



Subgroups and adequate yearly progress in Mid-Atlantic Region schools



Institute of Education Sciences
U.S. Department of Education



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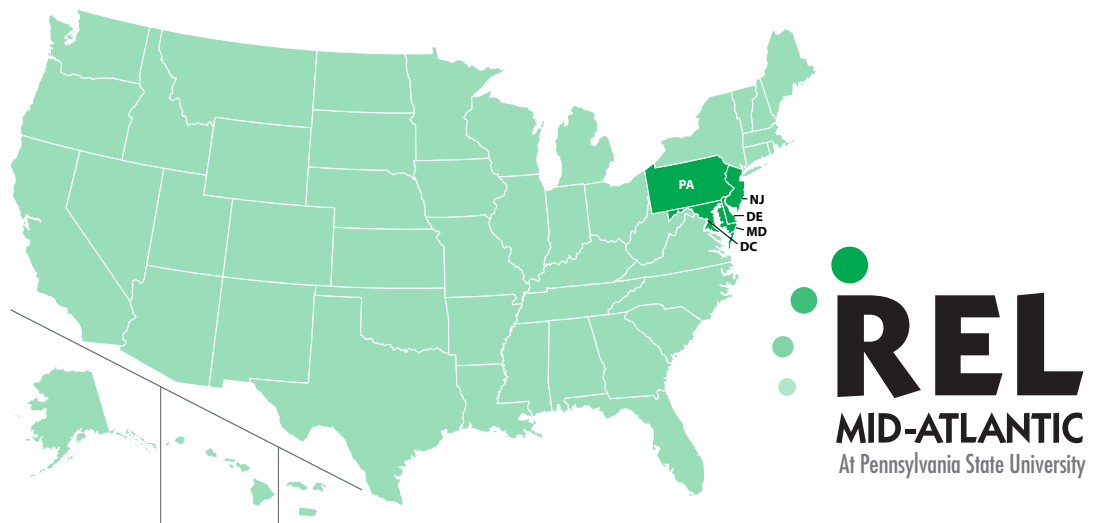
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This report is available on the regional educational laboratory web site at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

Summary

Subgroups and adequate yearly progress in Mid-Atlantic Region schools

This report examines to what extent Mid-Atlantic Region schools are achieving adequate yearly progress targets for No Child Left Behind subgroups. It provides education leaders with easily accessible data on what standards Mid-Atlantic Region states set for adequate yearly progress, how major No Child Left Behind subgroups perform against these standards, and how subgroup performance influences schools' adequate yearly progress determinations.

In a survey of 30 Mid-Atlantic Region education leaders, improving the achievement of No Child Left Behind subgroups—low-income students, students with limited English proficiency, students with disabilities, and students in major racial and ethnic groups—was the top priority for leaders from Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey, despite concerns about the accuracy and validity of test data (Crone, 2004; Kober, 2002). And all Mid-Atlantic Region states report difficulty in raising the achievement of black and Hispanic students to targets.

This report responds to these concerns. Its principal research question: to what extent are Mid-Atlantic Region schools achieving adequate yearly progress targets for No Child Left Behind subgroups? It provides education leaders with easily accessible data on what standards Mid-Atlantic Region states set for adequate yearly progress, how subgroups perform against these standards, and how subgroup performance influences schools' adequate yearly progress

determinations. The report finds large differences in policies and results across states.

In Delaware a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 40 or more students enrolled. Annual measurable objectives for the proportion of students achieving proficiency in 2005/06 were 62 percent for reading and 41 percent for math. Thirteen percent of Delaware schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup.

In Maryland a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with five or more students enrolled. Annual measurable objectives for student proficiency in 2005/06 were 57 percent for reading and 41 percent for math. Eight percent of Maryland schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

In New Jersey a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 20 or more students enrolled, except for students with disabilities, where the minimum size is 35. New Jersey uses confidence intervals for determining adequate yearly progress and “safe harbor” status. Annual measurable objectives for student proficiency in 2005/06 were 75 percent in grades 3–5, 66 percent in grades 6–8, and 79 percent in grade 11 for reading, and 62 percent in grades 3–5, 49 percent in grades 6–8, and 64 percent in grade 11 for math. Ten percent

of New Jersey schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

In Pennsylvania a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 40 or more students enrolled. For schools with subgroups of fewer than 40 students, the state department of education uses two or three years of data, if available, in making adequate yearly progress calculations and considers the use of a confidence interval. Annual measurable objectives for student proficiency in 2005/06 were 54 percent for reading and 45 percent for math. Eight percent of Pennsylvania schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

In the District of Columbia a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 25 or more students enrolled. Annual measurable objectives for student proficiency in 2005/06 were 50 percent for elementary reading, 37 percent for secondary reading, 57 percent for elementary math, and 42 percent for secondary math. Eight percent of District of Columbia schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

Examining the Mid-Atlantic Region as a whole, the report finds five patterns:

- Disparities across states in minimum group sizes, annual measurable objectives, and tests make state-to-state comparisons of subgroup achievement inappropriate. More appropriate is using these data to determine the magnitude of the problem a state is experiencing or may experience in the coming years.
- When schools did not make adequate yearly progress, the reason was generally the performance of multiple subgroups, partly because economically

disadvantaged students are also sometimes members of other subgroups.

- The students with disabilities subgroup represents a relatively low share of enrollment across the region, but in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania more schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup than to any other.
- The performance of the economically disadvantaged subgroup was the second most frequent reason for schools in Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia to not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.
- Fewer schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of limited English proficiency students than to that of any other nonrace or nonethnicity subgroup, except in Maryland, perhaps partly due to Maryland's reporting practices.

Detailed state data confirm the challenges to raising the performance of economically disadvantaged students and those with disabilities. And as the annual measurable objectives approach 100 percent proficiency, they will become even more difficult to reach.

The report therefore makes two recommendations. First, the unbalanced distribution of students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students across schools and the stigma from viewing schools not making adequate yearly progress as "failing" make it reasonable for policymakers to consider other definitions of adequate yearly progress. Value-added or growth modeling approaches are possible alternatives. Second, school policymakers should look beyond pass/fail categorizations to investigate how the achievement of students in each No Child Left Behind subgroup compares with that of subgroups in similar schools.

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This report examines to what extent Mid-Atlantic Region schools are achieving adequate yearly progress targets for No Child Left Behind subgroups. It provides education leaders with easily accessible data on what standards Mid-Atlantic Region states set for adequate yearly progress, how major No Child Left Behind subgroups perform against these standards, and how subgroup performance influences schools' adequate yearly progress determinations.

OVERVIEW

In a survey of 30 Mid-Atlantic Region education leaders, improving the achievement of No Child Left Behind subgroups—low-income students, students with limited English proficiency, students with disabilities, and students in major racial and ethnic groups—was the top priority for leaders from Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey, despite concerns about the accuracy and validity of test data (Crone, 2004; Kober, 2002). And all Mid-Atlantic Region states report difficulty in raising the achievement of black and Hispanic students to targets (see box 1 for definitions of key terms).

This report responds to these concerns. Its principal research question: to what extent are Mid-Atlantic Region schools achieving adequate yearly progress targets for No Child Left Behind subgroups? It provides education leaders with easily accessible data on what standards Mid-Atlantic Region states set for adequate yearly progress, how subgroups perform against these standards, and how subgroup performance influences schools' adequate yearly progress determinations. The report finds large differences in policies and results across states.

In Delaware a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 40 or more students enrolled. Annual measurable objectives for the proportion of students achieving proficiency in 2005/06 were 62 percent for reading and 41 percent for math. Thirteen percent of Delaware schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup.

In Maryland a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with five or more students enrolled. Annual measurable objectives for student proficiency in 2005/06 were 57 percent for reading and 41 percent for math. Eight percent of Maryland schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

BOX 1

Data sources and definitions

Data sources and basic terms related to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 are important background for the data in this report.

Data sources

Data were gathered from each state's annual assessment reports under the No Child Left Behind Act. These include the Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook, each state's Department of Education Report Card, and other statewide assessment reports. The methods states used to report adequate yearly progress data are not always consistent across the region. For example, information about N-sizes was taken from the Council of Chief State School Officers web site (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2007), which archives the State Accountability Workbooks, while school-level data came from either electronic spreadsheets (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2006; Maryland State Department of Education, 2007a) or PDF documents (State of New Jersey Department of Education, 2006d; State of Delaware, 2006; District of Columbia Public Schools and Charter Schools, 2006). The Common Core of Data was not used because its latest data are for 2004/05, except for some enrollment data that were unavailable on the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania web sites.

Overview of subgroups and determination of adequate yearly progress

The No Child Left Behind Act requires each state to set annual targets

to ensure that all students make adequate yearly progress toward achieving proficiency in reading and mathematics, with 100 percent proficiency to be achieved by 2013/14.

Subgroups. Under the No Child Left Behind Act schools must monitor progress toward proficiency goals, reporting data on several subgroups, including low-income students, students with limited English proficiency, students with disabilities, and students in major racial and ethnic groups, as well as aggregate data for the entire student population. In designated grades schools must test at least 95 percent of students in all subgroups and must meet their state's annual targets for all subgroups in a given year or on average in the last three years to be considered making adequate yearly progress.

Across the Mid-Atlantic Region the number of students in each subgroup is defined as the number of students meeting the criteria for subgroup membership who were instructionally served by the school in the tested grades and were in the school for a full academic year. The major race or ethnicity subgroups are American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, black/non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and white/non-Hispanic. Students with disabilities are students with Individual Education Programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Economically disadvantaged students are students eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch plan. Limited English proficiency students are typically included in the subgroup until they score at a predetermined level on a

state language proficiency test for two consecutive years.

Determination of adequate yearly progress. Each state has developed measures for determining whether its schools and local education agencies are making adequate yearly progress toward the goal of all students meeting state academic standards in reading and math. It sets the minimum level of proficiency that the state, its school districts, and its schools must achieve each year on tests and related academic indicators.

Minimum N-size. Each state has set a minimum group size to determine whether a subgroup within a school is sufficiently large to produce a statistically reliable proficiency rate. When a subgroup is smaller than the minimum N-size, the school is not held accountable for the proficiency of that subgroup in determining the school's adequate yearly progress.

Annual measurable objectives. To support determinations of adequate yearly progress, each state has adopted a schedule of annual measurable objectives that define the percentage of students who are expected to achieve proficiency in each subject and each year. Annual measurable objective thresholds are raised at least every three years, reaching 100 percent in 2013/14.

Safe harbor. The No Child Left Behind Act allows schools that fall short of annual measurable objectives to meet adequate yearly progress requirements by demonstrating improvement. Under "safe harbor" a school meets adequate yearly progress if

it reduces by at least 10 percent the proportion of students scoring below proficient in the previous year. Confidence intervals are used in some cases. The state-by-state results detail policies and reporting standards on safe harbor and adequate yearly progress.

Missed adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup. This report creates a new category that identifies the share of schools within a state that did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of a single subgroup. This category was determined by reviewing the schools

that reported subgroup performance and then counting the schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets solely because of the performance of a particular subgroup in math, reading, or both and dividing that number by the total number of schools in the state.

In New Jersey a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 20 or more students enrolled, except for students with disabilities, where the minimum size is 35. New Jersey uses confidence intervals for determining adequate yearly progress and “safe harbor” status. Annual measurable objectives for student proficiency in 2005/06 were 75 percent in grades 3–5, 66 percent in grades 6–8, and 79 percent in grade 11 for reading, and 62 percent in grades 3–5, 49 percent in grades 6–8, and 64 percent in grade 11 for math. Ten percent of New Jersey schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

In Pennsylvania a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 40 or more students enrolled. For schools with subgroups of fewer than 40 students, the state department of education uses two or three years of data, if available, in making adequate yearly progress calculations and considers the use of a confidence interval. Annual measurable objectives for student proficiency in 2005/06 were 54 percent for reading and 45 percent for math. Eight percent of Pennsylvania schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

In the District of Columbia a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 25 or more students enrolled. Annual measurable objectives for student proficiency in 2005/06 were 50 percent for elementary reading, 37 percent for secondary reading, 57 percent for elementary math, and 42 percent for secondary math. Eight percent of District of

Columbia schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

Examining the Mid-Atlantic Region as a whole, the report finds five patterns:

- Disparities across states in minimum group sizes, annual measurable objectives, and tests make state-to-state comparisons of subgroup achievement inappropriate. More appropriate is using these data to determine the magnitude of the problem a state is experiencing or may experience in the coming years.
- When schools did not make adequate yearly progress, the reason was generally the performance of multiple subgroups, partly because economically disadvantaged students are also sometimes members of other subgroups.
- The students with disabilities subgroup represents a relatively low share of enrollment across the region, but in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania more schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup than to any other.
- The performance of the economically disadvantaged subgroup was the second most frequent reason for schools in Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the District of

Disparities across states in minimum group sizes, annual measurable objectives, and tests make state-to-state comparisons of subgroup achievement inappropriate

Columbia to not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup.

- Fewer schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of limited English proficiency students than to that of any other nonrace or nonethnicity subgroup, except in Maryland, perhaps partly due to Maryland's reporting practices.

Detailed state data confirm the challenges to raising the performance of economically disadvantaged students and those with disabilities. And as the annual measurable objectives approach 100 percent proficiency, they will become even more difficult to reach.

The report therefore makes two recommendations. First, the unbalanced distribution of students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged

students across schools and the stigma from viewing schools not making adequate yearly progress as “failing” make it reasonable for policymakers to consider other definitions of adequate yearly progress. Value-added or growth modeling approaches are possible alternatives. Second, school policymakers should look beyond pass/fail categorizations to investigate how the achievement of students in each No Child Left Behind subgroup compares with that of subgroups in similar schools.

THE REPORT GATHERS FIVE SETS OF DATA

Adequate yearly progress determinations are based on annual measurable objectives set by each state for the proportion of students achieving proficiency, as well as the minimum group size (N-size) each state has selected for subgroups under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (table 1). To increase

TABLE 1

N-sizes and annual measurable objectives for the Mid-Atlantic Region, 2003/04–2013/14 (percent)

State	N-size	Annual measurable objective											
		2003/04		2005/06 ^a		2007/08		2009/10		2011/12		2013/14	
Delaware	40	R	57	R	62	R	68	R	73	R	84	R	100
		M	33	M	41	M	50	M	58	M	75	M	100
Maryland	5	R	43	R	57	R	66	R	76	R	86	R	100
		M	30	M	41	M	57	M	69	M	81	M	100
New Jersey	20 35 ^b	3–5/R	68	3–5/R	75	3–5/R	75	3–5/R	82	3–5/R	91	3–5/R	100
		6–8/R	58	6–8/R	66	6–8/R	66	6–8/R	76	6–8/R	87	6–8/R	100
		11/R	73	11/R	79	11/R	79	11/R	85	11/R	92	11/R	100
		3–5/M	53	3–5/M	62	3–5/M	62	3–5/M	73	3–5/M	85	3–5/M	100
		6–8/M	39	6–8/M	49	6–8/M	49	6–8/M	62	6–8/M	79	6–8/M	100
Pennsylvania	40	R	45	R	54	R	63	R	72	R	81	R	100
		M	35	M	45	M	56	M	67	M	78	M	100
District of Columbia ^c	25			Elem/R	50	Elem/R	59					Elem/R	100
				Sec/R	37	Sec/R	50					Sec/R	100
				Elem/M	57	Elem/M	64					Elem/M	100
				Sec/M	42	Sec/M	53					Sec/M	100

R is reading; M is math.

a. The 2005/06 annual measurable objectives are the basis for the adequate yearly progress determinations in this report.

b. For the students with disabilities subgroup.

c. The District of Columbia changed its test in 2005/06 and has just begun to adjust the annual measurable objectives based on these changes. Comparisons of objectives between 2003/04 and more recent years should thus be made with caution. These changes in testing have precipitated changes in future annual measurable objectives, which are currently unavailable to the public.

Note: Because of space constraints, only odd-numbered years are displayed.

Source: See tables 2–6.

the probability that all students reach proficiency by 2013/14, the No Child Left Behind Act requires that schools report data for several subgroups, including low-income students, students with limited English proficiency, students with disabilities, and students in major racial and ethnic groups. The distribution of these subgroups varies across the Mid-Atlantic Region (figure 1).

The act allows each state to set a minimum group size (the N-size) to determine whether a subgroup is sufficiently large to produce a statistically reliable participation rate for calculating its adequate yearly progress within a particular school. If a school’s enrollment in a subgroup is lower than the minimum N-size, the school is not held accountable for the proficiency level of that subgroup. There is considerable variation across the Mid-Atlantic Region in the minimum N-size.

The report gathers five sets of data for the Mid-Atlantic Region states (see box 1 for data sources). First is the percentage of schools that reported adequate yearly progress determinations for students in each subgroup, meaning that they enrolled more students in that subgroup than minimum group sizes set by states. Second is the percentage of those reporting schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for students in each subgroup. Third

is the percentage of those reporting schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of students in each subgroup. Fourth is the percentage of all schools—whether or not required to report for a subgroup—that missed adequate yearly progress targets for students in each subgroup. Fifth is the percentage of all schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of students in each subgroup.

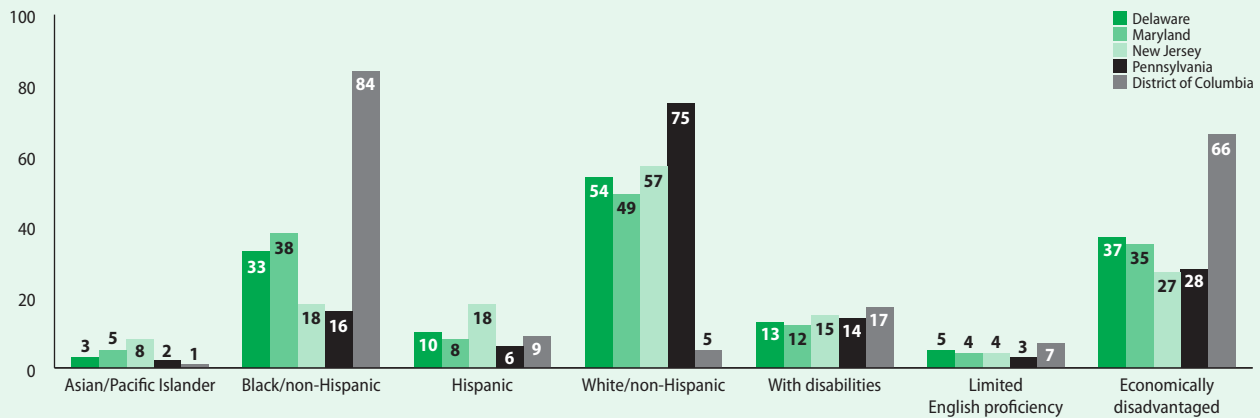
DETAILED POLICIES AND RESULTS ON ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS DETERMINATIONS FOR SUBGROUPS

This section briefly describes the determination of adequate yearly progress for subgroups in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Delaware

In Delaware a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 40 or more students enrolled. Annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 62 percent for reading and 41 percent for math. Overall, 13 percent of Delaware schools missed adequate yearly progress targets due solely to the performance of one subgroup.

FIGURE 1
The Mid-Atlantic Region: enrollment of subgroups, 2005/06 (percent)



Note: Because of extremely low enrollment, data for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup are not included here but can be found in tables 2–6.
Source: See box 1.

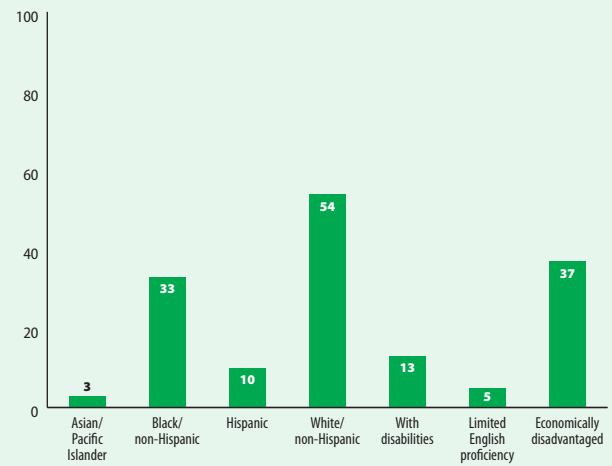
In Delaware 13 percent of schools missed adequate yearly progress targets due solely to the performance of one subgroup

At 54 percent, white/non-Hispanic students are the largest race or ethnicity subgroup in Delaware schools (figure 2 and table 2), with 71 percent of schools reporting for this subgroup. Of those, 0.7 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and

0.7 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Delaware schools, 0.5 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 0.5 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup.

Black/non-Hispanic students are the next largest race or ethnicity subgroup in Delaware schools, accounting for about a third of students. Seventy-five percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 6 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 0.7 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Delaware schools, 4 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets

FIGURE 2
Delaware: enrollment of subgroups, 2005/06 (percent)



Note: Because of extremely low enrollment, data for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup are not included here but can be found in table 2.

Source: See box 1.

for this subgroup, and 0.5 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup.

TABLE 2
Delaware: subgroups and adequate yearly progress, 2005/06 (percent)

Subgroup	Enrolled students in subgroup	Schools reporting for subgroup	Reporting schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	Reporting schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup	All schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	All schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.4	0	0	0	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	3	0	0	0	0
Black/non-Hispanic	33	75	6	0.7	4	0.5
Hispanic	10	19	0	0	0	0
White/non-Hispanic	54	71	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.5
Students with disabilities	13	28	37	28	10	8
Limited English proficiency	5	5	44	22	2	1
Economically disadvantaged	37	81	8	4	7	3

Note: Delaware sets its N-size at 40. Its annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 62 percent for reading and 41 percent for math.

Source: Minimum N-size, State of Delaware (2006); number of schools and adequate yearly progress, Delaware Department of Education (2007).

Hispanic students account for 10 percent of Delaware’s students, with 19 percent of schools reporting for this subgroup. No schools, reporting or not, missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup.

Delaware schools enroll few Asian/Pacific Islander students (3 percent) or American Indian/Alaskan Native students (0.4 percent). Only 3 percent of schools reported for the Asian/Pacific Islander subgroup, and none of those missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup. No Delaware schools reported for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup.

Delaware reported 37 percent of students as economically disadvantaged, the second highest share in the Mid-Atlantic Region, and 81 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 8 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 4 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Delaware schools, 7 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup.

Students with disabilities constitute 13 percent of the students in Delaware schools. Twenty-eight percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 37 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 28 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Delaware schools, 10 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 8 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Limited English proficiency students account for 5 percent of the students in Delaware schools. Only 5 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 44 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 22 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Delaware schools, 2 percent missed adequate yearly

progress targets for this subgroup, and 1 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup.

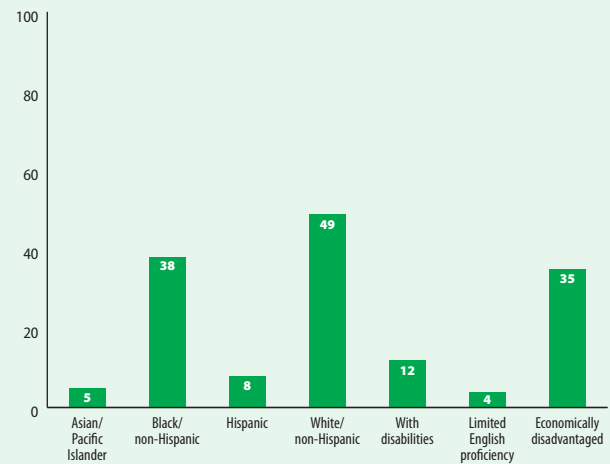
Maryland

In Maryland a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with five or more students enrolled. Because Maryland reported data separately for math and reading, separate statistics are included here. In 2005/06, 99 percent of students in each subgroup were tested in math and reading. Annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 57 percent for reading and 41 percent for math. Overall, 8 percent of Maryland schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup.

In Maryland 8 percent of schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup

At 48 percent, white/non-Hispanic students are the largest race or ethnicity subgroup in Maryland schools (figure 3 and table 3), with 81 percent of

FIGURE 3
Maryland: enrollment of subgroups, 2005/06 (percent)



Note: Because of extremely low enrollment, data for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup are not included here but can be found in table 3.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education (2007a).

TABLE 3

Maryland: subgroups and adequate yearly progress, 2005/06 (percent)

Subgroup	Enrolled students in subgroup	Schools reporting for subgroup	Reporting schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	Reporting schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup	All schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	All schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	0.04	5 R 5 M	2 R 0 M	0 R 0 M	0.1 R 0 M	0 R 0 M
Asian/Pacific Islander	5	51 R 51 M	0.1 R 0 M	0 R 0 M	0.1 R 0 M	0 R 0 M
Black/non-Hispanic	38	90 R 90 M	14 R 10 M	1 R 1 M	13 R 9 M	1 R 1 M
Hispanic	8	60 R 60 M	3 R 1 M	0.1 R 0 M	2 R 1 M	0.1 R 0 M
White/non-Hispanic	48	81 R 81 M	3 R 3 M	0 R 0 M	2 R 2 M	0 R 0 M
Students with disabilities	12	95 R 95 M	19 R 17 M	5 R 7 M	18 R 16 M	5 R 6 M
Limited English proficiency	4	42 R 43 M	8 R 3 M	2 R 0.2 M	3 R 1 M	1 R 0.1 M
Economically disadvantaged	35	91 R 92 M	13 R 9 M	1 R 0.1 M	12 R 8 M	0.4 R 0.1 M

R is reading; M is math.

Note: Maryland sets its N-size at 5. Its annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 57 percent for reading and 41 percent for math.

Source: Minimum N-size, Maryland State Department of Education (2006); number of schools and enrollment, Maryland State Department of Education (2007a); adequate yearly progress, Maryland State Department of Education (2007b).

schools reporting for this subgroup. Of those, 3 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math and reading for this subgroup, but no schools failed to make adequate yearly progress for math or reading solely because of this subgroup. Of all Maryland schools, 2 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math and reading for this subgroup. But again, no schools failed to make adequate yearly progress in math or reading solely because of this subgroup.

Black/non-Hispanic students are the second largest race or ethnicity subgroup in Maryland schools, accounting for 38 percent of students. Ninety percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 10 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 14 percent missed for reading. One percent of reporting schools did not make adequate yearly progress for math and reading due solely to this

subgroup. Of all Maryland schools, 9 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 13 percent missed for reading. One percent did not make adequate yearly progress in math and reading solely because of this subgroup.

Hispanic students account for 8 percent of Maryland students, with 60 percent of schools reporting for this subgroup. Of those, 1 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 3 percent missed for reading. But none in math and only 0.1 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Maryland schools, 1 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 2 percent missed for reading. No schools in math and only 0.1 percent in reading failed to make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Maryland schools enroll few Asian/Pacific Islander students (5 percent) or American Indian/Alaskan Native students (0.04 percent). However, Asian/Pacific Islander students are spread widely across Maryland’s schools, with 51 percent reporting for this subgroup. Of those, none missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 0.1 percent missed for reading. No schools did not make adequate yearly progress in math and reading solely because of this subgroup. Of all Maryland schools, 0.1 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for reading for this subgroup, but no schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Only 5 percent of schools reported for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup. Of those, none missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 2 percent missed for reading. No schools did not make adequate yearly progress in math and reading solely because of this subgroup. Of all Maryland schools, no schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 0.1 percent missed for reading. No school did not make adequate yearly progress in math or reading solely because of this subgroup.

Maryland reported 35 percent of its students as economically disadvantaged, the third highest share in the Mid-Atlantic Region, and 92 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 9 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets in math for this subgroup, and 13 percent missed in reading. But only 0.1 percent in math and 1 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Maryland schools, 8 percent missed targets in math for this subgroup, and 12 percent missed in reading; 0.1 percent in math and 0.4 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Students with disabilities constitute 12 percent of the students in Maryland schools. Ninety-five percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 17 percent missed adequate yearly progress

targets for math for this subgroup, and 19 percent missed for reading. Seven percent in math and 5 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Maryland schools, 16 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets in math for this subgroup, and 18 percent missed in reading. Six percent of Maryland schools in math and 5 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup.

Limited English proficiency students account for 4 percent of Maryland students, and 43 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 3 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 8 percent missed for reading. Only 0.2 percent of these schools in math and 2 percent in reading, however, did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Maryland schools, 1 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets in math for this subgroup, and 3 percent missed in reading; 0.1 percent in math and 1 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

New Jersey

In New Jersey a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 20 or more students enrolled, except for students with disabilities, where the minimum N-size is 35. New Jersey uses a confidence interval of 95 percent around the school or district proficiency level for determining adequate yearly progress and a confidence interval of 75 percent around the school or district proficiency level for determining safe harbor status. Annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 75 percent in grades 3–5, 66 percent in grades 6–8, and 79 percent in grade 11 for reading, and 62 percent in grades 3–5, 49 percent in grades 6–8, and 64 percent in grade 11 for math. The subgroup data in

In New Jersey 10 percent of schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup

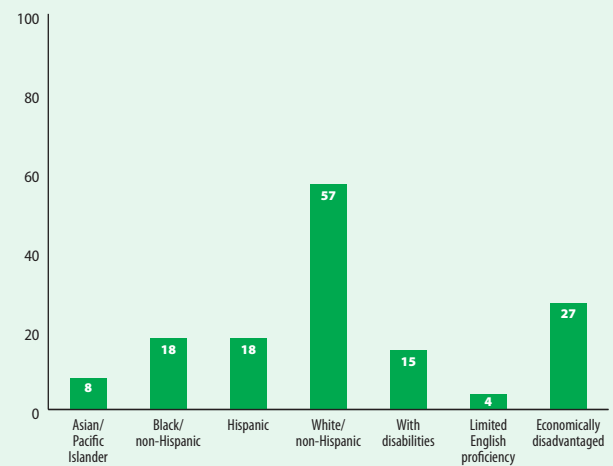
this report do not reflect safe harbor procedures. Overall, 10 percent of New Jersey schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup.

At 57 percent, white/non-Hispanic students are the largest race or ethnicity subgroup in New Jersey schools (figure 4 and table 4), with 76 percent of schools reporting for this subgroup. Of those, 3 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 0.6 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all New Jersey schools, 2 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 0.5 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Black/non-Hispanic students account for 18 percent of the students in New Jersey schools. About a third of New Jersey schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 54 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 6 percent did not make adequate yearly progress

FIGURE 4

New Jersey: enrollment of subgroups, 2005/06 (percent)



Note: Because of extremely low enrollment, data for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup are not included here but can be found in table 4.

Source: State of New Jersey Department of Education (2006a, d).

solely because of this subgroup. Of all New Jersey schools, 18 percent missed targets for this

TABLE 4

New Jersey: subgroups and adequate yearly progress, 2005/06 (percent)

Subgroup	Enrolled students in subgroup	Schools reporting for subgroup	Reporting schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	Reporting schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup	All schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	All schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.2	0	0	0	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	8	15	4	1	0.7	0.2
Black/non-Hispanic	18	33	54	6	18	2
Hispanic	18	31	40	3	12	1
White/non-Hispanic	57	76	3	0.6	2	0.5
Students with disabilities	15	18	70	29	13	5
Limited English proficiency	4	5	62	5	3	0.2
Economically disadvantaged	27	48	49	7	24	3

Note: New Jersey sets its N-size at 20, except for students with disabilities, where the minimum N-size is 35. Its annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 75 percent for reading in grades 3–5, 66 percent for reading in grades 6–8, 79 percent for reading in grade 11, 62 percent for math in grades 3–5, 49 percent for math in grades 6–8, and 64 percent for math in grade 11.

Source: Minimum N-size, State of New Jersey (2006c); number of schools and adequate yearly progress, State of New Jersey Department of Education (2006b); enrollment data, State of New Jersey Department of Education (2006a, d).

subgroup, and 2 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Hispanic students account for 18 percent of New Jersey’s students, the highest share in the Mid-Atlantic Region. Thirty-one percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 40 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all New Jersey schools, 12 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 1 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

New Jersey schools enroll few Asian/Pacific Islander students (8 percent) and American Indian/Alaskan Native students (0.2 percent). Fifteen percent of schools reported for the Asian/Pacific Islander subgroup. Of those, only 4 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 1 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all New Jersey schools, 0.7 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 0.2 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup. No schools reported for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup.

New Jersey reported 27 percent of its students as economically disadvantaged, the lowest share in the Mid-Atlantic Region, and 48 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 49 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 7 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all New Jersey schools, 24 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Students with disabilities constitute 15 percent of the students in New Jersey schools. Eighteen percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 70 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 29 percent did not

make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all New Jersey schools, 13 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 5 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Limited English proficiency students account for 4 percent of the students in New Jersey schools. Only 5 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 62 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 5 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all New Jersey schools, 3 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 0.2 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Pennsylvania

In Pennsylvania a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 40 or more students enrolled. For schools with subgroups of fewer than 40 students, the state department of education uses two or three years of data, if available, in making adequate yearly progress calculations and considers the use of a confidence interval. Annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 54 percent for reading and 45 percent for math. Pennsylvania allows schools to meet adequate yearly progress requirements through safe harbor, confidence intervals, or several other options (including the Pennsylvania performance index, appeal, or proxy; for details see Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2006). None of these adjustments are included in the data here, however. Overall, 8 percent of Pennsylvania schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup.

In Pennsylvania 8 percent of schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup

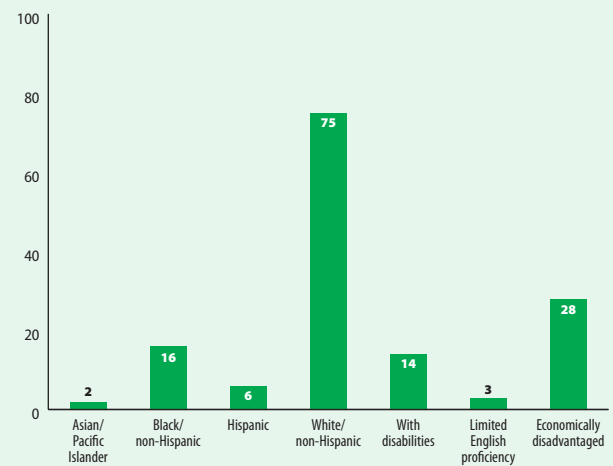
At 75 percent, white/non-Hispanic students are the largest race or ethnicity subgroup in Pennsylvania

schools (figure 5 and table 5), with 79 percent of schools reporting for this subgroup. Of those, 1 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math and reading for this subgroup. None did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Pennsylvania schools, 0.5 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math and reading for this subgroup, 0.1 percent did not make adequate yearly progress for math due solely to this subgroup, and 0.3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress for reading due solely to this subgroup.

Black/non-Hispanic students are the second largest race or ethnicity subgroup in Pennsylvania schools, accounting for 16 percent of students. Nineteen percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 21 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 25 percent missed for reading. Three percent

FIGURE 5

Pennsylvania: enrollment of subgroups, 2005/06 (percent)



Note: Because of extremely low enrollment, data for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup are not included here but can be found in table 5.

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education (2006) and U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2006).

TABLE 5

Pennsylvania: subgroups and adequate yearly progress, 2005/06 (percent)

Subgroup	Enrolled students in subgroup	Schools reporting for subgroup	Reporting schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	Reporting schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup	All schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	All schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.1	0.1	0 R 0 M	0 R 0 M	0 R 0 M	0 R 0 M
Asian/Pacific Islander	2	1	7 R 7 M	0 R 0 M	0.1 R 0.1 M	0 R 0 M
Black/non-Hispanic	16	19	25 R 21 M	4 R 3 M	5 R 4 M	0.7 R 0.6 M
Hispanic	6	6	26 R 13 M	5 R 0.1 M	2 R 1 M	0.7 R 1 M
White/non-Hispanic	75	79	1 R 1 M	0 R 0 M	0.5 R 0.5 M	0.3 R 0.1 M
Students with disabilities	14	15	27 R 30 M	19 R 19 M	4 R 4 M	3 R 3 M
Limited English proficiency	3	2	20 R 13 M	4 R 4 M	0.3 R 0.2 M	0.1 R 0.1 M
Economically disadvantaged	28	48	16 R 11 M	5 R 3 M	8 R 5 M	2 R 1 M

R is reading; M is math.

Note: Pennsylvania sets its N-size at 40. Its annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 54 percent for reading and 45 percent for math.

Source: Minimum N-size, State of Pennsylvania (2006); number of schools and adequate yearly progress, Pennsylvania Department of Education (2006); enrollment data, Pennsylvania Department of Education (2006) and U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2006).

in math and 4 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Pennsylvania schools, 4 percent missed adequate yearly progress for math for this subgroup, and 5 percent missed for reading; 0.6 percent in math and 0.7 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Hispanic students account for 6 percent of Pennsylvania students, with 6 percent of schools reporting for this subgroup. Of those, 13 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets in math for this subgroup, and 26 percent missed in reading. Of reporting schools, 0.1 percent in math and 5 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Pennsylvania schools, 1 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, and 2 percent missed for reading; 1 percent in math and 0.7 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Pennsylvania schools enroll few Asian/Pacific Islander students (2 percent) and American Indian/Alaskan Native students (0.1 percent). Only 1 percent of schools reported for the Asian/Pacific Islander subgroup. Of those, 7 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math and reading for this subgroup, but none did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Of all Pennsylvania schools, 0.1 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets in math and reading for this subgroup, but no schools failed to make adequate yearly progress in math and reading due solely to this subgroup. Only 0.1 percent of Pennsylvania schools reported for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup, and no schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for math or reading for this subgroup.

Pennsylvania reported 28 percent of students as economically disadvantaged, the second lowest share in the Mid-Atlantic Region, and 48 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 11 percent missed adequate yearly progress for math for this subgroup, and 16 percent missed for

reading. Of reporting schools, 3 percent in math and 5 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup. Of all Pennsylvania schools, 5 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets in math for this subgroup, and 8 percent missed in reading; 1 percent in math and 2 percent in reading did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup.

Students with disabilities constitute 14 percent of Pennsylvania students. Fifteen percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 30 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math for this subgroup, 27 percent missed in reading for this subgroup, and 19 percent missed for math and reading solely because of this subgroup. Of all Pennsylvania schools, 4 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for math and reading for this subgroup, and 3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress in math and reading due solely to this subgroup.

Limited English proficiency students account for 3 percent of students in Pennsylvania schools. Only 2 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 13 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets in math for this subgroup, and 20 percent missed in reading; 4 percent did not make adequate yearly progress in math and reading solely because of this subgroup. Of all Pennsylvania schools, 0.2 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets in math for this subgroup, and 0.3 percent missed in reading. Only 0.1 percent of all schools did not make adequate yearly progress for math and reading due solely to this subgroup.

District of Columbia

In the District of Columbia a school is required to report an adequate yearly progress determination for any subgroup with 25 or more students enrolled. Annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 50 percent for elementary reading, 37 percent for secondary reading, 57 percent for elementary math, and 42 percent for secondary math. Overall, 8 percent of District of Columbia schools did not

In the District of Columbia 8 percent of schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup

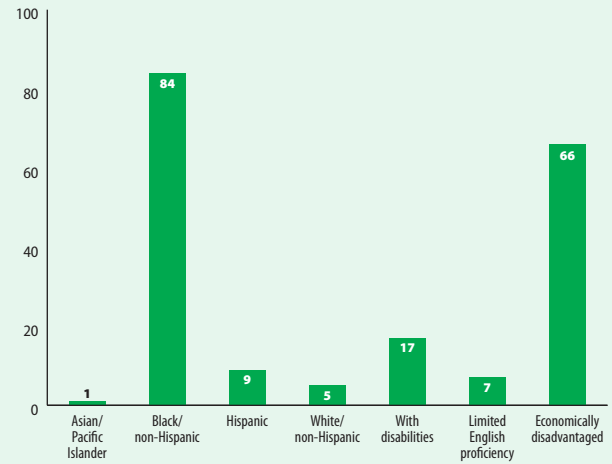
make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of one subgroup.

At 84 percent, black/non-Hispanic students are the largest race or ethnicity subgroup in District of Columbia schools (figure 6 and table 6), with 83 percent of schools

reporting for this subgroup. Of those, 70 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Across the District, 58 percent of schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Hispanic students are the second largest race or ethnicity subgroup in District of Columbia schools, accounting for 9 percent of students. Thirteen percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 86 percent missed adequate

FIGURE 6
District of Columbia: enrollment of subgroups, 2005/06 (percent)



Note: Because of extremely low enrollment, data for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup are not included here but can be found in table 6.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2006).

yearly progress targets for this subgroup, but none did not make adequate yearly progress due solely

TABLE 6

District of Columbia: subgroups and adequate yearly progress, 2005/06 (percent)

Subgroup	Enrolled students in subgroup	Schools reporting for subgroup	Reporting schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	Reporting schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup	All schools that missed adequate yearly progress targets for subgroup	All schools that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to subgroup
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.05	0	0	0	0	0
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	0.5	100	0	0.5	0
Black/non-Hispanic	84	83	70	3	58	3
Hispanic	9	13	86	0	11	0
White/non-Hispanic	5	5	0	0	0	0
Students with disabilities	17	21	82	9	17	2
Limited English proficiency	7	5	100	8	6	0.5
Economically disadvantaged	66	77	76	3	58	2

Note: The District of Columbia sets its N-size at 25. Its annual measurable objectives for 2005/06 were 50 percent for elementary reading, 37 percent for secondary reading, 57 percent for elementary math, and 42 percent for secondary math.

Source: Minimum N-size, District of Columbia Public Schools (2006); number of schools and enrollment, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2006); adequate yearly progress, District of Columbia Public Schools and Charter Schools (2006).

to this subgroup. Across the District, 11 percent of all schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup. Again, none did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

White/non-Hispanic students account for 5 percent of students in the District of Columbia. Only 5 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. No schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup.

District of Columbia schools enroll few Asian/Pacific Islander students (1 percent) and American Indian/Alaskan Native students (0.05 percent). Only 0.5 percent of schools reported for the Asian/Pacific Islander subgroup. Of those, all missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup. Across the District, 0.5 percent of schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, but none did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup. No schools in the District of Columbia reported for the American Indian/Alaskan Native subgroup.

The District of Columbia reported 66 percent of its students as economically disadvantaged, the largest share in the Mid-Atlantic Region, and 77 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 76 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Across the District of Columbia 58 percent of schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, but only 2 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Students with disabilities constitute 17 percent of District of Columbia students. Twenty-one percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, 82 percent missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 9 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Across the District, 17 percent of all schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 2 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

Limited English proficiency students account for 7 percent of the students in District of Columbia schools. Only 5 percent of schools reported for this subgroup. Of those, all missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 8 percent did not make adequate yearly progress solely because of this subgroup. Across the District, 6 percent of all schools missed adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup, and 0.5 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup.

REGIONAL PATTERNS IN ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS DETERMINATIONS FOR SUBGROUPS

Detailed state data suggest that five patterns cut across the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Policies vary, so state-to-state comparisons of subgroup achievement are inappropriate

Disparities across states in minimum N-sizes, annual measurable objectives, and tests make state-to-state comparisons of subgroup achievement inappropriate. Maryland set a minimum N-size of 5, but Delaware and Pennsylvania set a minimum N-size of 40. Annual measurable objectives range from as low as 37 percent proficiency for secondary school reading in the District of Columbia to as high as 79 percent for eleventh grade reading in New Jersey. More appropriate is using these data to determine the magnitude of the problem a state is experiencing or may experience in the coming years.

Few schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup

When schools failed to make adequate yearly progress, the reason was generally the performance of multiple subgroups. Across the Mid-Atlantic Region, 9 percent of the schools

When schools failed to make adequate yearly progress, the reason was generally the performance of multiple subgroups, partly because members of the economically disadvantaged subgroup are sometimes members of other subgroups

that missed adequate yearly progress fell short because of a single subgroup. This is partly because members of the economically disadvantaged subgroup are sometimes members of other subgroups. Poverty cuts across race, ethnicity, limited English proficiency, and disability—particularly evident in the District of Columbia. There, 58 percent of schools did not make adequate yearly progress due to the performance of the black/non-Hispanic and economically disadvantaged subgroups, but only 3 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of black/non-Hispanic students, and 2 percent did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of economically disadvantaged students. Education leaders should recognize the inherent complexities of subgroup data as part of a multi-targeted approach to improving the achievement of all subgroups.

When schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup, students with disabilities were the most frequent cause . . .

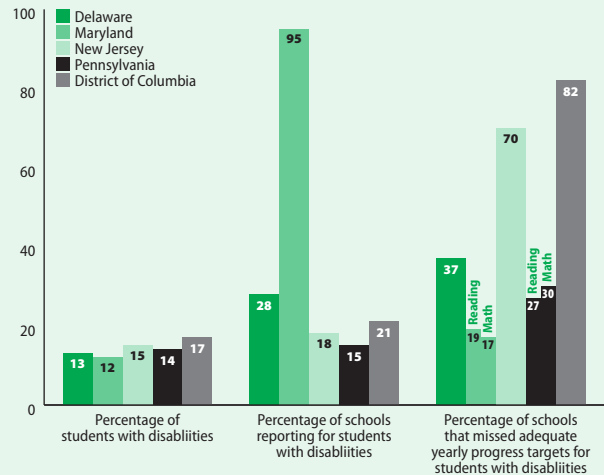
The students with disabilities subgroup represents a relatively low percentage of total enrollment across the region (figure 7). But in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania more schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to this subgroup than to any other. The District of Columbia was the exception. There, more schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the black/non-Hispanic subgroup.

More fully exploring these patterns requires better data, for example on the performance of individual students, because differences in the performance of students with disabilities may be due to differences in state-wide tests, minimum N-sizes, or annual measurable objectives. Research on student data may be able to determine whether the District of Columbia's exceptionally high poverty rate (66 percent),

The gap between targets and achievement will require that researchers, policymakers, and educators find ways to make education more effective for students with disabilities

FIGURE 7

Achievement of the students with disabilities subgroup and adequate yearly progress determination in the Mid-Atlantic Region, 2005/06



Note: Because separate math and reading data are available for Maryland and Pennsylvania, they are reported separately here.

Source: See box 1.

twice that of other Mid-Atlantic Region jurisdictions, is confounding its schools' ability to make adequate yearly progress for students with disabilities. Using student data may also show whether the processes for identifying students with disabilities in some states—say, by including only students with more profound disabilities—might explain why reporting schools in these states are less likely to make adequate yearly progress for students with disabilities.

The gap between targets and achievement will require that researchers, policymakers, and educators find ways to make education more effective for these students.

. . . with economically disadvantaged students the second most frequent

The economically disadvantaged subgroup represents a relatively high share of total enrollment, at 30 percent across the Mid-Atlantic Region. For schools in Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the District of Columbia that did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup,

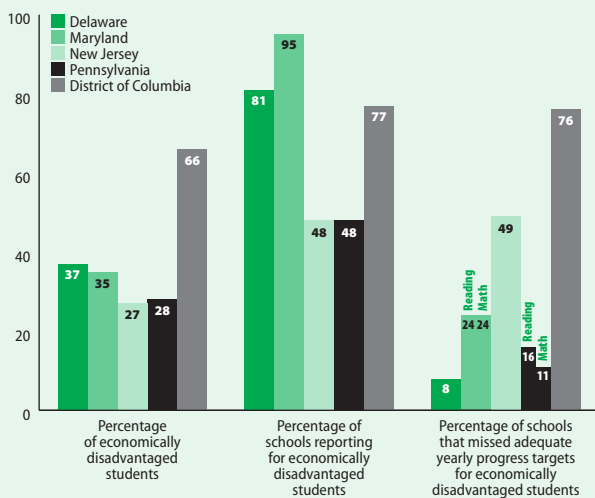
the economically disadvantaged subgroup was the second most frequent reason. Maryland was the exception. There, the economically disadvantaged subgroup ranked fourth behind the disabled, black/non-Hispanic, and limited English proficiency subgroups (in reading).

The District of Columbia's share of economically disadvantaged students is almost twice that in other Mid-Atlantic Region jurisdictions. Schools there reporting for economically disadvantaged students were three times more likely than reporting schools in other Mid-Atlantic Region states to miss adequate yearly progress targets for this subgroup (figure 8). In New Jersey schools reporting for economically disadvantaged students were twice as likely to miss adequate yearly progress targets.

Why are Pennsylvania schools reporting for the economically disadvantaged subgroup almost five times more likely to make adequate yearly progress than those in the District of Columbia? Differences in tests, minimum N-sizes, and annual measurable objectives may be important, but further research is needed to answer this and similar questions.

FIGURE 8

Achievement of the economically disadvantaged subgroup and adequate yearly progress determination in the Mid-Atlantic Region, 2005/06



Source: See box 1.

Schools rarely did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to limited English proficiency students, except in Maryland

Fewer schools did not make adequate yearly progress due solely to the performance of limited English proficiency students than to that of any other nonrace and nonethnicity subgroup. The exception was Maryland, where the limited English proficiency subgroup ranked the same as the black/non-Hispanic subgroup (in reading) in the number of schools not making adequate yearly progress due solely to one subgroup. The ranking of the limited English proficiency subgroup in Maryland may, however, be due partly to a lower minimum N-size (five) than in other Mid-Atlantic Region states.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report identifies what adequate yearly progress targets Mid-Atlantic Region states are setting and whether various subgroups are preventing schools from reaching those targets. As the annual measurable objectives approach 100 percent, however, they will become more difficult to attain, especially for the subgroups that most frequently caused schools to not make adequate yearly progress due solely to a single subgroup—students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students. Raising the achievement of such subgroups is a focus of Mid-Atlantic Region education leaders, despite concerns over the validity of test data (see box 2 for relevant findings from outside the Mid-Atlantic Region). Such difficulties mean that more and more schools are likely to be classified as “failing.”

This analysis leads to two recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Reconsider policies for measuring adequate yearly progress

Given the unbalanced distribution of students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students across schools and the stigma from

BOX 2

What can No Child Left Behind tests say about school quality?

Based on findings from outside the Mid-Atlantic Region, there are concerns over what No Child Left Behind tests can and cannot say about school quality. One is how to distinguish the school contribution to test scores from the effects of the students' innate abilities and their family, social, and economic backgrounds (Crone, 2004). Kane and Staiger (2002) find that 50–80 percent of the change in annual scores in North Carolina can be attributed to changes in the student population and one-time distractions rather than to improved or diminished learning

attributable to schools. Kober (2002) argues that “annual changes in average test scores for a subgroup, grade, or school can be an undependable gauge of the teaching and learning in that school. An annual rise in average test scores doesn't necessarily mean a school is succeeding, just as a drop in scores doesn't always mean it's failing” (p. 3).

A second concern is from students omitted from reporting. According to the Aspen Institute's No Child Left Behind Commission (2006, p. 1), a growing number of students are not included in No Child Left Behind reporting: “The trend since the initial year after the enactment of No Child Left Behind has been for

states to enlarge their N-sizes. Due to this state trend, increasing numbers of students have not been included in state accountability systems.” The Commission's data included Pennsylvania. And some states have reportedly increased their exemption rates by reclassifying previously low-performing students as disabled (Figlio & Getzler, 2002), strategically assigning long suspensions to low-performing students subject to disciplinary actions near the testing period (Figlio, 2005), and inflating exemption rates by up to 7 percent for Hispanic students and 14 percent for black students in years when these students were underperforming relative to their peers (Cullen & Reback, 2006).

viewing schools not making adequate yearly progress as “failing,” it is reasonable for policymakers to consider other definitions of adequate yearly progress. For example, determining adequate yearly progress based on value-added or growth modeling—taking into account the characteristics of the student population in setting school annual improvement targets—are possible alternatives. Doing so would be controversial, viewed by some as lowering expectations for certain subgroups or schools. It might instead be seen as establishing data-based targets that do not stigmatize as “failing” dedicated teachers, administrators, and schools.

Recommendation 2: Understand “relative school progress”

Information such as that in this report, based on No Child Left Behind's annual pass/fail ratings for adequate yearly progress, will remain important evaluative information for policymakers and school leaders. But other ways of looking at No Child Left Behind data may be more valuable to school leaders. Take, for example, information that

allows leaders to understand how their schools compare with other schools of similar size and socioeconomic context. Without such information, educators working with challenging student populations may dismiss ever-increasing No Child Left Behind targets as unattainable, feeling that they are doing well given their circumstances. That might simply perpetuate existing practices. And teachers working in more favorable circumstances might become complacent, with uniform No Child Left Behind targets relatively easy to achieve. Better information for comparison could show parents, teachers, and school leaders whether their school is doing better than similar schools—or worse.

This report thus recommends that school policymakers look beyond pass/fail ratings to investigate how the achievement of students in each No Child Left Behind subgroup compares with that of subgroups in similar schools. School leaders can use such data to show, for example, that other schools in similar circumstances are making better progress, inspiring teachers to continue searching for ways to improve. If the comparison with similar schools is favorable, school leaders

can show teachers and parents that their efforts are paying off.

To help school leaders understand their schools' relative progress, REL Mid-Atlantic encourages readers in the region to use its online interactive tool, "Understanding student progress in schools like mine," available soon on the REL web site (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midatlantic/projects.asp>).

The "Schools Like Mine" tool allows users to specify up to three criteria to identify similar schools, including the share of students in any No

Child Left Behind subgroup, and then see the results of recent adequate yearly progress testing, comparing the user's chosen school with the nine other schools most like it for the selected criteria. Using this tool, school leaders can determine whether other schools in similar educational contexts are finding ways to make better yearly progress for their students.

Using the "Understanding student progress in schools like mine" tool, school leaders can determine whether other schools in similar educational contexts are finding ways to make better yearly progress for their students

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