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ABSTRACT

The Los Angeles Unified School District has chosen the class of 2000, comprised of those students who enrolled in kindergarten in 1987 and who will graduate from high school in June 2000, for concentrated educational focus and detailed evaluation. A three-class cohort, which includes the class of 2000 and the classes that immediately precede and follow it, will be studied until each class graduates. A preliminary profile of the class of 2000 includes the following characteristics: (1) the ethnic composition of the class of 2000 is similar to that of the classes that started the year before and the year after; (2) nearly two-thirds (63.7 percent) of the students are Hispanic American, 15 percent of the students are Black, 14.2 percent of the students are White, and 4.9 percent of the students are Asian American; (3) approximately 40 percent of the students are limited English proficient; (4) kindergarten and grade 1 students had a notably lower retention rate than the previous year; and (5) comparisons of the academic achievement of the class of 2000 with the comparison classes reveal no clear trends. Future reports will include information about a wide range of educational indicators as they become available and relevant. Statistical data are presented in five tables. A list of 24 references is appended. (FMW)

THE LAUSD CLASS OF 2000: FRAMEWORK FOR A LONGITUDINAL PROFILE

PUBLICATION NO. 547

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT BRANCH

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

THE LAUSD CLASS OF 2000:
FRAMEWORK FOR A LONGITUDINAL PROFILE

PUBLICATION NO. 547

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THE LAUSD CLASS OF 2000: FRAMEWORK FOR A LONGITUDINAL PROFILE

Executive Summary

Background. Pupils who enrolled in kindergarten in the fall of 1987 and who will graduate from high school in June 2000 constitute the Class of 2000. This class has been chosen for concentrated educational focus and detailed evaluation. A three- ass cohort, which includes the Class of 2000 and the classes which immediately precede and follow it, will be followed until each class graduates. Enrollment, ethnicity, language, and retention data, as well as achievement test scores, of the initial years of schooling for these classes are reported.

Key Indicators. Subsequent reports on the progress of the Class of 2000 will include information about a wide range of indicators of educational success, as these become available and relevant. This list includes dropout rates, retention patterns, ethnicity and primary language, performance on traditional norm-referenced tests, postsecondary opportunities including access to "gate" courses in science and mathematics, development of technological literacy, emphasis on basic instruction, and programs for at-risk students. Other key variables which impact student success include parent involvement, an ongoing commitment to excellence in teaching, innovations in governance, teaching and assessment.

Data for some of these indicators, such as dropout and retention rates, achievement test scores, enrollment by ethnicity and primary language, are routinely collected and reported in the District. In the case of other variables, it will be necessary to develop means for data

collection. As an example, evaluations of innovations in governance, teaching, and assessment will need to be developed as such innovations evolve. Further, analytic techniques that lend themselves to determination of trends in the data will be utilized.

Current status. While data for most of the indicators just listed are not available, or can provide only the earliest indication of trends, a preliminary snapshot of the Class of 2000 can be described. The ethnic composition of this class, which entered school in 1987, is quite similar to classes which started immediately prior to, and since, that year. Nearly two thirds (63.7%) of the kindergarten pupils that year were Hispanic. Black students constituted 15% of this group, while 14.2% were White students. Asian students comprised 4.9% of the 1987 kindergarten class.

Further, approximately 40% of the members of the Class of 2000 are limited English proficient. Preliminary data show that for both kindergarten and first grade, members of the Class of 2000 had a notably lower retention rate than pupils in those grades during the previous year. Finally, comparisons between the Class of 2000 and the comparison classes using CTBS/U reading and mathematics data for the past 3 testing years reveal no clear trends. As additional test score data become available in future years any patterns reflecting true differences between the Class of 2000 and the older and younger cohorts should begin to emerge.

Summary and recommendations. In many ways, as data reflecting the indicators outlined above become available, it should be possible to ascertain the effectiveness of programs and courses of study

targeting the Class of 2000. In this way, the Class of 2000 will serve as a barometer of the effectiveness of existing programs and the commitment to new and innovative programs and interventions through the decade. The longitudinal evaluation targeting key indicators and evaluating innovative programs is critical to the promotion of successful educational experiences for the members of the Class of 2000. Some of the data from the wide variety of indicators outlined above are currently routinely gathered; however, new means for the collection of other data must be developed. In any case, this longitudinal evaluation should be a central part of all subsequent reports on the Class of 2000 and will speak to the effectiveness of the programs and opportunities afforded this class.

Introduction

Even before they entered kindergarten in 1987, the members of the graduating class of the year 2000 had been chosen for concentrated instructional focus, special planning, and detailed evaluation. They would receive more attention and monitoring over the 13-year span from kindergarten through 12th grade than any other class since the district's first elementary school opened in 1855. This graduating class, the first of the new millennium, is a logical focal point for a critically needed reconsideration of existing policies and plans, reevaluation of current efforts, and reflection on the sobering message inherent in our current measurements of a broad range of educational outcomes. The Class of 2000, then, in a sense, is a window to our future.

Our nation's schools are in a state of crisis, as noted by a wide array of observers (e.g., Haycock & Navarro, 1988; Taylor, 1989; Glasser, 1990). Achievement levels in all subject areas and at all grade levels are down. Discipline problems continue to grow in number and seriousness. On-campus crime rates are up. Teacher burnout is increasingly common. Racial isolation and intergroup hostility have increased. The picture painted by a variety of educational indicators is a gloomy one: dropout rates, absenteeism, and student transiency are at all time highs, while achievement test scores continue to plummet. Concerted intervention for the members of the Class of 2000 is needed to avoid a picture of failure.

Some of the complexity of the issues facing our schools arises from conditions outside of the realm of education. Schools do not exist in a

vacuum. They affect and are affected by the settings in which they are found. The difficulties particular to the education process are magnified by many of the ills originating outside of school grounds. In large urban settings, for example, social problems such as crowding, unemployment, high crime rates, and intergroup hostility do not respect the physical boundaries around schools. Poverty is becoming more concentrated in certain inner-city communities. Families are disintegrating. Students in schools in large urban districts are approximately nine times as likely as other children to be from single-parent homes (Committee for Economic Development, 1985). These children, whose thoughts are necessarily dominated by concerns for safety and who are preoccupied with their very survival, are not good candidates for high academic achievement. The costs to society for this cycle of educational failure are potentially tremendous (Levin, 1985).

This is all taking place at a time in which support for education seems to be wavering. Federal funding to large urban school districts has dropped by over 17% in recent years (Council of Great City Schools, 1987), and it is increasingly difficult to gain approval of state and local ballot measures designed to increase funding for education. Resources are being slashed. As a result, the current level and quality of services, materials, and personnel seemingly cannot be maintained. If these current levels cannot be maintained, then any hope for a full and genuine investment in the future which would necessitate an expansion of these levels, is weak. There is virtually no disagreement that education is at a crossroads, with a number of fundamental and difficult decisions facing policymakers (Stevens, 1989). During the

1990s, priorities must be reassessed and new solutions tried. Information provided from evaluation, assessment, and research focusing upon a core of critical variables can offer critical insights to this process (Finn, 1990).

LAUSD Class of 2000: Critical Issues and Key Indicators

While a clear and complete picture of the nature of the education in the year 2000 may not currently exist, it is possible to describe what should be elements of this picture and to identify critical variables which will serve as indicators of the effectiveness of the education process for members of the Class of 2000. On a conceptual level, to provide the best opportunity for success, our schools must have ideals which recognize people as its greatest resource; value and benefit from the rich ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of its staff and students; have a responsive, theoretically based curriculum; be fully committed to eliminating school failure with an array of programs for at-risk students; provide resources necessary for a strong program evaluation, research, and accountability effort; and, maintain a spirit of experimentation, and openness to innovation. A discussion of these ideals and their specific indicators follows.

Human Resources

Despite the incredible growth and development of information technology, increasing sophistication of hardware and software, and new developments in instructional techniques and procedures, certainly the most valuable resource available to school districts as they approach

the year 2000 is its people--motivated, engaged students, active and involved parents, as well as committed and energetic teachers.

Engaged students. A common complaint about contemporary education in large urban schools is that it fosters alienation and feelings of detachment in students. Alienated students are at-risk students who do not persevere, and instead choose to drop out. In contrast, engaged students are committed, interested, motivated, and much more likely to succeed. When they are motivated, and believe that their efforts will lead to valued outcomes, students will willingly and freely exert the necessary effort to attain high levels of achievement (Firestone, 1989; Newmann, 1989). Such variables as dropout rate, absence rate, and extent of participation in school activities provide an indication of level of student engagement which can be monitored over a period of years.

Attracting and retaining superior teachers. School districts have made great investments in their pool of experienced, effective teachers. This is an investment which must be nourished and protected. Indicators suggesting support provided to the teachers include opportunities for staff development, availability of support networks and mentor teachers, as well as provisions for necessary release time to take full advantage of such opportunities and enhanced professionalization.

Involved parents. Many teachers feel that the lack of parental support is the most important problem facing education. There are many examples of efforts made throughout the United States to get parents involved in their children's education (e.g., Lueder, 1989; Williams &

Chavkin, 1989). Research has supported the critical role which parents play in their children's learning ability, attitudes about school, and educational aspirations (Rock, Ekstrom, Goertz, & Pollock, 1985). Indicators of parental involvement which might be incorporated into future reports in this series are attendance at school meetings and conferences, level of interest in their children's schoolwork, as well as amount of encouragement and support provided.

Ethnic and Linguistic Diversity

Ethnicity. With its nearly 30 million residents, California is the most populous state in the nation. Its people are also, undoubtedly, the most diverse. In terms of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity, for the United States, and especially for California, the future is now. Immigration from other countries, migration from other states, and differential birth rates are the primary factors responsible for this unprecedented growth in ethnic and cultural diversity. Hispanics, who comprise about 24% of the state's population today will comprise over 29% by the year 2000. The proportion of the population who are Asian will rise from 9% to approximately 12% at the end of the decade. Blacks will comprise nearly 8% of the state's population in the year 2000. This diversity is reflected in enrollment in California public schools--about one half of current students are non-White. While such diversity presents an educational challenge, it also presents an opportunity. This opportunity entails recognizing the richness of diverse cultural perspectives, seeing this richness as an asset, and capitalizing upon

it. Disaggregating enrollment data by ethnicity provides direct indices of the nature of such diversity.

Language. The incredible racial and ethnic diversity just described is paralleled by significant linguistic diversity. The implications of this linguistic diversity for education are profound. Issues concerning bilingual education have become more intense with the changing ethnic and linguistic picture in the United States. In many individual school districts, especially large urban districts, more than half of the students come from homes in which English is not the primary language.

Currently, there are 93 languages spoken by students in LAUSD. Over half of the students have a primary language other than English and one third are limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. Approximately three fourths of these LEP students are in elementary school (Wong & Griffin, 1990). This language diversity presents an interesting challenge to the teachers faced with the task of teaching students standard English as well as the regular curriculum. The goal of the LAUSD is to help those students who are limited English proficient learn English while maintaining academic achievement. Indicators of progress made by Class of 2000 LEP students are extent of progress in English, achievement in content areas taught in their primary language, and rate of redesignation to English proficient status.

Full and equal educational opportunities. While it is illegal to explicitly exclude persons from educational opportunities based upon race or ethnicity, there are a number of rather powerful processes which operate implicitly, and result in de facto discrimination. Examples

of such processes include biases on selection committees, bias in tests used to make selection and placement decisions, ability tracking, differential expectancy levels, and even self-selection processes.

There is evidence that differences exist between schools, programs, and ethnic groups in terms of the rate of taking college-preparatory classes (Doby, 1985). Each member of the Class of 2000 must be supported with career and postsecondary educational counseling, preparation for college admission testing, assistance with financial arrangements, and opportunities to visit college campuses. Indicators which will describe the members of the Class of 2000 success rate for postsecondary opportunities are rates of enrollment in critical "gate" courses and college preparatory programs of study, taking college placement exams, applying to, and eventually being accepted in college programs.

Curriculum Issues

Promoting achievement. California's Superintendent of Public Instruction has characterized the curriculum in California schools in recent years as one "which promotes underachievement" (Honig, 1990, p. 8). Not surprisingly there are many appeals to "return to basics" in education. American first-graders spend a smaller percentage of time in academic activities at school than do their Taiwanese and Japanese counterparts. This difference is most pronounced for mathematics education, and is even greater in the higher grades (McKnight, et al., 1987). A similar pattern emerged in the amount of time spent doing homework; further, Japanese and Taiwanese students had more positive

attitudes toward homework (Utal, Lummis, & Stevenson, 1988). Although these patterns probably in part reflect cultural orientations and attitudinal differences concerning the value of hard work for achieving success.

It is important that educators strive to instill a value for hard work and dedication, and to restore the preeminence of academic versus nonacademic pursuits in students in the Class of 2000. Some of the concern over the perceived "slippage" in mathematics and science achievement of United States students stems from the perception that the gap between American students and students in other countries is widening. Even with the complexity of measuring achievement cross-culturally and related methodological difficulties, the need for a strong curriculum is clear. Indicators regarding the promotion of achievement include amount of emphasis on academic instruction, requirements to take basic course offerings in language, mathematics, and the sciences, assignment of homework, and student attitudes toward schoolwork.

Toward technological literacy. All reasonable estimates suggest that the world into which the Class of 2000 will graduate will be very different from that of today. Schools will need to meet the demand for highly trained, technical workers. Technological innovations including the "computer revolution" necessitate that students become computer literate. Further, all students should be able to reap the full array of benefits to be derived from being proficient in mathematics, science, and technology. Students must be provided with the tools to function successfully in the "high tech" world of tomorrow.

A tangible index of commitment to computer literacy is the number of computer units in the schools. Although it is not uncommon for families to have a personal computer in the home, this is certainly not yet the norm. Therefore, it is usually true that a child's first interaction with a computer occurs at school. To enrich the quality of the computer-related experiences of students, there must be a sufficient amount of computer units, with an adequate number of well-trained teachers. Some current evidence indicates that the LAUSD is following through on its commitment to meet these needs (Isonio, Pike, Weisbender, & Oliver, 1989). Indicators of the commitment to technological literacy include the number of computer units, the variety of ways which computers are used, and the number of students involved. Variables such as the number of computers available, the nature of their integration with existing instructional modalities, and the knowledge and ability of teachers to incorporate this technology into their lessons can all serve as indicators of progress toward technological literacy.

Programs for At-Risk Students

Too large a proportion of students have been identified as being "at-risk" of failing to successfully complete their education. These students often come from poor and single-parent households, are from minority groups, or have learning disabilities. The children who are at the greatest risk of failure in school are now the fastest growing portion of the school population (Stevens, 1989; Rouk, 1989). Left

unchecked, the factors which contribute to the at-risk status will continue to grow, and so will the number of such students.

Dropout prevention and recovery programs. While the act of dropping out is usually the culmination of years of frustration and failure for students, most educators believe that potential dropouts can be clearly identified as early as the third grade. Some reliable predictors of dropping out include retention in one or more grade level, poor math skills, little or no participation in school activities, social isolation, disruptive behavior in school, transiency, and poor attendance.

Although funding is often insufficient, and the scope of such programs is limited, the reporting of these data will evaluate how many at-risk Class of 2000 students are served. Efforts toward early identification of needs, and the implementation of programs to ease transition between educational levels and particular schools can serve as additional indicators of the committment to address the needs of at-risk students (Firestone, 1989). High transiency rates, absenteeism, nonparticipation, and social isolation would clearly be indicative of the need for more effective intervention. Test data from criterion-referenced or curriculum-based tests can be used to assess programs for at-risk students (Stevens, 1989).

Accountability

The role of educational research is often misunderstood and its usefulness is often underestimated. Educational researchers can collect, organize, present and interpret a broad array of indicators of

educational success. In addition, educational researchers can determine the relative effectiveness of various instructional strategies or approaches under controlled conditions. This information can be invaluable when used by decision makers.

Evaluating the performance of students is a major component of the duties of teachers; scoring assignments and exams, assigning marks, and making decisions regarding promotion and retention are all oriented toward providing information about individual student achievement. Of course, a strong evaluation and assessment program is the key element to an effective accountability system. An effective educational system is proactive, preparing students for their future, anticipating obstacles, exercising fiscal responsibility, developing and implementing an integrated, theoretically-based curriculum (Finn, 1990). Evaluations should be planned and provided for as particular programs are implemented. Districts throughout the state are now required to use school accountability report cards (SARCS), and these serve as the primary source of information regarding educational effectiveness for the public.

While the focus of research and evaluation within school districts is one of determining the effectiveness of existing programs, attention should be given to generating new knowledge, as well. Through research, decision-makers should have available to them a full array of facts. It is imperative that the results of evaluation and research be used as a part of decision-making. Ultimately, the best indicator of the value of research is the quality of decisions based upon such research.

Innovation

Regardless of the nature of the institution, there is need for an experimenting attitude. This openness to innovation must be sincere. Further, it must reflect a willingness to "go back to the drawing board" if that is what is needed so as not to miss opportunities for genuine change.

Openness to structural changes. The trend toward sharing power in school districts appears to be gaining momentum. It is healthy trend, not so much for the inherent value of school-based management and shared decision-making (SBM/SDM), but because of the willingness to experiment with new approaches, given the failure of traditional approaches. By the time the Class of 2000 finishes 12th grade, an assessment of shared decision-making should be clear. However, in the interim, adjustments and modifications should be made in the spirit of experimentation. Structural change of a different nature, namely ungraded primary education, also merits consideration. A model to implement ungraded primary education at selected schools on a voluntary basis is currently being designed in the LAUSD.

Teaching laboratories. The experimenting attitude should apply to methods of training teachers, as well. This curiosity and questioning could lead to new and more effective ways of training skilled teachers. These centers can work to identify factors related to success or failure as teachers, and develop models to predict excellence in teaching. Many questions regarding the best way to train and supervise student teachers need answers, and the teaching laboratories can address these questions. Indeed, Berliner (1985, 1986) has argued

that teachers and researchers should work closely in the study and development of teacher education. Finally, a strong link between the District and neighboring universities is a key to the success of these teaching laboratories.

Innovative assessments. There is growing realization that traditional norm-referenced tests should be supplemented with assessments that target higher-order thinking skills and processes, and that involve applying knowledge rather than relying on isolated skills. While the development of such assessment procedures that meet requirements for standardization, ease of scoring, and the ability to aggregate test data is a difficult task, the use of new technologies may create additional options, however.

Summary of Key Indicators

As noted above, future reports on the status of the Class of 2000 will include information reflecting a wide range of indicators of educational success, as these become available and relevant. Data disaggregated by ethnicity and primary language including enrollment, retention and dropout rates, achievement test scores, and postsecondary opportunities, will be included with a wide range of other variables such as the degree of emphasis on science and mathematics, opportunities to develop technological literacy, focus of basic instruction, and availability of programs for at-risk students. Parent involvement, an ongoing commitment to excellence in teaching, innovations in school governance, teacher training and assessment are other indicators of the

richness of opportunity afforded the Class of 2000 which should be included in the longitudinal analysis.

LAUSD Class of 2000: A Current Snapshot

This section of the report presents information on current characteristics of the LAUSD Class of 2000, the pupils who enrolled in kindergarten in fall 1987 and who will graduate from high school in June 2000. This report is the first on the progress of this class. As of fall 1990, they were entering the third grade. The design calls for periodic collection of data about the Class of 2000, and for comparison purposes, data about the classes that immediately precede and follow it were also collected. This three-class cohort is to be followed until each graduates (respectively, June 1999, 2000, and 2001). Information from this and subsequent reports will serve as an index of the effectiveness of special programs and innovative practices targeting the Class of 2000. The following sections describe the variables reported in this study and summarize current data regarding these variables.

Enrollment. In spring 1988, elementary schools were asked to submit rosters of kindergarten pupils (the Class of 2000), showing name, birthday, date of enrollment in school, and parents' names. This was the first step in identifying the original group of project pupils and beginning a database for longitudinal comparisons regarding the Class of 2000.

In fall 1987, LAUSD had a total enrollment of 590,287 students. Of this total, 47,531 were kindergarteners, members of the Class of 2000, and 51,487 first graders who constituted the older comparison group. A

year later there were 51,957 pupils in the Class of 2000 (then first graders), an increase of nearly 4,500 over the previous year. The enrollment of project pupils dropped slightly between 1988 and 1989 (Table 1).

Table 1

Enrollment for Class of 2000 and Comparison Grades, 1987-1989

Fall of year	Kgn.	1	2	3
1987	[47,531]	51,467	--	--
1988	47,250	[51,957]	49,290	--
1989	--	52,477	[50,983]	48,678

Note. Dashes indicate that data would be irrelevant for the present comparisons. To facilitate comparison, enrollment for Class of 2000 is boxed.

Ethnicity. With over 600,000 students in 1989-90, LAUSD is represented by many student ethnicities which are typically categorized into seven categories, for reporting purposes. The fall ethnic survey reports of 1987 through 1989 show that the Class of 2000 and comparison pupils were represented principally in the same ethnic proportions (Table 2). Sixty-four percent of the members of the Class of 2000 who entered kindergarten in 1987 were Hispanic. This percentage increased very slightly through the next 2 years into first and second grade. Black students comprised 15.0% of the enrollment in 1987--a value which remained stable over the following 2 years. White students comprised

Table 2

Ethnic Breakdown for Class of 2000 and Comparison Grades 1987-89

Fall	Grade	Amer. Ind./ AK Native	Asian	Black	Filipino	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	White	Total
1987	[K]	39 0.1%	2,327 4.9%	7,112 15.0%	822 1.7%	30,443 64.0%	178 0.4%	6,610 13.9%	47,531
1987	1	67 0.1%	2,579 5.0%	8,197 15.9%	782 1.5%	32,335 62.8%	194 0.4%	7,313 14.2%	51,467
1988	K	38 0.1%	2,233 4.7%	6,529 13.8%	823 1.7%	31,039 65.7%	194 0.4%	6,394 13.5%	47,250
1988	[1]	82 0.2%	2,561 5.0%	7,856 15.5%	842 1.6%	33,552 64.5%	200 0.4%	6,894 13.3%	51,957
1988	2	90 0.2%	2,452 5.0%	7,700 15.6%	854 1.7%	31,494 63.9%	188 0.4%	6,512 13.2%	49,290
1989	1	57 0.1%	2,473 4.7%	7,337 14.0%	831 1.6%	34,940 66.6%	193 0.4%	6,646 12.7%	52,477
1989	[2]	66 0.1%	2,504 4.9%	7,484 14.7%	792 1.6%	33,552 65.8%	217 0.4%	6,368 12.5	50,983
1989	3	81 0.2%	2,260 4.6%	7,344 15.1%	756 1.6%	31,948 65.6%	183 0.4%	6,106 12.5%	48,678

Note. Grade of the Class of 2000 is boxed, to aid comparison.

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the next largest proportion in the initial year of schooling for the Class of 2000 (13.9%). This value dropped very slightly in 1988, and again in 1989. Approximately 5% of the Class of 2000 in each of the years from 1987 to 1989 were Asian students. In terms of ethnicity, then, the Class of 2000 is quite similar to the classes which immediately precede and follow it.

Language. LAUSD pupils speak a total of 93 different languages according to the District's Bilingual Survey Report. There are 13 major languages other than English spoken by significant numbers of District students. The greatest number of such students speak Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Korean, and Pilipino.

In spring 1988, schools indicated that they had limited-English-proficient (LEP) and fluent-English-proficient (FEP) pupils in the 13 major language categories. For the Class of 2000, Spanish speakers comprised 91% of the LEP categories, with Korean and Cantonese totaling 2% and 1%, respectively. Spanish speakers were also the predominant group in FEP categories with an 81% share of this group, followed by Korean and Tagalog, each with 3% of this total. It is noteworthy that only the Tagalog and Persian FEP speakers outnumbered their counterpart LEP speakers. As Table 3 indicates, this language category breakdown remained largely unchanged as the Class of 2000 moved from kindergarten in 1987 into the first and second grade, in 1988 and 1989, respectively.

Table 3

Non-English Language Census for Class of 2000 and Cohort Grades, Spring 1988 and Spring 1989

Primary language	Proficiency level	Spring 1988		Spring 1989		
		[K]	1	K	[1]	2
Spanish	LEP	20,215	21,105	21,224	22,562	20,993
	FEP	6,567	6,876	6,431	6,757	6,738
Korean	LEP	422	383	409	408	307
	FEP	204	290	155	274	306
Cantonese	LEP	308	330	331	302	292
	FEP	99	119	87	108	135
Pilipino (Tagalog)	LEP	112	173	164	143	159
	FEP	264	304	214	266	304
Vietnamese	LEP	207	189	156	189	147
	FEP	88	121	97	100	108
Persian	LEP	114	134	99	133	141
	FEP	133	193	149	146	169
Other non-English	LEP	739	741	841	927	753
	FEP	616	762	582	682	773
Total	LEP	22,117	23,055	23,224	24,664	22,792
Total	FEP	7,971	8,[illegible]5	7,715	8,333	8,533

Note. Grade of the class of 2000 is boxed, to aid comparison.

Achievement test scores. Table 4 presents reading and mathematics median percentile scores for the Class of 2000 and comparison grades for testing periods since fall 1987. As can be seen, performance by the Class of 2000 on both the reading and math portions of the CTBS/U when first graders (1988-89) was higher than that of the older cohort as first graders (for math, median percentile of 48 compared with 27; for reading, 35 compared to 33). Similarly, as second graders, members of the Class of 2000 attained a higher median percentile score for math than did the previous group of second graders (52 compared to 48). However, the median percentile reading scores were identical (35) for the Class of 2000 and their older cohorts, as second graders.

Comparisons between the Class of 2000 and the younger cohort, as first graders reveal a less consistent pattern. Specifically, first graders tested in spring 1990 (younger cohort) attained a lower reading score than that earned by the Class of 2000 as first graders the previous testing year (median percentile reading scores of 35 and 37, respectively). However, the median percentile for math was much higher for the younger cohort (51 compared to 42). With only a few comparisons possible at this early point in the evaluation, attempts to interpret these achievement test data would be premature.

Retention in grade. Retention rate is defined as the number of persons retained in June of a particular year divided by the number enrolled in October of the same year. This rate provides a means of comparison across grade levels and years. Table 5 presents 3 years of retention data for the Class of 2000 and the comparison classes.

Because of systematic differences between retention rates at different grade levels, the longitudinal comparisons should be limited to those involving different cohorts in the same grade at different points in time.

Table 4

CTBS/U Median Percentile Scores for Class of 2000 and Comparison Grades

		Reading		Math	
Testing Period	Grade	Median Percentile	Number Tested	Median Percentile	Number Tested
Fall 1987	[K]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	1	33	27,785	27	28,205
Fall 1988,	[1]	37	27,233	42	25,285
Spring 1989	2	35	27,035	48	27,481
Spring 1990	1	35	27,073	51	27,239
	[2]	35	28,432	52	28,805
	3	33	30,026	43	30,307

Note. Kindergarteners are typically not tested with the CTBS/U as a part of the regular assessment progress. Grade level for Class of 2000 students is boxed, to aid comparison.

Comparing across cohorts, holding grade level constant, it can be seen that the retention rate for the Class of 2000 as kindergarteners (1.75% in the 1987-88 year) is markedly lower than the rate for the older cohort the previous year (2.28%), although essentially the same as that for the younger cohort the following year (1.71%). One additional meaningful comparison can be made--the first grade rate for the Class of

2000 (in 1988-89) was 3.69%, clearly lower than that for first graders the previous year (4.06%). While these data might be interpreted as suggesting that the Class of 2000 has exhibited lower retention rates than the comparison groups, the data are perhaps too preliminary to support such a conclusion.

Table 5

Number and Percentage Retained for Class of 2000 and Comparison Grades, 1986-1989

School year	Grade	Enrolled October	Retained June	Retention rate
1986-87	K	47,918	1,094	2.28%
1987-88	[K]	47,531	833	1.75%
	1	51,467	2,090	4.06%
1988-89	K	47,250	810	1.71%
	[1]	51,957	1,916	3.69%
	2	49,290	1,048	2.13%

Note. Grade for Class of 2000 is boxed. Retention rate equals number retained in grade in June, divided by the number enrolled the previous October.

Summary and Recommendations

Demographically, the Class of 2000 is quite similar to the classes which immediately precede and follow it--it is predominately Hispanic (approximately 65%); additionally, nearly 40% of this class is limited-English-proficient. At this point, however, achievement and retention data are not sufficient to warrant conclusions about the Class of 2000. As the longitudinal record for these three cohorts grows, it should be possible to discern more meaningful trends.

The concerted and comprehensive longitudinal evaluation outlined in this report is a necessary part of the district's commitment to the Class of 2000. Curriculum innovations, programmatic changes or enhancements, and educational opportunities should be documented in subsequent reports on the progress of the Class of 2000. For subsequent reports to provide an adequate snapshot of the class as it progresses through the educational system, existing evaluation efforts must be continued, and procedures for the collection of the additional necessary data must be developed and implemented. Only in this way will the longitudinal record necessary for ascertaining relationships between educational programs and opportunities provided to the Class of 2000 and critical outcome indicators be available.

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