

TESTING BRIEF
Grade 5 Writing Assessment
Winter 2012 Administration
March 7-8, 2012

Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-281) states, “writing assessments shall be administered to students in grades three, five, eight, and eleven.” The purpose of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment is to assess student achievement on the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) in writing and to improve writing and writing instruction. The Grade 5 Writing Assessment provides predictive information to fifth graders about their future writing performance in advance of taking the Grade 8 Writing Assessment. The assessment consists of an evaluation of each student response to a randomly assigned prompt. Students are assigned a topic from a prompt bank representing three genres: narrative, informational, and persuasive. Students are allowed approximately 120 minutes to write their essays.

The scale score range for the Grade 5 Writing Assessment is 100 to 350. Writing scores are also reported in the following performance levels: Does Not Meet (100-199), Meets (200-249), and Exceeds (250-350).

KEY FINDINGS: ALL STUDENTS

- Eighty (80) percent of all students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standard set for writing, a one (1) percentage point increase from seventy-nine (79) percent in 2011.
- Since the inception of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment as a GPS-based test in 2007, the percent of all students achieving the Meets or Exceeds standard set for writing has increased by ten (10) percentage points from seventy (70) percent in 2007 to eighty (80) percent in 2012.
- The 2012 mean scale score for all students was 213, a one (1) scale score point decrease from the mean scale score of 214 in 2011.
- The 2012 mean scale score of 213 for all students shows an increase of four (4) scale score points over the 2007 administration’s mean scale score of 209.

KEY FINDINGS: BY RACE/ETHNICITY GROUPS

Asian Students

- Ninety-one (91) percent of Asian students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standard for writing, a one (1) percentage point decrease from ninety-two (92) percent in 2011.
- Since the inception of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment as a GPS-based test, the percent of Asian students meeting or exceeding the standard has increased by six (6) percentage points from eighty-five (85) percent in 2007 to ninety-one (91) percent in 2012.
- The 2012 mean scale score for Asian students was 231, a two (2) scale score point decrease from the mean scale score of 233 for the 2011 administration.
- The 2012 mean scale score of 231 for Asian students shows an increase of five (5) scale score points over the 2007 administration's mean scale score of 226.

Black Students

- Seventy-four (74) percent of Black students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standard for writing, a two (2) percentage point increase from seventy-two (72) percent in 2011.
- Since the inception of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment as a GPS-based test, the percent of Black students meeting or exceeding the standard has increased by twelve (12) percentage points from sixty-two (62) percent in 2007 to seventy-four (74) percent in 2012.
- The 2012 mean scale score for Black students was 206, a one (1) scale score point decrease from the mean scale score of 207 for the 2011 administration.
- The 2012 mean scale score of 206 for Black students shows an increase of four (4) scale score points over the 2007 administration's mean scale score of 202.

KEY FINDINGS: BY RACE/ETHNICITY GROUPS (CONTINUED)

Hispanic Students

- Eighty (80) percent of Hispanic students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standard for writing, a one (1) percentage point increase from seventy-nine (79) percent in 2011.
- Since the inception of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment as a GPS-based test, the percent of Hispanic students meeting or exceeding the standard has increased by eighteen (18) percentage points from sixty-two (62) percent in 2007 to eighty (80) percent in 2012.
- The 2012 mean scale score for Hispanic students was 210, a one (1) scale score point decrease from the mean scale score of 211 in the 2011 administration.
- The 2012 mean scale score of 210 for Hispanic students shows an increase of nine (9) scale score points over the 2007 administration's mean scale score of 201.

White Students

- Eighty-five (85) percent of White students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standard for writing, a one (1) percentage point increase from eighty-four (84) percent in 2011.
- Since the inception of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment as a GPS-based test, the percent of White students meeting or exceeding the standard has increased by nine (9) percentage points from seventy-six (76) percent in 2007 to eighty-five (85) percent in 2012.
- The 2012 mean scale score for White students was 217, a two (2) scale score point decrease from the mean scale score of 219 in the 2011 administration.
- The 2012 mean scale score of 217 for White students shows an increase of two (2) scale score points from the mean scale score of 215 in the 2007 administration.

KEY FINDINGS: BY PROGRAM

Regular Program Students

- Eighty-four (84) percent of Regular Program students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standard for writing, a one (1) percentage point increase from eighty-three (83) percent in 2011.
- Since the inception of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment as a GPS-based test, the percent of regular program students meeting or exceeding the standard has increased by nine (9) percentage points from seventy-five (75) percent in 2007 to eighty-four (84) percent in 2012.
- The 2012 mean scale score for Regular Program students was 216, a one (1) scale score point decrease from the mean scale score of 217 in the 2011 administration.
- The 2012 mean scale score of 216 for Regular Program students shows an increase of three (3) scale score points from the mean scale score of 213 in the 2007 administration.

Special Education Students

- Forty-seven (47) percent of Special Education students achieved the Meets or Exceeds standard for writing, a two (2) percentage point increase from forty-five (45) percent in 2011.
- Since the inception of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment as a GPS-based test, the percent of Special Education students meeting or exceeding the standard has increased by twelve (12) percentage points from thirty-five (35) percent in 2007 to forty-seven (47) percent in 2012.
- The 2012 mean scale score for Special Education students was 184, a one (1) scale score point decrease from the mean scale score of 185 in the 2011 administration.
- The 2012 mean scale score of 184 for Special Education students shows an increase of three (3) scale score points over the 2007 administration's mean scale score of 181.

English Language Learners

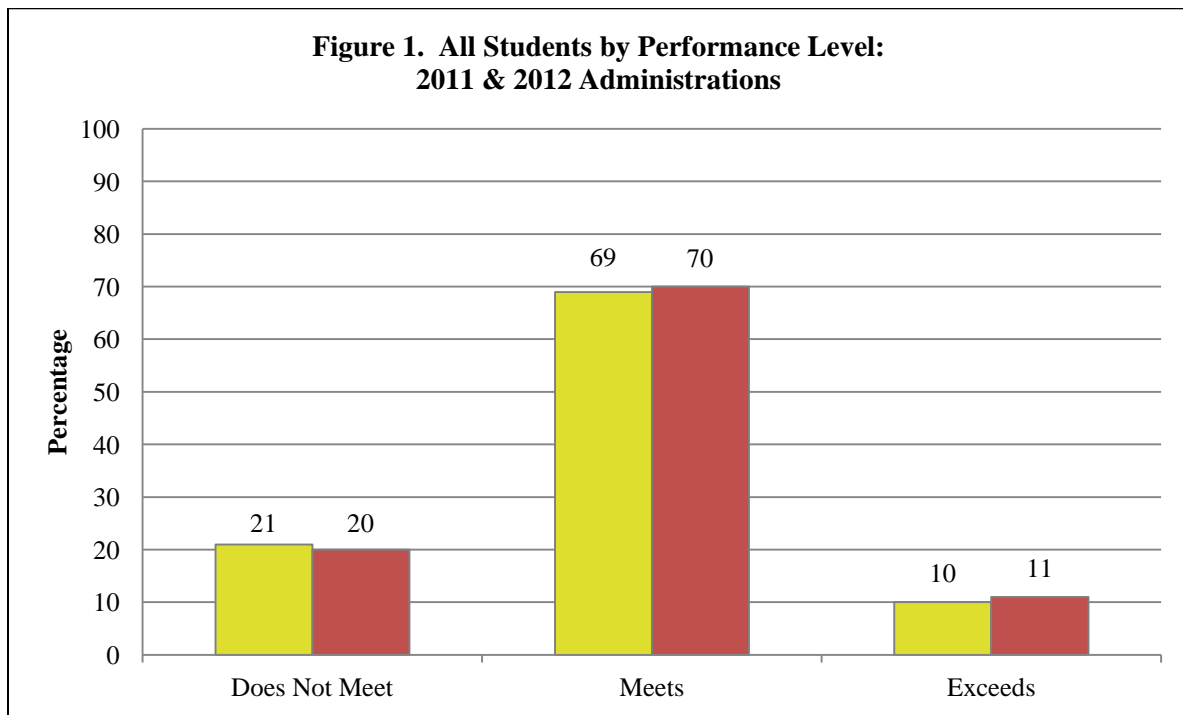
- Sixty (60) percent of English Language Learners achieved the Meets or Exceeds standard for writing, a (1) percentage point decrease from sixty-one (61) percent in 2011.
- Since the inception of the Grade 5 Writing Assessment as a GPS-based test, the percent of English Language Learners meeting or exceeding the standard has increased by seventeen (17) percentage points from forty-three (43) percent in 2007 to sixty (60) percent in 2012.
- The 2012 mean scale score for English Language Learners was 195, a two (2) scale score point decrease from the mean scale score of 197 in the 2011 administration.
- The 2012 mean scale score of 195 for English Language Learners shows an increase of nine (9) scale score points over the 2007 administration's mean scale score of 186.

KEY FINDINGS: CLOSING THE GAP

- The 2012 Grade 5 Writing results show that growth has occurred in the achievement levels of many student groups. When comparing the 2012 results to 2007, notable closing of the gaps are found in terms of the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard:
 - The achievement gap between Black and White students has decreased by three (3) percentage points from 14% to 11%, in terms of the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard. This trend can be categorized as Very Positive Narrowing, wherein gains were made by both groups, but gains made by Black students exceeded those made by White students.
 - The achievement gap between Hispanic and White students has decreased by nine (9) percentage points from 14% to 5%, in terms of the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard. This trend can be categorized as Very Positive Narrowing, wherein gains were made by both groups, but gains made by Hispanic students exceeded those made by White students.
 - The achievement gap between English Language Learners (ELL) and All students has decreased by seven (7) percentage points from 27% to 20%, in terms of the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard. This trend can be categorized as Very Positive Narrowing, wherein gains were made by both groups, but the gains made by English Language Learners exceeded those made by the All student group.
 - The achievement gap between Special Education students and All students has decreased by two (2) percentage points from 35% to 33%, in terms of the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard. This trend can be categorized as Very Positive Narrowing, wherein gains were made by both groups, but the gains made by Special Education students exceeded those made by the All student group.
- Similar comparisons can be made between the mean scale scores of various groups:
 - Black: White Students – The achievement gap between Black and White students has decreased by two (2) scale score points, from a difference of thirteen (13) in 2007 to eleven (11) in 2012.
 - Hispanic: White Students – The achievement gap between Hispanic and White students has decreased by seven (7) scale score points, from a difference of fourteen (14) in 2007 to seven (7) in 2012.
 - English Language Learners: All Students – The achievement gap between English Language Learners and All students has decreased by five (5) scale score points, from a difference of twenty-three (23) in 2007 to eighteen (18) in 2012.

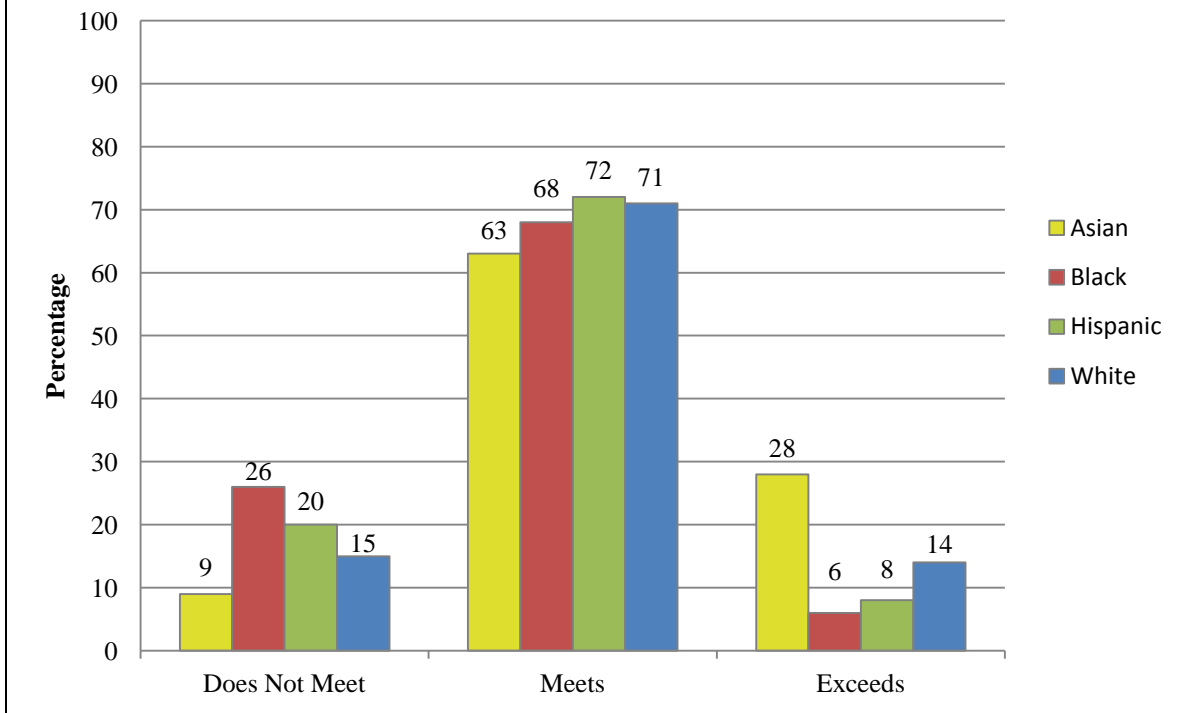
Table 1. Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Standard: 2007-2012

Student Groups	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change from 2011 to 2012	Change from 2007 to 2012
All Students Tested	70	77	78	73	79	80	+1	+10
Regular Program	75	82	82	77	83	84	+1	+9
Special Education	35	43	44	38	45	47	+2	+12
English Language Learner	43	53	55	53	61	60	-1	+17
Asian	85	90	90	89	92	91	-1	+6
Black	62	71	71	65	72	74	+2	+12
Hispanic	62	73	76	72	79	80	+1	+18
Native American/Alaskan	77	73	80	73	81	82	+1	+5
White	76	81	82	78	84	85	+1	+9
Multi Ethnic	76	81	81	76	81	83	+2	+7
Female	78	84	85	80	85	87	+2	+9
Male	62	71	70	66	73	74	+1	+12



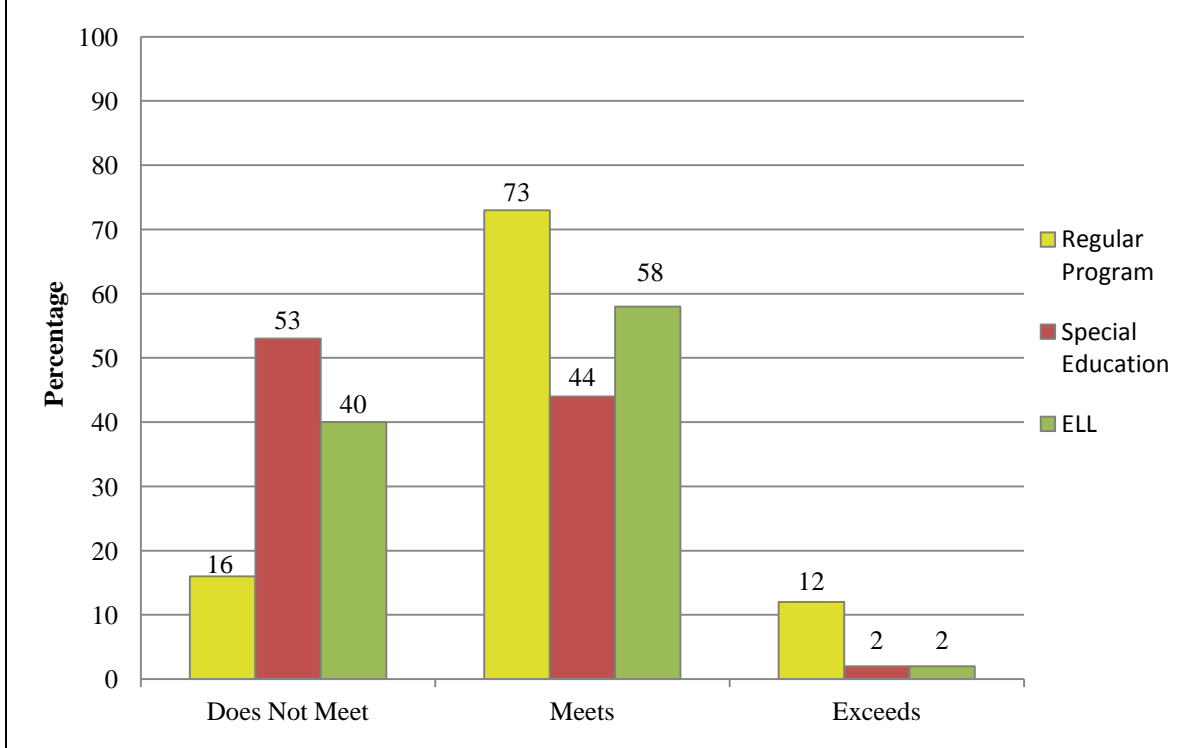
Note: Due to rounding, performance levels may not sum to 100%.

Figure 2. Percentage of Students in Each Performance Level by Race/Ethnicity: 2012 Administration



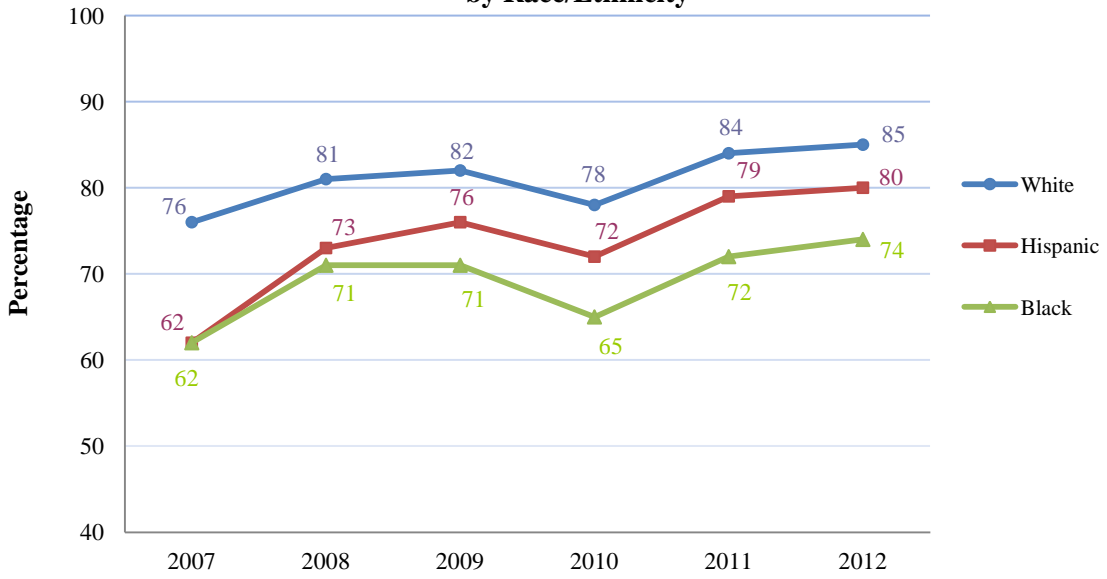
Note: Due to rounding, performance levels may not sum to 100%.

Figure 3. Percentage of Students in Each Performance Level by Student Group: 2012 Administration



Note: Due to rounding, performance levels may not sum to 100%.

**Figure 4. Closing the Gap:
Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Standard
by Race/Ethnicity**



**Figure 5. Closing the Gap:
Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding the Standard
by Student Group**

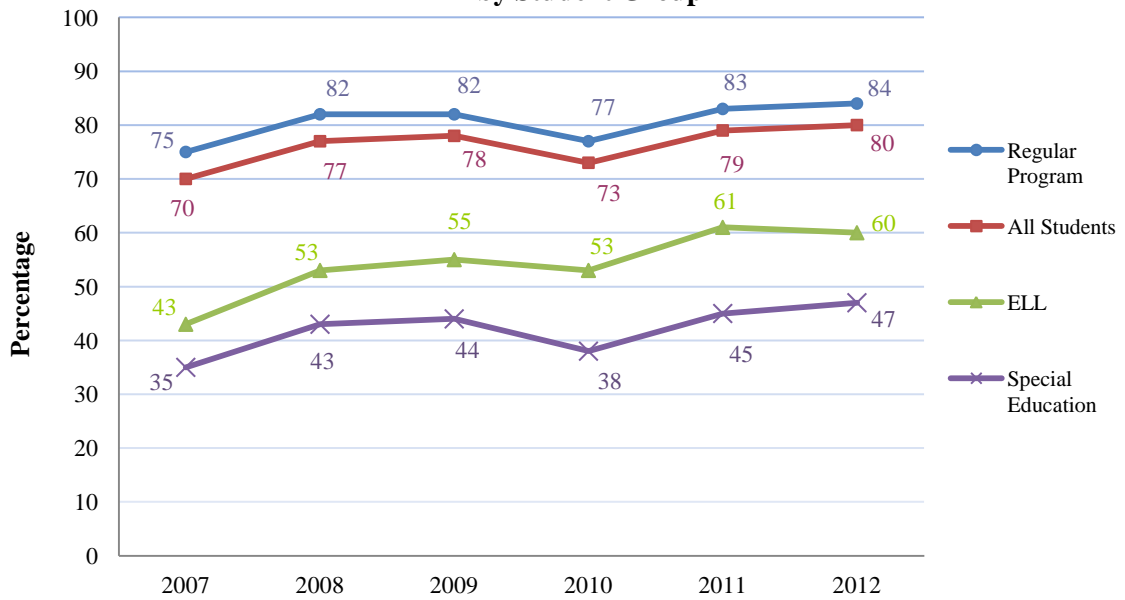
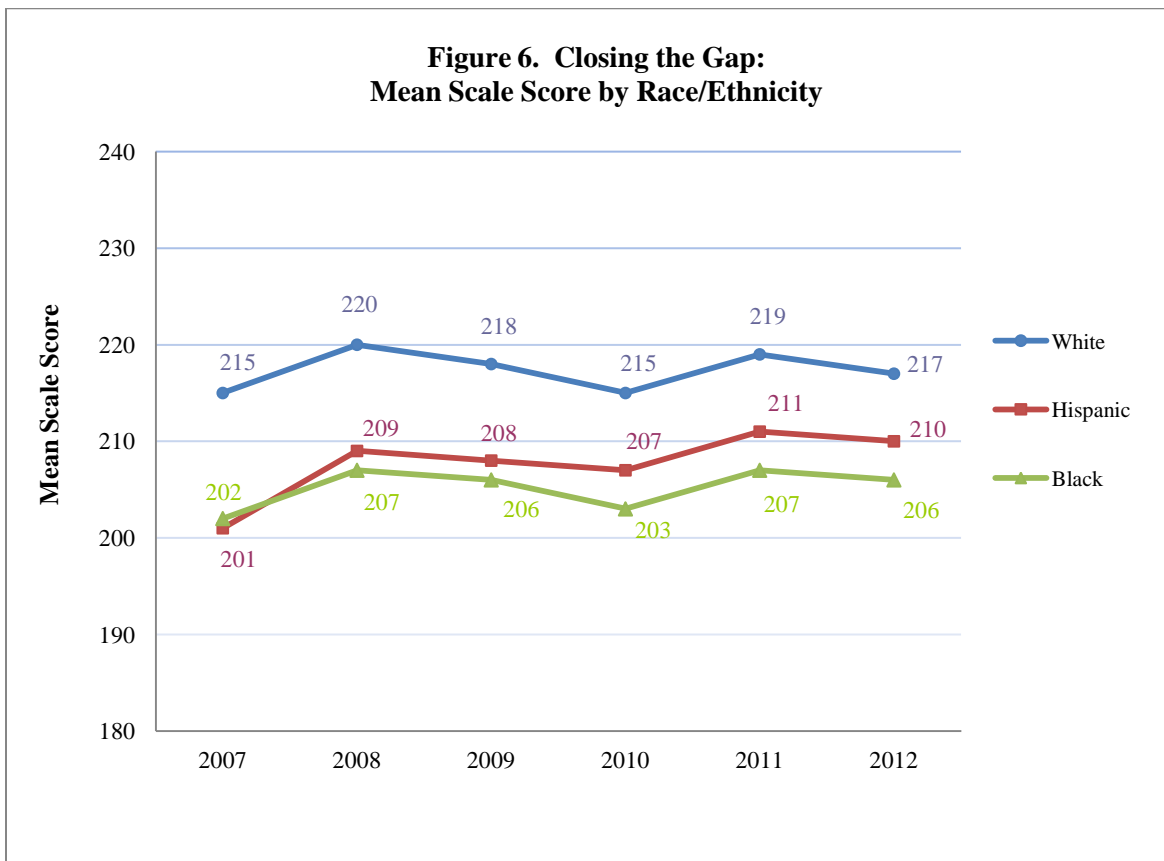


Table 2. Mean Scale Scores: 2007-2012

Student Groups	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Change from 2011 to 2012	Change from 2007 to 2012
All Students Tested	209	214	213	210	214	213	-1	+4
Regular Program	213	218	216	213	217	216	-1	+3
Special Education	181	185	185	182	185	184	-1	+3
English Language Learner	186	193	194	194	197	195	-2	+9
Asian	226	233	232	228	233	231	-2	+5
Black	202	207	206	203	207	206	-1	+4
Hispanic	201	209	208	207	211	210	-1	+9
Native American/Alaskan	214	214	212	211	216	212	-4	-2
White	215	220	218	215	219	217	-2	+2
Multi Ethnic	212	218	216	213	217	216	-1	+4
Female	216	220	219	216	220	218	-2	+2
Male	203	209	207	204	208	207	-1	+4



**Figure 7. Closing the Gap:
Mean Scale Score by Student Group**

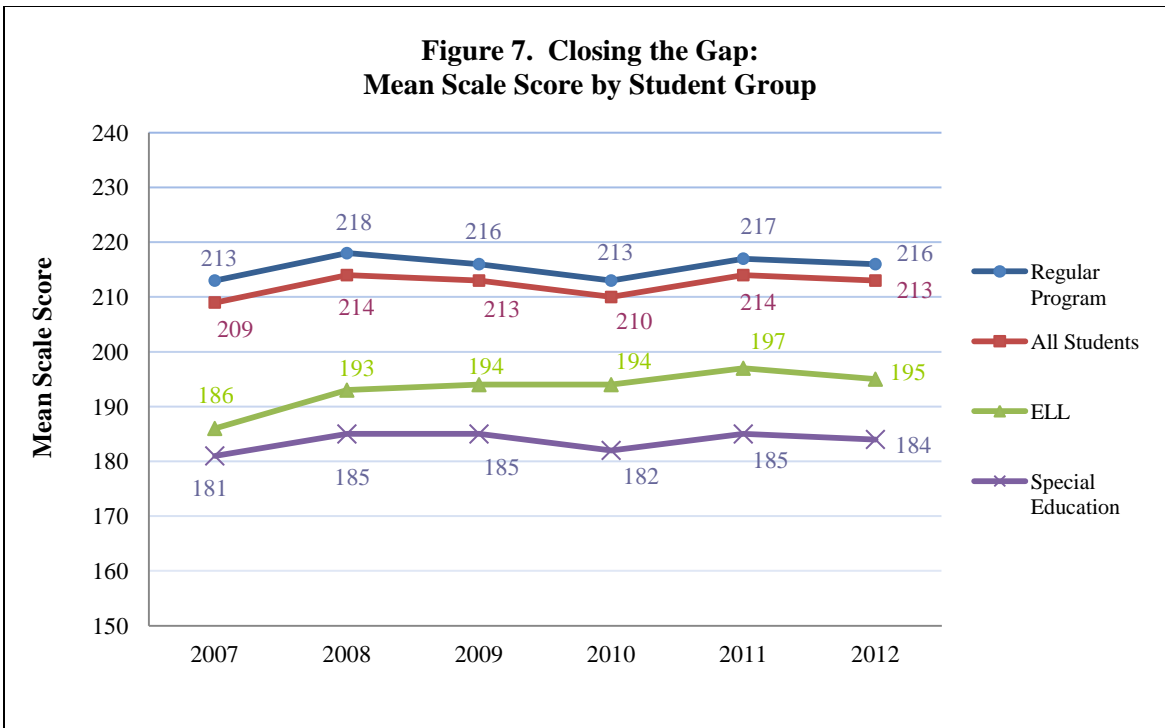


Table 3. Number of Students Tested by Program: 2007-2012

Year	All Students	Regular Program	Special Education	English Language Learner
2007	118,383	103,183	15,200	4,085
2008	119,140	104,981	14,159	3,799
2009	122,977	109,154	13,823	3,491
2010	123,929	111,069	12,860	3,578
2011	127,463	114,408	13,055	4,655
2012	127,339	114,138	13,201	4,697

Table 4: Number of Students Tested by Race/Ethnicity: 2007-2012

Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Native American/Alaskan	White	Multi-Ethnic
2007	3,542	44,376	11,430	159	55,258	3,326
2008	3,708	44,410	11,689	175	55,139	3,744
2009	3,854	45,980	12,318	199	56,177	4,150
2010	3,921	45,873	14,185	290	56,138	3,335
2011	4,256	47,491	15,307	285	56,136	3,797
2012	4,509	47,085	16,264	223	55,216	3,877