grade 5 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Multi-Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	90.1	94.8	83.1	80.1	93.4	84.3	92.5	83.6	67.2	65.8
2004	92.4	95.0	86.5	88.1	95.0	89.7	94.4	87.6	82.0	72.2
2005	89.9	94.4	82.1	85.8	95.0	83.3	92.0	83.8	76.8	68.4

Grade 8

Overall achievement improved slightly in both reading and mathematics for 8th graders. The highest increase, for both subjects, was among the Hispanic and ELL populations (between 9 and 11 percentage points). Despite measurable growth, only an average of 55% of English Language learners are proficient in reading and mathematics.

The achievement gap decreased slightly in both reading and mathematics. The largest gaps were between students with disabilities and the non-disabled (34 percentage points in reading and 35 percentage points in mathematics). The largest decreases in the achievement gap occurred between the ELL and non ELL populations (approximately 9 percentage points). The gap between Black and White students decreased 2 points in both reading and mathematics, leaving gaps of 14 and 19 percentage points, respectively.

North Carolina: Grade 8 - State Test Reading Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Multi-Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	85.7	92.3	75.7	65.0	87.0	79.3	90.8	74.3	41.4	49.8
2004	87.8	93.4	79.1	73.5	90.7	84.6	92.1	78.7	53.6	57.3
2005	87.9	93.6	79.3	74.9	90.4	82.8	91.9	79.2	52.5	58.3
North Carolina: Grade 8 - State Test Math Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Multi-Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2003	82.4	90.2	68.6	68.2	90.1	77.5	86.1	69.9	51.7	46.1
2004	84.3	91.3	71.6	75.0	92.3	81.1	87.0	73.5	61.7	52.6
2005	84.0	91.0	71.4	76.1	92.5	79.5	86.7	73.8	61.9	53.3

High School

Disaggregated information for high school students is only available for 2005; therefore, analysis in achievement and achievement gaps is not possible at this time.

North Carolina: State Test English I Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Multi-Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities
2005	82.0	89.4	70.3	64.6	85.2	72.6	87.8	70.0	29.8	45.7
North Carolina: State Test Algebra I Proficiency	All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Multi-Racial	Economically Disadvantaged	English Language Learners	Student with Disabilities
2005	80.3	88.3	65.3	72.4	89.5	73.7	81.3	69.7	62.7	53.9

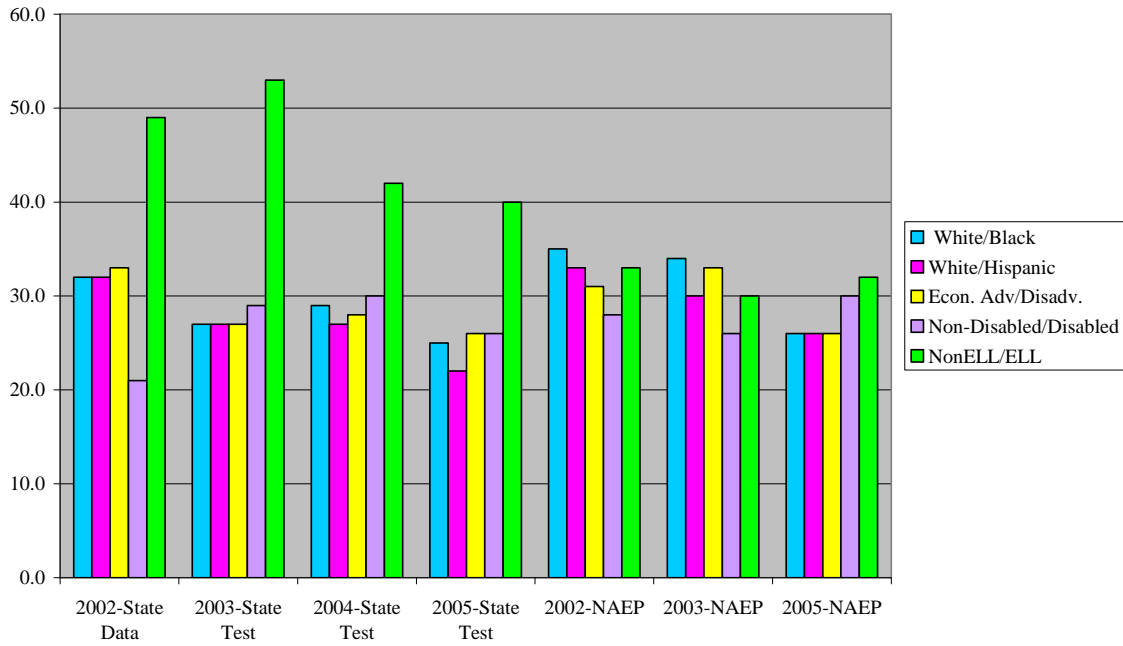
Conclusion

Achievements gaps still occur in all seven states studied. There are gaps in achievement between White and Black students, White and Hispanic students, disabled and non disabled, and other ethnicities including Asian and American Indians. An investigation of achievement and the ability to close achievement gaps in each of the seven states produced mixed results.

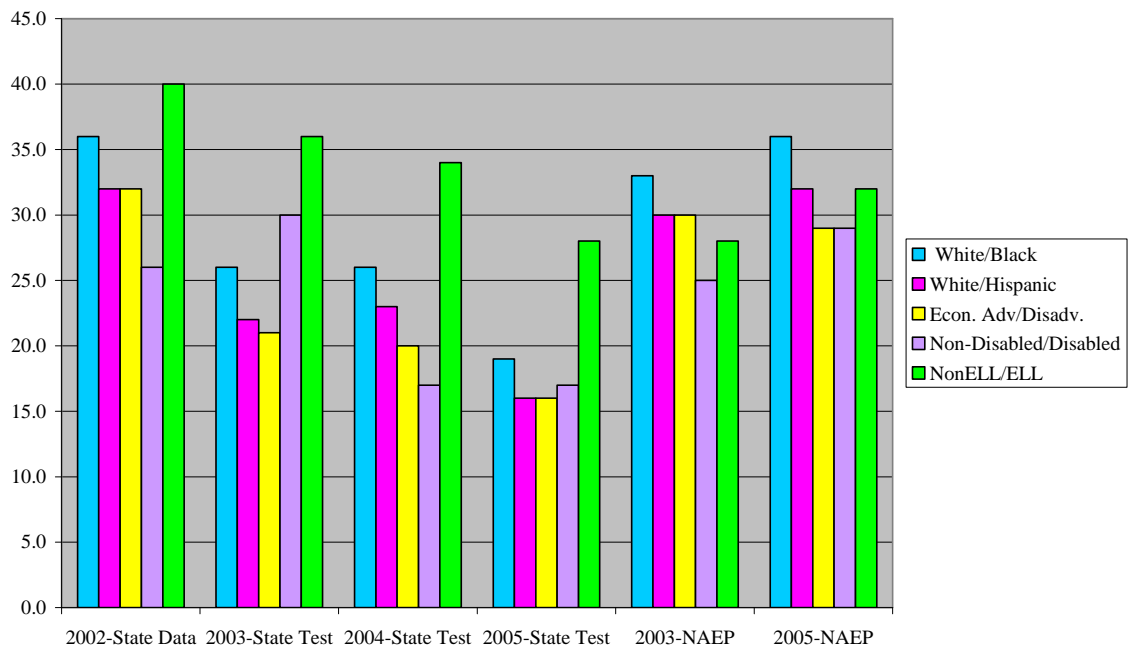
While the achievement in some states was relatively high such as in Texas, North Carolina, and Mississippi in early grades, achievement decreased as students matriculated through the system. North Carolina and Mississippi both showed measurable gains in the closure of the achievement gap in the earlier years, while gap closure in Texas stagnated and sometimes reversed in high school. Other states showed little progress in either achievement or gap closure. By far, results are mixed in all of the states; overall achievement and gap closure vary from grade to grade and subject to subject.

Appendix

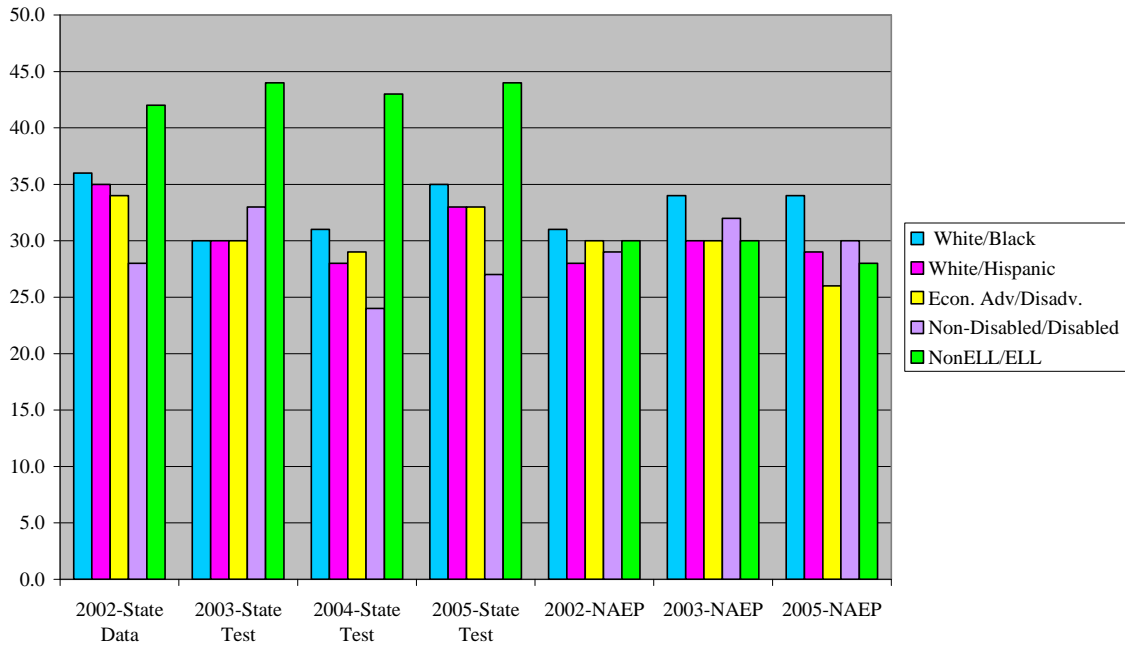
New York Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Reading



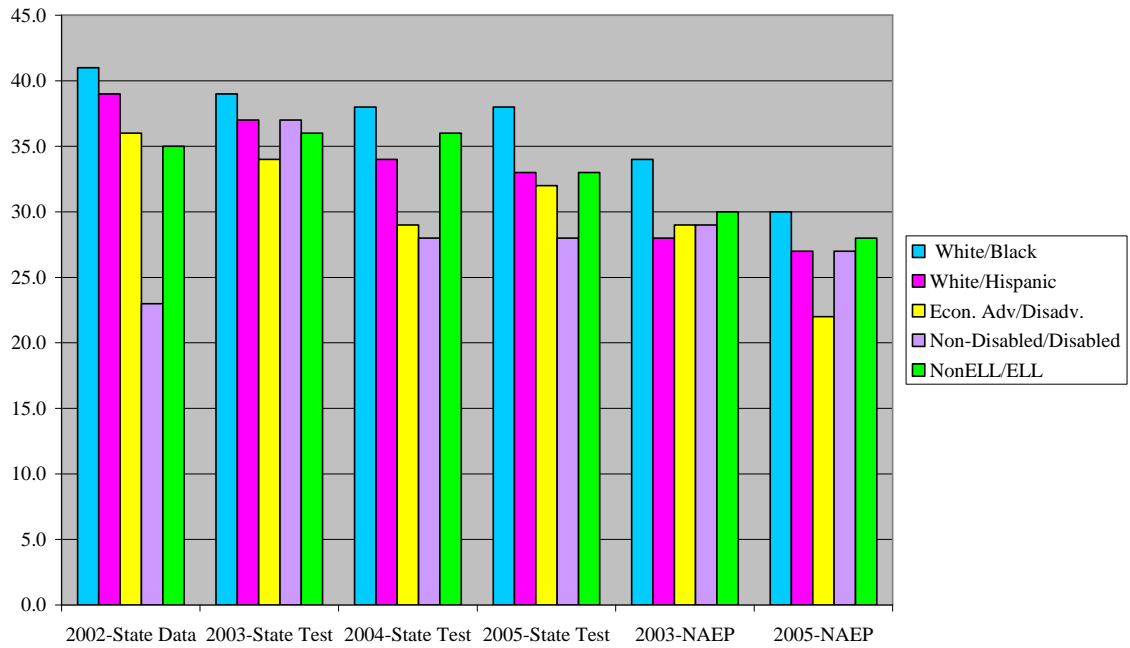
New York Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Mathematics



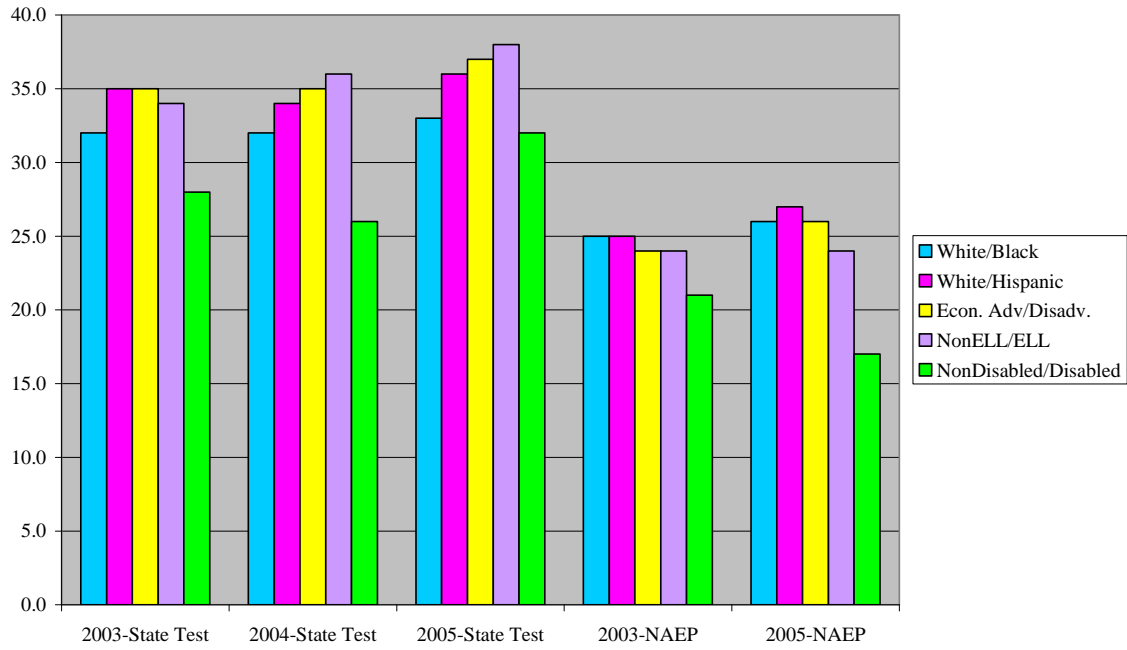
**New York Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Reading**



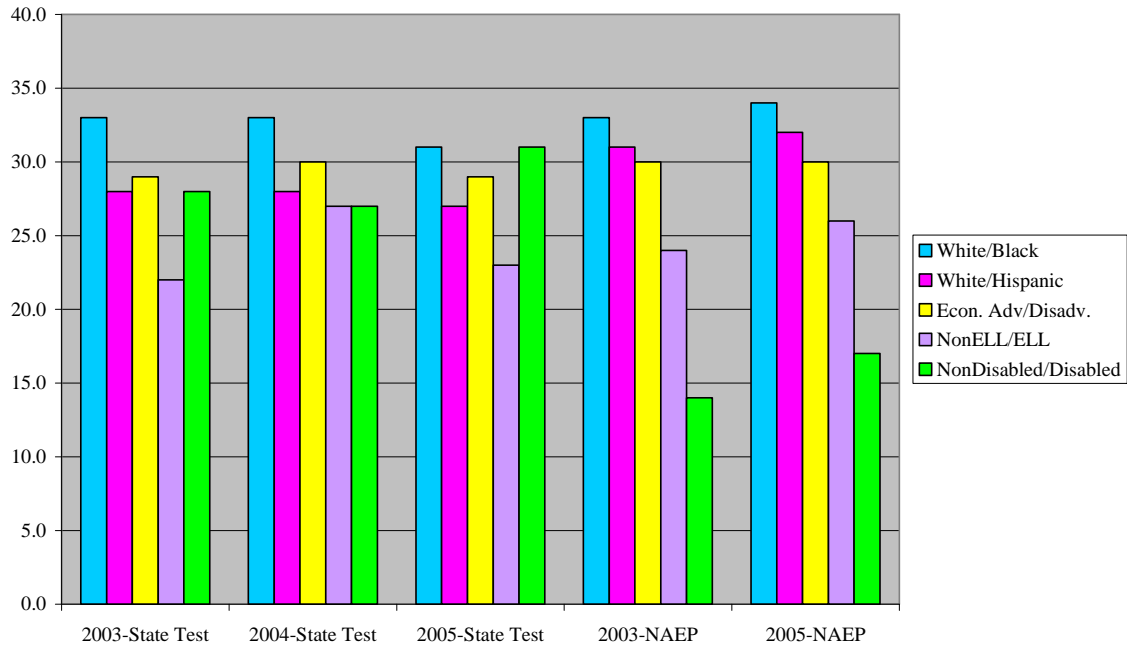
**New York Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Mathematics**



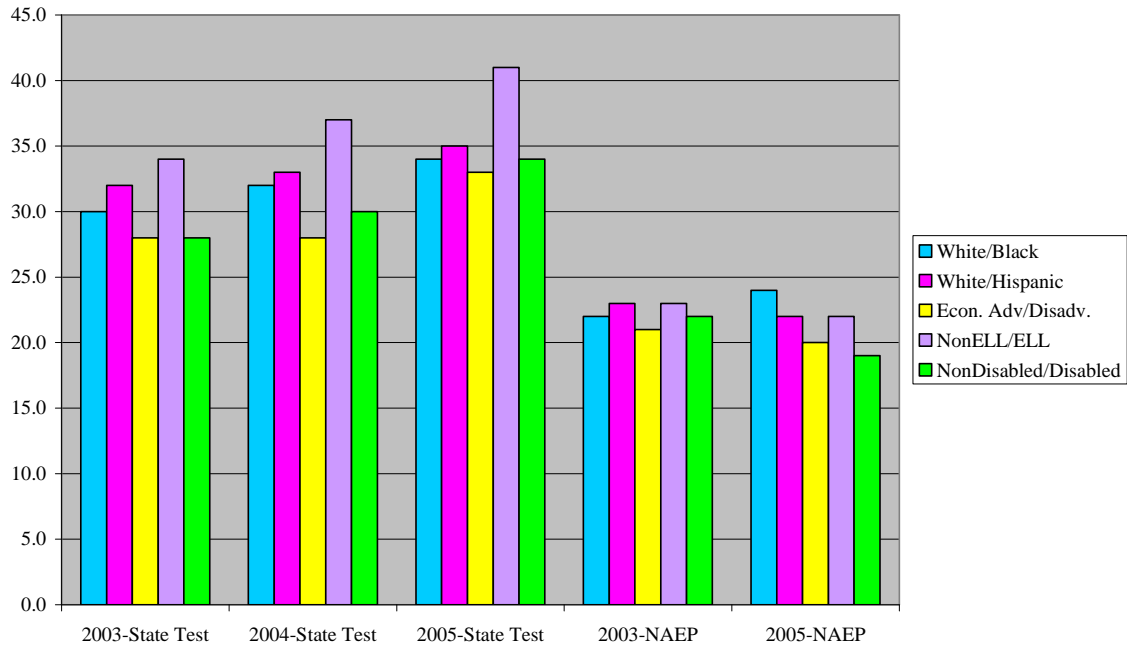
**California Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Reading**



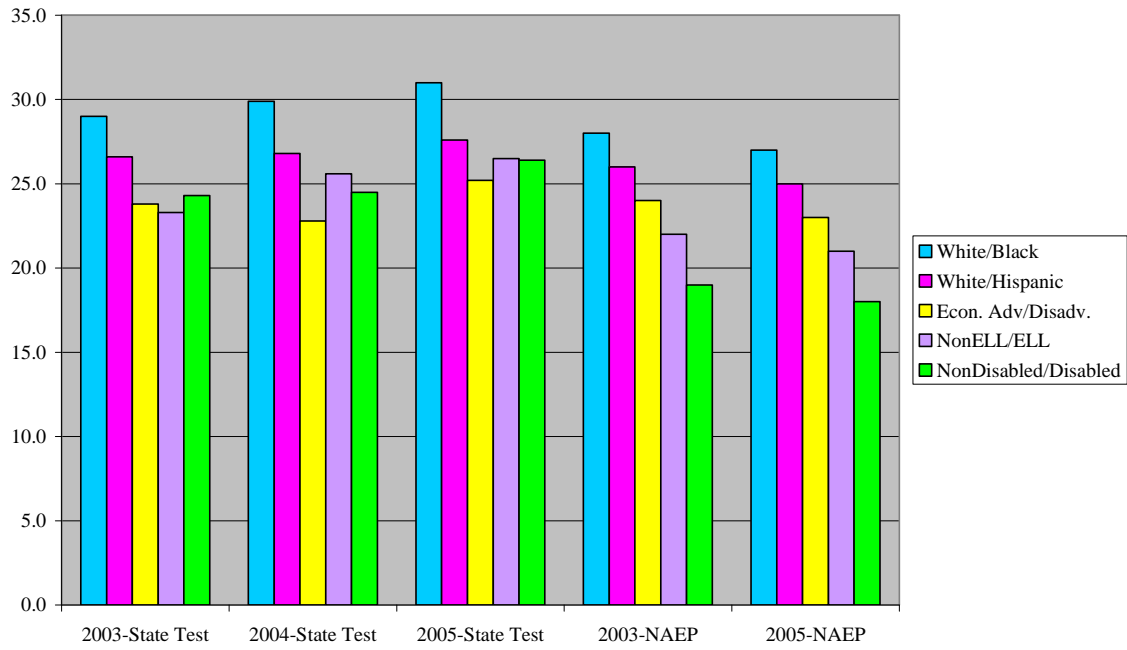
**California Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Mathematics**



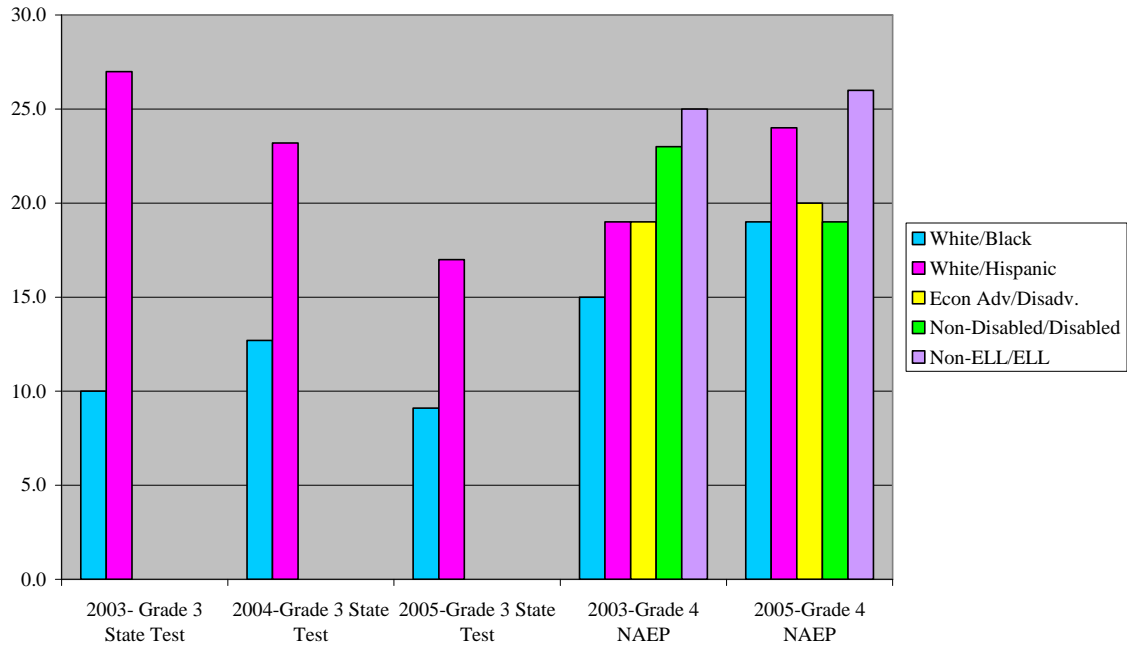
**California Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Reading**



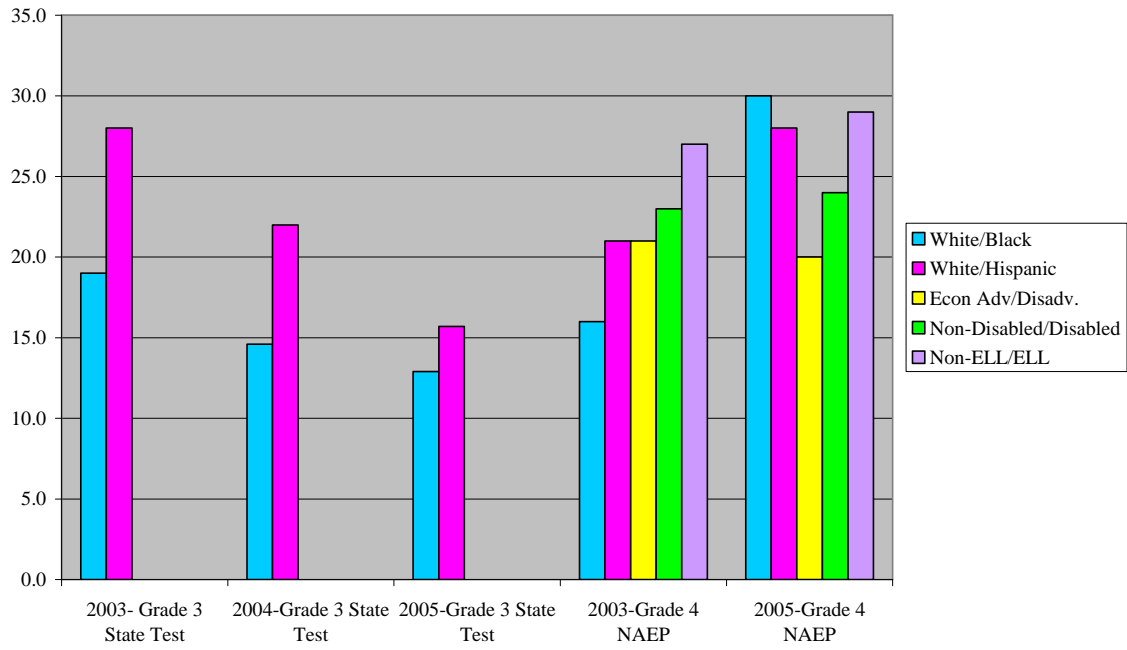
**California Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Mathematics**



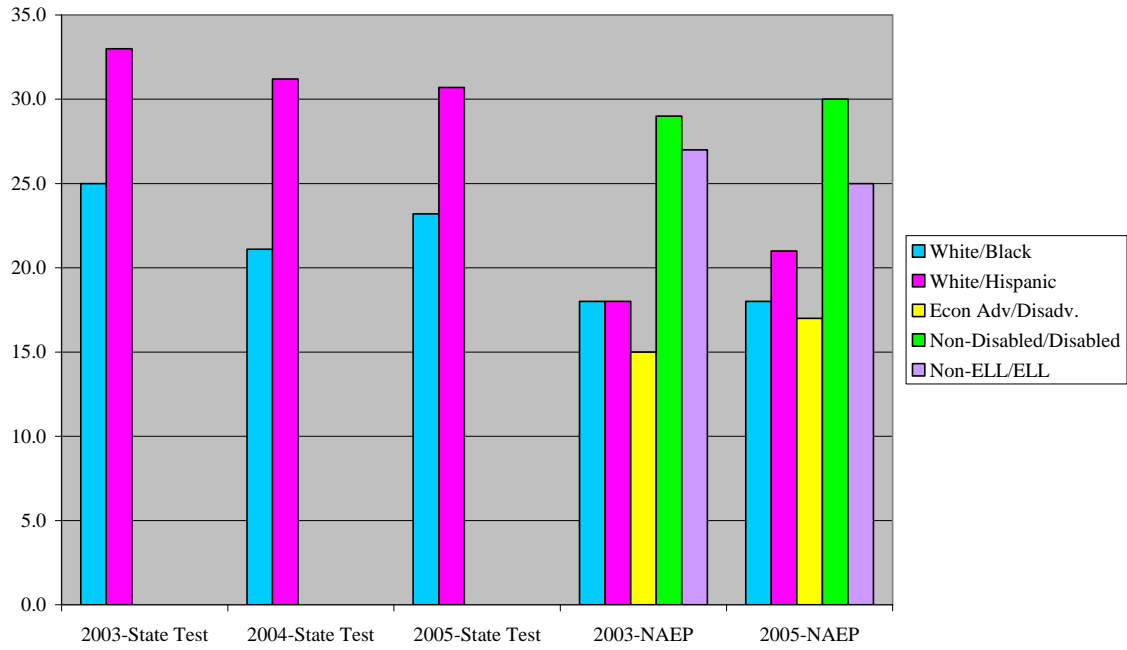
**Oregon Achievement Gaps
Grade 3 and Grade 4 - Reading**



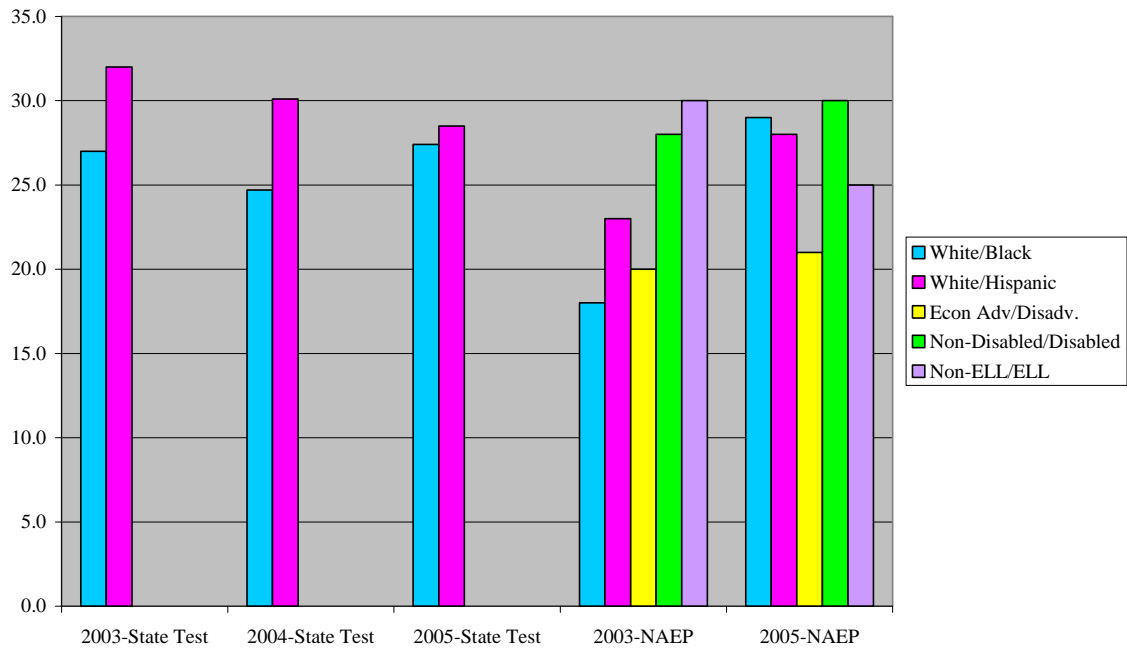
**Oregon Achievement Gaps
Grade 3 and Grade 4 - Mathematics**



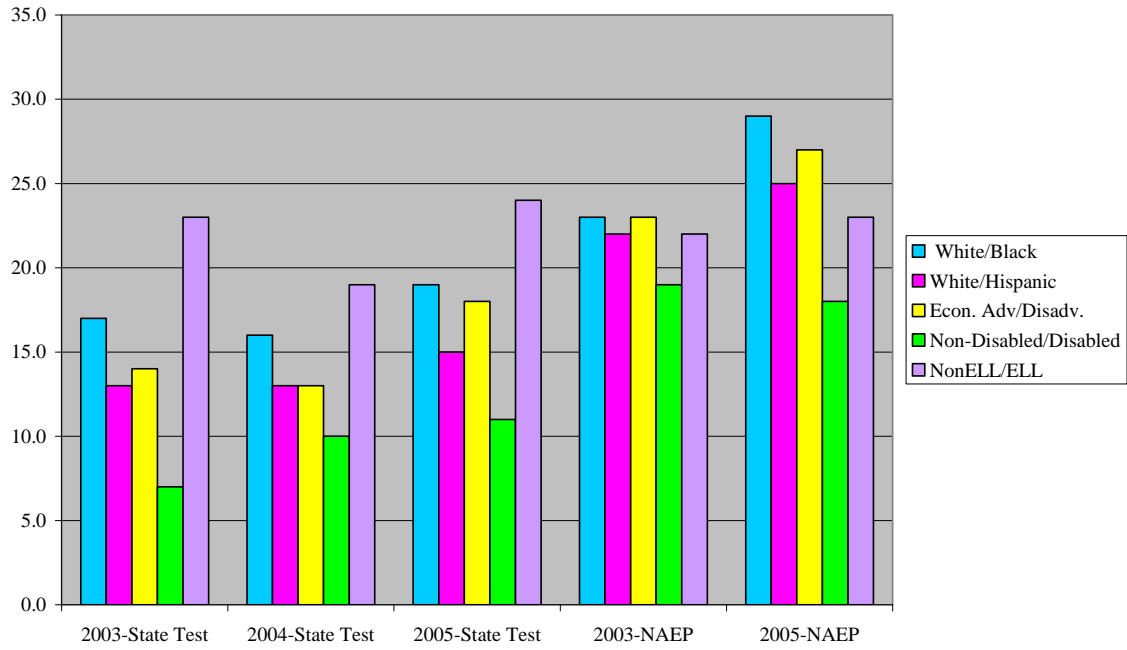
**Oregon Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Reading**



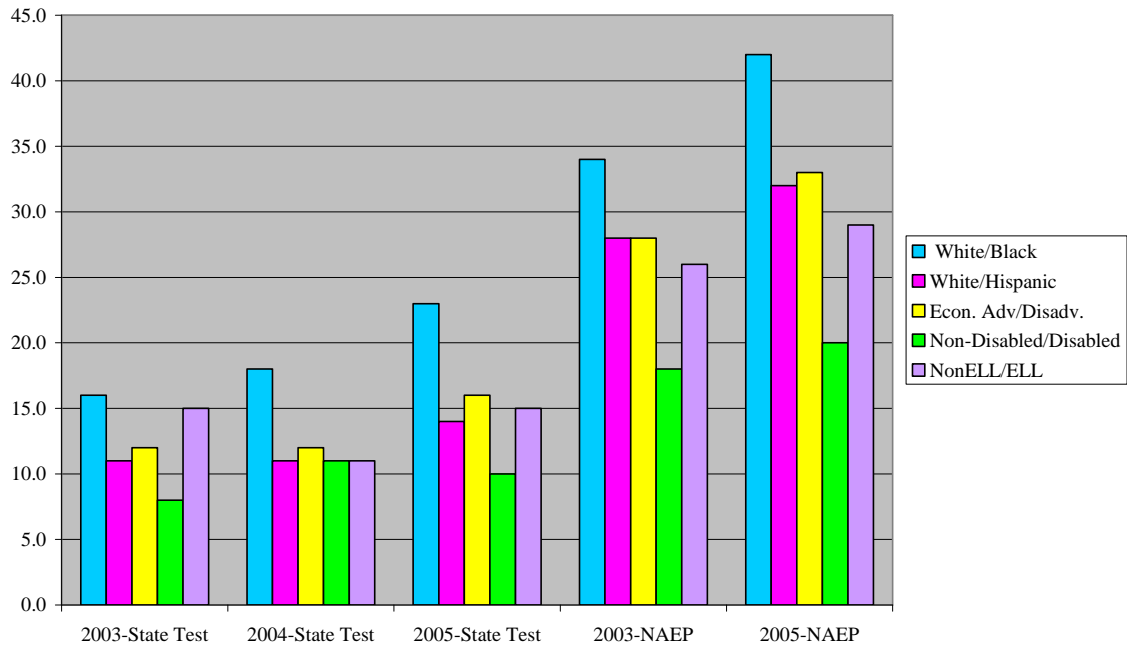
**Oregon Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Mathematics**



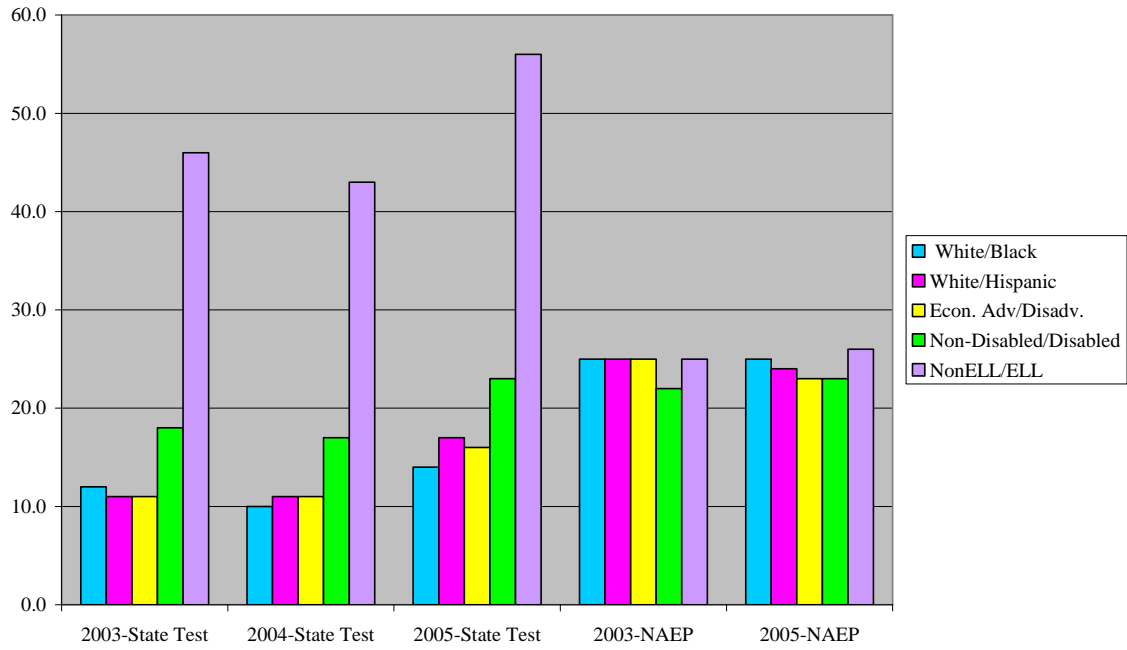
**Texas Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Reading**



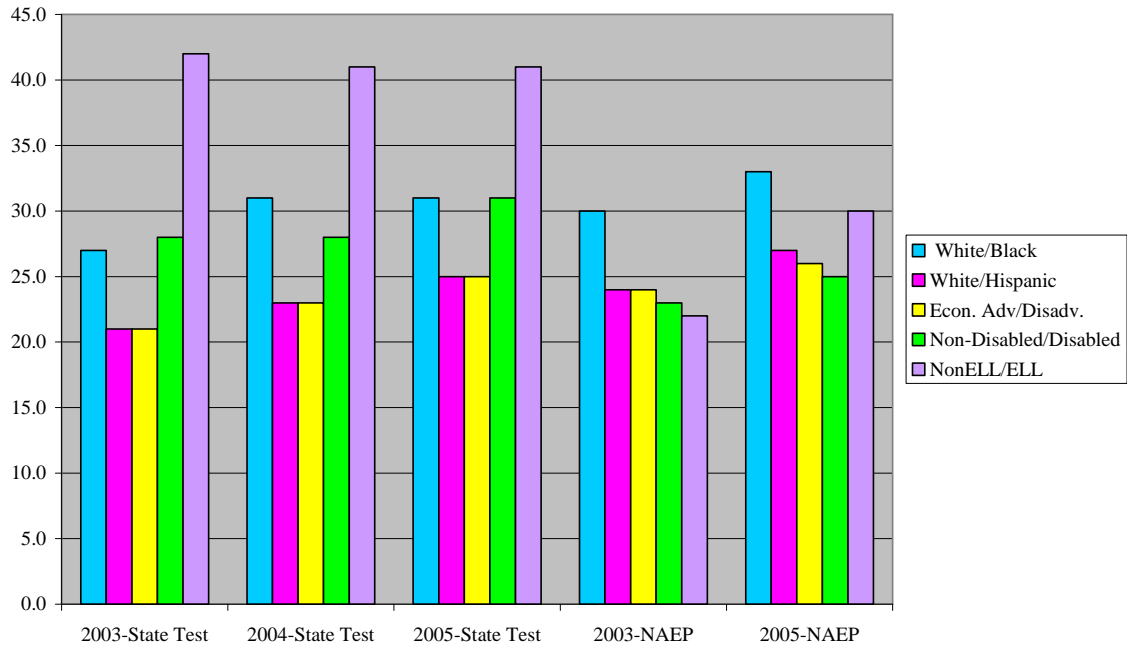
**Texas Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Mathematics**



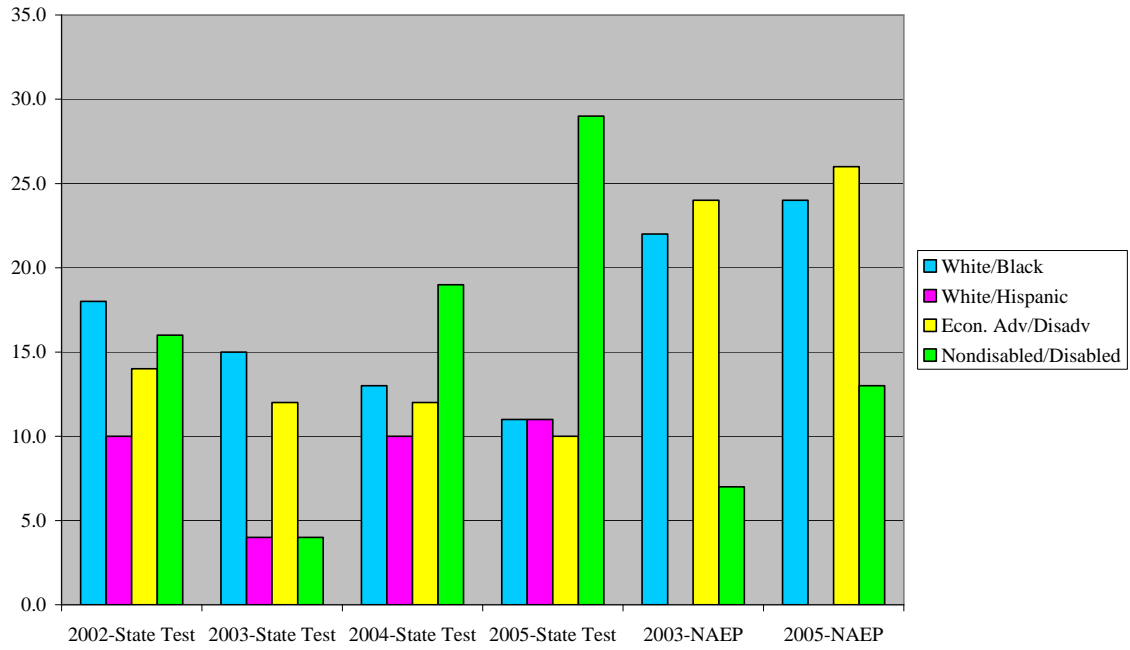
**Texas Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Reading**



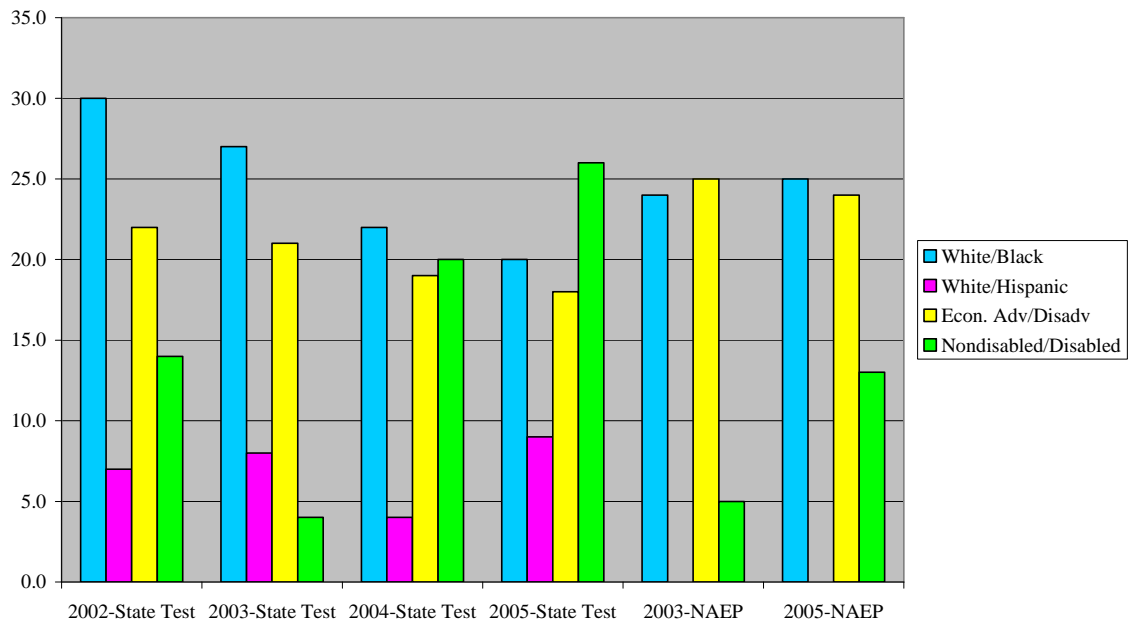
**Texas Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Mathematics**



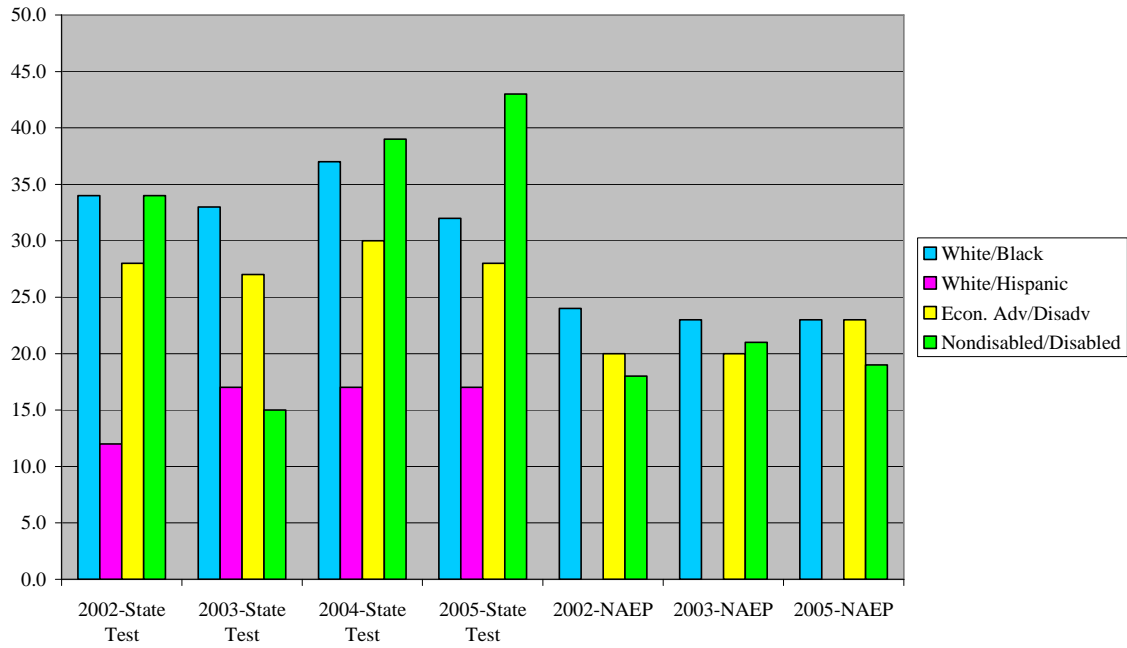
**Mississippi Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Reading**



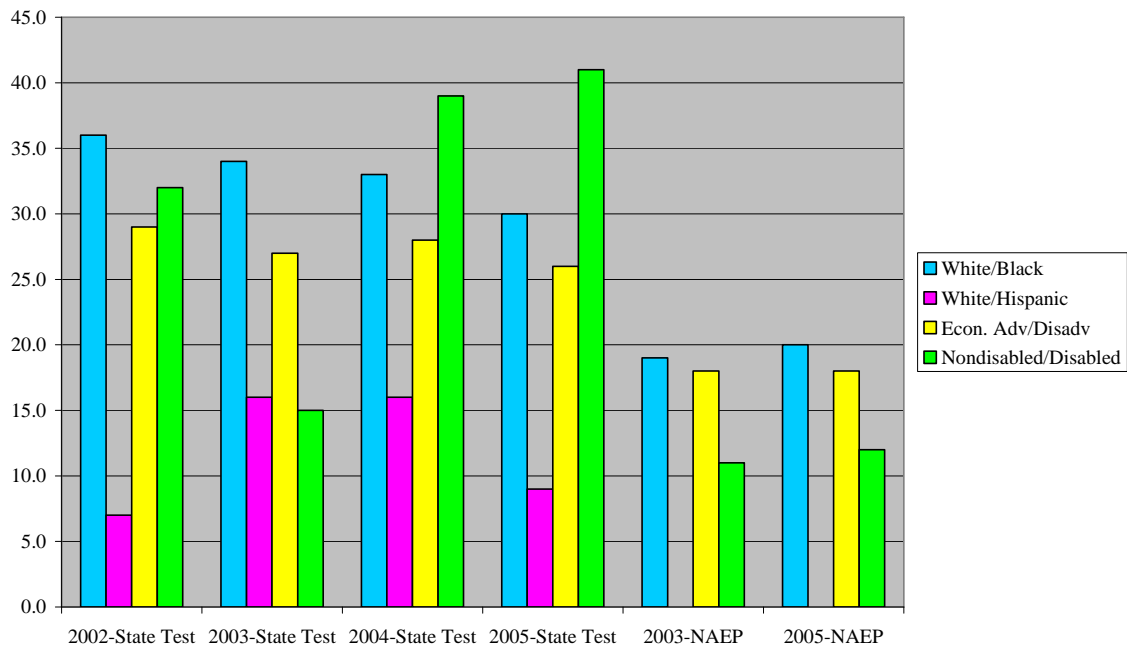
**Mississippi Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Mathematics**



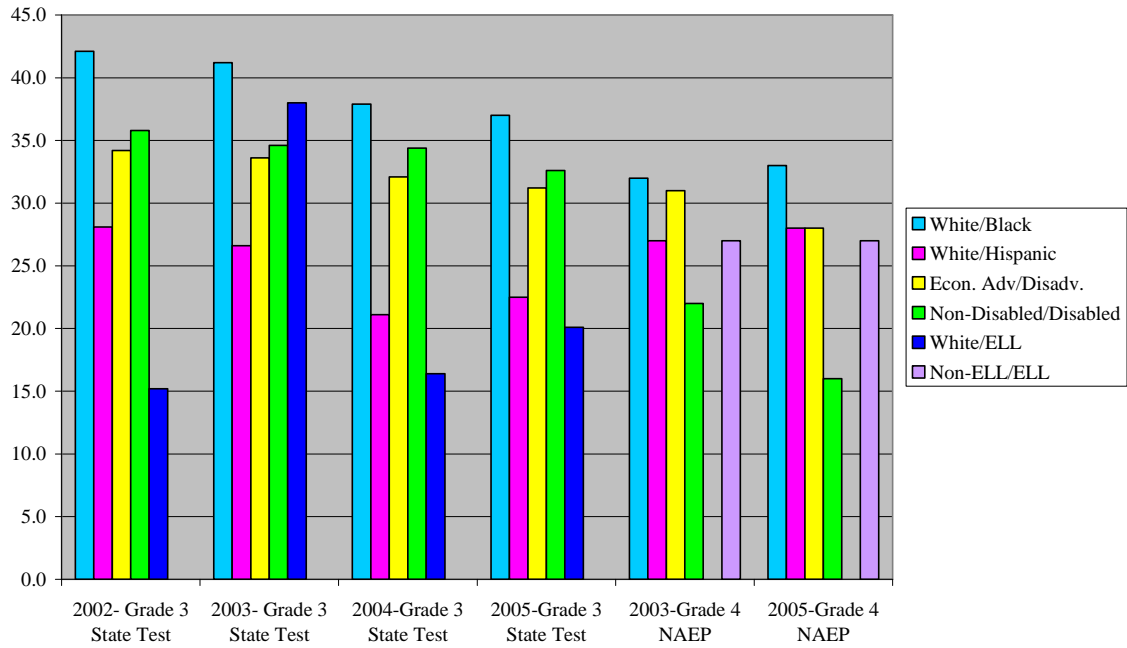
**Mississippi Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Reading**



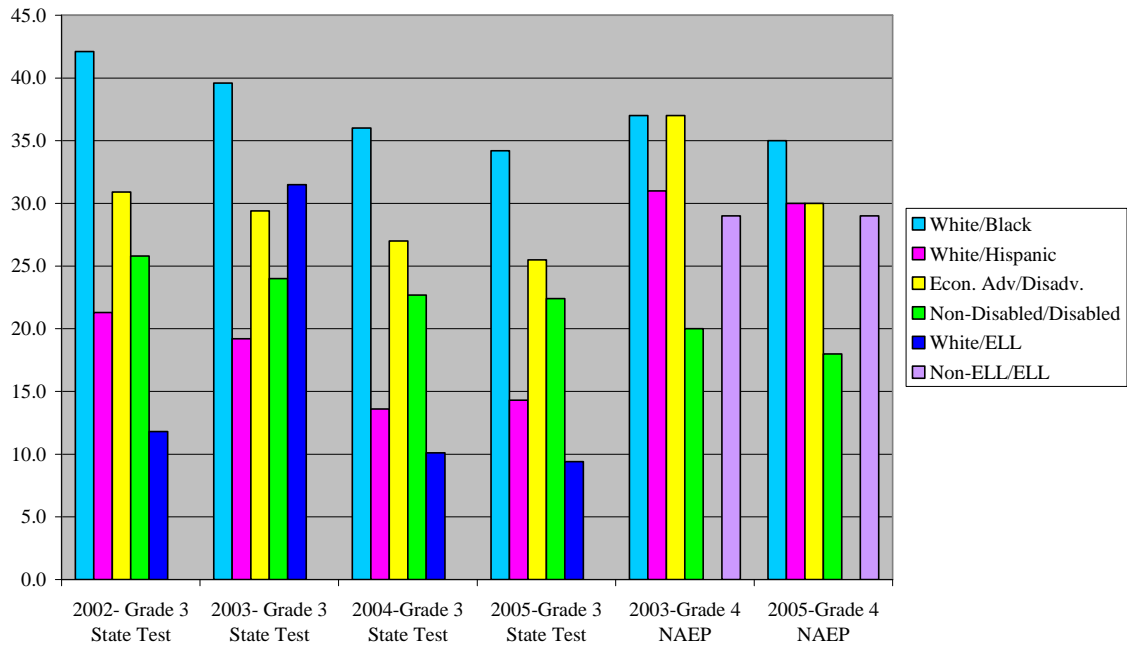
**Mississippi Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Mathematics**



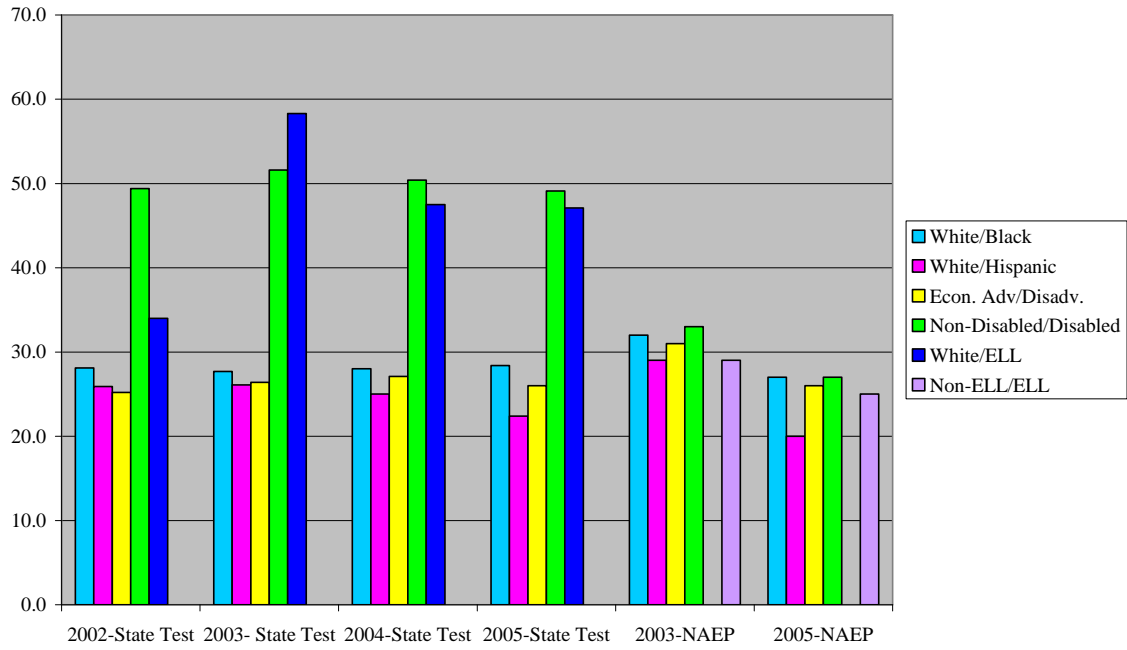
**Illinois Achievement Gaps
Grade 3 and Grade 4 - Reading**



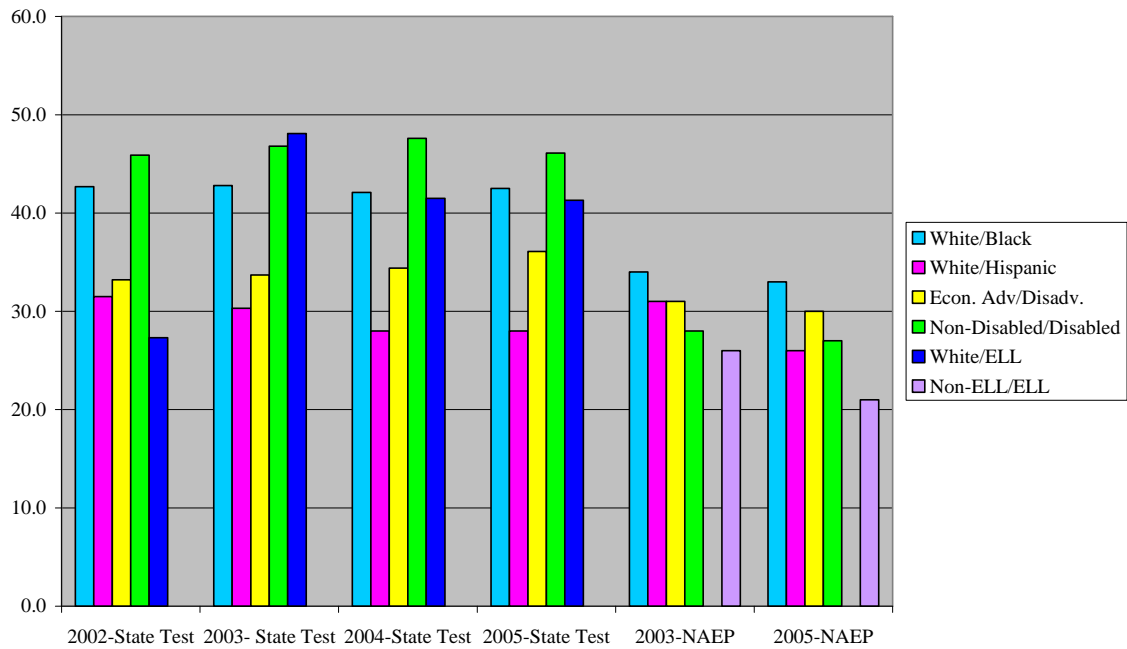
**Illinois Achievement Gaps
Grade 3 and Grade 4 - Mathematics**



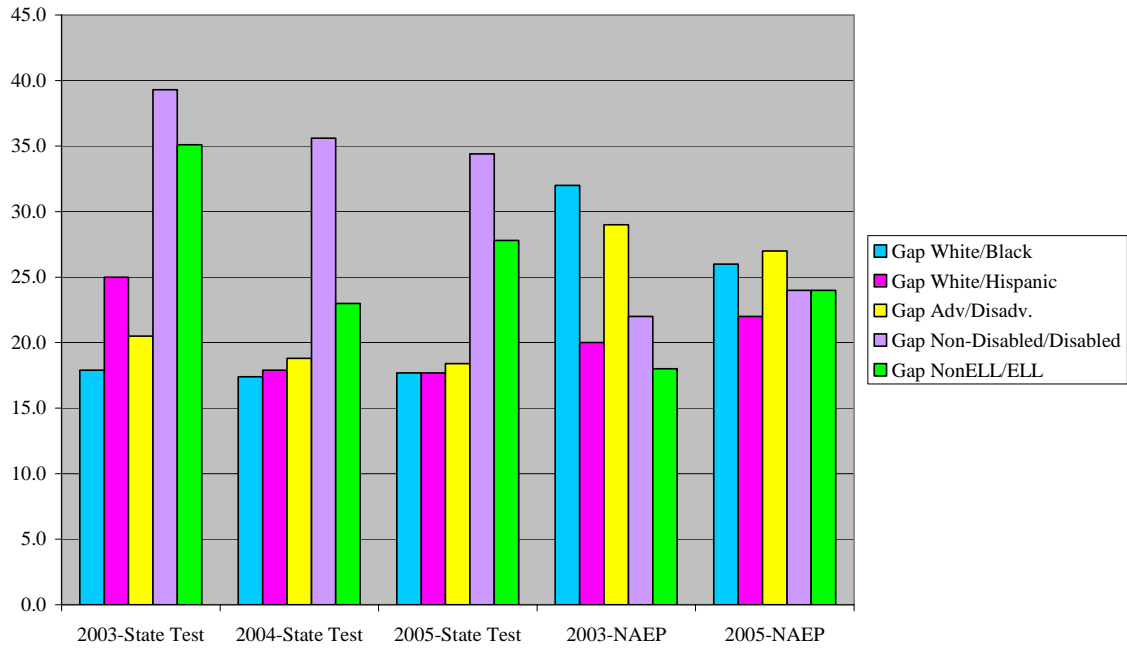
**Illinois Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Reading**



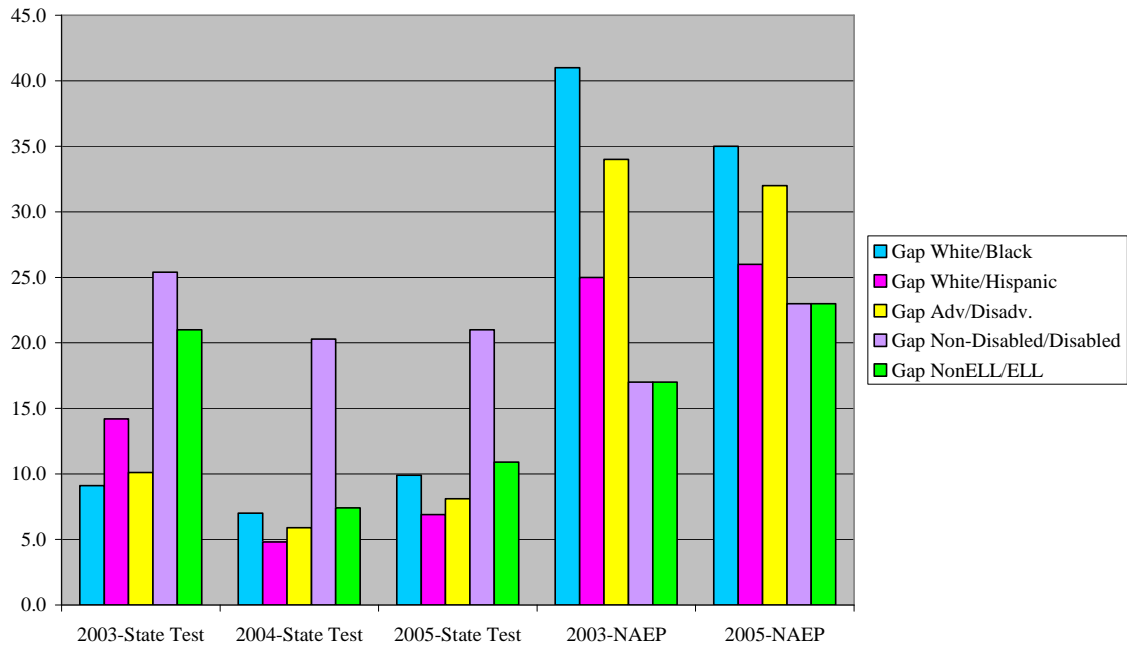
**Illinois Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Mathematics**



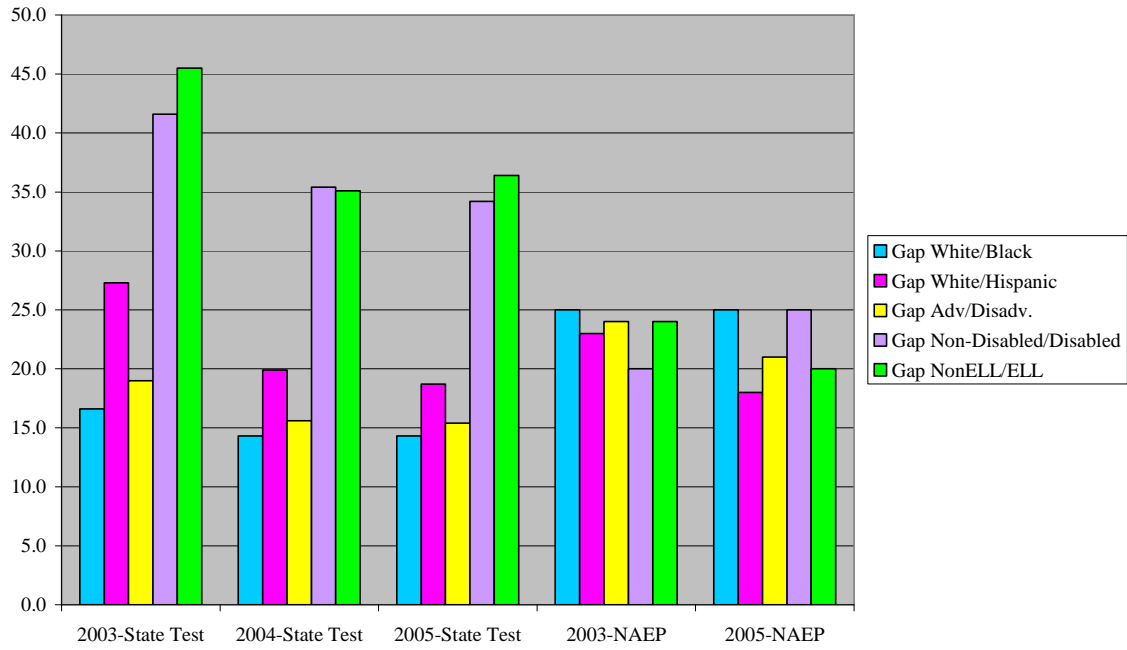
**North Carolina Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Reading**



**North Carolina Achievement Gaps
Grade 4 - Mathematics**



**North Carolina Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Reading**



**North Carolina Achievement Gaps
Grade 8 - Mathematics**

