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ABSTRACT

A study evaluated the Early Literacy program that served 2,021 underachieving pupils in grades 1 (1600) and 2 (421) in the Columbus, Ohio, public schools. The purpose of the Early Literacy program was to provide early intervention to underachieving first- and second-grade pupils who appeared unlikely to learn to read successfully without reading instruction. The program featured small group instruction each day for 40-45 minutes on reading and writing activities. A major part of the evaluation effort was accomplished through the administration of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT7, 1992). Results indicated that: (1) 74% of a treatment group of 1,314 pupils displayed over time each of three strategic processing behaviors (constructing meaning, monitoring reading, and integrating sources of information; (2) 1,028 (59.8%) grade 1 pupils read 5 or more books at level 8 or above and 136 (82.4%) grade 2 pupils independently read at least 10 books; (3) in reading comprehension, 80 discontinued grade 2 pupils had normal curve equivalent (NCE) gains of 4.01, with not discontinued pupils (110) lost 8.48 NCEs; and (4) 1,838 different parents or guardians were involved in the program, and 3,986 contacts were made by these individuals. Findings support continuation of the program with consideration given to seven areas of concern. (Contains 13 figures of data.) (RS)

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Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

1995-96

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EARLY LITERACY READING PROGRAM

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Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
EARLY LITERACY READING PROGRAM
1995-96

Executive Summary

Program Description: The Early Literacy program served 2021 pupils in grades 1 (1600) and 2 (421). Funding for the program was provided through a combination of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) - Title I and Columbus Public Schools' general fund monies.

The purpose of the Early Literacy program was to provide early intervention to underachieving first- and second-grade pupils who appeared unlikely to learn to read successfully without additional reading instruction. The program featured small group instruction for first- or second-grade pupils for 40-45 minutes daily.

During 1995-96, 60 teachers (42.9 FTEs - Full Time Equivalent) served pupils in 52 schools.

Time Interval: For evaluation purposes, the program started on September 25, 1995 and continued through May 3, 1996. This provided a maximum of 138 days of instruction. Pupils included in the final analyses for Desired Outcomes 1 and 2 must have attended at least 50 percent of the scheduled program days. To be included in the analysis of standardized test achievement, grade 2 pupils must have attended at least 50 percent of the scheduled program days, been English-speaking, and have had valid pretest and posttest scores on a nationally standardized achievement test.

Activities: The Early Literacy program teacher and each group of pupils worked together each day on reading and writing activities. The lessons included reading to the pupils, guided reading of charts and stories, shared reading/writing activities, independent reading/writing activities, and activities designed to help pupils attend more closely to print. The lessons were tailored to build on what the pupils already knew while strengthening a self improvement system which would lead to continued growth.

Desired Outcomes: Two desired outcomes were established for the Early Literacy program. First, at least 50 percent of the pupils who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period or who were successfully discontinued (completed) would display over time three strategic processing behaviors - constructs meaning, monitors reading, and integrates sources of information. Second, at least 50 percent of the grade 1 pupils who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period or who were discontinued would read at least five books at text reading level 8 or above; and at least 50 percent of the grade 2 pupils who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period and who were not discontinued would independently read at least 10 books.

Evaluation Design: In addition to the two desired outcomes, aggregate test data was reported for pupils in grades 2 and above for individual buildings for Reading Comprehension. Although not part of the evaluation design, parent involvement information was also collected by program teachers.

A major part of the evaluation effort was to be accomplished through the administration of the Metropolitan Achievement Tests, (MAT7, 1992). Administered on a spring-spring test cycle, the test series served as the pretest and posttest for grade 2 pupils. The spring administration to grade 1 pupils served as the pretest for grade 2. Analyses of the standardized test data included average NCE scores and pretest-posttest NCE gains for grade 2. Another major part of the evaluation effort was to be accomplished through the collection of data, using locally constructed instruments, on pupil reading processing behaviors and pupil independent reading. Locally constructed instruments were also used to collect enrollment/attendance and parent involvement data.

Major Findings: The information collected at the end of the year (on Pupil Data Sheets) indicated the program served 2021 pupils for an average of 3.8 hours of instruction per week. The average daily membership in the program was 1254.32 pupils. The average days of enrollment (days scheduled) per pupil was 83.8 days and the average days of attendance (days served) per pupil was 73.0 days.

The 2021 pupils served were classified as either discontinued (398), not discontinued but attended the program 50 percent of the treatment period (916), or other pupils served (707). By grade level, 277 grade 1 pupils were discontinued and 121 grade 2 pupils were discontinued.

Desired Outcome 1 stated that at least 50 percent of the pupils in the treatment group (those who met the attendance criterion or were discontinued) would display evidence of each strategic processing behavior at least once during the treatment period when reading appropriate instructional text to the satisfaction of the program teacher. This outcome was achieved. Of the 1314 pupils (1028 grade 1 and 286 grade 2) in the treatment group, 972 pupils (74.0%) met the criterion, including 725 (70.5%) grade 1 pupils and 247 (86.4%) grade 2 pupils.

Desired Outcome 2 stated that at least 50 percent of grade 1 treatment group pupils would read at least five books at or above text reading level 8 as certified by the program teacher and that at least 50 percent of grade 2 treatment group pupils, who were not discontinued, would independently read a minimum of ten books selected by the program teacher. This desired outcome was met at both grade levels. Of the 1028 grade 1 pupils in the treatment group, 615 (59.8%) read at least 5 books at text reading level 8 or above and of the 165 grade 2 pupils in the treatment group, 136 (82.4%) read a minimum of 10 books. Combined, 63.0% (751 pupils) of the 1193 treatment group pupils read the appropriate number of books.

In Reading Comprehension, grade 2 pupils (190) had an average NCE loss of 3.22 NCEs. Discontinued pupils (80) gained 4.01 NCEs and not discontinued pupils (110) lost 8.48 NCEs.

Parent involvement information showed that 1838 different parents or guardians were involved in the program and that 3986 contacts were made by these individuals. The 1314 treatment group pupils (65.0% of all pupils served) represented 75.6% (1390) of the total number of different parents or guardians involved in the program and 80.0% (3187) of the total contacts made.

Recommendations

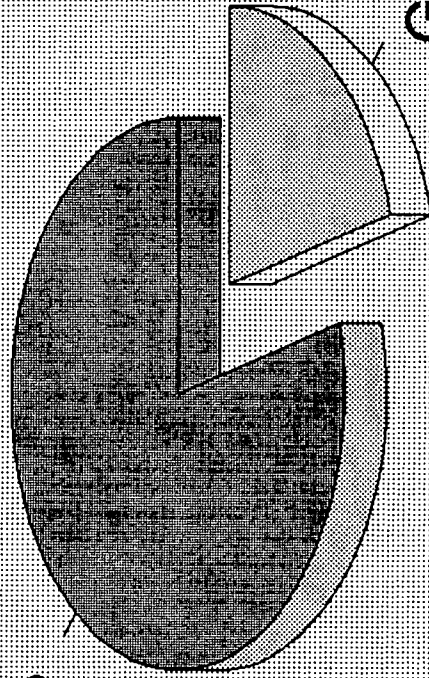
The following recommendations are made to strengthen the 1996-97 Title I Early Literacy program:

1. In grade 2, the textbooks that teachers use with pupils need to be leveled for difficulty. Leveling of textbooks would provide teachers with a guideline that they could use when considering the discontinuance of service to a pupil. Leveling of textbooks would insure that a consistent standard was being used with all pupils.
2. During the 1994-95 school year the average NCE gain from pretest to posttest for grade 2 pupils in Reading Comprehension was 15.97 NCEs. In 1995-96 the average pupil lost 3.22 NCEs. Program personnel need to closely examine the instructional program at grade 2 to determine what emphasis is being placed on comprehension skills during the instructional delivery of the program.
3. The process by which pupils are discontinued from the program needs to be re-examined. Pupils are to be discontinued from the program when they reach the average reading ability of their classroom. Often times program teachers keep pupils in the program too long after they have reached the average level of ability for their classroom. If pupils are kept too long in the program, other pupils may be denied service.
4. As increased parent involvement is regarded as one of the indicators of effective schools, every effort must be undertaken to promote parental involvement in the program, especially in the areas of planning, operation, and evaluation.
5. The whole language instructional strategies and techniques used by program teachers need to be shared with and enhanced by the regular classroom teacher. The instruction provided by the program teacher and by the regular classroom teacher must complement each other. The academic achievement of pupils will suffer if they receive mixed messages in their reading and writing instruction. Opportunities must be made available for program teachers and regular classroom teachers to develop a consistent whole language based approach to instruction.
6. An on-going process of site visitations by the program evaluator needs to be continued. These visits provide invaluable information for the program evaluator in the areas of content and instruction and provide program teachers the opportunity to clarify questions they may have about evaluation requirements and record keeping. These visitations also help build a rapport between the program teacher and program evaluator.
7. Inservice meetings should be continued to provide program teachers the opportunity to enhance their instructional intervention skills, to share instructional ideas with one another, and to clarify any concerns or misconceptions they may have about the total Early Literacy program.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

ALL PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL

GRADE ONE PUPILS
N=1600 79.2%



GRADE TWO PUPILS
N=421 20.8%

TOTAL PUPILS SERVED (N=2021)

FIGURE 1

Grade one pupils were served in 51 schools and grade two pupils in 19 schools.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

FREQUENCIES OF ALL PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND GENDER

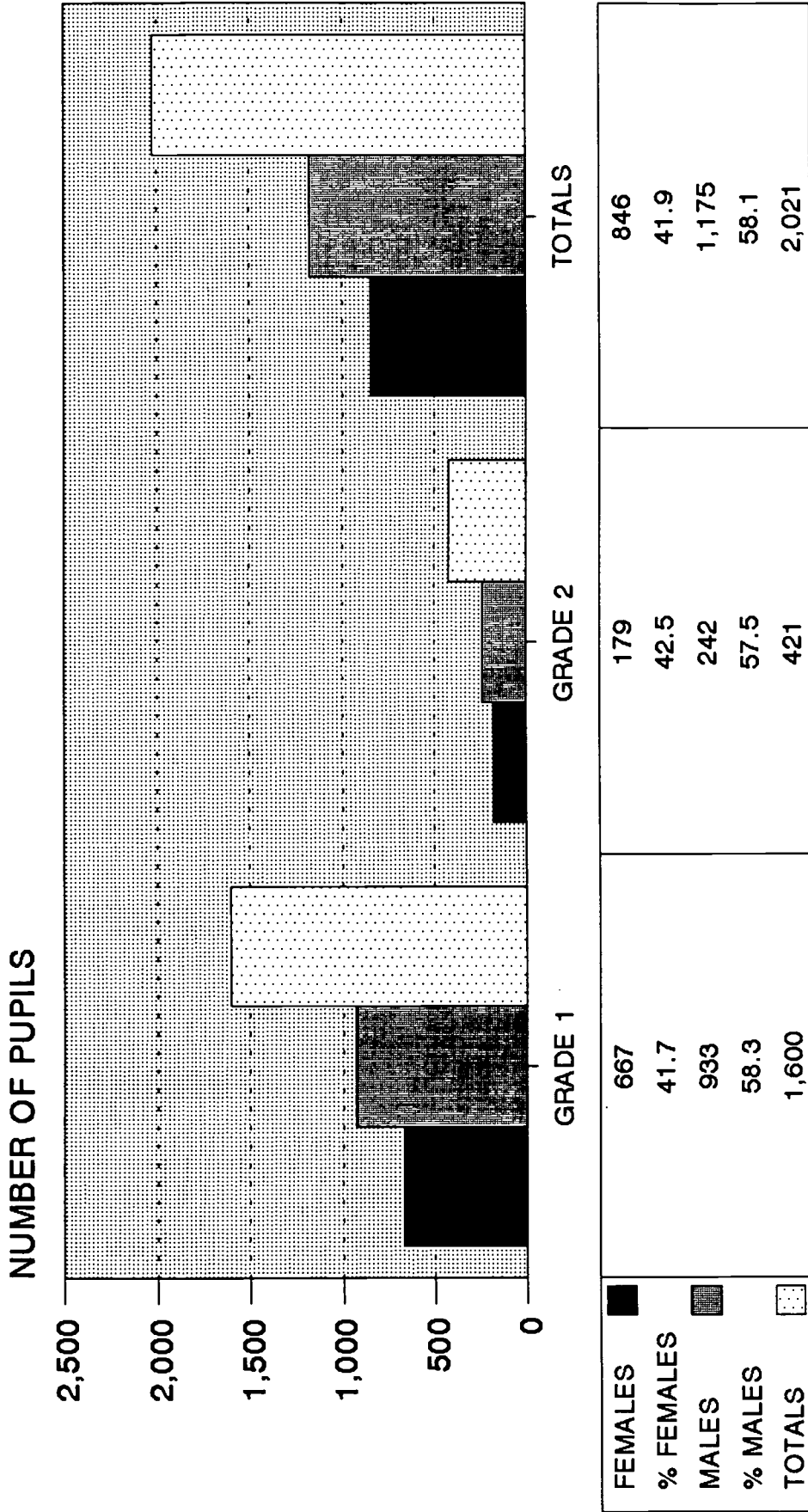


FIGURE 2

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

PERCENTS OF ALL PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND GENDER

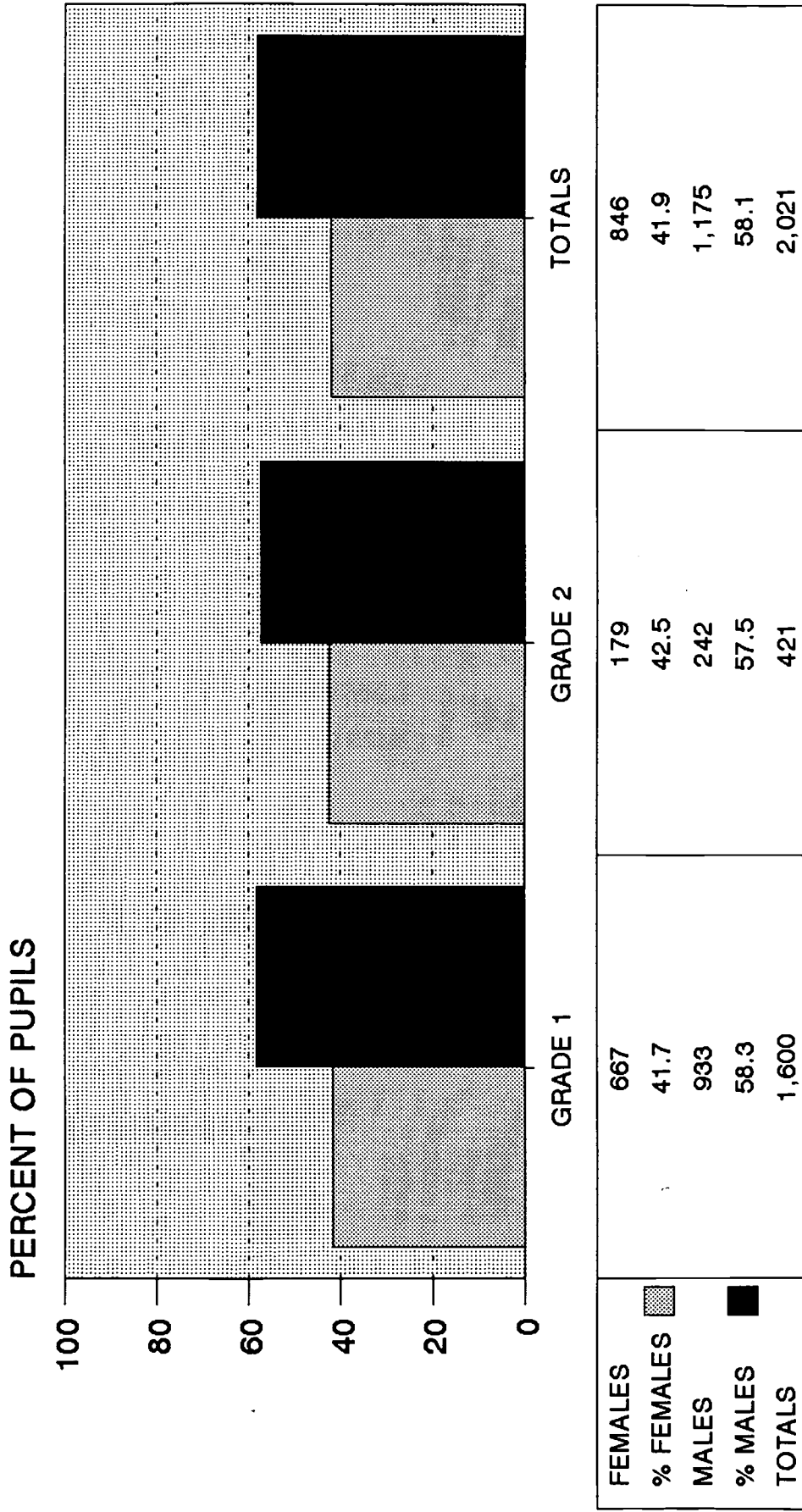


FIGURE 3

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

FREQUENCIES OF ALL PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND RACE

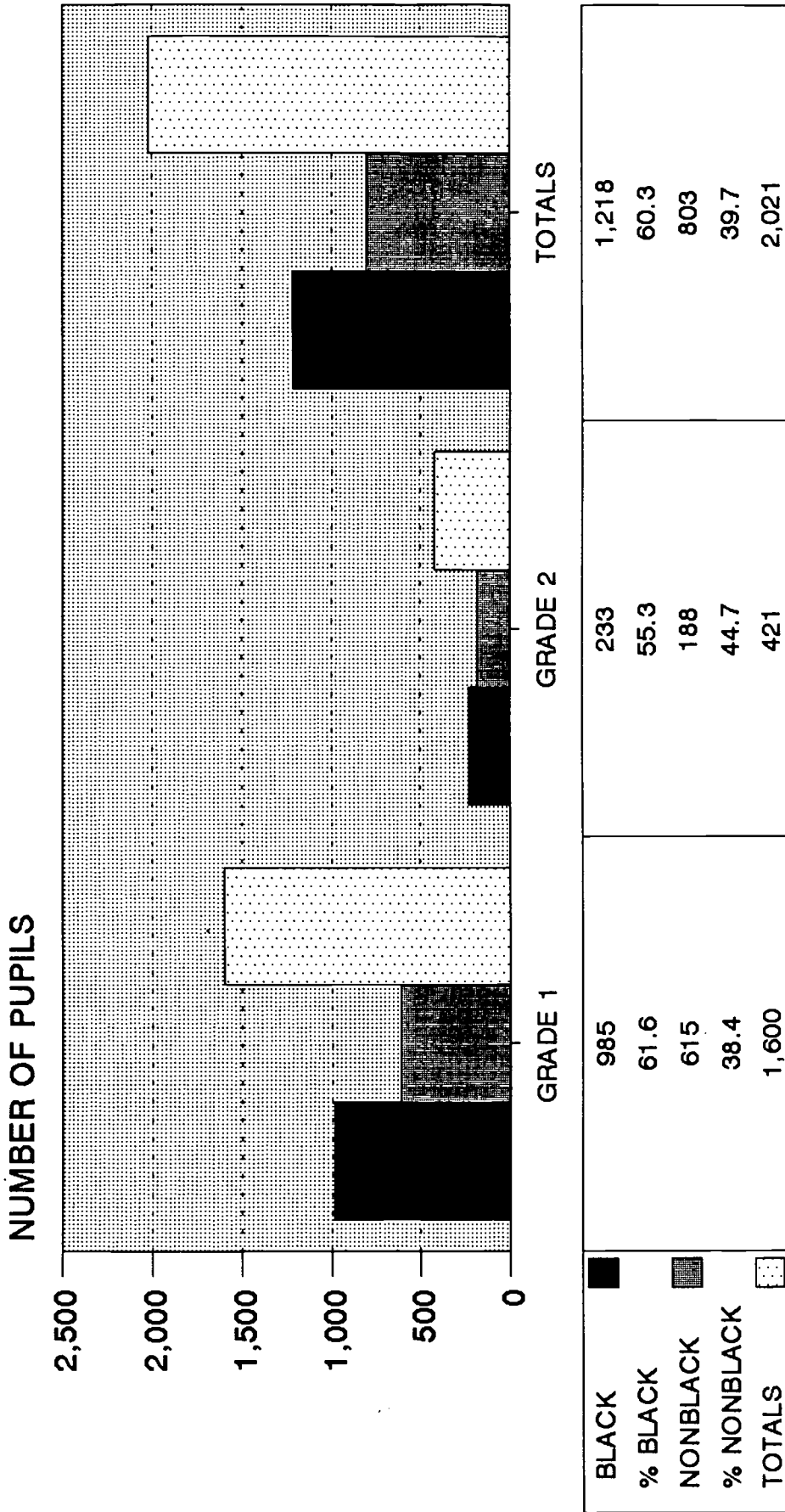


FIGURE 4

Nonblack includes Asian, Hispanic, Native American and White pupils.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

PERCENTS OF ALL PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND RACE

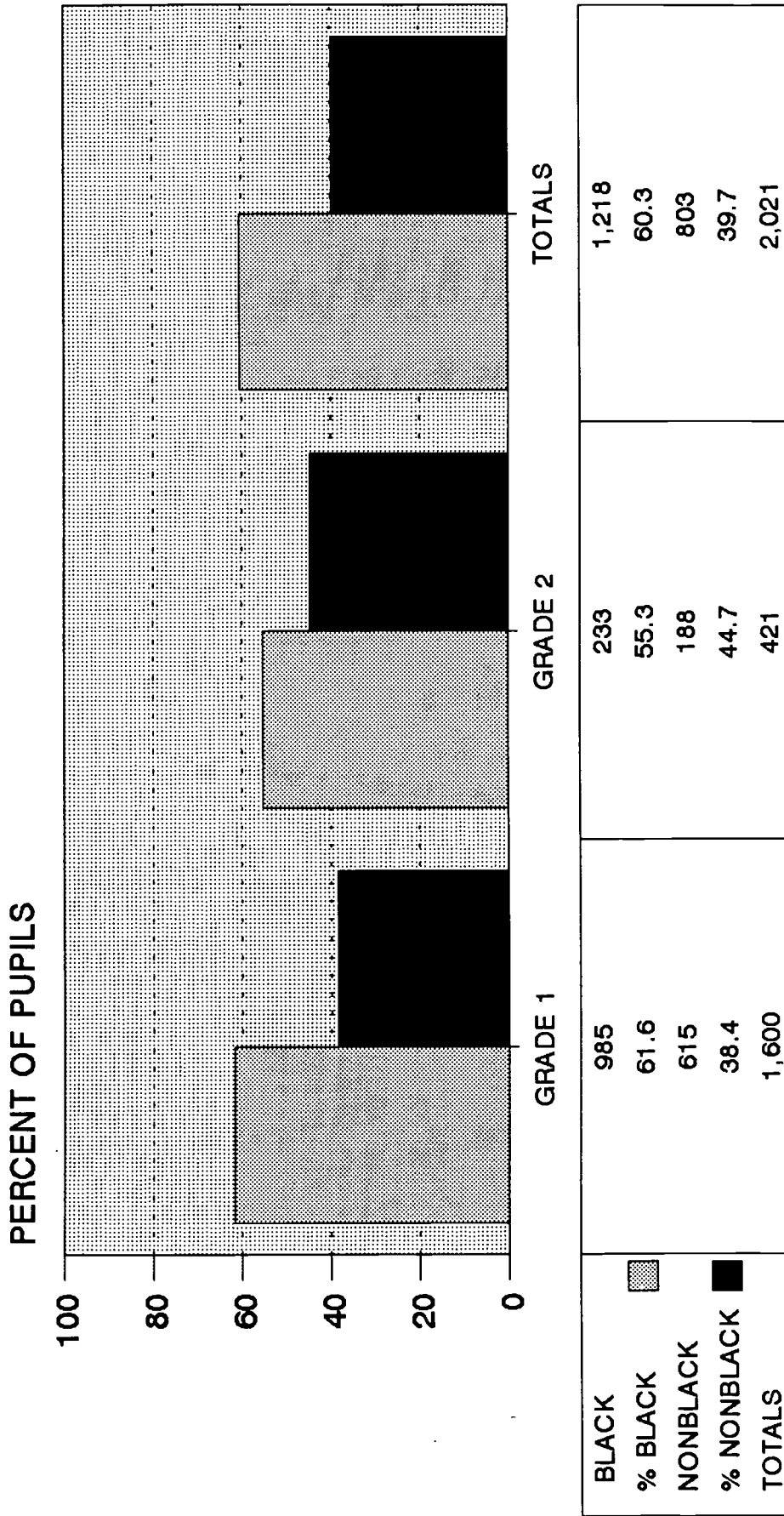


FIGURE 5

Nonblack includes Asian, Hispanic, Native American and White pupils.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

FREQUENCIES OF ALL PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH STATUS

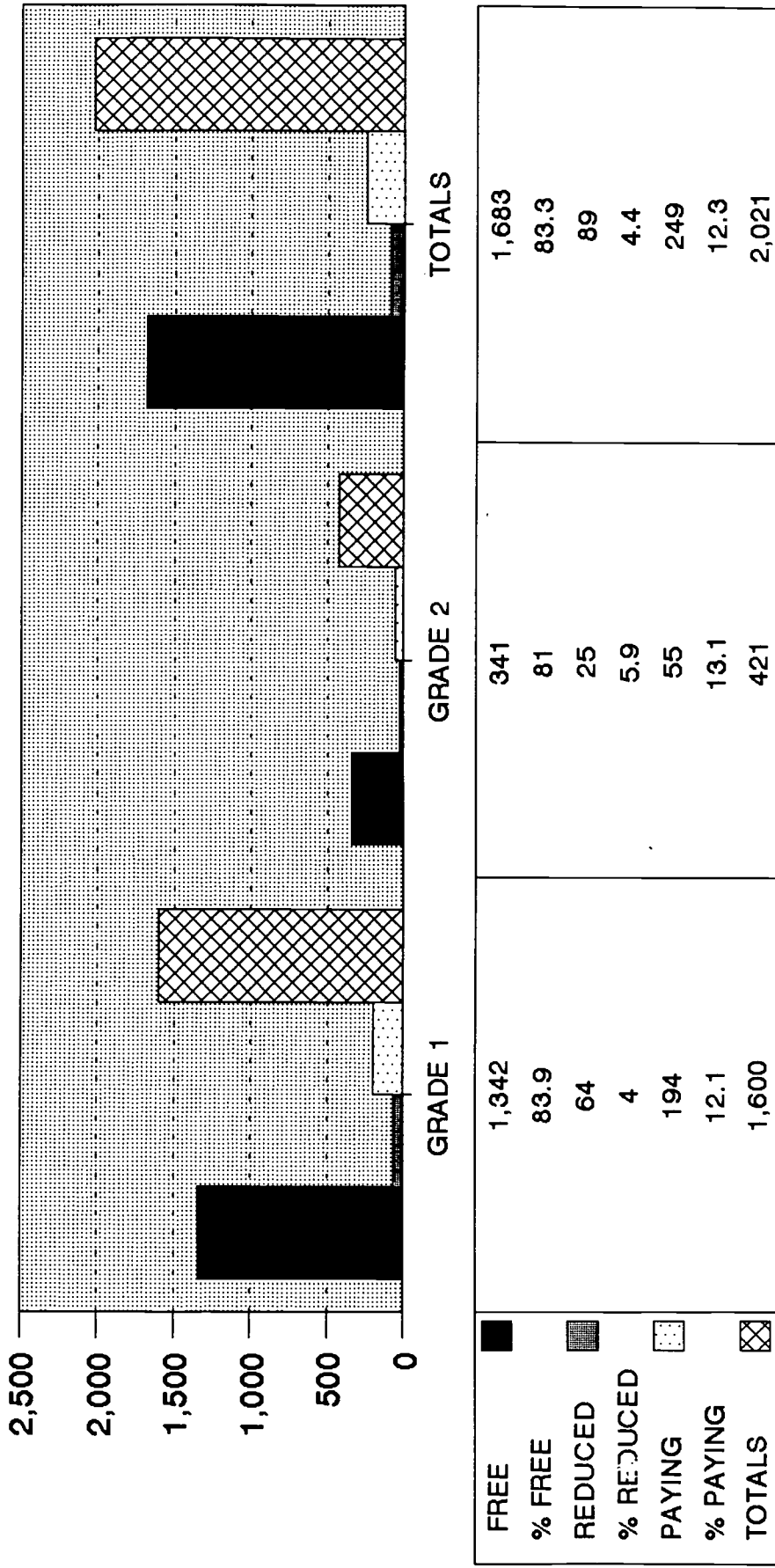


FIGURE 6

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

PERCENTS OF ALL PUPILS SERVED BY GRADE LEVEL AND FREE OR REDUCED PRICE LUNCH STATUS

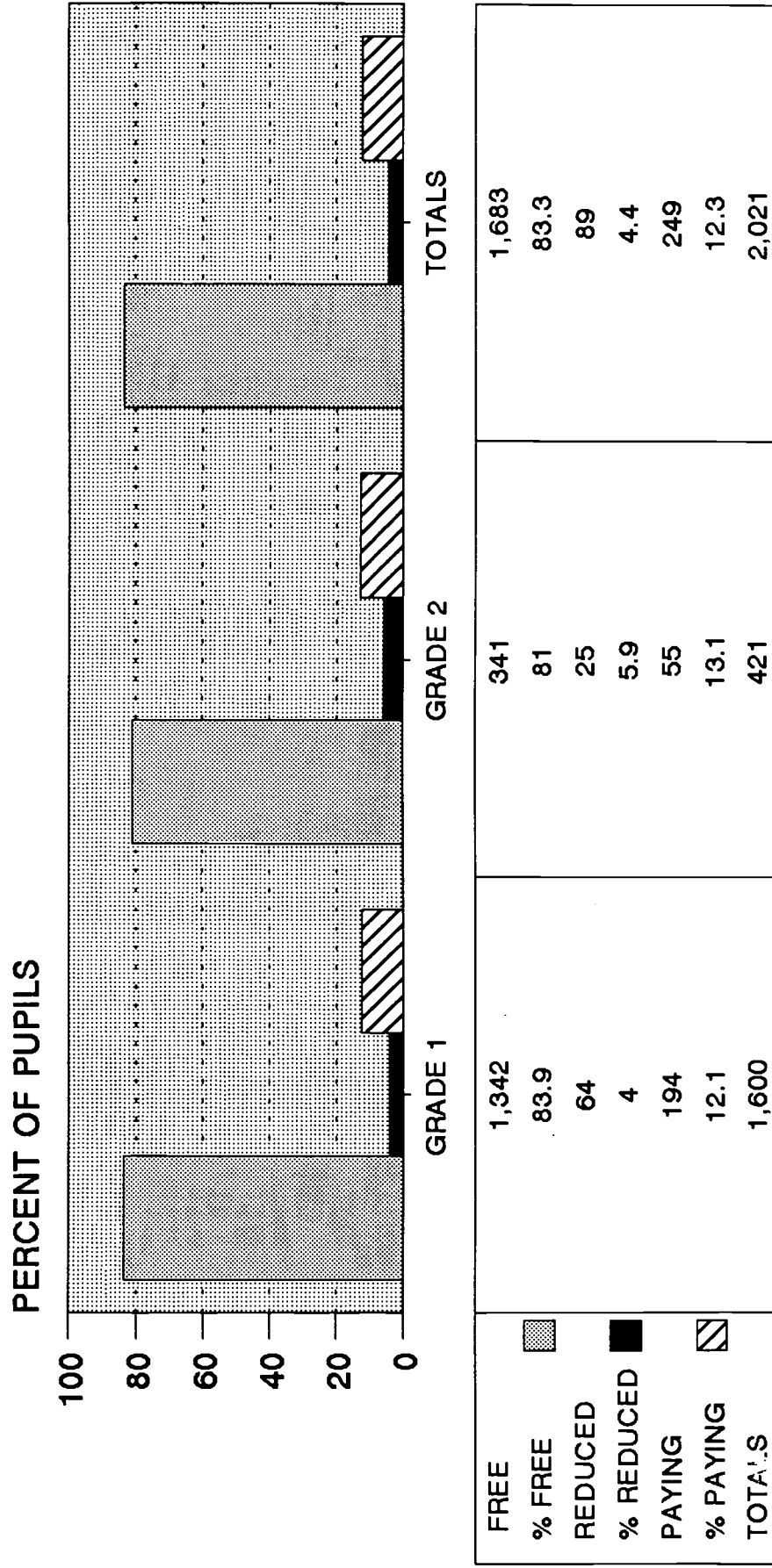


FIGURE 7

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

FREQUENCIES OF ALL PUPILS SERVED BY DISCONTINUED STATUS

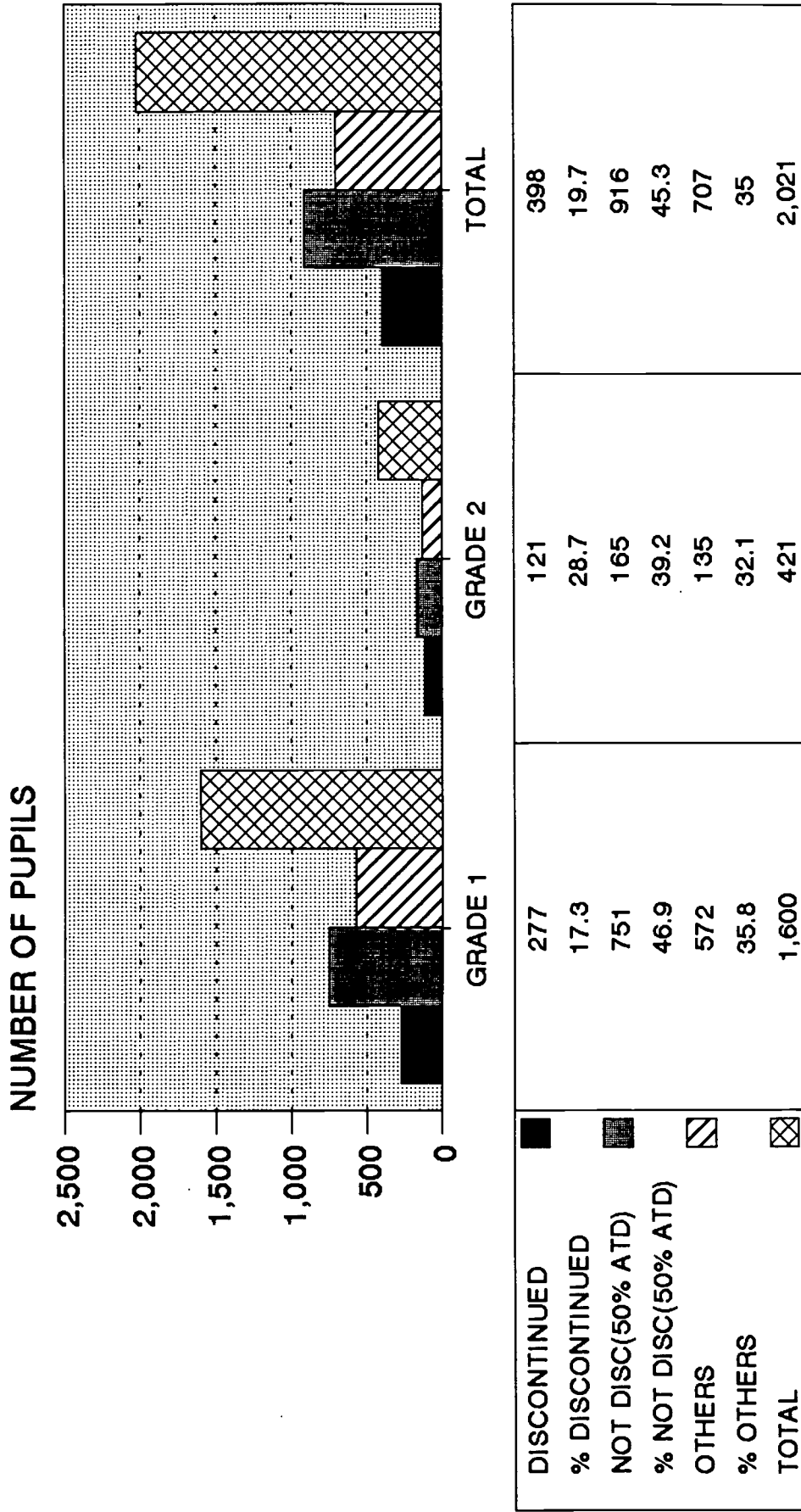


FIGURE 8

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

PERCENTS OF ALL PUPILS SERVED BY DISCONTINUED STATUS

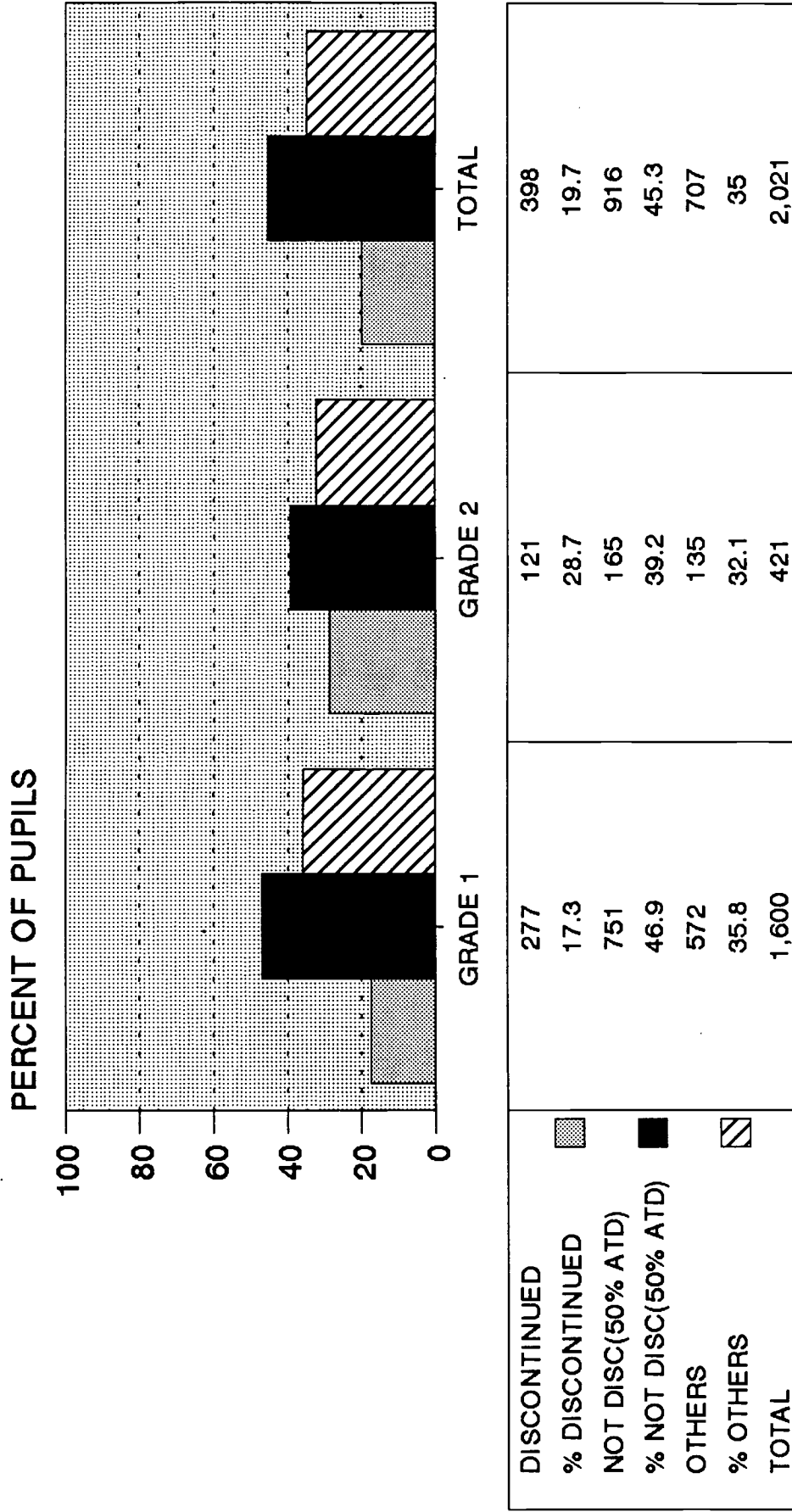


FIGURE 9

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Final Evaluation Report
1995-96

Early Literacy Reading Program

Desired Outcome 1 Results

- Desired Outcome 1: At least 50 percent of the pupils who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period or were discontinued will display evidence of each strategic processing behavior at least once during the treatment period when reading appropriate instructional text to the satisfaction of the Title I teacher.
- The following chart (Figure 10) presents the analysis of the number and percent of pupils in the treatment group who met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 1. The chart indicates the grade, number of pupils in the treatment group, number of pupils meeting the performance criterion, and the percent of pupils meeting the performance criterion.
- Summary statements for pupils served in the Early Literacy program:
 - > Of the 2021 pupils served, 1314 (65.0%) met a criterion to be included in the treatment group.
 - > Of the 1028 grade 1 treatment group pupils, 725 (70.5%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 1.
 - > Of the 286 grade 2 treatment group pupils, 247 (86.4%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 1.
 - > Of the 1314 total treatment group pupils, 972 (74.0%) met the performance criteria for Desired Outcome 1 indicating the desired outcome was achieved.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

Desired Outcome 1: Strategic Processing

Number and Percent of Pupils Who Met Criterion by Grade Level

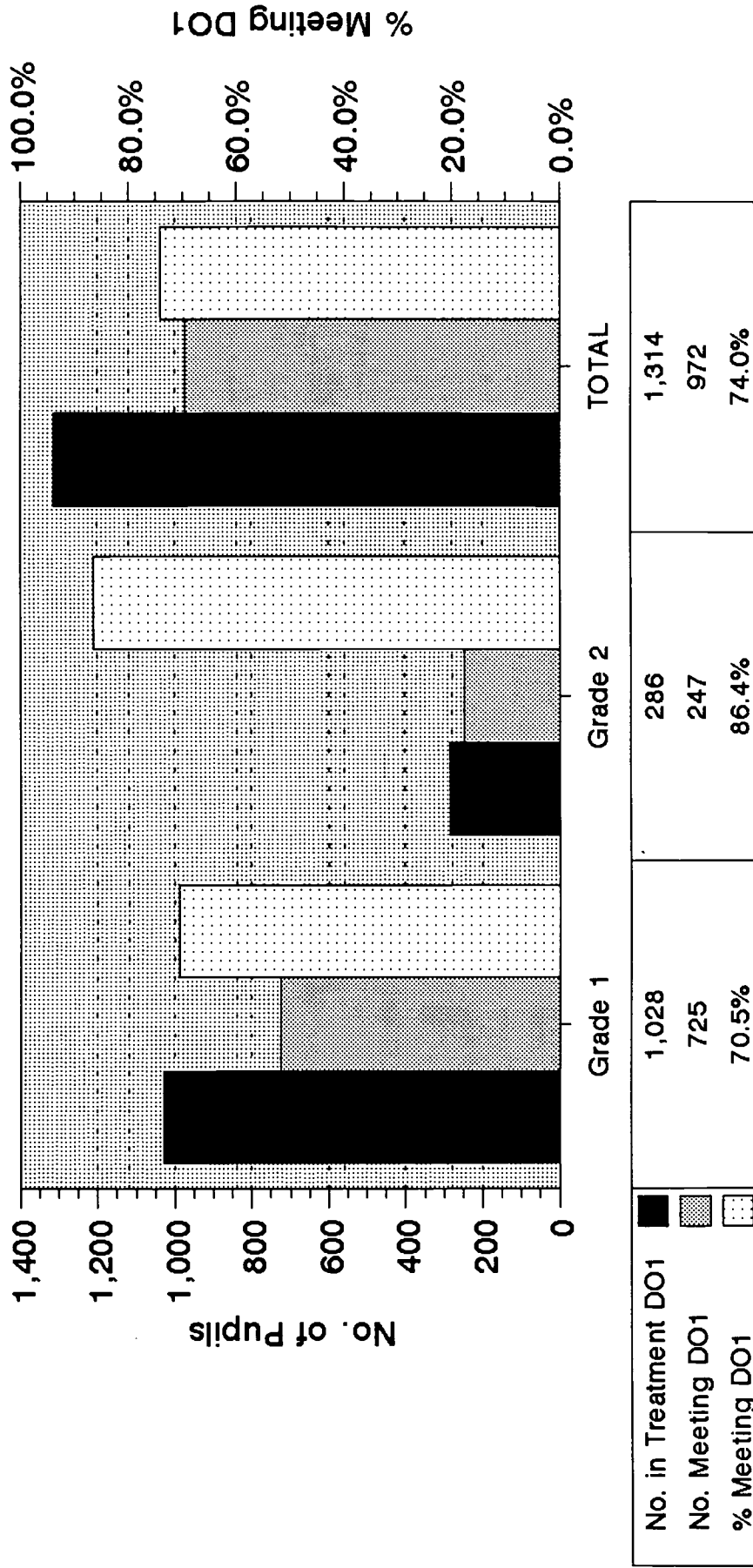


FIGURE 10

Of the 2021 total pupils served, 1314 (65.0%) met a criterion of be included in the treatment group.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I
Final Evaluation Report
1995-96

Early Literacy Reading Program

Desired Outcome 2 Results

- Desired Outcome 2: Of the grade 1 pupils who were discontinued or attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period at least 50 percent of the pupils will read at least five books at text reading level 8 or above as certified by the Title I teacher. At least 50 percent of the pupils in grade 2 who attended the program at least 50 percent of the treatment period and were not discontinued will independently read throughout the treatment period a minimum of ten books as certified by the Title I teacher.
- The following chart (Figure 11) presents the analysis of the number and percent of pupils in the treatment group who met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 2. The chart indicates the grade, number of pupils in the treatment group, number of pupils meeting the performance criterion, and the percent of pupils meeting the performance criterion.
- Summary statements for pupils served in the Early Literacy program:
 - > Of the 2021 pupils served, 1193 (59.0%) met a criterion to be included in the treatment group.
 - > Of the 1028 grade 1 treatment group pupils, 615 (59.8%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 2.
 - > Of the 165 grade 2 treatment group pupils, 136 (82.4%) met the performance criterion for Desired Outcome 2.
 - > Of the 1193 total treatment group pupils, 751 (63.0%) met the performance criteria for Desired Outcome 2 indicating the desired outcome was achieved.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

Desired Outcome 2: Read a Given Number of Certified Books
 Number and Percent of Pupils Who Met Criterion by Grade Level

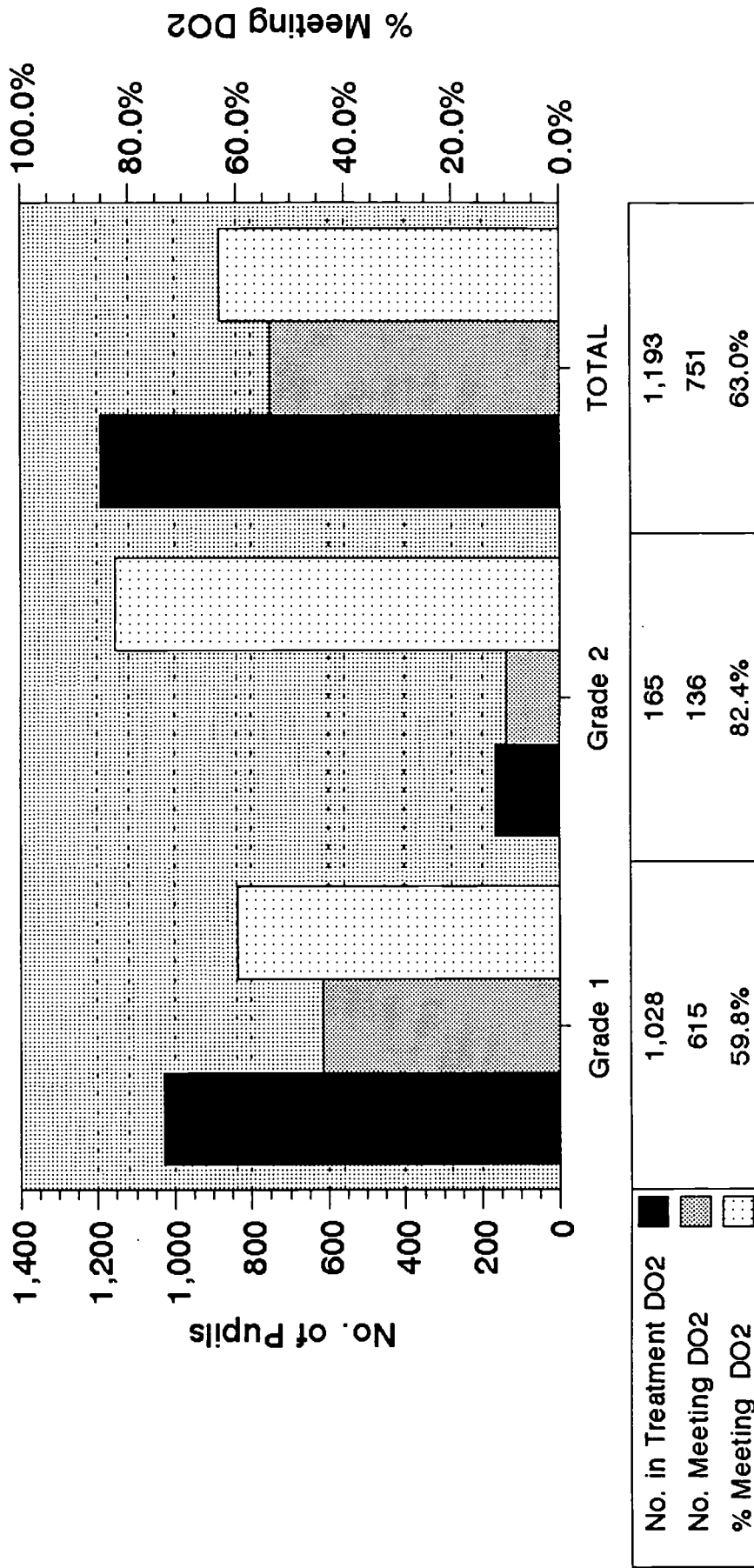


FIGURE 11

Of the 2021 pupils served, 1193 (59.0%) met a criterion to be included in the treatment group.

**Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I
Final Evaluation Report
1995-96**

Early Literacy Reading Program Standardized Test Results

- Aggregate test data is reported for grades 2 and above for individual buildings for Reading Comprehension. In order to be included in the evaluation sample for standardized test results a grade 2 pupil had to attend at least 50% of the treatment period and have both a pretest (spring 1995) and a posttest (spring 1996). For grade 1, pretesting did not occur but posttesting did. Therefore, Reading Comprehension pretest-posttest change scores could not be determined for grade 1 pupils.
- The following chart (Figure 12) presents standardized test results for grade 2 pupils served by the Early Literacy program.
 - > In Advanced Skills (Reading Comprehension), the average loss for the 190 evaluation sample pupils was 3.22 NCEs.
 - > In Advanced Skills (Reading Comprehension), discontinued pupils (110) had an average gain of 4.01 NCEs and not discontinued pupils (80) had an average loss of 8.48 NCEs.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

Advanced Skills (Reading Comprehension) NCE Change Scores for Grade 2

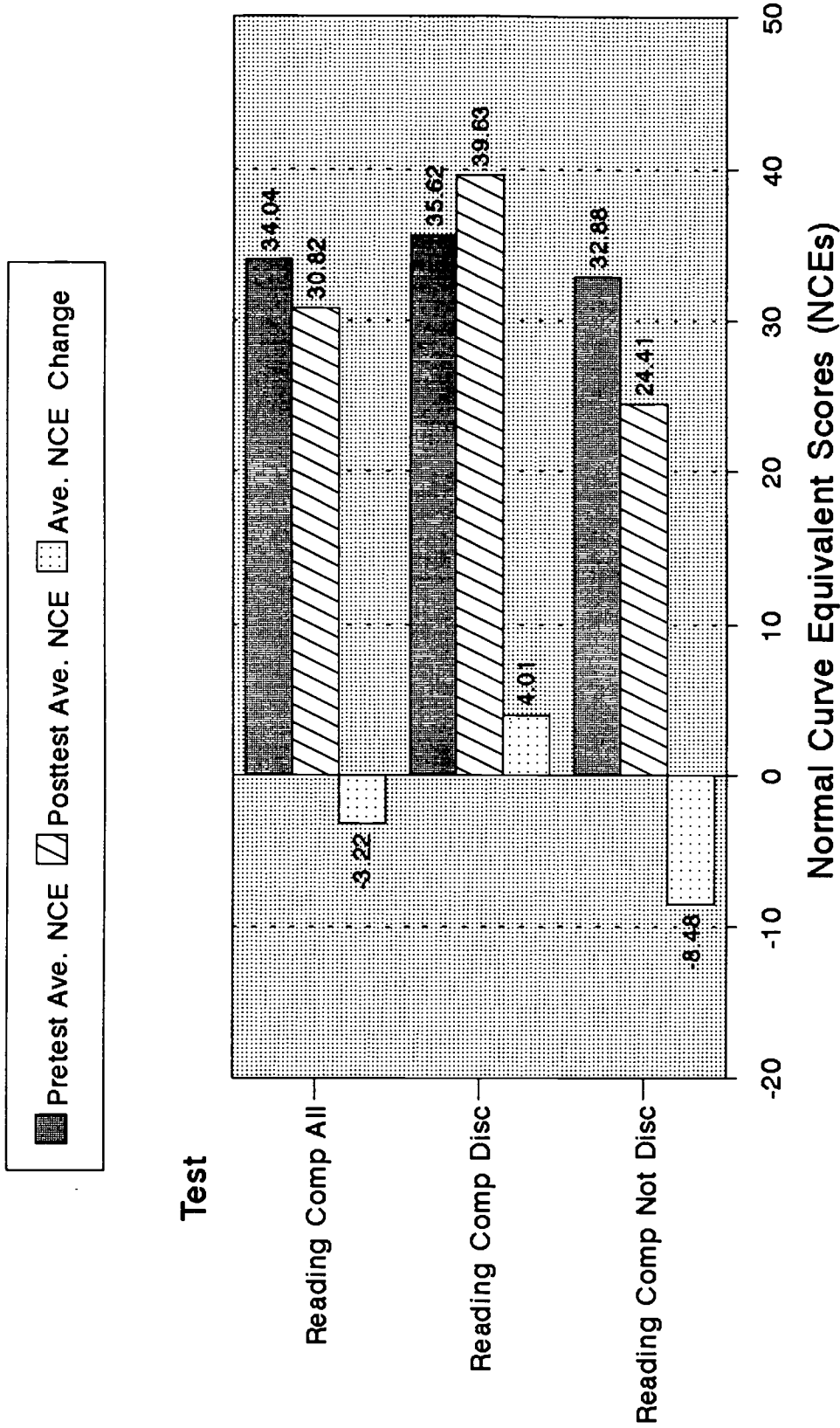


FIGURE 12

All (All Evaluation Sample Pupils); Disc (Discontinued Pupils in Evaluation Sample); Not Disc (Not Discontinued Pupils in Evaluation Sample).

**Elementary and Secondary Education Act - Title I
Final Evaluation Report
1995-96**

Early Literacy Reading Program

Parent Involvement Information

- Records of parent contacts and activities were maintained by program teachers. The following chart (Figure 14) presents parent involvement information for all pupils served by the Early Literacy program.
 - > A total of 1838 different individuals (parents, guardians) were involved with the Early Literacy program.
 - > Individuals involved in conferences (1696) accounted for the greatest number of persons involved with the program.
 - > The smallest number of individuals were involved with planning (30) and home visits (51).
 - > A total of 3986 contacts were made with the 1838 individuals involved with the Early Literacy program.
 - > Contacts involving individual conferences (3108) accounted for the greatest number of contacts with the program.
 - > The smallest number of contacts with the program included planning (39) and home visits (58).

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM 1995-96

PARENT INVOLVEMENT FOR ALL PUPILS SERVED

BY TYPE OF ACTIVITY

NUMBER OF PARENTS (thousands)

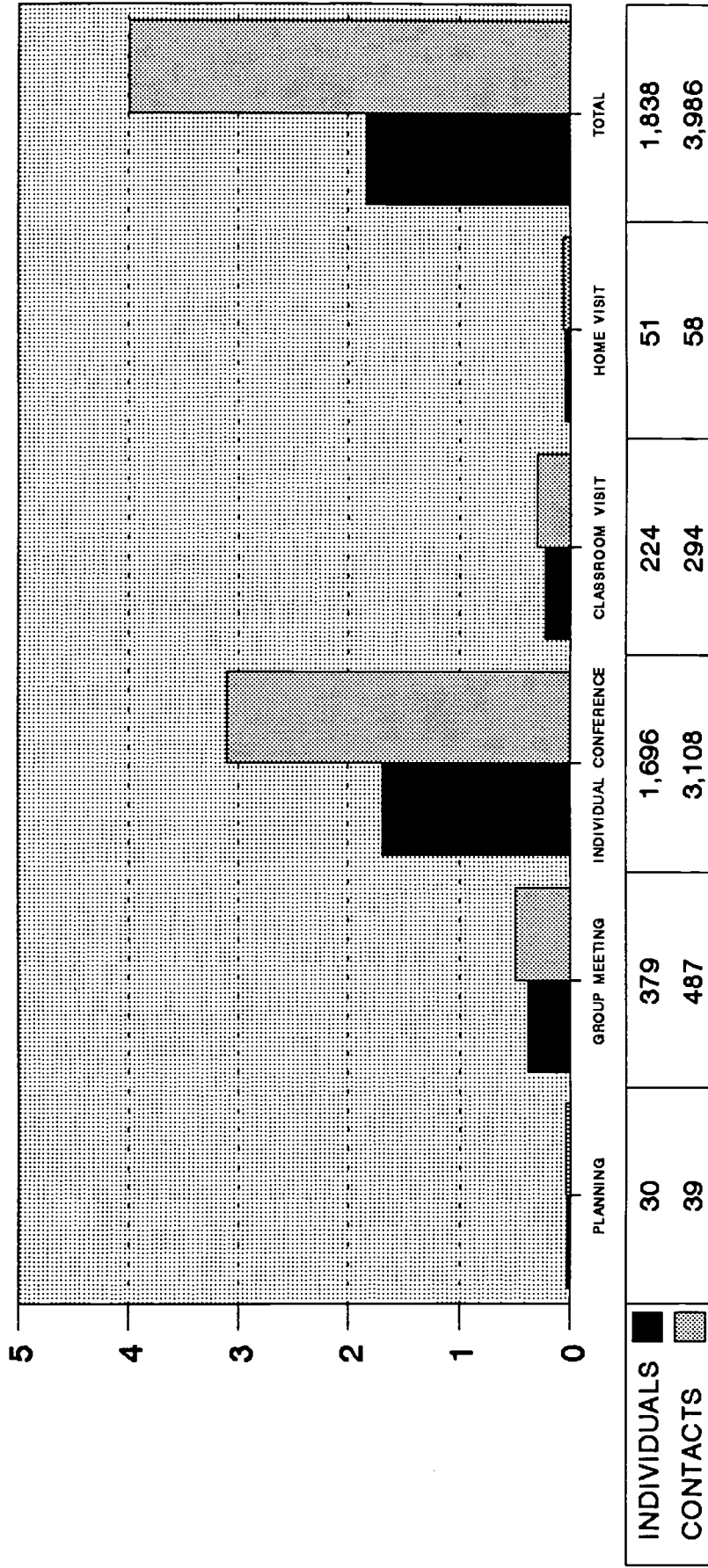


FIGURE 13

Total individuals is not additive across all activities as each individual may be involved in more than one activity.

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