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ABSTRACT

This report presents information on the progress that 45 of the largest urban school districts, which comprise the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), have made toward 6 basic educational goals in the form of several indicators. Indicators of progress on the six goals for the year 2000 are as follows: (1) increased achievement (districtwide scores on standardized achievement tests are rising, urban students' scores on nationally administered tests are rising faster than the national average, and students with special needs are achieving more through special programs); (2) school readiness (urban early childhood and preschool education programs are laying the foundations for learning); (3) graduation rates at the national average (dropout rates in some urban school districts are down); (4) preparation for post secondary education and careers (urban schools are undertaking programs that encourage more students to enter higher education and are better preparing students for careers); (5) ethnically diverse, quality teaching staff (schools are mounting several creative approaches for building and attracting a quality teaching force); and (6) higher levels of health and safety (schools are undertaking improved substance abuse prevention programs, better health care delivery programs, and facility renovation projects). An appendix describes the CGCS. (JB)

PROGRESS IN MEETING URB[illegible] GOALS

RESULTS 2000:

Progress in Meeting Urban Education Goals

Holmes Braddock, President
Constance Clayton, Vice President
Forrest Rieke, Secretary/Treasurer
Larry L. Zenke, Past President
Samuel B. Husk, Executive Director

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

Fall, 1990

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THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CORPORATION

Dedicated to Richard Green

"Education is the most important gift that a person can give or receive and the value we must all embrace. I ask only for the time to prove the case for the public schools."

Richard R. Green, Chancellor
New York City Public Schools
May 9, 1989

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS IS A COALITION OF 45 of the largest urban public school districts in the nation designed to promote the improvement of education in the Great City Schools through research, legislation and other appropriate activites.

The Council is indebted to a great many individuals who helped make this report possible.

First, we extend our appreciation to our urban Board of Education members, Superintendents and staff for providing inspiration and data, completing surveys, and offering helpful suggestions. Our Directors of Research and Evaluation deserve special thanks for urging us to produce a hard-nosed report and furnishing us with the evidence needed to accomplish our goal. James Lytle, Sharon Johnson-Lewis, and John Griffith were key in this effort. And thank you to the Council's Business and Finance Directors, lead by Bill Wise of Nashville, for providing the revenue data for Part 2 of this report. Appreciation is extended to all of our districts for reading early drafts, correcting mistakes and contributing ideas.

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Project Director
Michael Casserly

Assistant Project Director
Jacquelin Dennis

Authors
Michael Casserly and Nancy Kober

Production Coordinator and Photography
Jacquelin Dennis

Research
Michael Casserly, Jacquelin Dennis, Pamela Hall,
Nancy Kober and Isabel Salinas

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE 45 LARGE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT CONSTITUTE THE Council of the Great City Schools have committed themselves to attaining six basic educational goals by the year 2000. The Great City Schools can provide evidence, in the form of several indicators, that progress is already being made toward meeting these goals. The goals and the indicators of progress are as follows:

GOAL #1

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL INCREASE THEIR ACHIEVEMENT TO AT LEAST THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

Indicator of Progress: District-wide scores on standardized achievement tests are rising.

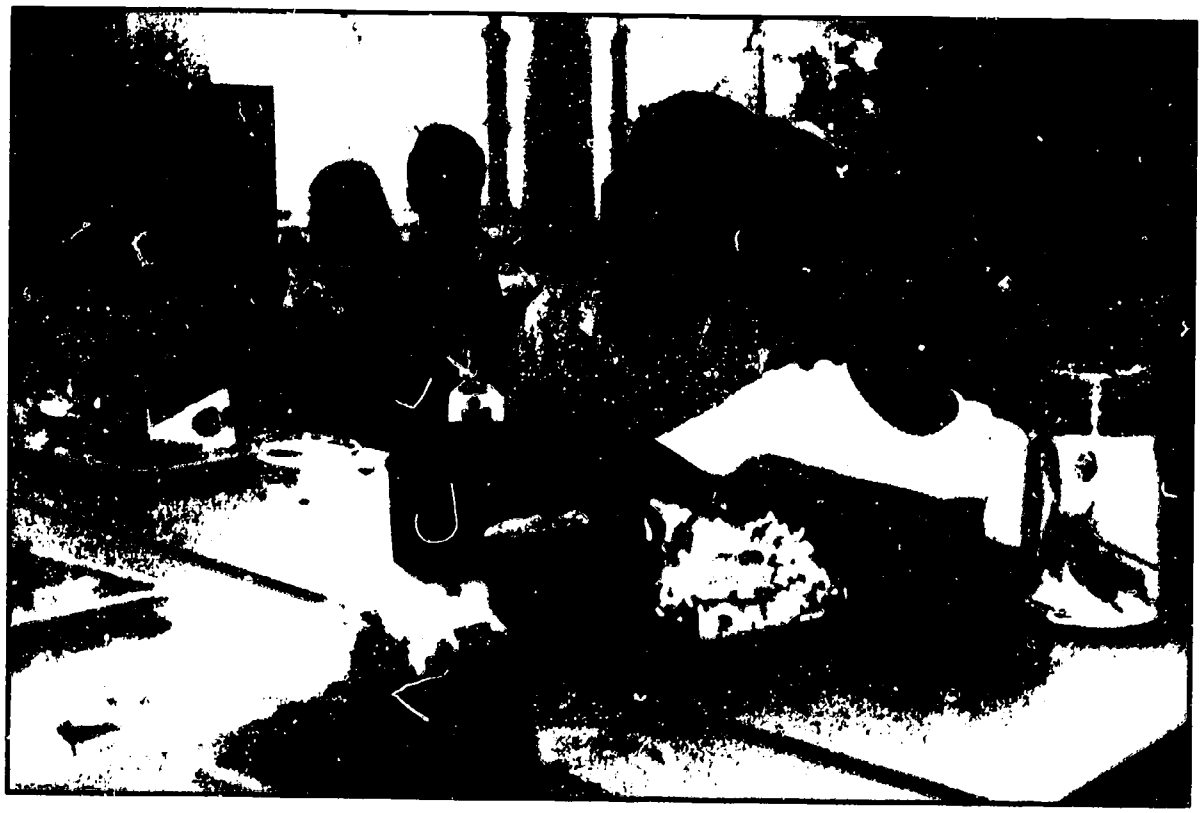
Indicator of Progress: Urban students' scores on nationally-administered tests are climbing faster than the national average.

Indicator of Progress: Students with special needs, including disadvantaged, handicapped, limited-English-proficient, and gifted and talented students, are achieving more as a result of special programs.

GOAL #2

BY THE YEAR 2000, ALL URBAN CHILDREN WILL START SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.

Indicator of Progress: Urban early childhood and preschool education programs are laying the foundations for learning.



GOAL #3

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOLS WILL INCREASE THEIR GRADUATION RATES SO THEY ARE COMPARABLE TO THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

Indicator of Progress: Dropout rates in some Great City School districts are down.

GOAL #4

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOL GRADUATES WILL BE ADEQUATELY PREPARED TO ENTER HIGHER EDUCATION, PURSUE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES, AND EXERCISE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AS CITIZENS.

Indicator of Progress: Great City Schools are undertaking programs that are encouraging more students to enter higher education and better preparing students for careers.

GOAL #5

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOLS WILL BE ADEQUATELY STAFFED WITH QUALIFIED TEACHERS WHO ARE CULTURALLY AND RACIALLY SENSITIVE AND WHO REFLECT THE RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THEIR STUDENTS.

Indicator of Progress: Great City schools are mounting a number of creative approaches for building and attracting a quality teaching force.

GOAL #6

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOLS WILL BE FREE OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL, STUDENTS WILL BE WELL-NOURISHED AND HEALTHY, AND SCHOOLS WILL BE WELL-MAINTAINED AND SAFE.

Indicator of Progress: Urban school districts are undertaking programs to reduce substance abuse in inner city schools.

Indicator of Progress: Urban youth are receiving better health care.

Indicator of Progress: Urban school districts are repairing and renovating aging facilities.

The Council of the Great City Schools has identified two principal factors that are fueling progress: expertise and financial commitment. Some of the strategies that are working to improve urban education are:

Special categorical programs
Organizational and management changes
Magnet schools
Community support and business participation
Effective school research

In addition, modest increases in local urban school revenues have spurred concomitant progress in the Great City Schools. Without greater public commitment and funding, however, urban schools will not be able to sustain their progress and meet their goals by the year 2000.

RESULTS 2000:

Progress in Meeting Urban Education Goals

INTRODUCTION

OVER THE PAST DECADE, THE NATION HAS FOCUSED ENORMOUS attention and energy on improving the education of our children. Nowhere does the national resolve to strengthen our education system face a tougher test than in the inner cities. In the large urban centers, every problem is more pronounced, every solution harder to implement. From teacher shortages to drug abuse, from dilapidated buildings to dropouts, urban schools meet challenges each day that would overwhelm other districts. These formidable obstacles demand comprehensive and intensive solutions that address the entangled effects of crushing poverty, limited-English proficiency, family instability, discrimination, disability and malnutrition; and recognize the enormous political, demographic, economic and social diversity and turmoil characteristic of urban settings.

The board members, administrators, and teachers who work with inner city children every day have made a sustained commitment to improving urban schools. In recent years the 45 large, urban school systems that make up the Council of the Great City Schools have instituted an array of programs to enhance quality across entire districts, to upgrade the climate and quality of individual schools, and to target special groups and specific problems. As this report will show, these programs are beginning to produce concrete results—some impressive, some modest– which taken together demonstrate a clear trend of progress in urban education.

Although these indicators of upward movement are encouraging, they cannot be deemed sufficient, either by urban educators or the nation. Recognizing that more must be done,

the Board of Directors of the Council of the Great City Schools, in March, 1990, adopted a series of goals for urban schools for the year 2000. These goals are complementary urban versions of the National Goals set by the President and the Governors. In general, the goals spur urban schools to reach the national average by the year 2000 in several key areas, and thereafter lead the nation. They are as follows:

1. By the year 2000, urban school students will increase their achievement to at least the national average.
2. By the year 2000, all urban children will start school ready to learn.
3. By the year 2000, urban schools will increase their graduation rates so they are comparable to the national average.
4. By the year 2000, urban school graduates will be adequately prepared to enter higher education, pursue career opportunities, and exercise their responsibilities as citizens.
5. By the year 2000, urban schools will be adequately staffed with qualified teachers who are culturally and racially sensitive and who reflect the racial characteristics of their students.
6. By the year 2000, urban schools will be free of drugs and alcohol, students will be well-nourished and healthy, and schools will be well-maintained and safe.

The Council believes that these benchmarks are realistic and attainable. The major urban public school systems have pledged to meet them, and in turn, ask the rest of the nation to assist in the effort. This will entail a major rethinking of the concept of responsibility for urban education. At times, it has appeared that society would rather contain the problems of inner cities than confront them; that strategy has not worked. Only with the involvement of all major segments of society will significant progress occur.

One might ask why the larger community should help solve problems that seem so remote, costly, entrenched and complex. The reasons are uncomplicated. First, America's economic and global primacy depends on the productivity of the children now being educated in our city schools, the next generation of workers. Consider the following fact: if the graduation rate for urban schools equaled the national average, the Great City Schools would have graduated 325,520 students in 1987-88 instead of 239,317. At the current 28% rate, the federal tax on the total additional lifetime earnings of those extra 86,203 individuals is large enough to double the present Congressional appropriation for elementary and secondary education, increase

federal AIDS research five-fold, or boost drug prevention efforts by a factor of ten—efforts that benefit the whole nation, not just the cities. Second, unless action is taken immediately, the problems faced by big city schools will soon become prevalent in all the nation's schools. Finally, the country has a moral imperative, grounded in the Constitution, to strive for individual justice and equality for all its citizens, and education is the soundest way of endowing these rights.

In short, our city schools are as basic to the national welfare as America's military bases are to the national defense. The nation's inattention to the needs and promise of urban youth, however, is a spiritual failure of the first magnitude and a catastrophic strategic mistake that saps our strength and dilutes our will.

Urban schools know that it is not enough to assure people they will try hard to meet these goals or their money is worth the investment. We must back up those assurances with results—concrete, verifiable documentation that our efforts to improve education in the cities are paying off, and that the extra funding necessary to bring urban schools up to our goals is a sound investment.

This report seeks to show how the nation's urban schools are rising to the challenges addressed in the urban goals for the year 2000.

Part 1 summarizes the statistical and other relevant evidence of progress that urban districts have already made toward the six urban goals. The statistical evidence of progress is not uniform for every city, or for every child, but the results are convincing enough to generate optimism and spur continued, systemwide progress.

Part 2 analyzes some of the reasons behind the progress. The crucial factors include expertise—special strategies, programs, and reforms at the student, school district and school building level—and funding in the form of modest increases in federal and state support for urban youth.

Part 3 discusses where the nation must go to attain the urban goals by the year 2000. As this report will demonstrate, in places where the public and private sector have made a commitment to urban education and provided the financial support, concrete results are being produced and urban schools are contributing to the nation's survival. The case is made that increased support will engender greater progress.

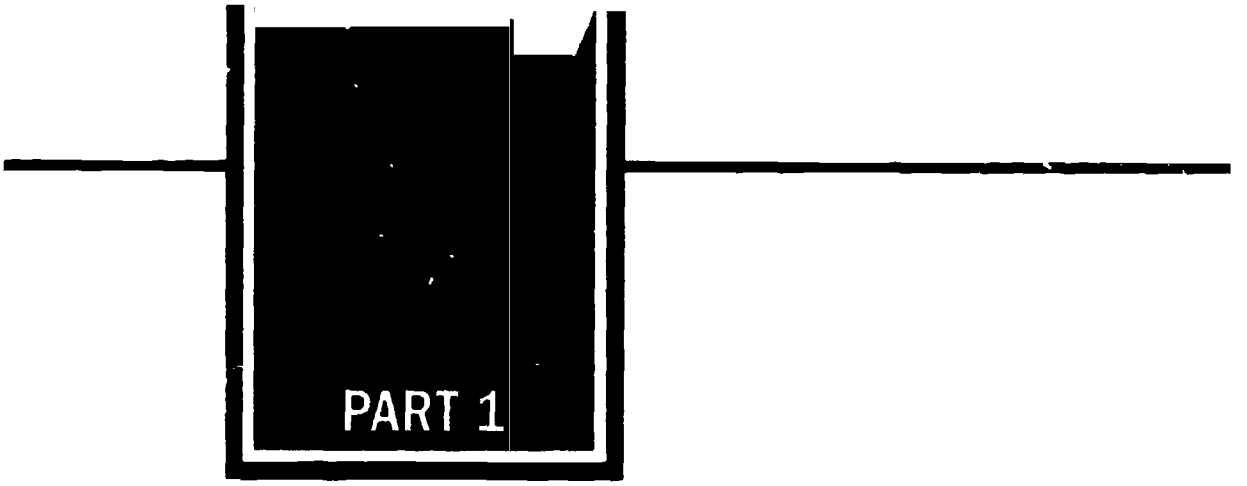
In summary, this report might be considered both a descriptive analysis of the current status of the Great City Schools with respect to the urban goals and a documentation of the ability of urban school districts to achieve the goals by building upon techniques that are already working and by garnering support from other segments of society.

SNAPSHOT OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS*

THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS ARE UNIQUE IN THE EDUCATION UNIverse because of their size, needs, composition and complexities. Here are examples:

- Total enrollment in the 45 Great City School systems: 5,225,040.
- Percent of nation's public school students in the Great City Schools: 12.5%.
- Percent of Great City School enrollment which is African American: 42.1%.
- Percent of Great City School enrollment which is Hispanic American: 23.7%.
- Percent of Great City School enrollment which is eligible for a free or reduced price lunch: 56.4%.
- Total number of languages spoken by Great City School students: 110.
- Average pupil/teacher ratio in the Great City Schools: 19:1.
- Average teacher salary in the Great City Schools: $31,118.
- Average years of experience of Great City School teachers: 15.
- Percent of Great City School teachers who are African American, Hispanic American or Asian American: 31.6%.
- Average number of days on duty for Great City School teachers: 186.
- Total annual revenue of the Great City Schools: $25 billion.
- Percent of annual revenue from local sources: 41.5%.
- Percent of annual revenue from state sources: 50.3%.
- Percent of annual revenue from federal sources: 8.2%.
- Average current spending per pupil: $4,274.
- Total number of schools: 7,350.
- Percent of Great City School buildings over 50 years old: 33%.
- Estimated cost of maintenance backlog in Great City School buildings: $5 billion.
- Total number of annual Great City School graduates: 239,317.
- Median Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score of Great City School districts: 862.

* City-by-city statistics on each of these indicators are available through the Council of the Great City Schools.



Progress Toward Meeting Urban Education Goals

UNDERSTANDABLY, THE FIRST THING THE PUBLIC WANTS TO KNOW about any highly-touted reform effort is whether it works. Are test scores rising? Are dropout rates falling? Are tax dollars making a difference? Should we invest more? The Council believes that parents and the public should have some evidence to gauge whether urban schools are making progress and moving toward their goals. Toward this end, the Council has analyzed standardized test scores and other statistical yardsticks, reviewed local evaluations of special programs and practices, and scrutinized other indicators of progress in urban schools. The results of this assessment are analyzed below, with summaries of the major findings of progress, keyed to the six urban goals.

GOAL #1

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL INCREASE THEIR ACHIEVEMENT TO AT LEAST THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

The primary goal of the Great City Schools is to boost the achievement of their students to at least the national average, regardless of the starting point or the constraints. How to meet that challenge has sent city schools searching for strategies that have worked in the past and hold promise for attaining the urban goals by the year 2000. The hunt has yielded some promising programs. From *Philadelphia* to *Portland*, from *Miami* to *Anchorage*, the Great Cities are undertaking adventurous, rigorous, and sometimes costly projects to improve student performance system-wide. These projects include *Pittsburgh*'s program to improve students' critical thinking skills, *Minneapolis*' program to set achievement goals for different grade levels and measure student mastery, and *San Diego*'s program to evaluate and strengthen curricula throughout the district.

An analysis of statistical and other relevant indicators, as summarized below, shows that student achievement is improving steadily in most of the Great City public school systems. Although the increases have been modest in size, the urban goal of attaining national parity is within reach, provided that some extra help and support is forthcoming.

Indicator of Progress: District-wide scores on standardized achievement tests are rising.

All urban districts regularly administer system-wide standardized tests. Some use popular, nationally-available tests; others administer state-mandated competency tests or local benchmark tests. In an effort to detect trends in student achievement within and across individual districts, the Council has reviewed several years of standardized test results from its members.

Tables 1 and 2 display our findings, and the results are promising. There is a clear, general trend of rising scores in large-city districts over the past five years. Most of the Great City School districts can boast of gains in students' reading and math test scores at most grade levels.

A detailed analysis of the two tables reveals the breadth of progress in the Great City Schools. Of the 45 Great City districts, over two-thirds (31 districts) report increases in reading and math test scores since 1985 at the elementary level; just about half (22 districts) report increases at the secondary level. Another 13 districts report stable scores or mixed results at the elementary grades, and 22 districts report stable or mixed results at the secondary level. A significant number of districts have succeeded in boosting student achievement to the national norm or above. About half the districts (23 districts) equaled or exceeded national norms in the elementary grades in reading and math, and 16 districts equaled or exceeded norms at the secondary

level. Another 21 districts show elementary level scores on their respective tests that are either below the norm or have mixed results (i.e., some grades above norms, others below); and 28 districts show similar patterns at the secondary level. Six districts at the elementary level and 18 at the secondary showed test scores that were below the norm across the board. Most importantly, however, none of the districts showed elementary or secondary grade test scores declining.

Any general conclusion about 45 districts as diverse as the Great City Schools cannot capture the range of experiences school districts confront as they seek to boost student achievement.* In some cases, the rise in test scores is a recent trend. In others, the upward trend has been building over the past decade. Several cities have experienced wide swings in test scores, with rises and dips along a general upward line. Some districts show consistent improvements across all grade levels, while others show particularly strong gains in the elementary grades and less dramatic increases at the secondary level.

Accordingly, a word of caution is in order. However tempting it may be to compare one urban system's progress with another, such comparisons are unfair and not enlightening. Every district must contend with its own special set of factors that affect student achievement.

*It is technically impossible to report all city-wide test scores on a single chart. Tests were published and standardized several years ago and are administered at different times of the year, for varying purposes, and using dissimilar norms. Some tests are given in selected schools or to a sampling of students, others are given to all students. In addition, many cities differ on the metric they use to report scores; i.e., some use stanines, while others use percentiles, grade equivalents or gain scores. Also, some tests are referenced against a norm group, others against specific learning criteria.

TABLE 1

ELEMENTARY GRADE ACHIEVEMENT IN READING AND MATH

City	Direction of Scores*	Norm†	Grades	Standardized Test
Anchorage	Stable	Above	4,6,8	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Atlanta	Increase	At	1-8	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Baltimore	Increase	Mixed	1-8	California Achievement Tests
Baton Rouge[1]	Increase	At	K-8	Comprehensive Assessment Program Test (CAP)
Boston	Increase	Above	1-5	Metropolitan Achievement Test
Buffalo	Increase	Above	1-8	Stanford Achievement Test (M)
	Increase	At	1-8	California Test of Basic Skills (R)
Chicago	Increase	Below	1-8	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Cincinnati	Increase	Below	K-6	California Achievement Tests
Cleveland	Stable	Mixed	1-8	California Achievement Tests
Columbus	Stable	Mixed	2-5	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Dade County	Increase	Above	K-6	Stanford Achievement Test
Dallas	Increase	Above	2-6	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Dayton	Increase	Below	1-6	California Achievement Tests
Denver	Stable	Mixed	K-6	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Detroit	Stable	Mixed	K-8	California Achievement Tests
El Paso	Increase	Mixed	2-8	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Fresno	Increase	At	1-6	California Achievement Tests
Houston	Increase	Above	1-6	Metropolitan Achievement Test
Indianapolis	Increase	Mixed	K-6	California Achievement Tests
Jacksonville	Increase	Above	1-8	Stanford Achievement Test
Long Beach	Stable	Mixed	2,4	Metropolitan Achievement Test
Los Angeles	Increase	Below	1-8	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Memphis	Increase	Mixed	K-8	California Achievement Tests
Milwaukee	Increase	Below	2,5	Iowa Test of Basic Skills

City	Direction of Scores*	Norm†	Grades	Standardized Test
Minneapolis	Stable	At	2-8	California Achievement Tests
Nashville	Increase	Above	K-8	Stanford Achievement Test
New Orleans	Increase	Above	K-8	California Achievement Tests
New York City	Increase	Above	2	Metropolitan Achievement Test (R)
	Stable	Mixed	3-8	Degrees of Reading Power (R)
	Increase	Mixed	2-8	Metropolitan Achievement Test (M)
Norfolk	Increase	Mixed	2-5,7,8	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Oakland	Increase	Mixed	1-8	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Omaha	Stable	Above	K-6	California Achievement Tests
Philadelphia	Increase	Below	2-8	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Phoenix	NA	NA	NA	NA
Pittsburgh	Increase	Above	K-9	California Achievement Tests
Portland	Increase	Above	3-8	Portland Achievement Levels Test
Rochester	Increase	Above	K-6	California Achievement Tests
St. Louis[2]	Increase	Above	8	California Achievement Tests
St. Paul	Increase	Above	2-8	SRA Survey of Basic Skills
San Diego	Increase	Above	5,7	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
San Francisco	Increase	Mixed	K-8	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Seattle	Stable	Above	K-8	California Achievement Tests
Toledo	Stable	Mixed	1-8	Metropolitan Achievement Test
Tucson	Stable	At	2-8	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Tulsa	Stable	Above	1-6,8	SRA Survey of Basic Skills
Washington	Increase	At	3,6,8	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills

[1]East Baton Rouge Parish changed examinations in the 1988-89 school year, switching from the Comprehensive Assessment Program Test (CAP) to the state-mandated CAT. Chart shows information before CAT was instituted.

[2]St Louis changed examinations in the 1988-89 school year, switching from the California Achievement Tests to the Stanford Achievement Test.

R Reading; M Mathematics

Mixed: Some grades are above the norm, some are below; or some grades or subjects show increases but others do not.

*Direction of scores over approximately the last five years

†Position of average system scores relative to the test norm used by the district.

TABLE 2

SECONDARY GRADE ACHIEVEMENTIN READING AND MATH

City	Direction of Scores*	Norm†	Grades	Standardized Test
Anchorage	Stable	Above	11	Test of Achievement and Proficiency
Atlanta	Increase	Below	9-11	Test of Achievement and Proficiency
Baltimore	Increase	Above	9-11	California Achievement Tests
Baton Rouge[1]	Increase	At	9-10	Comprehensive Assessment Program Test (CAP)
Boston	Mixed	Mixed	6-12	Metropolitan Achievement Test
Buffalo	Increase	Below	9-12	New York State Regents Examination
Chicago	Increase	Below	9-12	Test of Achievement & Proficiency
Cincinnati	Increase	Below	7-11	California Achievement Tests
Cleveland	Stable	Mixed	9-12	California Achievement Tests
Columbus	Stable	Mixed	6-9	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Dade County	Increase	Mixed	7-11	Stanford Achievement Test
Dallas	Stable	Below	10	Test of Achievement and Proficiency
	Stable	Below	7-8	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Dayton	Increase	Below	7-11	California Achievement Tests
Denver	Stable	Mixed	9-12	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
Detroit	Stable	Below	9-12	California Achievement Tests
El Paso	Mixed	Mixed	9-12	Test of Achievement and Proficiency
Fresno	Stable	At	7-12	California Achievement Tests
Houston	Increase	At	7-9	Metropolitan Achievement Test
Indianapolis	Increase	Below	9-12	California Achievement Tests
Jacksonville	Increase	Above	9-12	Stanford Achievement Test
Long Beach	Stable	Mixed	7,9,11	Metropolitan Achievement Test
Los Angeles	Increase	Below	9-12	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Memphis	Increase	Below	9,12	Stanford Achievement Test
Milwaukee	Increase	Below	7,10	Iowa Test of Basic Skills

City	Direction of Scores*	Norm†	Grades	Standardized Test
Minneapolis	Stable	At	10	California Achievement Tests
Nashville	Increase	Above	9,12	Stanford Test of Academic Skills
New Orleans	Stable	Below	9-11	California Achievement Tests
New York City	Stable	Mixed	9-12	Degrees of Reading Power Test (R)
Norfolk	Stable	Above	11	Test of Achievement and Proficiency
Oakland	Mixed	Mixed	9-12	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Omaha	Increase	Above	8,10	California Achievement Tests
Philadelphia	Increase	Below	9-12	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Phoenix	—	Below	9-12	Test of Achievement and Proficiency
Pittsburgh	Increase	Below	9-12	California Achievement Tests
Portland	Increase	NA	9	Graduation Standards Test
Rochester	Stable	Above	8-12	California Achievement Tests
St. Louis[2]	Increase	Below	9-12	California Achievement Tests
St. Paul	Increase	At	10	SRA Survey of Basic Skills
San Diego	Mixed	Above	9,11	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
San Francisco	Increase	Mixed	9-11	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
Seattle	Stable	Above	9-11	California Achievement Tests
Toledo	Stable	Below	9,10	Metropolitan Achievement Test
Tucson	Stable	At	9-11	Test of Achievement and Proficiency
Tulsa	Stable	Above	9,11	SRA Survey of Basic Skills
Washington	Increase	Below	9-11	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills

[1]East Baton Rouge Parish changed examinations in the 1988-89 school year, switching from the Comprehensive Assessment Program Test (CAP) to the state-mandated CAT. Chart shows information before CAT was instituted.

[2]St.Louis changed examinations in the 1988-89 school year, switching from the California Achievement Tests to the Stanford Achievement Test.

R Reading; M Mathematics

Mixed: Some grades are above the norm, some are below; or some grades or subjects show increases but others do not.

*Direction of scores over approximately the last five years.

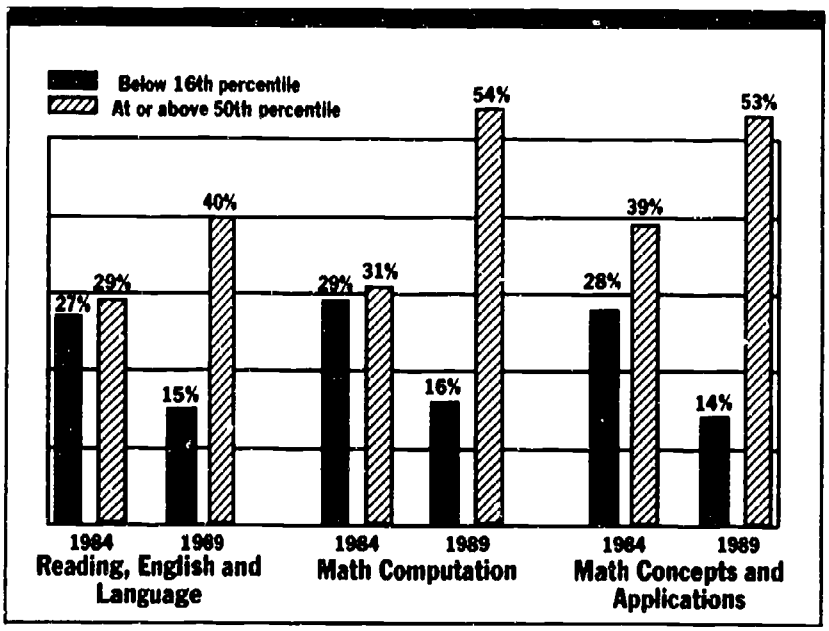
†Position of average system scores relative to the test norm used by the district.

The *Philadelphia* Public Schools offer a good case study of what is happening to the test scores of inner city students. Although the average scores in most urban districts remain below what the system considers desirable, they are showing rapid and steady improvement.

CASE STUDY:

PHILADELPHIA STUDENTS SHOW GAINS IN READING AND MATH

The Philadelphia School District has witnessed reductions in the number of students scoring in the very lowest group on its city-wide, nationally-normed test. Philadelphia's math gains stand out from the pack: in every grade but the fourth, fewer students are falling below the 16th national percentile rank, and more are scoring at or above the 50th national percentile rank. The chart shows the percentage of students scoring below the 16th percentile and above the 50th percentile on city-wide tests.



* Test given only in grades 3-8.

Chart reads: In 1984, 27% of students in grades 1-8 scored below the 16th percentile in reading while 29% scored at or above the 50th percentile; in 1989, 15% scored below the 16th percentile; while 40% scored at or above the 50th percentile.

Philadelphia is not alone in its improvements. Many cities' test results are equally encouraging:

• Students in every grade in *Jacksonville* have increased their reading and math scores on the Stanford Achievement Test from

below national norms in 1977 to above national norms in 1989.

• *San Francisco* students in grades 1 through 11 showed average one-year gains in 1988-89 of more than one year in reading, language and mathematics on the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills.

• *St. Paul's* testing program found that between 1985-86 and 1988-89, the percentage of students in grades 3-11 scoring above the national average on the SRA Survey of Basic Skills increased from 44% to 50%.

• In *San Diego*, half of the students scored above the 49th percentile in reading on the CTBS in the spring of 1982, while in the spring of 1988 half of the students scored above the 55th percentile. In addition, the number of students taking the College Board's Advanced Placement Test rose from 669 in 1981 to 1536 in 1988, while the percentage of students obtaining a satisfactory grade (i.e 3 or higher on a 5 point scale) remained stable at about 64%.

• The percentage of *Portland* students in grades 3-8 scoring above the national test publisher's reading norms increased from 66.9% in the spring of 1981 to 73.4% in the spring of 1988.

• The *Rochester* Public Schools have reduced the number of elementary schools in the lowest-performance category and increased the number of schools in the highest, according to the New York State Pupil Evaluation Program Tests (PEP). Between 1986 and 1988, the number of elementary schools in the highest performance category (those with 80% or more students scoring above the statewide reference point on all PEP tests) rose from 6 to 16; the number in the lowest category (those with fewer than 70% of students scoring above the statewide reference point) dropped from 18 to 7.

• The percentage of *Milwaukee* students scoring at or above

the national average on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills increased in both reading and math for all the grades tested (grades 2, 5, 7, and 10) between 1981-82 and 1986-87. Scores then dropped after changing norms but have remained stable since.

- Between 1988 and 1989, the average percentile for *Baton Rouge* students increased from 48 to 49 for ninth graders tested in reading and math on the California Achievement Tests, and from 44 to 54 for tenth graders.
- In 1986 two of twelve grades in *Boston* were performing at or above the national average on the Metropolitan Achievement Test; in 1989 nine of the twelve grades were performing at or above the national average on that test.
- In *Atlanta*, the composite scores for grades 1 through 11 on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills have risen. Between 1986 and 1988, the percentage of students scoring above national norms has increased from 36% to 50% in math.
- *El Paso* pupils in all grades except the ninth are obtaining higher scores on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Particularly impressive are the jumps in the percentage of students above the national median in grade 2 (from 46% to 57%); grade 3 (46% to 56%), grade 4 (38% to 49%); grade 5 (39% to 48%) and grade 7 (35% to 46%) between 1986 and 1989.
- *Detroit's* students showed impressive gains on the California Achievement Tests from 1980 to 1987. In addition, they made

major strides on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (M.E.A.P) test between 1980 and 1987. The percentage of fourth graders who met at least 75% of the M.E.A.P. objectives went from 45.5% to 71.0% in reading and from 53.7% to 85.3% in math. The percentage of seventh graders meeting the same standard went from 52.1% in reading to 69.5% and 30.4% in math to 62.1%. The percentage of tenth graders increased from 51.0% to 69.7% in reading and from 29.6% to 45.8% in math.

- In *Long Beach*, the 1988–89 California Assessment Program scores revealed that seniors gained an average of 12 points from the previous year, twice the state-wide average.
- The *Denver* Public Schools administer the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills. The latest available data showed that 11 of the tests' 13 composite grade scores went up between 1986 and 1988.
- In the *Nashville* Public Schools the percentage of children in grades 2–7 scoring in stanines 4–9 (average to high) on the Stanford Achievement Test rose from 78.6% in 1985 to 87.6% in 1988, putting the district well above the national average. The percentage of children in stanines 7–9 (high) rose from 20.9% to 27.9%.
- In *Washington, DC* scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills increased substantially in grades 3, 6, 8, 9 and 11 between 1987 and 1989. The percentage of students scoring at or above the national average in reading increased from 43 to 50 in grade 3, from 44 to 49 in grade 6, 32 to 37 in grade 8, 34 to 41 in grade 9, and from 31 to 37 in grade 11.
- *St. Louis* students in grades 8 through 12 are also showing impressive gains. On the Missouri "Basic Essential Skills Test (BEST)," the percentage of St. Louis students receiving passing scores went from 35% of eighth graders in 1982 to 79% in 1987, from 36% of ninth graders in 1982 to 80% in 1987, from 52% of tenth graders to 88%, from 57% of 11th graders to 86%, and from 79% of twelfth graders to 95%.
- In *Columbus*, from 1985 through 1989 the percentage of students in grades three through eight scoring in the lowest quartile was consistently below the expected 23% in total reading on the CTBS. The one exception was grade 6 in 1985. The average student in Columbus now scores above the 50th percentile on 8 of the 24 tests administered.
- *Memphis* students increased their scores on the California Achievement Tests between 1986–87 and 1988–89 in every elementary grade except for the seventh in reading and in all grades in math.
- In *Dayton*, the average normal curve equivalent scores in reading on the California Achievement Tests improved between 1979 and 1987 from below 50% to above 50% in all but three grades: 4, 10 and 11.

• In *Baltimore*, the fall reading scores on the California Achievement Tests have increased in all grades from 1 to 11 between 1982 and 1987.

• The number of students in *Phoenix* who received at least one failing grade dropped from 5,487 (34.8%) in 1985–86 to 4,606 (28.3%) in 1988–89.

• The percentage of *Cincinnati* students in grades 1–8 scoring above the national average on the California Achievement Test increased between 1981 and 1987 from 39.1% to 55.2% in reading and from 42.3% to 61.2% in math.

• The percentage of *Buffalo* pupils scoring above the state reference point on the New York State mandated achievement tests increased from 1982-83 to 1988-89 by an average of 29.9% in the elementary grades in reading and math.

• The percentage of *New Orleans* students in all grades scoring above the 50th percentile on the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills increased between 1985 and 1988 from 31.1% to 38.1% in reading and from 39.4% to 44.3% in math.

A consideration of Table 1 and Table 2 reveals a common problem: in some districts, secondary school students are not showing the gains of their elementary counterparts. While secondary school students in most large-city districts are doing better than they were five years ago, many are still not realizing their full potential. It is not uncommon for inner-city children to make strides in the elementary grades as a result of targeted programs, and then falter and lose their foothold by the time they reach high school. There is evidence that resource disparities between urban and suburban schools increase with grade level, and this may be a factor. In addition, it is a slow and frustrating process for inner-city school systems to maintain achievement gains at the secondary school level in the face of competing social pressures such as drugs, joblessness, pregnancy, and peer pressure. The fact that some districts are not producing gains among secondary students equal to those made by elementary students suggests that there is a need for more programs concentrating on the unique problems of secondary youth.

Finally, the use of standardized test scores in this report to demonstrate the achievement gains of urban youth does not overshadow our concern about how these measures can sort children unfairly, shape classroom teaching practices, and de-emphasize the need for developing critical thinking skills among our nation's students. How urban public school systems are held accountable will need to be broadened beyond standardized test scores if our children are to emerge from our schools truly educated and not simply coached and classified.

Indicator of Progress: Urban students' scores on nationally-administered tests are climbing faster than the national average.

The achievement of urban students on the Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT) and the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) provides further evidence of progress in urban education in recent years. The scores of urban students on these two familiar benchmarks are rising, and at a more rapid rate than the scores of other students. Of the forty Great City School systems which computed a system- vide SAT average in 1988, 17 or 42.5% were above the national average of 904 on combined math and reading scores. City school systems now range from a high of 1,221 to a low of 715, with a median of 862—just 4.6% below the national average.

Portland is a good example of the progress some urban districts have made in boosting the SAT scores of their college bound students.

CASE STUDY:

PORTLAND SAT SCORES RISE ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE

The Portland Public Schools' SAT scores have increased to the point where they are consistently above the national norms in reading and math. Between 1983 and 1989, Portland's average SAT verbal scores increased from 412 to 434 and its SAT math

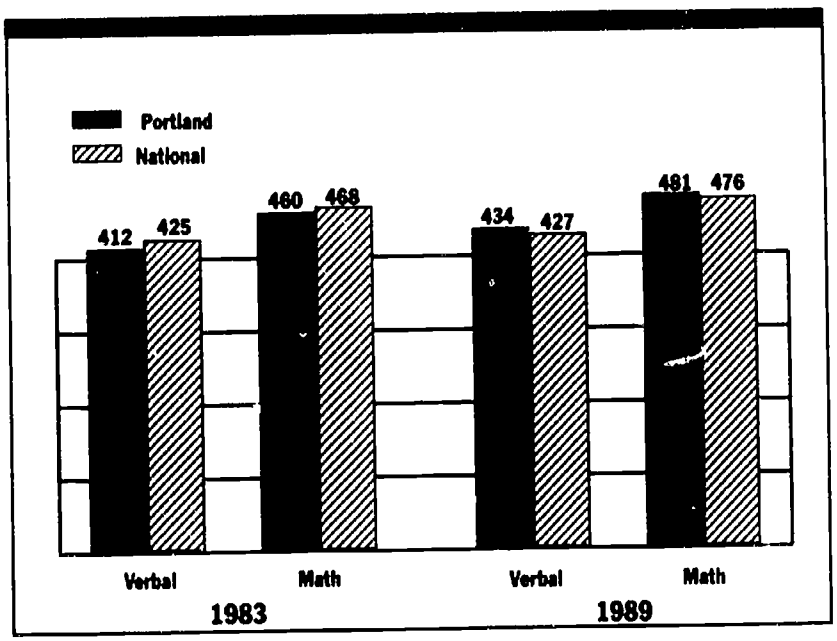


Chart reads: Verbal scores on Portland's SAT tests rose from 412 in 1983 (below the national average) to 434 in 1989 (above the national average).

scores rose from 460 to 484. By 1989, Portland students scored 7 points above the national verbal average and eight points above the national math average, while testing 52% of their graduates in contrast to the national average of 42%.

Other urban districts are showing gains on their SAT averages:

- *Indianapolis'* average SAT scores rose 25 points in verbal and 8 points in math between 1980 and 1987.
- The SAT scores of the *St. Louis* schools increased from 335 in verbal in 1980 to 362 in 1987, and from 380 to 402 in math over the same period.
- At the same time the *Dade County* (Miami) Public Schools were implementing programs for high-achieving students, the number of Dade students scoring above 550 on the SAT verbal section (or above 24 on the ACT) rose 8.7% between 1985-86 and 1986-87; the number scoring above 550 in math increased 10.5%. Between 1986-87 and 87-88, the number of students scoring 3 or better on the College Board's Advanced Placement Examinations went up 5.3%.
- The average SAT score in *Atlanta* increased from 691 in 1986 to 720 in 1988.
- Between school years 1981-82 and 1986-87, the average ACT scores for students in the *El Paso* School District increased from 17.5 to 20.9, above the national average of 18.8.
- The average SAT score in *Baltimore* increased from 736 in 1986 to 754 in 1988.
- *Jacksonville's* SAT scores have risen between 1977 and 1989 from 450 to 467 in math and from 410 to 420 in verbal.
- The number of *Fresno* students taking the SAT increased between 1982 and 1989 from 780 to 925. During the same period, average SAT verbal scores declined from 426 to 412, but math scores increased from 463 to 472.
- The number of students in *Cleveland* taking the ACT, the PSAT or the SAT rose from 2,952 in 1987-88 to 3,713 in 1988-89.

Many urban districts with rising SAT scores have high numbers and percentages of students who have scored historically below the national average. The city-by-city statistics above raise the possibility that the efforts of city systems may be driving a nationwide rise in the SAT scores of African American and Hispanic American students and keeping the overall national average from falling further. The 1989 SAT results show that while the national average on verbal scores has remained unchanged for ten years, the scores of African American students rose 21%, those of Puerto Rican American students rose 15%, and those of Mexican American students rose 11%.

In highlighting these statistics, the Council does not wish to overemphasize the importance of SAT scores. We are aware of their limitations, their possible biases, and their imperfect correlation with college performance. As a rule, SAT scores are not good indicators of achievement system-wide because so few students take the exams and the exams themselves were not constructed for that kind of aggregation. In cities where most students do not take SATs, these scores tell very little about overall student achievement. We have included SAT scores in our analysis because the SAT is a benchmark with which the public is familiar and is one of the few tests administered to students in every school district in the country. In conjunction with other indicators, the SAT trends contribute to a general portrait of urban improvement.

Another national barometer, the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), offers further evidence of progress among urban students, African American students and Hispanic American students as compared to other groups. NAEP examines national trends in student achievement in key subjects. Although NAEP's sample does not include data specifically on the 45 Great City School systems and although the urban systems do not, of course, enroll all African American and Hispanic American students, the assessments add to the evidence that urban schools are making headway in improving achievement relative to the nation at large (see Table 3).

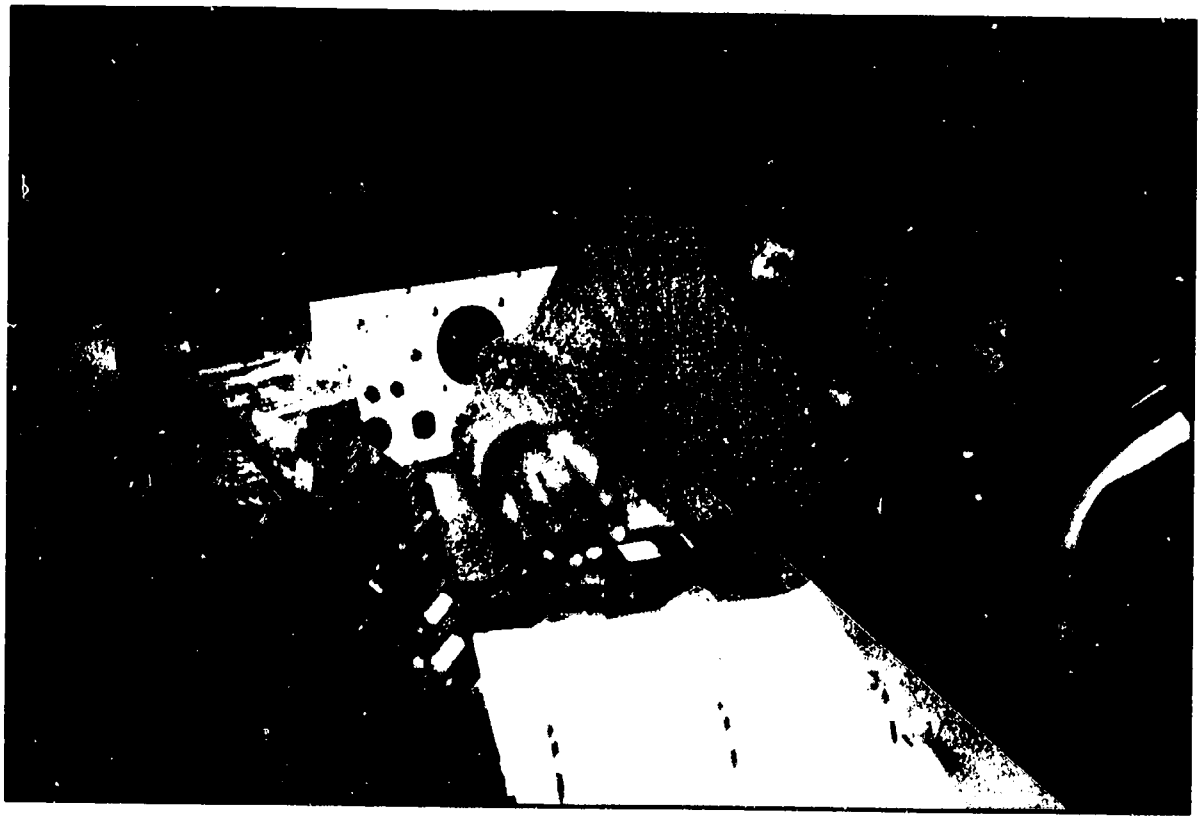
TABLE 3

INCREASES IN MEAN NAEP READING PROFICIENCY SCORES FOR DISADVANTAGED URBAN, BLACK AND HISPANIC STUDENTS

1970-71 TO 1988-89
(SCALE OF 0-500)

Student Group	Age 9	Age 13	Age 17
All students	+ 4.5 points	+ 2.3 points	+4.7 points
Disadvantaged urban **	+12.8	+ 4.9	+14.9
Black students	+18.5	+20.5	+35.8
Hispanic students*	+10.9	+ 7.6	+18.6

* The table shows trend from 1974-75 to 1988-89 for Hispanic students.
** Sample size was too small in the 1988-89 testing to yield stable standard error scores for urban population. Data should be interpreted with caution.



Between 1971 and 1989, the reading proficiency of disadvantaged urban, African American and Hispanic American students as measured by NAEP rose at a greater than average pace for all three age groups tested. Similar trends are seen among these students on NAEP math and writing assessments. From 1980 to 1988, the gap between disadvantaged urban students and the national norm closed by 28.0% among nine-year-olds and by 48.5% among seventeen-year-olds, while increasing among thirteen-year-olds by 11.5%. Wide gaps in achievement still remain between disadvantaged urban students and the rest of the nation. On the 1988 reading assessment, disadvantaged urban students scored 19.8 points below the national average among nine-year-olds, 18.5 points below among thirteen-year-olds and 15.1 points below among seventeen-year-olds. It should be stressed again, that these gaps are closing as the achievement of urban youngsters increases at a faster pace than that of other children.

The increases in SAT or NAEP scores for African American, Hispanic American and disadvantaged urban students raise a very important issue: namely, that urban districts cannot reach the goal of improved student achievement without taking into account the particular characteristics of the urban student population, including students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and students with special needs. The NAEP and SAT data suggest that this may be occurring, and more detailed evidence from local evaluations buttresses this hypothesis.

Indicator of Progress: Students with special needs, including disadvantaged, handicapped, limited-English-proficient, and gifted and talented students, are accomplishing more as a result of special programs.

Urban districts must be able to address the extreme needs that inner city children bring to the educational setting, including those arising from discrimination, poverty, homelessness, limited English proficiency, disability, and giftedness. It stands to reason that if the educational performance of these students improves, then city-wide average achievement will rise.

In most cities, urban educators have learned to tackle these needs by breaking them into smaller, more manageable components. This has often meant tailoring programs to the unique requirements and characteristics of each group of students, and sometimes to each individual student. The research to back this approach has been consistently strong over the years, although the debate on the narrowness of such categorized efforts continues. Evaluations, especially at the local level, show, for the most part, that this tailoring works, especially as educators gain experience and expertise with it, but that the need is running far ahead of resources being devoted to the programs.

Over several years, urban school systems have developed hundreds of special programs and approaches for meeting the diverse needs of these children. The Council's review of local program evaluations and other sources indicate that these programs, many of which are federally funded, are integral to urban school success and play a key role in the general achievement gains described above. A closer look at some of the statistical outcomes for particular groups of students corroborates this point.

Disadvantaged. One cannot discuss urban education without considering the prospects of disadvantaged students, who present unique challenges to our school systems. Many urban children come from homes characterized by extreme poverty, instability, family dysfunction, domestic violence, or substance abuse, and consequently do not receive the parental support or positive contacts with schools so crucial to learning. Some have no home or are uprooted frequently. All of these disadvantages exacerbate the problems that students may already be experiencing as a result of poverty and racial discrimination.

Urban schools have not mastered precisely how all these interlocking problems can be untangled and solved in an educational setting, but most are trying hard to do so. These efforts form the front line of city schools' attempts to lift the achievement of some of the most disadvantaged young people in the nation. While not all cities are showing success, some are

producing very promising results. One such example is the "Success for All" program in *Baltimore*, operated in conjunction with the Johns Hopkins' Center for the Disadvantaged.

CASE STUDY:

BALTIMORE BOOSTS SUCCESSES FOR DISADVANTAGED PUPILS

Baltimore's "Success for All" is a school-wide program funded under Chapter 1 for students in grades pre-kindergarten to three. The goal is to organize resources to ensure that every student will reach the third grade on time with adequate skills and that no student will be allowed to fall between the cracks. The program uses tutors, supplementary reading time, language development and readiness, regular assessments, family support and outreach, and outside facilitators and social workers. The chart shows mean reading scores for project students in comparison to control schools.

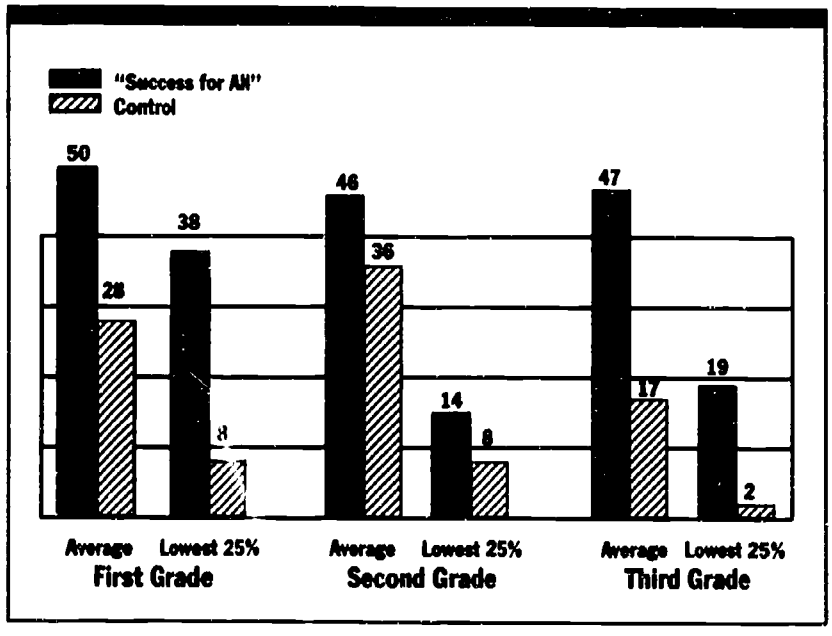


Chart reads: The average first grade student participating in the program scored at the 50th percentile compared to the 28th percentile for a control group of nonparticipating students. First grade students scoring in the lowest 25% on the pre-test scored at the 38th percentile on the post-test compared to the 8th percentile for nonparticipating students.

Similar programs with comparable results can be found in other cities:

- *Tucson's* Chapter 1 - funded "Reading Recovery" program provides first-grade students who have reading problems

with extra one-to-one, daily tutoring with emphasis on comprehension. Program evaluations show higher than expected gains for participating students."

• *Nashville's* transition program for low-achieving or developmentally-immature students in grades 1, 4, and 7 focuses on academic, social, emotional, and physical maturity skills. Since the program began in 1983-84, it has served 6,000 students. The district has strong objective evidence that the majority of these students have been helped by the program. For example, of the first, fourth and seventh graders in the transition program, 73.8% improved their scores in reading on the Stanford Achievement Tests during the course of a year.

• *Detroit's* Eastside and Westside Development Centers operate alternative sites for about 230 poorly-performing middle-school students in grades 6-8. Eastside and Westside students scored significantly higher on the Assessment of Basic Curriculum Skills Test than comparable non-transfer students and had significantly higher grade point averages, attendance rates and scores on school aptitude tests. The district is now grappling with ways to ensure these gains continue when students return to the regular school setting.

• *Anchorage's* Whole Child Project is designed to serve students K-12 at risk of failing because of unmet emotional and social needs, poor self-esteem, low identification with school, and poor coping skills. Over 90% of teachers and participating parents recommend the program's continuation.

• *Houston's* Chapter 1 Extended-School-Year Program provides supplemental remedial instruction in reading, language arts, and math in a 20 day summer session. The results for those students participating in the program for longer than fifteen days showed Metropolitan Achievement Test scores increasing in reading for 2nd, 4th and 5th grades, and language scores for 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades.

• *Memphis'* Chapter 1 reading evaluation for the 1987-88 school year shows that program students gained an average of 6 to 9.8 Normal Curve Equivalents (NCE's) in grades 2-6, and that the gains were higher than for non-program children in grades 2, 4, 5 and 6.

• *Baton Rouge's* Mathematics Improvement Project, aimed at four elementary schools with high percentages of disadvantaged youth, increased the math achievement of its 895 participating students by an average of 9.9 NCE's between 1988 and 1989.

• *Cincinnati's* Chapter 1 reading evaluation in 1987-88 shows that the average achievement gain that year was 5.7 NCE's.

Handicapped. Special education in cities and rural areas changed dramatically in the mid-1970s with the passage of the federal Education of All Handicapped Act, P.L. 94-142, and other related legislation. In response, urban schools devoted a great deal of attention to identification, diagnosis and placement of disabled students. As big cities began to progress on these activities, attention turned to issues related to pre- and post-placement, mainstreaming, and program content, as well as to inappropriate screening, lengthy waiting lists, and inadequate program evaluations.

Urban areas have roughly as many handicapped students per capita as other areas, but diagnosis and individual planning is more expensive, cases are often more severe, and services are more complicated because of the prevalence of poverty, limited-English proficiency, race, physical abuse, low birth-weights and drug addiction in the inner city.

Pittsburgh is one city whose schools are showing concrete results with a program called "Project Liaison" that trains handicapped students in vocational education.

CASE STUDY:

PITTSBURGH IMPROVES FUTURE FOR HANDICAPPED

Pittsburgh's "Project Liaison" works with approximately 800 educable/trainable mentally retarded, physically handicapped, learning disabled, and socially/emotionally disturbed students, 300 of whom are in approved vocational programs. The project is designed to help students choose and enter an appropriate vocational program, support them during training, and assist them in finding a job upon completion of the training. The project mainstreams handicapped students, rather than placing them in separate programs; however, the students are assisted by specially trained staff. A follow-up of 135 June 1988 graduates showed them engaged in the following activities:

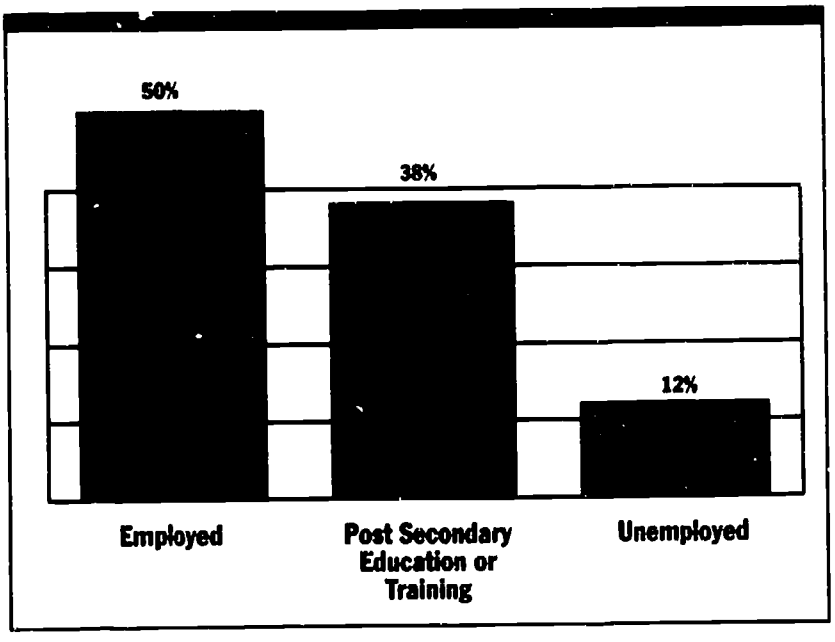


Chart Reads: Fifty percent of handicapped students previously enrolled in the program have a job, 38% are enrolled in postsecondary education or vocational training, and 12% are unemployed or not seeking work.

Examples of successful efforts in other cities include:

• *Philadelphia* runs a program to teach functional skills to severely and profoundly impaired students ages 4 through 21. The program focuses on daily living skills and emphasizes parental involvement, behavioral instruction, and clinical training for teachers. Evaluations show that the program is helping a high percentage of students improve their skills in personal maintenance, domestic maintenance, vocational areas, functional academics, and interpersonal communication.

• By enhancing psychological services, art therapy, speech therapy, case management, transition and employment services, *Dade County* has increased the number of students receiving special education diplomas from 110 to 130 in a two-year period.

Limited-English-Proficient. The nation's urban areas continue to draw immigrants and refugees from all over the world, creating both opportunities and challenges for our schools. Changing U.S. foreign policy and immigration laws are having a major effect on the numbers of limited English proficient students in urban schools. Recent projections show that while the overall school-aged population will rise by 16% by the year 2000, language minority school-aged children will increase by 40%. City schools will absorb the lion's share of these children, requiring major expansion of programs to accommodate them. Already, students in our city schools speak an estimated total of 110 languages, 85 in *Los Angeles* alone.

While the national debate continues over how best to serve these students, several of the Great City Schools are making substantial progress in spurring achievement.

The federally-supported bilingual education program in *El Paso* is an example of what can be accomplished with this growing population.

CASE STUDY:

EL PASO LEP STUDENTS EXCEED NATIONAL AVERAGES IN BASIC SKILLS

With well-trained teachers and small classes, El Paso's bilingual effort includes two programs: bilingual immersion and transitional bilingual education. Both programs use content area instruction in English and Spanish. A 1987 evaluation of the programs in grades 1-3, with data collected on over 2,500 students, showed that students in bilingual immersion scored at the national average in language on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. In addition, 81% of participants in both programs passed the Texas math competency exam by the end of the third grade, compared with 85% of all third-graders in the district. Seventy-four percent of the bilingual immersion students and 56% of the transitional program students had obtained the highest possible score on the English version of the Oral Language Dominance Measure by the end of the third grade, without losing their Spanish comprehension. In addition, 97% of the third graders obtained the highest possible score on the Spanish version of the test. The chart shows the percentage of students scoring the maximum score on the Oral Language Dominance test by the number of years in the program.

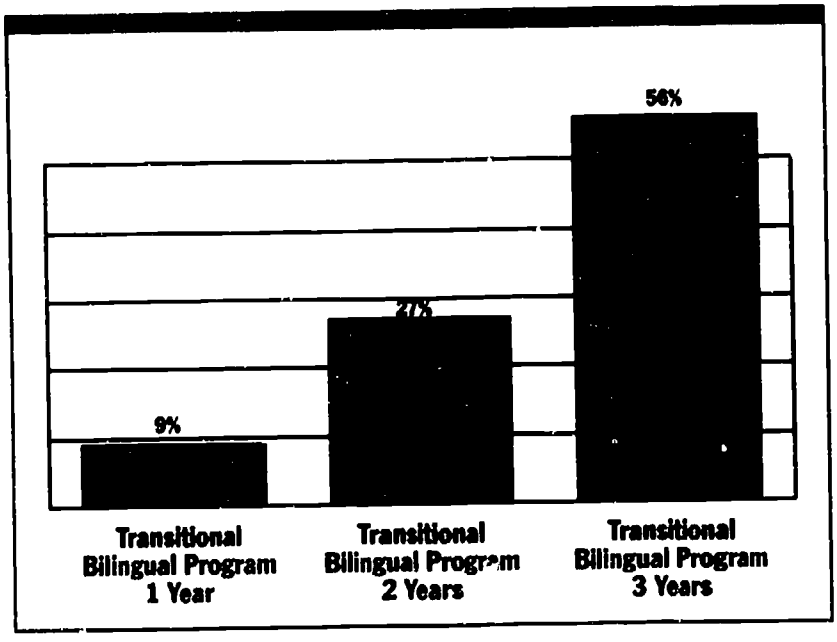


Chart reads: Nine percent of transitional bilingual students obtained the maximum English oral language proficiency score after one year in the program; twenty-seven percent obtained the maximum after two years; and fifty-six percent obtained this score after three years in the program.

Other cities are also raising the educational attainment of limited English proficient students:

• The percentage of *Dade County* students classified as limited-English-proficient for more than three years decreased in grades 3 through 12 between 1984-85 and 1986-87.

• Third-graders at the Oyster School in *Washington, D.C.*, now score at the sixth grade level in math and the fourth grade level in language on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, due to the school's two-way bilingual education program and its active parents' association.

Gifted and Talented. In striving to meet the urgent needs of urban poor, handicapped and limited-English-proficient children, city schools have not overlooked the needs of gifted and talented children. Urban schools enroll an impressive number of youngsters with special talents. Our graduates include leaders from every conceivable field: arts, science, politics, music, literature, business and civil rights.

The *New York City* schools alone produce more Westinghouse Science Scholars than California, Illinois and Virginia combined. Scholars, poets, scientists, actors and athletes of every variety emerge annually from our city schools and achieve national recognition in their fields. The challenge for urban schools is to uncover and nurture these gifts so that every child reaches his or her potential. One way of accomplishing this is to increase the number of youngsters enrolled in special programs for the

gifted, without compromising standards or jeopardizing racial balance. Programs to accomplish this are among the best in the nation at nurturing young talent while balancing excellence and equity concerns. Great City School districts such as *San Diego* are moving forward on similar programs.

CASE STUDY:
SAN DIEGO NURTURES GIFTED STUDENTS

The San Diego Public Schools have a Gifted and Talented Education(GATE) program to spur the achievement of students identified as gifted. The effort focuses on higher-order cognitive skills and curriculum development in language, literature, mathematics, science and social studies in grades K-12. GATE also has a component to encourage gifted deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Participants in this program have consistently outscored their hearing-impaired peers on achievement tests during the last four years. Noteworthy is the fact that the number of students participating in GATE in 1983 and 1988 have doubled—from 5,000 to 10,000—without changes in definitions or standards. And, the collective enrollment of African American, Hispanic American and other ethnic minority students in the program now equals its total enrollment in 1983.

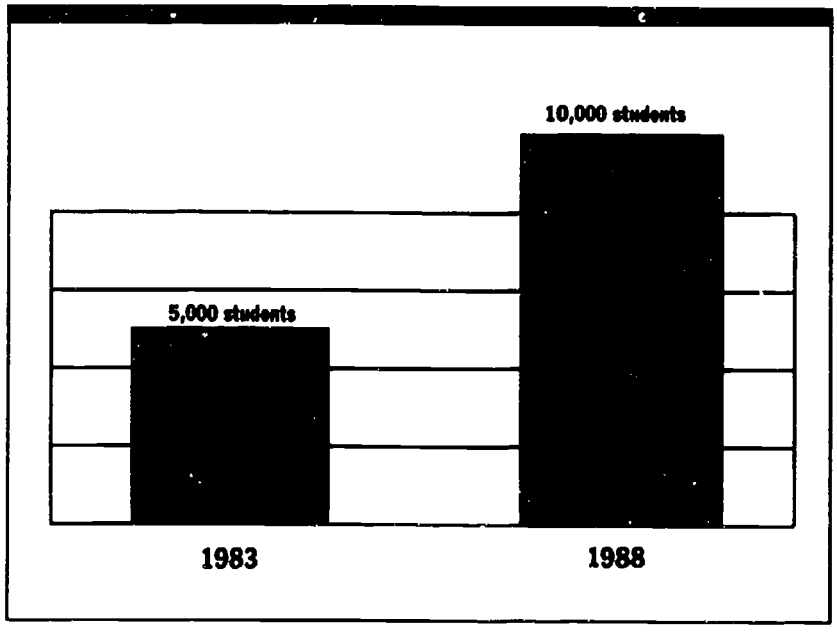


Chart reads: Between 1983 and 1988 the number of San Diego students in the gifted and talented education program doubled from 5,000 to 10,000.

Other urban gifted and talented programs are helping districts achieve educational goals:

• The number of National Merit Scholar Semifinalist in *Jacksonville* increased to 40 in 1988, nearly three times the num-

ber five years before the district initiated its Potential National Merit Scholars Program.

- Enrollment in *Nashville's* gifted and talented programs is up 11% in three years, from 1242 in 1987-88 to 1380 in 1989-90. To participate, a student must be certified as gifted and talented according to the state definition.
- The number of *Pittsburgh* students in grades K-12 identified as gifted increased from approximately 2000 in 1983 to over 3200 in 1989 while, at the same time systemwide enrollment declined.
- The number of African American and Hispanic American students participating in the *Dade County* gifted and talented program increased by 12% between 1985-86 and 1986-87.

Not all urban schools are showing exemplary performance in all areas, and the level of need remains inordinately high. More effort will be required for city schools to meet their goal for the year 2000 of attaining or surpassing the rising national average achievement levels. Urban school districts are approaching this goal through combinations of general, system-wide upgrading and specific programs for particular needs. While not all districts are attempting the same strategies, it is encouraging to realize that the programs are in place and seem to be paying dividends.

In addition to achievement, there are many other concrete signs that our inner city schools are rebounding, as seen from the discussion of the remaining goals.

GOAL #2

BY THE YEAR 2000, ALL URBAN CHILDREN WILL START SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.

Indicator of Progress: Urban early childhood and preschool education programs are laying the foundations for learning.

One of the primary strategies for improving urban schools is pre-school education. Early intervention is particularly important to the millions of young, inner-city children who suffer from inferior health and nutrition, inadequate day care and insufficient parental involvement. The case for such a strategy is compelling. Recent studies on the long-term effects of comprehensive preschool education and child development programs have highlighted the degree to which these programs provide disadvantaged children with benefits in excess of program costs— benefits such as higher educational attainment, lower dropout and incarceration rates, and higher motivation to achieve.

In light of these positive research findings, it is particularly distressing to realize that because of funding limitations,

millions of children remain unserved by early childhood and preschool programs. A 1987 survey by the Council and the High Scope Foundation found that urban schools served only 23% of preschoolers in need, and that existing preschool programs served 70% of participants for three hours per day or less.

Most urban school districts implement preschool education programs and services, although funding shortfalls limit their size or scope. Comprehensive longitudinal evaluations of individual district programs are still rare, but the evidence that does exist indicates that early intervention programs hold a great deal of promise.

The *Detroit* Public Schools, for example, use a portion of their federal Chapter 1 funds to operate preschool programs for disadvantaged four-year-olds. The results of a recent longitudinal study of the effort are impressive.

CASE STUDY:

DETROIT ENRICHES OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Detroit's Chapter 1 preschool program has been in operation for many years, but a 1987 longitudinal study of pupils from the 1973-74 school year showed just how dramatic and successful the effort has been. Two groups of students from that year's preschool program were followed *ex post facto* through high school (1986 - 87) and compared to a similar group who had not participated in the preschool program.

Thirteen years later, the experimental group outperformed the control group on all variables measured. The chart below shows the results.

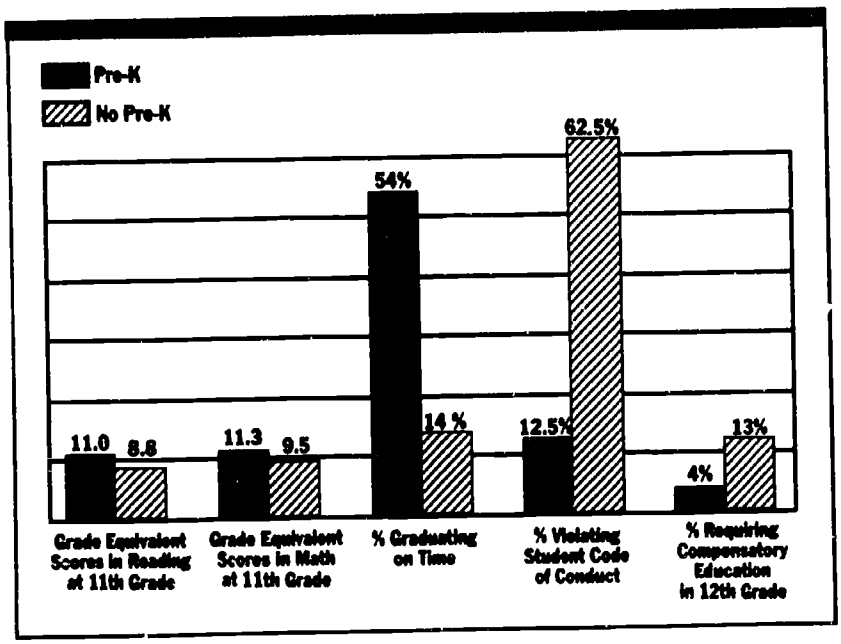


Chart reads: Fifty-four percent of the students who had participated in Detroit's pre-kindergarten program graduated from high school on time, compared with 14% of those who had not participated in pre-kindergarten.

Other examples of gains in city school systems using early childhood education programs include:

- Former pre-school students in *Jacksonville* were found in a recent follow-up study to have higher reading and math scores on the Stanford Achievement Test and lower retention, misconduct, dropout, special education and compensatory education placement rates than comparable students without a preschool experience.
- A spring 1989 evaluation of *Tulsa's* preschool programs examined the achievement of fifth graders who had been in a pre-K program. The evaluation found that 21% of the fifth graders who had scored below norms on school readiness tests before entering Pre-K education were scoring above average in reading on the fifth grade SRA tests, and 34% were scoring above average in math.
- An evaluation of *Memphis'* Chapter 1 Homebased Early Childhood Program showed that 87% of three year-old participants made a 25% or greater gain on the Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development over the course of a year, and 82% of four-year olds made similar gains. A comparison of scores received in kindergarten showed that project children outperformed a matched group of non-project children on 73% of the areas tested.

• A longitudinal study of participants in several of *Philadelphia's* pre-school programs found that by the third grade, 80% equaled or exceeded national math norms and 67% equaled or exceeded national reading norms—in comparison to only 40% for nonparticipating youngsters.

• An evaluation of *Atlanta's* pre-school program showed that children in school-based day care scored significantly higher on subsequent achievement tests than those with little or no day care and somewhat higher than those in community-based care.

• Data from *Cincinnati's* kindergarten program shows that the program was able to reduce subsequent participation in Chapter 1 by moving from a half-day program to a full day program.

GOAL #3

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOLS WILL INCREASE THEIR GRADUATION RATES SO THEY ARE COMPARABLE TO THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

Indicator of Progress: Dropout rates in some Great City School districts are down.

Urban school districts face a prolonged and sometimes frustrating battle to keep their students in school. A report of the National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States:1988*, shows that central cities continue to have higher dropout and lower retention rates than suburban or non-metropolitan areas. Dropout rates continue to be higher among African American, Hispanic American and Native American youth than among white students. Encouraging signs have emerged, however, in the form of national data indicating a decline in dropout rates over the last ten years, slowly among whites but dramatically among African American students. In fact, the difference between dropout rates for whites and African Americans has closed from 13% to 2% in ten years. No comparable decline exists among Hispanic American children.

Nearly every Great City district has mounted some sort of dropout prevention and re-entry program, and these programs in all likelihood have helped bring down the national dropout rate for African American students. Not all cities are showing progress, but some are making encouraging inroads toward solving a severe problem. *Norfolk's* results are one such hopeful sign.

CASE STUDY:

NORFOLK KEEPS MORE YOUTH IN SCHOOL

Norfolk's "Holding Power" Plan, initiated in the 1981-82 school year, operates in the system's five high schools and eight middle schools to encourage students who have dropped out of school to re-enter and to retain those who remain. The effort involves full-time staff, city-wide public service announcements, sports celebrity visits to schools, individual tutoring and counseling, and an extensive summer retrieval effort with home visits to bring students back to school. The chart below shows the changes in the annual dropout rate for Grades 8-12 in the Norfolk Public Schools

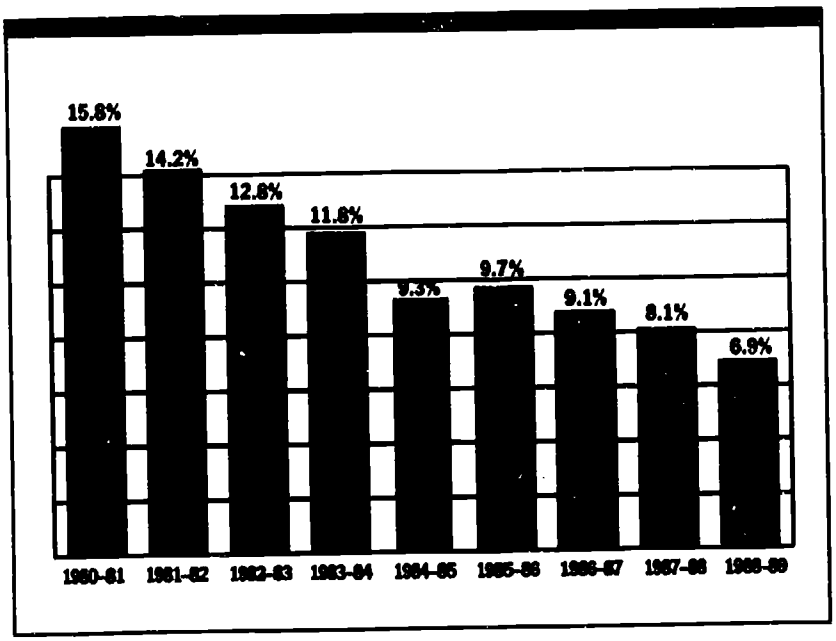


Chart reads: The annual dropout rate of 8-12 graders in the Norfolk Public Schools declined from 15.8% in 1980-81 to 6.9% in 1988-89.

Other cities are showing similar results:

- *Dallas'* Pupil Assistance Support System(P.A.S.S.) works to identify and help potential dropouts, and is being attributed in part with keeping the system's "known" annual dropout rate at 4.8% or below for the past three years.
- The annual dropout rate for grades 9-12 in *Phoenix* dropped from 19.8% in 1984-85 to 16.9% in 1985-86, 18.2% in 1986-87, 17.6% in 1987-88, to 14.4% in 1988-89.
- *Rochester's* four year dropout rate declined 15.9% between 1983 and 1987.
- The annual dropout rate for grades 9-12 in the *Boston* Schools has decreased from 17.2% in 1984-85, to 14.8% in 1985-86, to 13.9% in 1986-87, and then to 13.4% in 1987-88.

• *Jacksonville's* four-year high school completion rate increased from 57.4% in 1980-81 to 66.5% in 1988-89.

• *Portland's* system-wide annual dropout rate fell from 9.0% in 1980-81 to 8.2% in 1987-88. The dropout rate for African American students declined from 12.1% to 8.3% and is now about the same as or lower than those of most other racial and ethnic groups.

• Through community services and counseling, *Toledo's* Circle of Support program works to return dropouts to school and keep potential dropouts in school. Over the past two years, the program served 67 students; of these 29 graduated from high school, 19 remained in school, and 19 left the program.

• *Buffalo's* annual dropout rate improved from 7.4% in 1983 to 5.4% in 1989, a 27% improvement. Over the same period, the system's high school graduation rate climbed from 84.9% to 91.5%.

GOAL #4

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOL GRADUATES WILL BE ADEQUATELY PREPARED TO ENTER HIGHER EDUCATION, PURSUE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES, AND EXERCISE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AS CITIZENS.

Indicator of Progress: Great City schools are undertaking programs that are encouraging more students to enter higher education and better preparing students for careers.

Key to the nation's future productivity is the ability of urban schools to move students into higher education, training and employment, but trends appear to be moving in the wrong direction. The annual average youth unemployment rate remains almost twice as high for African Americans aged 16-19 residing in cities than for whites. The percentage of African American youth age 18-24 enrolled in higher education dropped from 22.6% in 1976 to 19.7% in 1985. Contributing to these trends are the rising costs of postsecondary education and the federal government's increasing use of loans instead of grants to aid students financially. These trends have had the most adverse effects on inner-city black youth, who are graduating in rising numbers but who have greater difficulty pursuing a college education.

Urban schools are trying a number of strategies to increase the numbers and percentages of their graduates entering postsecondary education and training.

CASE STUDY:

OMAHA STUDENTS PURSUE COLLEGE AND TRAINING

For several years the Omaha Schools have actively encouraged its graduates to pursue postsecondary education or technical training. The chart below shows the percentage of Omaha Public Schools graduates pursuing further education in post-secondary institutions.

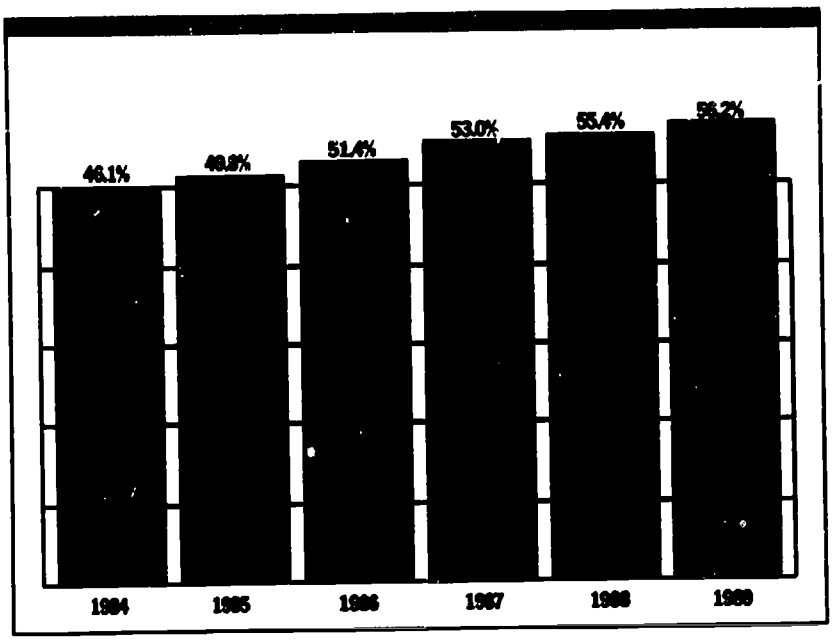


Chart reads: In 1984, 46.1% of Omaha's graduates went on to postsecondary education or training institutions; in 1989, 56.2% did.

Other examples of successful postsecondary education and job preparation programs include the following:

- The percentage of graduates from the *Philadelphia* schools pursuing postsecondary education and training increased from 53.9% in 1985 to 55.0% in 1987.
- In 1986, 63% of *Atlanta's* graduates went to postsecondary education institutions; in 1989, 68% did.
- Offered at 21 junior and 22 senior high schools, *Los Angeles'* MED-COR Program encourages minority secondary school students to pursue health careers. Services include academic enrichment courses, summer work study, family outreach, counseling and college application assistance. A recent evaluation of the program showed college attendance rates among some participants were twice that of similar graduates who were not in the program.
- *Baltimore's* Early College Intervention Program in five middle schools provides enrichment activities, college trips and group meetings with partner colleges to assist students in con-

sidering their options, particularly college education. All participants have chosen academic courses and were promoted to the next grade. Most increased in grade point average and test scores.

• Evaluations of *San Diego's* Summer Training and Education Program (STEP), which provided summer youth employment, training and counseling during the summers of 1985 and 1986, found that participants lost less ground in reading during the summer, gained in math achievement, had better school attitudes, displayed more familiarity with the world of work, and were less sexually active than a control group.

• *Memphis'* Partners Program has steadily increased the summer placement rate for jobs for its students, so that the rate is now at about 97%. The program operates in 33 city schools serving about 300 11th and 12th grade students.

GOAL #5

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOLS WILL BE ADEQUATELY STAFFED WITH QUALIFIED TEACHERS WHO ARE CULTURALLY AND RACIALLY SENSITIVE AND WHO REFLECT THE RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THEIR STUDENTS.

Indicator of Progress: Great City Schools are mounting a number of creative approaches for building and attracting a quality teaching force.

A thorough discussion of the characteristics, needs, and progress of teachers and administrators in urban schools is contained in the Council's 1988 report, *Teaching and Leading in the Great City Schools.* This report described almost 200 special programs and strategies that large urban districts were undertaking to attract, retain, and enhance the skills of teachers and leaders and serves as a good summary of what has been done already and what must be done in the future to achieve this fifth urban goal. Although some of the goals, such as eliminating urban teacher shortages and improving the racial diversity of the teaching force will be difficult to achieve, the report shows that progress is being made in several districts. Some highlights include:

• *Baltimore's* R.E.C.I.T.E. program, aimed at recruiting and retaining minority teachers, has helped the city schools retain 85% of its minority recruits.

• *Rochester* has instituted a new twelve-step salary scale that brings teachers' pay more in line with that of other professionals; in return, teachers must comply with new accountability standards.

• *The New York City Public Schools* have helped 3500 paraprofessionals become regular teachers over a ten-year period by paying for courses toward a degree and certification in education.

• *Pittsburgh's* three teacher centers have received national acclaim for their innovative approach that grants teachers leave from regular duties to participate in a five-week staff development program in a real school setting.

GOAL #6

BY THE YEAR 2000, URBAN SCHOOLS WILL BE FREE OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL, STUDENTS WILL BE WELL-NOURISHED AND HEALTHY, AND SCHOOLS WILL BE WELL-MAINTAINED AND SAFE.

Indicator of Progress: Urban school districts are undertaking programs to reduce substance abuse in inner-city schools.

Drug and alcohol abuse is one of the most pernicious problems that inner city school districts face. Because so many of the factors affecting substance abuse of students—supply and availability of drugs or family attitudes and role models, for example—lie beyond the control of the schools, the problems seem to elude school-based solutions. Nevertheless, all the Great City districts have mounted some type of school-based substance abuse education and prevention effort.

CASE STUDY:

PHILADELPHIA STUDENTS LEARN TO AVOID DRUGS

The Philadelphia Public Schools have implemented a state-approved drug and alcohol abuse prevention curriculum for students in grades K-6. The purpose of the effort is to provide high-risk children with the skills necessary to avoid drug use; and focuses on social skills, information, and bonding with prosocial peers and institutions. Such values and behaviors as self-worth, decision-making, self-control, "refusal skills" and problem solving are emphasized. A portion of the effort is supported with funds from Philadelphia's Corporate Alliance for Drug Education(CADE) which coordinated an independent evaluation of the program. The results of a pre-post control group assessment showed that the program improved students' self-esteem, their abilities to refuse negative activities, and knowledge of the negative effects of drugs, while decreasing use of tobacco as a gateway drug in grades 1-3. Trends in other drug use were positive but not statistically significant.

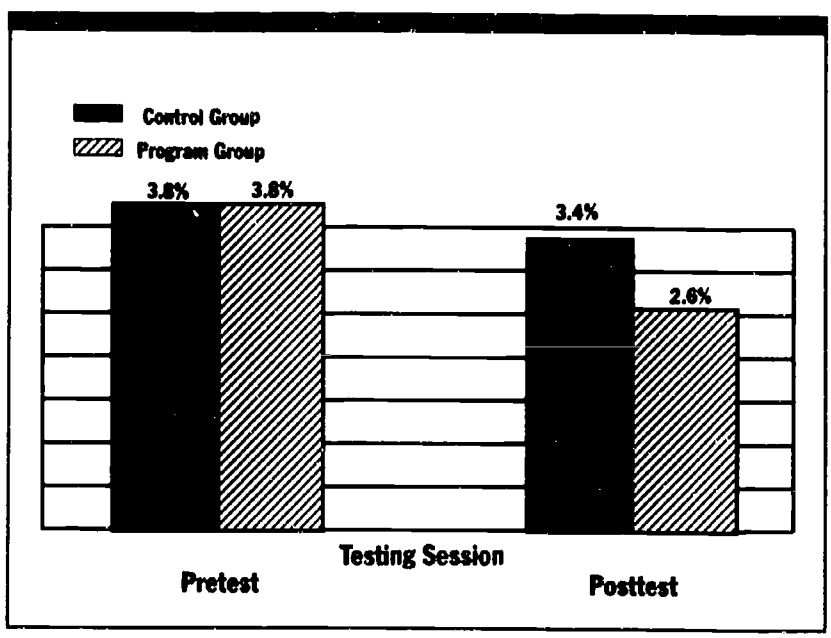


Chart reads: In a post-test, 2.6% of program participants reported using chewing tobacco compared to 3.4% of a control group.

Other notably successful programs include:

• The TRIBES program in the *Columbus Public Schools* begins in the elementary grades by improving self-image, building peer support groups, and instilling in students a sense of responsibility for their own behavior. Evaluations show that the program has improved academic achievement as well as self-confidence, responsibility, peer relations, motivation, and decision-making.

• *New Orleans'* Mendez Foundation Substance Abuse Prevention Program provides a comprehensive curriculum for sixth and ninth graders, as well as teacher and parent training. The program has helped students improve their values and decision-making ability about substance abuse.

• *Omaha* has two programs to combat substance abuse: a Student Assistance Program, run in cooperation with outside treatment agencies, to identify and intervene with students who are abusing drugs and alcohol; and the Parent Peer Prevention Power Club, an in-school prevention curriculum and parent involvement program.

• *Dade County's* W.R. Thomas Middle School, located in an area once termed "Cocaine Alley," made a remarkable recovery through its Project Trust, virtually eliminating drug use in the school without resorting to a single expulsion.

• *Los Angeles'* Project D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) has become a national model for law enforcement cooperation and involvement in the schools. The program now involves the majority of the district's elementary schools and has contributed significantly to improving students' drug resistance attitudes.

Indicator of Progress: Urban youth are receiving better health care.

Inner-city young people suffer from a wide variety of health problems, including some that seriously impede or threaten the educational process. Many urban youngsters have no direct access to a doctor, nurse, dentist or health service worker who can provide the simplest of diagnosis, treatment or advice. This lack of access to health care contributes to problems ranging from basic malnutrition to low-birth weight, from learning disabilities to drugs. The cycle of health problems is perpetuated when school-age parents fail to receive comprehensive health care.

While it is by no means the primary mission of the schools, health care has long been recognized as an adjunct to education. Some city schools have taken major steps to combat health problems in their communities, sometimes amid serious controversy, through strategies that include treatment, education and prevention. The cities are making progress in reducing teen pregnancy, low-birth weights, and developmental delays.

CASE STUDY:

ST. PAUL ENHANCES THE HEALTH OF ITS STUDENTS

The St. Paul School District has operated school-based health centers in its high schools since 1973. The effort, now independently managed by HEALTHSTART, a non-profit health corporation, served 2,740 students in 1988-89 with a total of 12,597 visits by students. Students are seen for school and athletic physical examinations, immunizations, nutritional concerns, family planning and prenatal care.

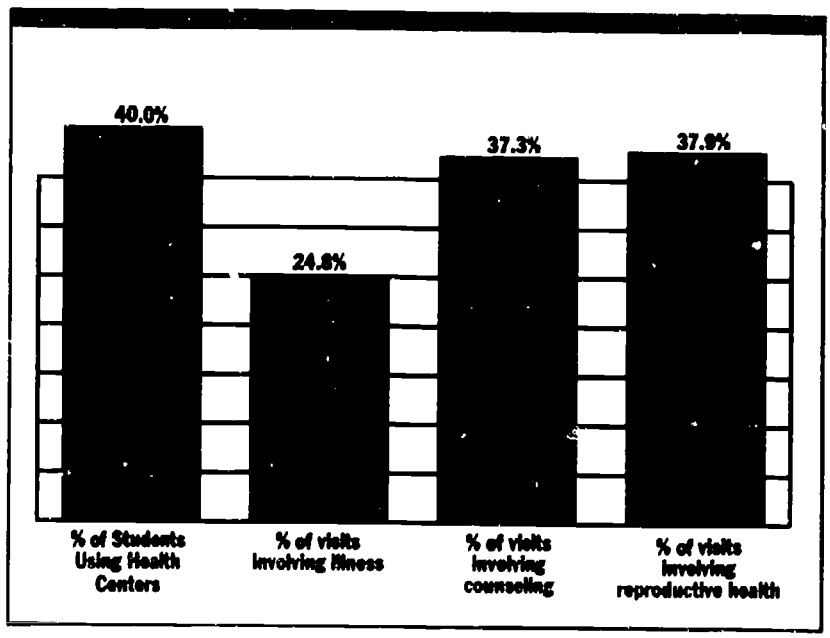


Chart reads: In 1988-89, 40.0% of the students in schools with health centers used the services provided by them; 24.8% of the visits involved illness, 37.3% involved counseling, and 37.9% were for reproductive health.

Other efforts to provide more and better health care to urban students include:

- Data from *Memphis'* school for parenting teens indicate that the health care program has reduced the number of low-weight births to less than 9%.
- *Oakland's* Teen Parent Assistance Program/School Age Parent Partnership Program showed that it improved the rate of G.E.D. completions of the programs' participants by 16% and the graduation rate by 22%, increased entry level job skills by 32% and the number of participants in unsubsidized jobs by 19%, boosted the number of students enrolling in college by 18%, and decreased the rate of second births by 6.5%
- Data on *Minneapolis'* health programs indicate that while the rate of teenage pregnancy may still be increasing, the percent of pregnant teens who remain in school is also increasing.

• *Chicago's* AIDS education program is geared specifically toward improving the awareness of this disease among urban minority youth through video tapes, special curricula and community involvement.

• *San Francisco's* AIDS education program works to prevent the spread of this disease by incorporating information into the core curriculum, involving parents and teachers, and specifically targeting various racial and language groups.

Indicator of Progress:
Urban school districts are repairing and renovating aging facilities.

Progress in improving education at the individual school level is not all instructional and programmatic. Many urban school systems are at the first stage of addressing their long-overdue building needs by constructing new schools to meet population shifts and growth, but the backlog in repairing and renovating c rrent structures remains staggering. The estimated cumulative cost of deferred building maintenance in the Great City Schools is over $5.0 billion. Approximately 70% of the 7,350 school buildings in urban districts are over 25 years old, and about one-third are over 50 years old. Districts have spent millions of dollars bringing old buildings into compliance with new requirements related to asbestos, radon and lead abatement; life, safety and fire protection; electrical wiring capacity; access for the handicapped; specialized programs for vocational training; new instructional approaches calling for smaller teaching settings; fuel storage and trash removal; food handling and transportation; temperature, ventilation and air conditioning; and lighting and noise levels. Meeting these demands has overshadowed day-to-day maintenance and repair needs.

CASE STUDY:
NEW YORK SCHOOLS BUILD THE FUTURE

The New York City School Construction Authority was approved by the state legislature in 1988 through the advocacy of Chancellor Richard Green, and was designed to centralize and speed capital expenditure projects for the city schools. Half of the 1000 public school buildings in New York City are over 50 years old, and most are in a state of disrepair. The maintenance backlog exceeds $500 million and the number of repair requests could jump from 33,000 to 158,000 by 1994 without funding increases. The Authority will implement the system's five year $4.3 billion capital improvement plan, if adequate funds are available. The chart on page 52 shows how those funds could reduce the maintenance backlog.

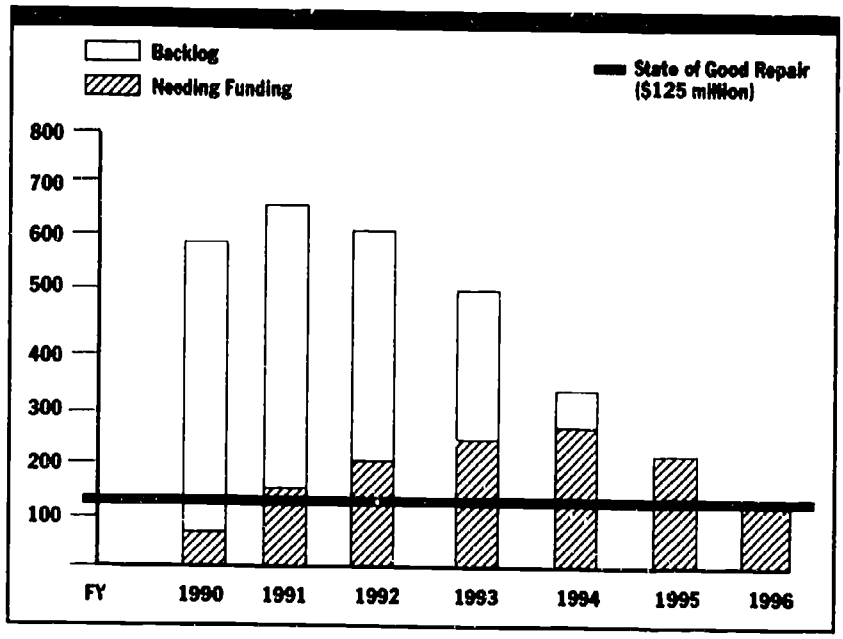


Chart reads: With full funding for its five-year maintenance plan, New York City Schools maintenance backlog could drop from over $500 million to zero by 1995.

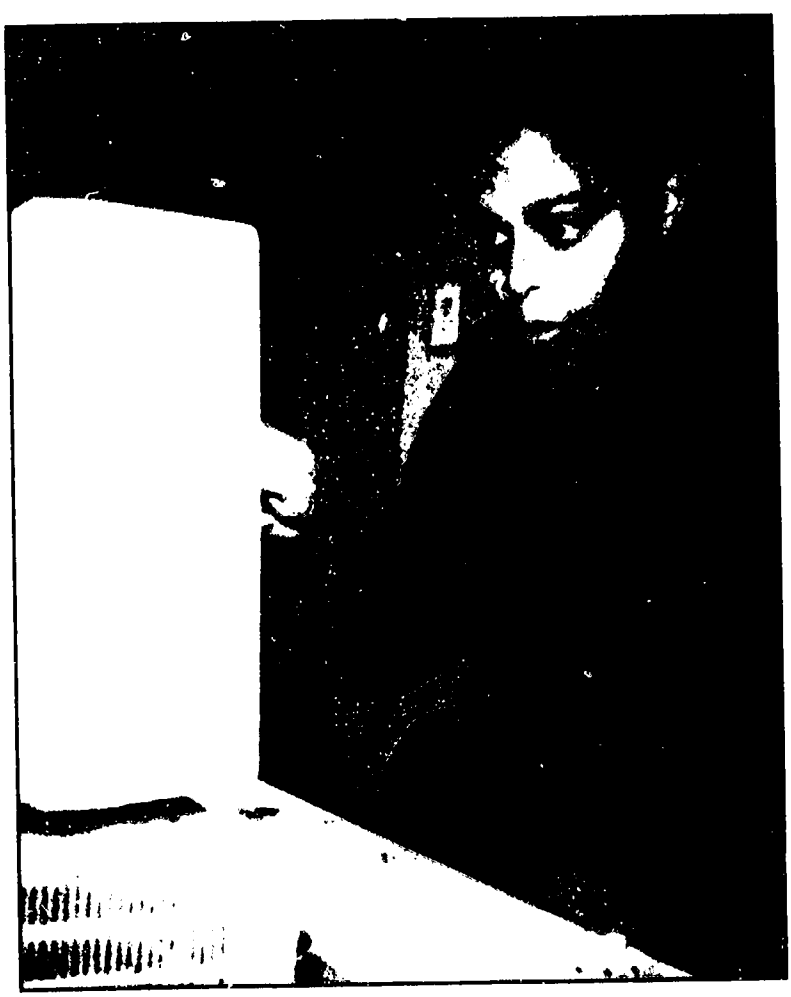
Pent up demand and growing public confidence in many of our urban schools, however, has permitted several cities to garner the resources they need through bond issues or special allocations. Here are examples:

- The *Dade County* voters approved a $900 million bond, the largest school bond in history, to construct 23 new schools to address the Dade County system's burgeoning enrollment of refugee children.
- *Omaha's* recently-passed bond issue will allow the school system to renovate and update three of its high schools.
- Five new state-of-the-art science buildings are now being designed for the *Long Beach* Public Schools at a total cost of $40 million.
- As of June 1990, *St. Louis* has completed renovation of 18 existing buildings; by June 1992, the district plans to complete renovations to an additional 90 buildings, along with the construction of 43 new gyms, 8 classroom additions and three new school buildings. This work is progressing in compliance with a U.S. District Court Order relating to magnet and regular school programs. Court-ordered renovations of $103 million will be shared equally by the state and the district. The district has sold $50 million in revenue bonds, and in April, 1990, voters approved the issuance of another $100 million in school bonds.
- A $64 million bond issue passed in *Seattle* in 1984 is bearing fruit. The first phase of that district's capital improve-

ment program was completed last year, providing six new schools and two schools which received partial renovation and major additions. Construction on two new schools is scheduled to begin in the summer of 1990, with partial renovation and major additions set for two others.

- *Columbus* voters approved a $92 million bond issue in November, 1988, to fund school renovation, asbestos removal and energy conservation.
- Voters in *Jacksonville* approved a $199 million bond issue, allowing the system to launch a new $314 million construction and renovation program.

According to the many yardsticks, urban schools are rising to the challenge of the year 2000, slowly but steadily. There is cause for a new enthusiasm among urban educators that they have turned the corner on their problems and have their goals within reach. Not all cities, of course, are showing progress on all fronts nor with all children. Many have been unable to implement preschool education programs on a broad scale; some are failing to show demonstrable progress with disadvantaged or limited-English-proficient youth; some have dropout rates that remain unacceptably high; some have waiting lists for handicapped children that are too long; and some view health problems and job training as outside their purview. Many others do not have the resources or the political backing to undertake restructuring or other building level improvements. Although much remains to be done before the year 2000, the indicators above show that progress has been made and, with sufficient financial and public support, can continue apace. But urban schools will need the help and commitment of many others to go the remaining distance in time.



The next section discusses some of the reasons for the progress the Great City schools.

PART 2

Reasons Why Urban Schools Are Making Progress

THE PROGRESS THAT URBAN SCHOOLS ARE MAKING IN REACHing their goals for the year 2000 is a result of two primary factors: expertise and increased financial resources. Both factors are interrelated and essential.

EXPERTISE

Urban districts have learned that goals cannot be met with a single strategy and that several approaches are required. While categorical programs continue to be a proven, valuable way for meeting student needs, most urban districts are using special programs in conjunction with other, newer strategies that recognize the relationship among different urban challenges, that cut across categories of student needs, and that attempt to change schools, districts, and communities by treating them as a whole. These include management and organizational changes, magnet schools, community and business partnerships, and effective schools programs. Many of these efforts are newer, less tested and more controversial than categorical programs, but they are among the significant reasons for the progress cited. These new strategies have been accompanied by such non-quantifiable factors as more enlightened and sensitive attitudes, better teachers with greater commitment, more vigorous leadership, and renewed public support.

Urban districts, in fact, have been on the leading edge of locally-developed school reform. Examples abound in most of the Great Cities. Much media attention had been devoted to schools that have "turned around," as if this feat could be accomplished by magic or by a single individual. Certainly a dynamic principal or a new teacher-training technique can do a lot for a school. But it takes more than one person, and it takes more than a plan on a piece of paper to revitalize buildings in racially and economically-

isolated neighborhoods; renew schools on the edge of open-air drug markets; and rebuild buildings crumbling with age.

In *Philadelphia*, turning around a school building meant instituting a "House Plan" that encouraged creativity in building design, instructional delivery and staff reorganization in middle schools. In *Tulsa*, it meant enlisting parents and community people in a participatory management process. In *Pittsburgh*, it meant designating an inner-city high school as a flagship training center for teachers throughout the district.

Below are some of the approaches that are fueling the progress in urban education.

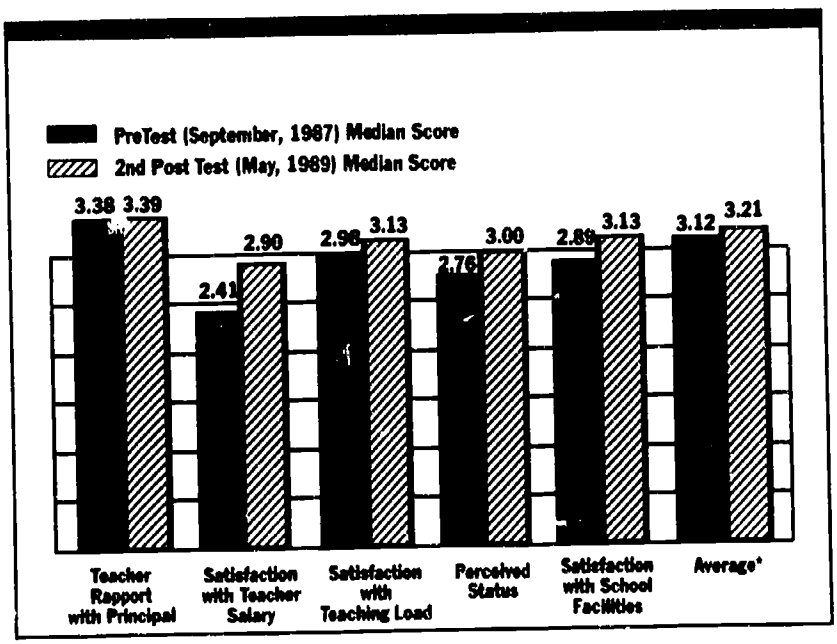
Special categorical programs. The strategy of breaking down a challenge into its basic components and developing programs addressing those individual components has been tested over time and is well accepted by educators and policy makers as a tool for increasing student achievement. As noted in the first part of this report, districts have had success with a wide variety of programs for particular students, such as disadvantaged and handicapped; or particular needs, such as health care. While districts are sensitive to concerns about undue categorization and bureaucracy, they continue to emphasize special programs because evidence shows that the programs are addressing individual student needs and also driving system-wide progress. Since several of these efforts are discussed in detail in the preceding Chapter they will not be addressed at length in this section, except to note that this is one area where federal and state governments can be particularly helpful.

Organizational and Management Changes. Few education reform efforts are being as closely watched as those involving the restructuring of urban schools. The *Dade County* Public School System is leading the way not just in the Great Cities but across the nation by developing a school-based management model that moves decision-making closer to the people who must live with the decisions. The effort now stands as one of the nation's foremost examples of locally-based education reform and draws visitors and students of the experiment from all over the world. No two school systems are implementing school-based reform in the same way. Even within *Dade County*, individual schools are implementing the program differently. The common theme, however, is to endow individual schools with authority over decisions previously made at a central or regional office, including those regarding staffing patterns, hiring, budgeting, curriculum design, community involvement, student grouping, scheduling, maintenance, in-service staff training and others. Not all school officials, city or elsewhere, see the same promise in this method of reform, but most are watching *Dade County* with interest and expectation.

CASE STUDY:

DADE COUNTY SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM BUILDS ENTHUSIASM, IMPROVES EXPECTATIONS

The Dade County School District implemented its innovative School-Based Management/Shared Decision-Making program in 33 pilot schools in 1987-88, after a year of planning and proposal-writing by individual schools interested in the idea. The pilot effort is expected to last three years and is being assessed at the end of each year, with the first two evaluations focusing on the program's implementation and on student impact. The second year's evaluation, completed in May 1989, assessed teachers' awareness of, expectations for, and participation in the program; school climate; individual pilot school status; and principals' views. While no definite conclusions can be drawn until the end of the third year, preliminary baseline data look promising. The chart below shows pre- and post-median scores on the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire for pilot elementary schools for school year 1988-89.

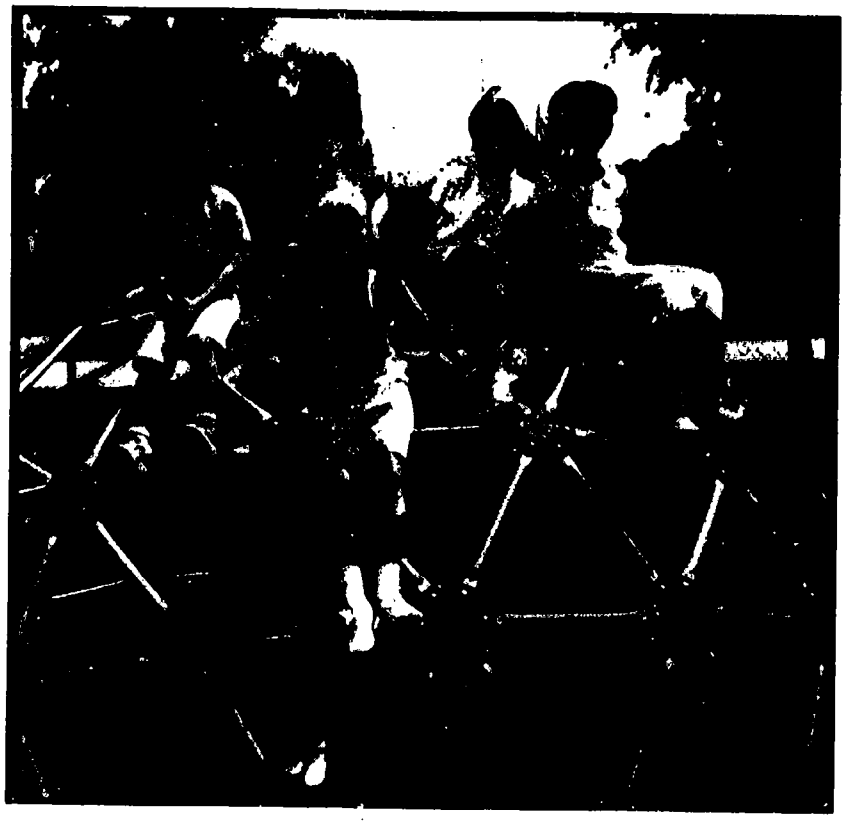


* Scores range from 1 to 4; average includes variables not shown.

Chart reads: Half of all teachers in the school-based management program rated rapport with their principals as 3.38 or above on a four point scale before the program began and 3.39 or above after the end of the program's second full year of operation.

While most cities do not have final evaluations of their re-structuring efforts, several are reporting ground-breaking efforts:

• *Chicago*'s public schools are undergoing some of the nation's most ambitious restructuring with 469 elementary and 71 secondary schools electing 11 member councils (six parents with



students in the school, two community representatives, the principal and two teachers) with broad authority to approve budgets, design curricula, choose books and hire and fire principals.

• *San Diego's* "Schools of the Future Program" operates to restructure the system's schools by increasing site-based decision-making among teachers and administrators. In-service training is provided by the district.

• *Toledo's* "Professional Teaching, Accelerated Learning" (PTAL) program is a systematic effort in school restructuring, teacher professionalization, and parent and community involvement that in conjunction with Project SHAPE boosted the achievement of project students in vocabulary, reading, spelling and language in a pre-post test evaluation.

• *New York City* is in the first throes of an extensive effort to implement a school-based management/shared decision making program within its system.

Magnet Schools. Magnet schools are another popular urban strategy for meeting urban educational goals. Initially instituted as a way of voluntarily desegregating urban schools, magnet schools offer enriched or specialized curriculum, teaching methods, or materials to attract students of varying racial backgrounds from across a city. Some systems use magnet schools independently from a desegregation plan, as a way of enhancing excellence and choice; some require students pass entrance exams; and others establish "thresholds" for each racial group. However implemented, these

programs show unusual success in boosting academic achievement among urban youngsters and in encouraging individuals who might have sought private schooling to stay in the public sector. Concerns that these schools might be creaming the best students from other schools is spurring some cities like Pittsburgh to transform all of their schools into magnets.

The *Buffalo* Public Schools have some of the nation's leading magnet schools; they are producing concrete and promising results.

CASE STUDY:

BUFFALO MAGNET SCHOOLS BOOST LEARNING AND DESEGREGATION

Buffalo tested its children in grades 3 and 6 in reading and math and found that the percentage of children attending magnet schools who achieved in stanines 7-9 (upper levels) exceeded the district-wide average of children in those stanines. These positive results were attained without sacrificing racial balance and positive parent ratings.

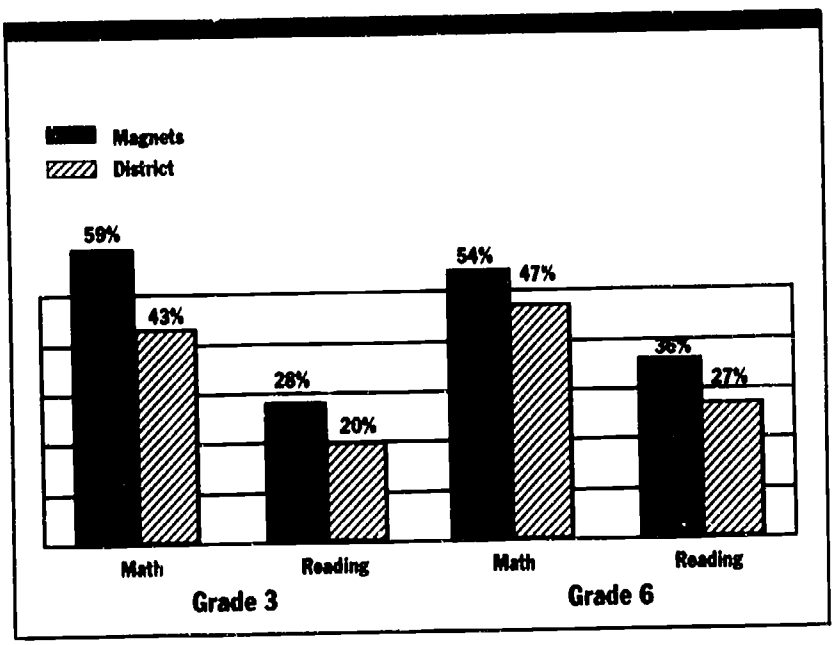


Chart reads: Fifty-nine percent of third graders in magnet schools achieved in stanines 7-9, compared with 43% of all third graders in the district.

Other urban districts are reaping similar benefits from the magnet concept:

• In 1985-86, the *St.Paul* Public Schools converted six regular elementary schools that did not meet the state desegregation mandates into magnet schools. Currently the district operates 31 magnet programs enrolling over 12,000 students at 28 schools. Student achievement is improving steadily across the system,

and the district is in full compliance with state desegregation regulations.

• In *Portland*, magnet schools in health occupations, business, dance, international education, foreign languages and others, attract a racially diverse population.

• An evaluation of *San Diego's* federal magnet school grant showed that students in participating schools gained significantly more than their peers in reading and math on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills between 1986 and 1987.

• In 1988-89, the *Columbus* Public Schools operated 32 magnet schools, serving about 14,000 students. Evaluations show students in magnet schools had better attendance, higher achievement and lower discipline rates than students in other schools.

Increased Community Support and Business Participation. Fostering community involvement in urban schools is often difficult in complex, overburdened urban settings. Too often urban schools are isolated from mainstream civic, political and economic opportunities because their needs are so great, their scale so large, and their costs so high. Because children in cities lack many of the parental and agency supports found in other areas, urban schools have had to shoulder a host of noninstructional burdens, including health and day care, feeding and clothing, recreation and discipline. Often the problems are too severe and the solutions too ambitious for large city school districts to solve alone.

In cities throughout the country, the private sector is helping to fill gaps in resources and personnel by championing school tax increases, hiring city school graduates, and building community-wide strategies for school improvement. One of the more dramatic contributions of the private sector has been volunteering employees as mentors, instructors, role models, and tutors.

A good example can be found in the Indianapolis Public Schools.

CASE STUDY:

INDIANAPOLIS BUSINESS SUPPORT HELPS TURN SCHOOL AROUND IN A YEAR

Thanks to the "Invest Indianapolis" program, George Washington High School, over the course of one pilot year, has raised attendance, improved grades across the board, increased the number of students with a B average or better, and enlisted more students onto the honor roll. Under the terms of the "Invest Indianapolis" agreement, businesses provide internships for students and jobs for graduates who meet agreed-upon criteria; they also provide resources and funding. Students and

parents, in turn, commit to maintaining a C average, achieving a 90% attendance record, and performing internships successfully, among other things. With an investment of $144,355 from the district, the program has touched a high proportion of the students at George Washington; as a result, the district plans to expand into seven other sites over the next four years. The table below shows the percentage of participating juniors and seniors with at least a B average or better:

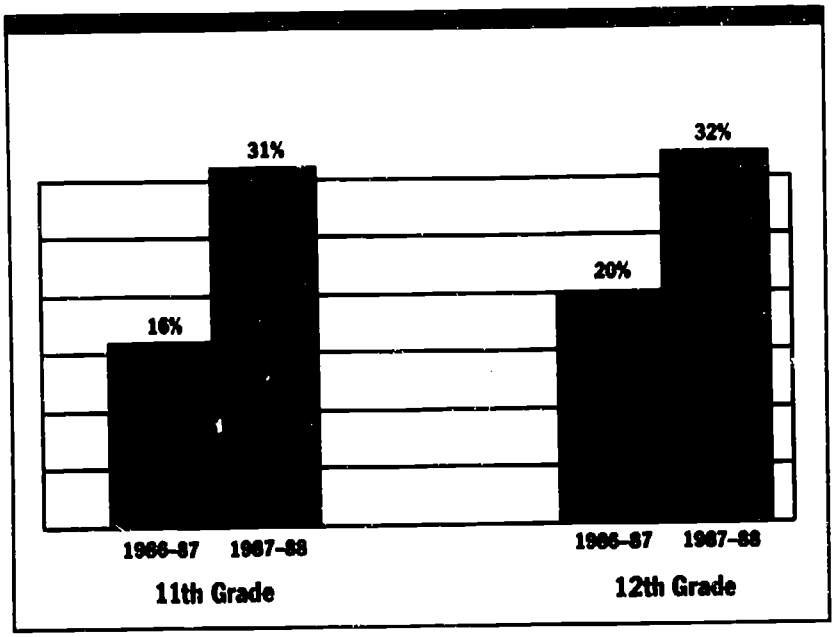


Chart reads: In 1986-87, 16% of participating 11th graders attained a B average or better; in 1987-88, 31% achieved a B average or better.

Other examples of successful business and community support of inner-city schools abound:

• *Dallas'* Project SEED (Special Elementary Education for the Disadvantaged) sends professional mathematicians and instructors from major universities and corporations to intact classes of elementary school children on a daily basis as a supplement to the regular math program, resulting in higher achievement gains for low socioeconomic students, better attitudes about math and fewer grade retentions.

• Under *Philadelphia's* "High School Business Academies" program, five participating satellite schools receive budget supplements from the private sector of $212,000 each. This extra money is earmarked for at-risk students in grades 9-12. These students receive extra instructional help in basic skills, technical and employability skills, and career exploration. The academies now have a 90% attendance rate, a 95% graduation rate, and an 87% employment and postsecondary attendance rate among graduates of the class of 1985.

• *Seattle's* "Challenge" program provides regular academic classes and tutor-mentor support from members of the business community.

• The *Tulsa* "Adopt-A-School" effort provides hands-on experiments in physics, chemistry, and life science for fourth and fifth graders. Scientists from the Amoco Corporation and Tulsa area veterinarians also provide training for parent volunteers.

• The *Boston* "Compact" is one of the nation's model business collaboratives, involving over 360 companies in developing education goals and objectives for the city students and engendering private sector commitments to hiring graduates.

• The *Dade County* "Partners" program is a cooperative agreement between the schools and businesses, professional organizations, governmental agencies and civic groups to enhance educational programs, cultivate an ongoing dialogue and commit community resources to the schools.

Effective Schools. For many years now, urban districts have been experimenting with effective schools techniques; in fact, the effective schools movement was actually forged in urban schools, but its principles were so valuable that they spread throughout the country. Implementing the effective schools concept—a term that refers to those studies aimed at identifying and replicating those characteristics shared by especially effective schools—has now become an accepted part of the urban agenda.

San Diego is a good example of a district that, as a result of a court-ordered desegregation plan, identified 34 minority-isolated school sites (80% or more minority) and, for an additional cost of $26 per pupil per year, produced outstanding results. The plan incorporated several of the variables schools research has shown to be effective, including: 1) academic focus, 2) rigorous content, 3) coordinated curriculum, 4) effective use of time, 5) regular homework, 6) teacher-directed instruction, 7) variety of teaching strategies, 8) regular assessment, 9) instructional leadership, 10) structured staff development, and 11) high expectations.

CASE STUDY:

SAN DIEGO EFFECTIVENESS PROGRAM PRODUCES LARGE GAINS

According to an independent, 1989 evaluation of 16 affected schools, San Diego's Achievement Goals Program (AGP) has resulted in vigorous attendance and homework policies, more time on task, and an elimination of classroom distractions. These schools have AFDC enrollments averaging 33% and

limited-English-proficient enrollments averaging 21%. Achievement scores have gone up over a six year period on both the California Achievement Test (CAT) and the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). The following graph shows the percent of children at or above the national norm for the CTBS in reading:

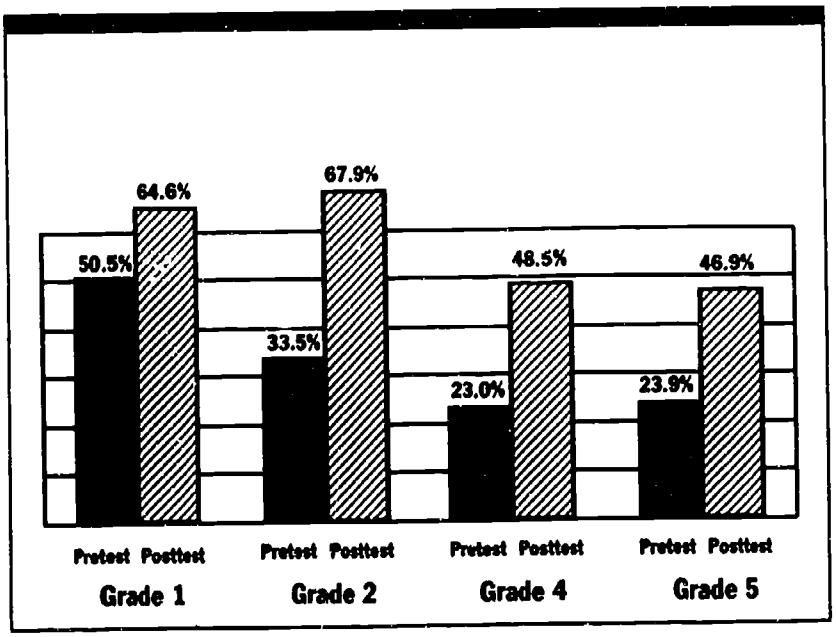


Chart reads: Among Grade 1 participants in the AGP program, the percent achieving at or above the CTBS national mean in reading for that grade increased from 50.5% to 64.6% between pre- and post-testing.

Results from other city schools are similarly promising:

- An evaluation of *Cincinnati's* "Low Achieving Schools" program showed that four program schools in reading achievement and five in math have moved out of the seven lowest scoring schools in the system.
- *Philadelphia* is conducting an extensive test of the effectiveness of its participating Chapter 1 school-wide projects sites and finding that achievement of students is often significantly higher than expected.

Other factors. In addition to the strategies mentioned above, Council member districts cited a number of other reasons for their progress. Among the contributing factors mentioned were a well-defined curricular strategy; enlightened attitudes about teaching and learning; forward-thinking school leadership; organizational structuring; public support and interest; and most importantly increased parental involvement. The following list identifies some of the factors that the Great City districts have cited as being important to their progress in the past and essential for the future:

REASONS FOR URBAN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Curricular Strategy:

- Application of critical thinking skills curricula at earlier grade levels.
- Sequencing in curricula, with more tightly defined skill objectives.
- Use of instructional technology to individualize and manage instruction.
- Development and use of multi-cultural curricula to engage students of varying backgrounds.

Enlightened Attitudes:

- Recognition of the value of preschool education and a willingness to invest in preschool programs.
- Recognition of the need to strengthen middle schools as a bridge between elementary and high school success.
- Sensitivity to cultural and social diversity of students.
- Recognition of diversity as an advantage rather than a disadvantage.

Leadership:

- Public and open acknowledgment of urban school problems by superintendents and boards of education followed by a challenge to the whole community to help solve them.
- Reliance on local initiatives rather than state or federal solutions.
- Development of locally-run inservice teacher training programs as an alternative to college-based programs.
- Increased professionalization of superintendents.
- Willingness to address the non-instructional needs of children, such as nutrition, health, prenatal, recreational needs, where families and other local agencies are not meeting all the needs.

Organizational Structure:

- Reliance on "whole school," "school-wide," "effective schools," or "school-based management" approaches.
- Long-range planning; solid connections between evaluation results and program planning.
- Cooperation between teachers and management in solving educational problems.

Public Support

- Involvement of the private sector and the community in improving schools rather than criticizing them.
- Public pressure on school systems to be accountable for results.

FINANCIAL INVESTMENT AND COMMITMENT

Total urban school revenues have increased modestly in the last few years. The good news is that these added dollars are spurring corresponding increases in achievement in the Great City Schools, as demonstrated in Part 1.

Urban education is an expensive responsibility, made so by high numbers and percentages of children with special needs, high costs of living, and requirements to deliver multiple services. The economics of urban education is further complicated by the growing impoverishment of inner-city neighborhoods, waning industrial tax base, diminishing middle class, and declining numbers of school-aged children. The assault upon federal education and urban program funding that occurred in the early 1980's only exacerbated the situation. The education reform movement, for its part, has demanded new spending without suggesting sources of new revenues, and the new emphasis on goal-setting has made the climb seem steeper.

On the whole, funding for urban districts has kept pace with inflation since 1980, and in some cases has risen enough to sustain the special programs discussed in the preceding chapters. Total revenues of urban school districts from all sources grew modestly after adjusting for inflation, from $2,837 per child in 1980-81 to $3,144 in 1988-89—a rise of 10.8%.

Federal funding was by far the weakest component of that increase. Between 1980-81 and 1988-89, federal allocations to urban schools decreased after adjusting for inflation from $329 per child to $273 per child, a decline of 17%.

Local revenues, on the other hand, generally increased ahead of inflation. After adjusting for inflation, total locally-derived funds grew from $1,093 per child in the urban schools in 1980-81 to $1,262 per child in 1988-89, an increase of 15.5%.

State funding of urban schools showed a similar pattern. Between 1980-81 and 1988-89, state funding of urban schools increased from $1,415 per child to $1,609 per child in inflation-adjusted terms, a gain of 13.7%.

The increase in local and state funding of city schools is part of the reason for the progress in urban education. But the revenue numbers are not as positive as they might appear at first blush. For one thing, much of the increase simply made up for the extreme cuts in federal spending on city schools. The federal funds are extremely important in the provision of services to children with special needs. Second, most new state dollars coming out of the education reform movement have been devoted to badly-needed increases in teacher salaries and not to special programs designed to help "at-risk" children in the inner-cities. The average teacher salary in the Great City Schools increased from $19,202 in 1980-81 to $32,217 in 1988-89—a 67.8% increase that absorbed a good deal of the additional state funding over that period.

Finally, some increases in state dollars have served only to correct serious disparities in the distribution of revenues to poor areas that existed in the past. This increase in state support of urban schools narrowed the gap between systems with greater and lesser degrees of need and helped fuel some of the progress seen in this report. Still, the share of state funds received now by cities is little more than what one would expect on a per capita basis and does not reflect the greater proportion of need found in the urban areas (see Table 4). Some urban school systems actually receive less state money than they would under a strict per capita formula (e.g., New York City, Denver, Baltimore, Memphis and Portland).

TABLE 4

URBAN SCHOOL SHARE OF STATE-WIDE TOTALS,1987-88

City	El./Sec. Expenditures	Poverty Enrollment[1]	Total Enrollment
Anchorage	30.4%	40.0%	--%
Atlanta	6.3	12.6	5.8
Baltimore	12.7	47.4	16.2
Baton Rouge	6.9	4.6	7.3
Boston	5.5	18.8	7.3
Buffalo	2.4	3.1	1.8
Chicago	28.0	54.4	23.2
Cincinnati	3.3	6.6	2.9
Cleveland	6.7	12.3	4.1
Columbus	3.9	7.2	3.7
Dade County	17.3	16.8	15.3
Dallas	1.7	6.1	3.9
Dayton	2.2	3.9	1.7
Denver	4.6	22.9	10.7
Detroit	18.2	31.8	11.1
Jacksonville	6.4	6.3	--
El Paso	2.1	5.4	1.7
Fresno	1.3	1.4	1.4
Houston	4.0	9.4	5.9
Indianapolis	5.8	16.3	5.2
Long Beach	1.6	1.8	1.5
Los Angeles	16.0	18.2	13.2
Memphis	10.8	22.2	12.9
Milwaukee	17.6	26.4	12.4
Minneapolis	5.0	10.1	5.5
Nashville	6.3	7.1	7.9
New Orleans	9.3	19.7	10.5
New York	33.5	62.6	36.4
Norfolk	4.9	8.1	3.7
Oakland	2.4	2.4	1.1
Omaha	13.8	23.1	15.4
Philadelphia	14.3	30.5	12.0
Phoenix[2]	1.1	(23.3)	3.5
Pittsburgh	2.3	4.9	2.4
Portland	8.9	14.5	11.6
Rochester	1.5	1.8	1.2
St. Louis	11.4	20.1	5.7
St. Paul	4.8	7.6	4.5
San Diego	1.9	3.6	2.6
San Francisco	1.4	2.4	1.4
Seattle	6.1	11.2	5.3
Toledo	3.0	4.5	2.4
Tucson	9.6	10.6	9.9
Tulsa	5.1	9.0	7.3
Washington	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average	17.7%	30.4%	16.3%

1 1980 Census Data

2 Includes percentage of school-age children in poverty for entire City of Phoenix; other statistics are for the Phoenix Union High school district.

PART 3

Helping Urban Schools Meet Goals For The Year 2000

Urban schools are becoming better places to learn and work, but there is still a long road to travel to attain our goals by 2000. Urban educators are understanding more and more about the special needs of inner-city children, and urban systems are committed to continuing the urban reformation. As the preceding pages demonstrate, progress is the product of the hard work of educators, the concerted efforts of urban communities and parents, the consistent support of local, state and federal governments, the renewed attention of business and labor, and the admirable philanthropy of concerned individuals.

But reform does not come easily or cheaply. The benchmarks developed by the urban schools for improvement over the next ten years will require both money and expertise. The trends over the past ten years suggest that together these elements can move urban education forward but that they will be needed in much larger doses if the nation's urban education goals are to be met.

The future of inner-city school systems, and the nation's ability to meet its new education goals hang in the balance. We can revitalize our efforts to prepare every urban student for the 21st Century; or we can succumb to the demographic, fiscal and societal forces that threaten to rob us of the progress we've made during the last decade.

We can tip the balance, with the help of teachers, administrators, parents, the communities, the private sector, and all levels of government. There are two primary types of support we need to fuel the urban renaissance.

First, large city school systems need more financial support. The Great Cities have become experts at doing what they can with available resources. With more support, we could produce better results. The central theme of this report is that we are

currently getting what we are paying for in urban education, and to get more we need to pay more. The current progress demonstrates that the investment is worth the effort.

Right now, that investment is not being made. Together the Great City schools enrolled 30.4% of all the poor school-age children in their states, 43.5% of all school-age African American children and 30.1% of all school-age Hispanic American children. The percentages of limited-English-proficient and low-achieving children are even higher. The urban share of state elementary and secondary expenditures would have to increase by nearly 50% for the gap between current dollars and need to be partially closed and for the cities to have a realistic chance of reaching urban goals by the year 2000.

Likewise, greater support will be needed from the federal level. While federal funds are better targeted to urban areas than are state funds, perhaps by a factor of 50%, Congressional allocations for elementary and secondary education would have to be doubled merely to return to the level of financial assistance made by the federal government in 1980, let alone to spur quicker progress toward urban goals.

Most important, however, the share of our national wealth devoted to improving urban schools needs to increase. Had the nation spent the same share of its Gross National Product (GNP)

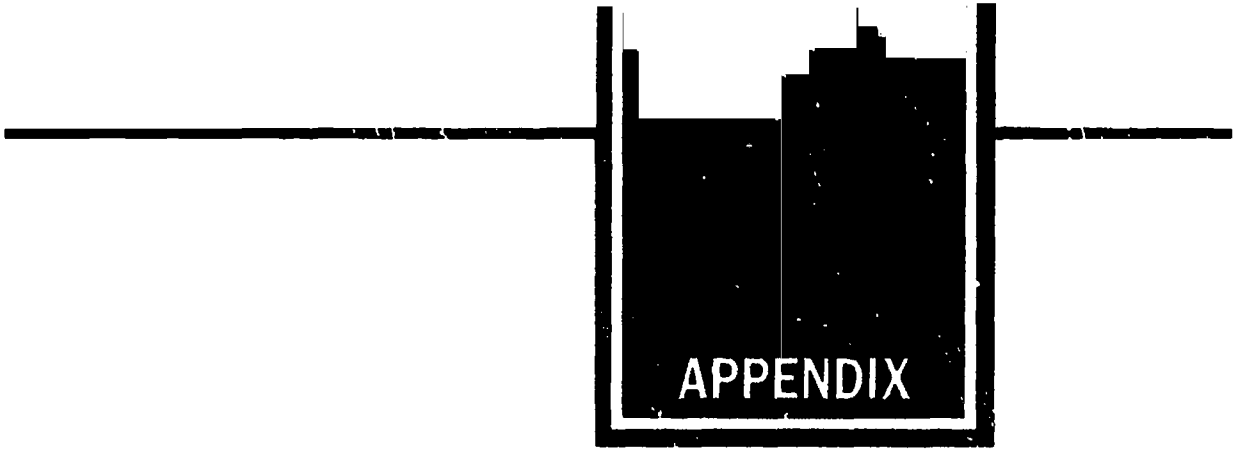
on urban schools in 1987-88 as it did in 1980-81, inner city schools would have had $2.523 billion or 11.5% more revenues to improve their programs and serve more children.

With more support, we could replicate the successful programs described in this report. Toledo's Circle of Support, for example, reaches 67 students; it should be reaching 6,600. Philadelphia's Transition Program for developmentally-immature kindergarten students and first graders is serving 1,600 students in 65 schools; it should be reaching all those in need. Dade County's successful Minority Educational Enrichment Program, serves 300 students in five schools and helps prepare minority students for placement in advanced academic programs; it should be available to all. The resources have not been there to expand these important and effective programs.

In addition to financial support, we need public commitment, without threats of takeover or charges of educational bankruptcy. An ailing system will get better only when the whole community rallies behind the goal of improvement. Support can come from a variety of sources in a variety of ways. Parents who send their children to public school instead of private school. Businesses that provide a solid economic base for the local economy by staying in the city. Civic leaders who place educational issues at the top of the local agenda. Local media representatives that ask, "How can we help?" and not just "What's wrong?"

The Council of the Great City Schools, for its part, will be initiating a number of activities to guide and assess progress. The first, as we have seen, was the development of the "National Urban Education Goals." These benchmarks will be debated and amended, as necessary, after meeting with leaders from other national organizations. The second initiative was this report to demonstrate the promise of urban schools and the value of investing in them. The third activity will involve proposing a new major federal and state legislative package to aid inner-city schools, the "Urban Schools of America (USA)" bill. The fourth initiative will include the development of assessment tools to measure urban school progress toward meeting the goals, and the progress of others in helping. Finally, the Council will be convening a National Urban School Summit to finalize strategies for how to meet the goals by the year 2000.

Urban educators must continue to pursue effective methods to operate our schools and deliver instruction. We trust this report will convince the public to support our drive towards a better America in the year 2000.



ABOUT THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

THE COUNCIL OF THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS is a membership organization representing 45 of the largest urban public school systems in the United States. Its Board of Directors is comprised of the Superintendent and one Board of Education member from each school district, making it the only education association so constituted and the only one whose membership and purpose is solely urban. Membership is open to public school systems that are located in cities with populations over 250,000 or enrollments over 30,000 and with urban characteristics. The Council's purpose is to promote the improvement of education in the Great City Schools through research legislation and other appropriate activities. For three decades, the Council has been in the vanguard of urban education, advocating the cause of urban youth.

The Council was formally incorporated in 1961 as an outgrowth of concerns of lay and professional educators that no existing national organization was directly focusing attention on the problems of large urban school systems. It began with informal meetings convened to discuss the educational needs of city children and to exchange information about successful and promising practices. Since that time the Council has focused the attention of Congress and the Nation on issues vital to its members and has sponsored many research, fact-finding and technical assistance programs.

Located in Washington, D.C., the Council promotes communications at several levels: among member school districts, between member districts and other school systems, and among members, legislators and federal government officials who determine national educational policy. Its Board of Directors meets twice a year, and between each meeting an Executive Committee is empowered to manage the affairs of the organization. The Committee has a President, a President Elect, a Secretary/Treasurer, and a Past President and includes sixteen

(16) other persons elected by the Board of Directors. In addition to a Nominations Committee, the Board has four standing committees which develop and review Council policies and programs in the following areas:

LEGISLATION

The Legislative Standing Committee seeks to mobilize the resources of member districts to work with Congress and other policy-makers in the adoption and implementation of federal legislation favorable to the education of urban youth.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY

The Public Advocacy Standing Committee is responsible for two areas: the promotion and communication of urban education concerns and success stories to a variety of national audiences; and the promotion coordination and dissemination of important news matters in the member districts.

RESEARCH AND POLICY

The Research and Policy Standing Committee is responsible for three areas: identification of and research on critical issues in urban education; collection and dissemination of reliable and valid data on areas of common interest to the memberships; and the analysis and evaluation of various educational policies.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Special Projects Standing Committee seeks to design and conduct specialized short-term activities and projects on issues of immediate concern to the membership.

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