

Elementary-Level Social Studies

The grade 5 social studies test based on the new standards was administered for the first time in 2000–01. Data on this test were collected for the first time in 2001–02, the second year of testing. This test assesses knowledge and skills gained in grades K-4 in New York State history, United States history, world history, geography, economics, and civics, citizenship, and government. The percentage of students statewide scoring at Level 3 remained stable in 2002 and 2003 (56 percent), but the percentage scoring at Level 4 dropped from 32 percent in 2002 to 16 percent in 2003. Similar drops at this level were seen in New York City and the Rest of State (Figure 3.15).

Middle-Level Science

The grade 8 science test based on the new standards was administered for the first time in 2000–01. Data on this test were collected for the first time in 2001–02, the second year of testing. This test assesses knowledge and skills gained in grades 5-8 in scientific inquiry, living environment, and physical setting. Performance statewide on this test remained relatively stable in 2002 and 2003: 75 percent scored at Level 3 or above in 2002 and 72 percent did so in 2003 (Figure 3.16). Performance in New York City and the Rest of State also remained relatively stable.

Middle-Level Social Studies

The grade 8 social studies test based on the new standards was administered for the first time in 2000–01. Data on this test were collected for the first time in 2001–02, the second year of testing. This test assesses knowledge and skills gained in grades 7-8 in United States history, geography, and economics. Performance statewide dropped in 2003, 65 percent of students scored at Levels 3 and 4 in 2002; only 51 percent did so in 2003 (Figure 3.17). New York City saw a significant increase in students scoring at Level 1: 5 percent in 2002 compared with 18 percent in 2003.

Figure 3.15
Percentage of Tested Public School Students Scoring at Each
Performance Level on Elementary-Level Social Studies
2002 and 2003

Number Tested in 2002 = 216,100
 Number Tested in 2003 = 216,200

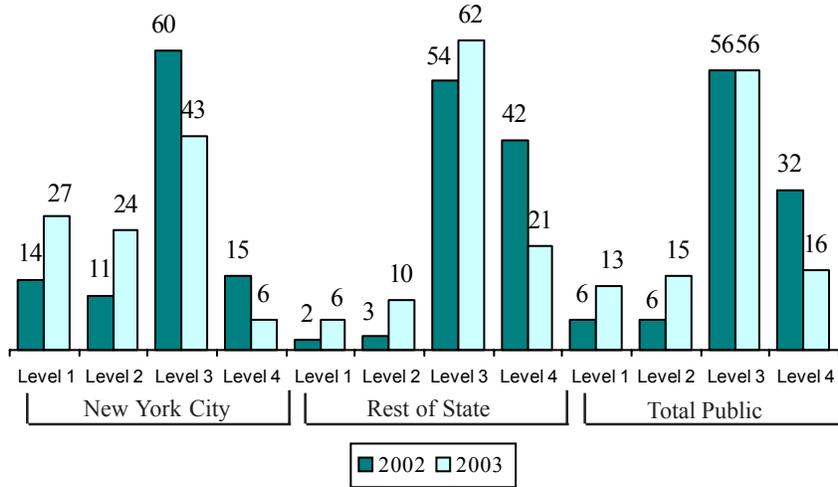


Figure 3.16
Percentage of Tested Public School Students Scoring at Each
Performance Level on Middle-Level Science
2002 and 2003

Number Tested in 2002 = 178,400
 Number Tested in 2003 = 185,500

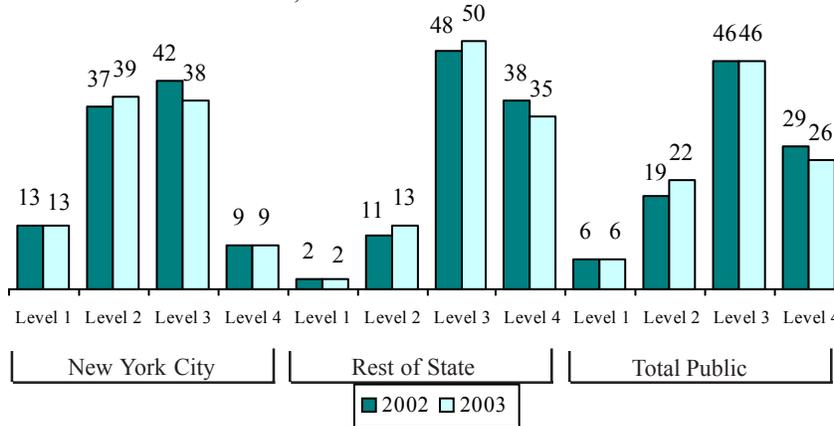
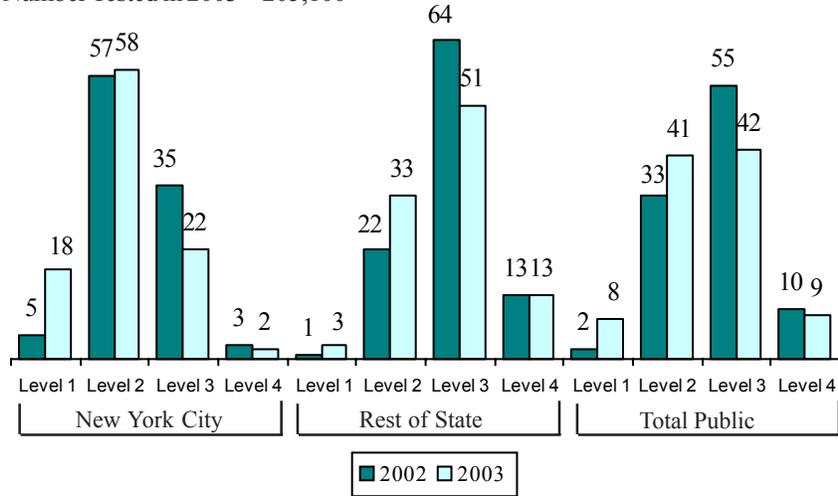


Figure 3.17
Percentage of Tested Public School Students Scoring at Each
Performance Level on Middle-Level Social Studies
2002 and 2003

Number Tested in 2002 = 195,300
 Number Tested in 2003 = 205,100



Regents Examinations

General-education students who entered ninth grade for the first time in 1996 were required to score at least 65 (55 with local board approval until the requirements are fully implemented) on the Regents examination in English; students who entered ninth grade in 1997 were required to score at least 65 (55 with local board approval) on the Regents English examination and a Regents mathematics examination; students who entered ninth grade in 1998 were also required to score at least 65 (55 with local board approval) on the Regents global history and geography and the Regents U.S. history and government examinations; and students who entered ninth grade in 1999 must also score at least 65 (55 with local board approval) on a Regents science examination. Students may also meet the Regents graduation requirement by passing approved alternative assessments. (See *Part I: Overview* for a description of high school graduation requirements.)

Performance on the Regents examinations is reported using two measures: First, in the five curricular areas in which Regents examinations are required for graduation, the number of students tested scoring 55–100 and the number scoring 65–100 are reported. Second, performance on the Regents English, mathematics, global history and geography, U.S. history and government, and science examinations is reported as a percentage of the number of students enrolled in a cohort, for each cohort for which the subject was a graduation requirement.

Beginning in 1996, for each examination, schools reported results for students tested in January and/or June, and only one score, the student's higher score, was reported if the student took an examination more than once during the school year. In 1998, schools began reporting results for students tested the previous August, January, and/or June.

Number Tested and Passing

Test results show that the number of students tested and the number of students scoring 55 or higher on all five core Regents examinations has increased substantially since 1996 (Figures 3.18–3.22). In fact, on four Regents examinations, comprehensive English, global studies (or global history and geography), U.S. history and government, and living environment, the number of public school students scoring 55 or higher was greater in 2003 than the number tested in 1996. Between 1996 and 2003, the increases in numbers of students scoring 55–100 compared to the numbers of students tested on those four examinations ranged from 37 to 53 percent. The 2001–02 downturn in the number of students tested in mathematics reflects the greater amount of time and coursework needed to prepare for the mathematics A examination compared with the sequential mathematics, course I, examination (Figure 3.19).

In 2003, 86 percent of tested students scored 55 or higher on the Regents English examination, as did 75 percent on the Regents mathematics A examination. Scoring 55 or higher on these examinations satisfies the minimum graduation requirements in English and mathematics during the phase-in of new graduation requirements.

Figure 3.18
Trends in Numbers Tested and Scoring
55–100 and 65–100 on the Regents
Comprehensive Examination in English
1995–96 to 2002–03

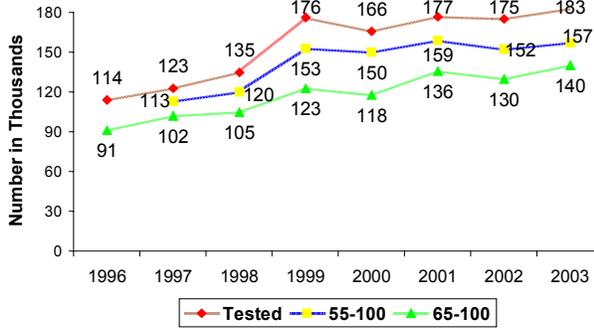


Figure 3.19
Trends in Numbers Tested and Scoring
55–100 and 65–100 on the Regents
Examinations in Sequential Mathematics, Course I,
and/or Mathematics A
1995–96 to 2002–03

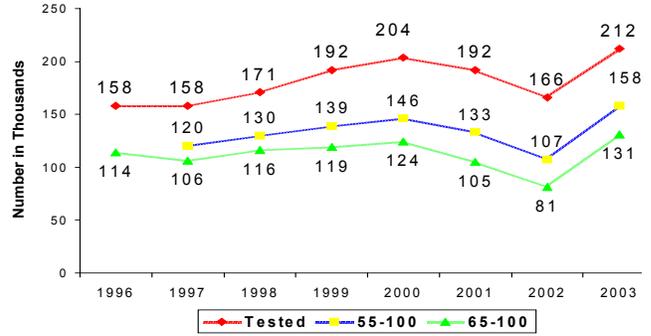


Figure 3.20
Trends in Numbers Tested
and Scoring 55–100 and 65–100
on the Regents Examinations in
Global Studies and/or Global History and Geography
1995–96 to 2002–03

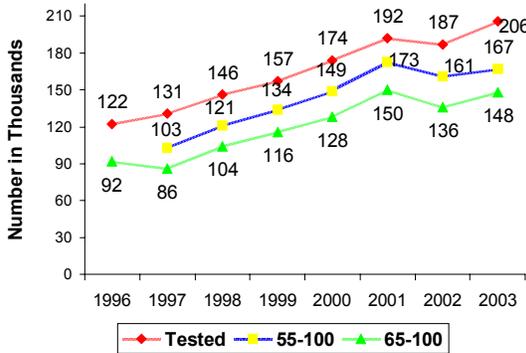


Figure 3.21
Trends in Numbers Tested
and Scoring 55–100 and 65–100
on the Regents Examination in
U.S. History & Government (old and new)
1995–96 to 2002–03

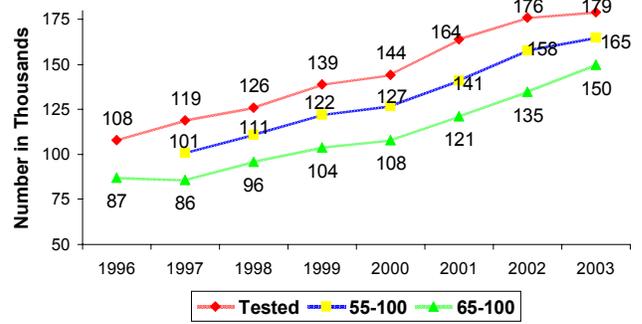
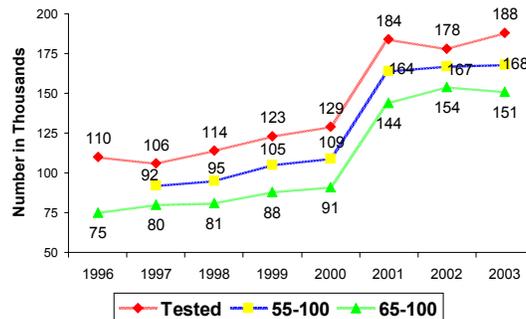


Figure 3.22
Trends in Numbers Tested
and Scoring 55–100 and 65–100
on the Regents Examinations in
Biology and/or Living Environment
1995–96 to 2002–03



Cohort Performance after Four Years of High School

A “cohort” consists of all students, regardless of their current grade status, who first entered grade 9 in a particular year and were enrolled in the reporting school on BEDS day (the first Wednesday in October of the school year, the date on which Basic Educational Data System (BEDS) data are collected) two years later (or, in the case of ungraded students with disabilities, reached their seventeenth birthday during the school year in which the graded students in the cohort first entered grade 9). For instance, the 1998 cohort consists of all students, regardless of their current grade status, who were enrolled in the school on October 4, 2000 (BEDS day) and either first entered grade 9 (anywhere) during the 1998–99 school year (July 1, 1998 through June 30, 1999) or, in the case of ungraded students with disabilities, reached their seventeenth birthday during the 1998–99 school year.

The percentage of students in the 1999 cohort meeting the graduation requirement in English by scoring 65 or higher on the Regents examination in English within four years was greater than for the 1996 cohort but smaller than for the 1998 cohort. However, because the number of students in the 1999 cohort (154,500) was significantly larger than the number in the 1998 cohort (144,500), the number of students in the 1999 cohort scoring 65 or higher was greater than that in the 1998 cohort. The number of students in the 1999 cohort scoring 65 or higher on the Regents English examination within four years was 120,441, compared with 115,318 in the 1998 cohort. In public schools statewide, 75 percent of general-education students in the 1996 cohort, 76 percent in the 1997 cohort, 80 percent in the 1998 cohort, and 78 percent in the 1999 cohort met the English graduation requirement within four years by scoring 65 or higher on the Regents English examination (Figure 3.23). A small percentage of students in each cohort were not tested (7, 8, 9, and 10 percent, respectively).

A greater percentage of students in the 1999 cohort than in the 1996 cohort scored 65 or higher on the Regents mathematics examination, 75 percent in the 1999 cohort compared with 73 percent in the 1996 cohort (Figure 3.24). The increase in the number of students scoring 55 or higher on the mathematics examination is not unexpected given that Regents mathematics was not a graduation requirement for students in the 1996 cohort. A much smaller percentage of students in the 1997, 1998, and 1999 cohorts than in the 1996 cohort were not tested in Regents mathematics after four years (7, 8, and 9 percent in the 1997, 1998, and 1999 cohorts, respectively, compared with 22 percent in the 1996 cohort).

Eighty-one percent of general-education students in the 1999 cohort compared with 78 percent in the 1998 cohort scored 65 or higher on the Regents global history and geography graduation requirement within four years (Figure 3.25). The performance of the 1998 and 1999 cohorts on the Regents U.S. history and government examination was similar: 77 percent of the 1998 cohort scored 65–100 after four years; 76 percent of the 1999 cohort did so (Figure 3.26). Students typically take the global history and geography examination in the second year of high school, the U. S. history and government examination in the third year. Figure 3.27 shows the performance of the 1999 cohort in Regents science. This was the first group that was required to take and pass a Regents science examination to receive a local diploma. Over 80 percent of this group scored 65–100 on a Regents science examination after four years.

Figure 3.23
Performance of General-Education Students
in Accountability Cohort in
Regents English after Four Years
1996 to 1999 Cohorts

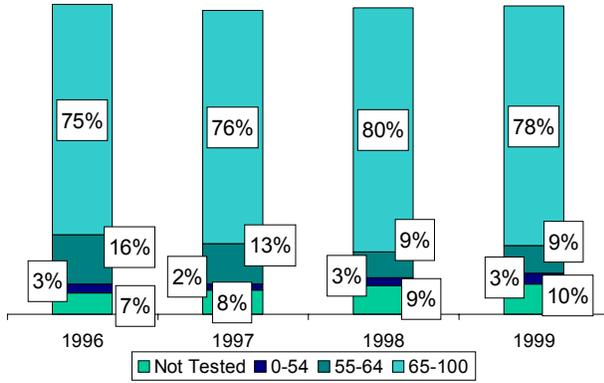


Figure 3.24
Performance of General-Education Students
in Accountability Cohort in
Regents Mathematics after Four Years
1996 to 1999 Cohorts

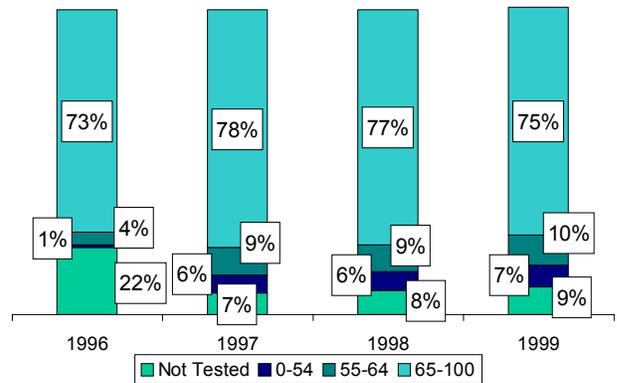


Figure 3.25
Performance of General-Education Students
in Accountability Cohort in Regents Global
History and Geography after Four Years
1998 and 1999 Cohorts

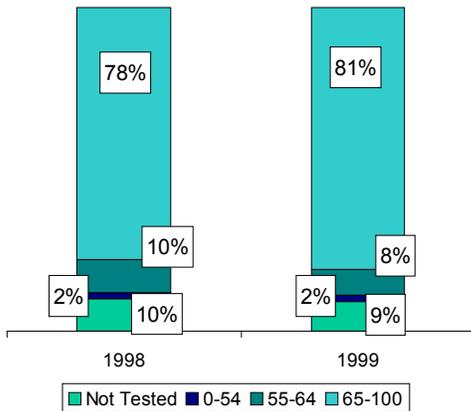


Figure 3.26
Performance of General-Education Students
in Accountability Cohort in Regents U.S. History
and Government after Four Years
1998 and 1999 Cohorts

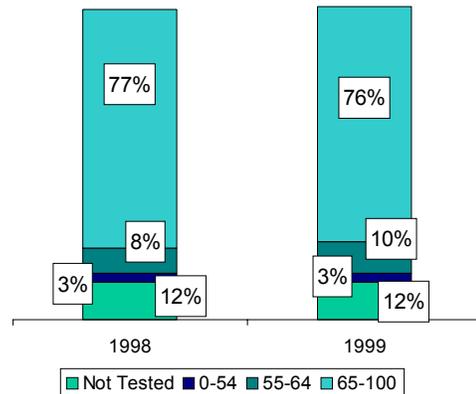
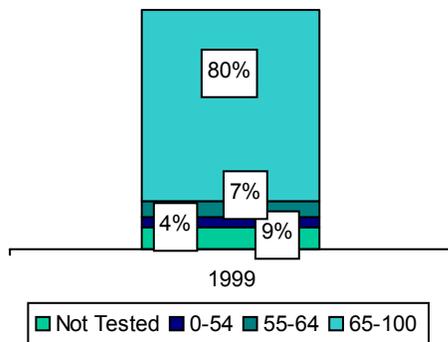


Figure 3.27
Performance of General-Education Students
in Accountability Cohort in
Regents Science after Four Years
1999 Cohort



Enrollment of General-Education
Students in Accountability
Cohort after Four Years:

1996: 143,500
1997: 145,000
1998: 144,500
1999: 154,500

Note: The counts and percentages for the 1996 to 1998 cohorts include students who were continuously enrolled in schools within the district. The 1999 cohort counts and percentages also include continuously enrolled students who transferred between schools within a district or who were out of district placements.

1996 Cohort Performance after Four Years of High School

Within four years of first entering grade nine, 71.8 percent of all students (general education students and students with disabilities) in the 1996 cohort scored 65–100 on the Regents comprehensive examination in English (Table 3.10). Nearly three-fourths (74.5 percent) of general-education students in the 1996 cohort scored 65–100 in Regents English after four years. Only slightly over one-third (35.6 percent) of students with disabilities did so.

TABLE 3.10

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN THE 1996 COHORT SCORING 55-100 AND 65-100 IN REGENTS ENGLISH AFTER FOUR YEARS

PAGE 75

1997 Cohort Performance after Four Years of High School

Performance of students in the 1997 cohort in Regents English was similar: 75.8 percent of general-education students compared with 37.7 percent of students with disabilities scored 65–100 in Regents English after four years (Table 3.11). Nearly 73 percent of all students in the cohort scored 65–100. More students in the 1997 cohort achieved scores of 65–100 in Regents mathematics than in English within four years; more students achieved scores of 55–100 in English than in mathematics.

TABLE 3.11

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN THE 1997 COHORT SCORING 55-100 AND 65-100 IN REGENTS ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS AFTER FOUR YEARS

PAGE 76

1998 Cohort Performance after Four Years of High School

After four years, 76.3 percent of students in the 1998 cohort scored 65–100 in Regents English and 73.4 percent did so in Regents mathematics (Table 3.12). This was a 4.5 percent improvement over the 1996 cohort and a 3.5 percent improvement over the 1997 cohort in English. Similar percentages of students in the 1998 cohort scored 65–100 in Regents global history and government and U.S. history and government after four years: 74.6 and 73.3 percent, respectively.

TABLE 3.12

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN THE 1998 COHORT SCORING 55-100 AND 65-100 IN REGENTS ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, GLOBAL HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY, AND U.S. HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT AFTER FOUR YEARS

PAGE 77

1999 Cohort Performance after Four Years of High School

After four years, 73.6 percent of students in the 1999 cohort scored 65–100 in Regents English and 70.6 percent did so in Regents mathematics (Table 3.13). Similar percentages of students in the 1999 cohort scored 65–100 in Regents global history and geography (77.4 percent), U.S. history and government (71.9 percent), and science (76.4 percent) after four years. The 1999 cohort performed better than the 1996 and 1997 cohorts in Regents English.

TABLE 3.13

**PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS IN THE 1999
COHORT SCORING 55-100 AND 65-100 IN
REGENTS ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, GLOBAL
HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY, U.S. HISTORY AND
GOVERNMENT, AND SCIENCE
AFTER FOUR YEARS**

PAGE 78

Performance of Students with Disabilities

In keeping with the Department's goal of raising standards for all children, one objective is to increase the percentage of students with disabilities who participate in the State testing program. Elementary- and middle-level students must participate in the NYSAP or the New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) for students with severe disabilities. The NYSAA, first administered in the 2001–02 school year, measures the progress of students with severe cognitive disabilities in meeting alternate assessment standards. These students are designated as eligible for the NYSAA by the Committee on Special Education (CSE).

No student may earn a high school diploma without demonstrating competency for high school graduation by passing the Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) or Regents examinations (or approved alternatives) in required areas. The local CSE sets individualized goals for students with disabilities. Those students they judge to be unable to meet the competency requirements earn IEP (Individualized Education Program) diplomas or local certificates when they complete the goals established in their IEPs. Students who do not take the competency tests are required to take the NYSAA, if eligible, or the general assessment before they reach 17 years of age. Some students working toward IEP diplomas may take State tests in some academic areas and the NYSAA in others. (See *Part I: Overview* for a description of high school graduation requirements.)

RCT results for students with disabilities are compiled separately from those of general-education students. Results reported earlier for the NYSAP in ELA and mathematics include students with disabilities. Regents examination results sometimes include both general-education students and students with disabilities. Cohort results are reported for general-education students, students with disabilities, and all students.

Students with disabilities have been afforded increasing access to general-education programs leading to high school diplomas and, consequently, have been participating in the testing program with greater frequency. This section reviews their performance on the NYSAP, Regents examinations, and Regents Competency Tests (RCTs). The Regents examinations document proficiency at the level required for graduation. The RCTs document minimum competency for graduation for students not subject to the revised graduation requirements. Districts must provide a plan for academic intervention services for students who score below Level 3 on NYSAP tests, who fail RCTs, or who score below the approved local passing grade on Regents examinations.

New York State Assessment Program

Smaller numbers of students with disabilities participated in the elementary-level NYSAP in 2003 than in 2000, 2001, and 2002 (Table 3.14). Of those who participated, 23 percent of fourth-graders achieved the State standard in ELA; 48 percent did so in mathematics. Middle-level students with disabilities, like middle-level general-education students, were less successful than elementary-level students in achieving the State standards. Only 8 percent of eighth-graders scored at Levels 3 and 4 on the ELA and 17 percent did so on the mathematics assessment.

TABLE 3.14

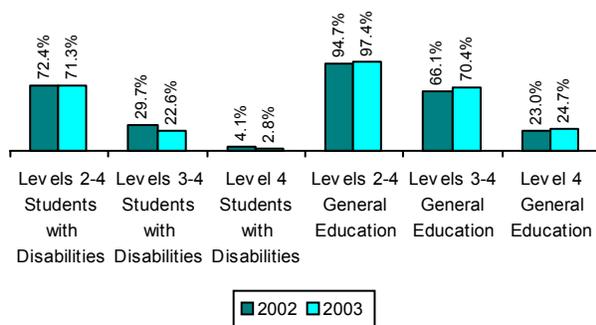
**NUMBER OF PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TESTED AND PERCENT SCORING AT EACH PERFORMANCE LEVEL
NEW YORK STATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

PAGE 79

The performance of students with disabilities lags behind that of general-education students. A number of federal and State initiatives are designed to increase the achievement of students with disabilities. General-education students were nearly nine times more likely than students with disabilities to score at Level 4 on the elementary-level English language arts assessment in 2003 (24.7 compared with 2.8 percent) and more than three times as likely to score at Level 3 or above (70.4 compared with 22.6 percent) (Figure 3.28).

Figure 3.28

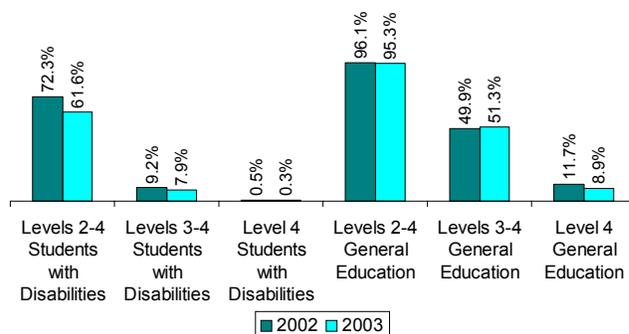
**Elementary-Level English Language Arts Results for General-Education Students and Students with Disabilities
2002 and 2003**



At the middle level, the disparity between the performance of general-education students and students with disabilities in English was even greater: 8.9 percent of general-education students compared with 0.3 percent of students with disabilities scored at Level 4; 51.3 compared with 7.9 percent scored at Level 3 or above (Figure 3.29).

Figure 3.29

**Middle-Level English Language Arts Results for General-Education Students and Students with Disabilities
2002 and 2003**



Elementary- and Middle-Level Science and Social Studies

The trend in the performance of students with disabilities taking the elementary- and middle-level science and social studies tests was similar to that of all students in the State. Over 42 percent of students with disabilities tested on the elementary-level science test scored above the State designated level (Table 3.15). Nearly 43 percent of students with disabilities who took the grade 5 social studies test scored at Level 3 or above, while 45.6 percent of students with disabilities who took the grade 8 science test and 19.0 percent of those who took the grade 8 social studies test did so (Table 3.16).

TABLE 3.15

NUMBER OF PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TESTED AND PERCENT ABOVE AND BELOW STATE DESIGNATED LEVEL (SDL) ELEMENTARY-LEVEL SCIENCE

PAGE 80

TABLE 3.16

NUMBER OF PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TESTED AND PERCENT SCORING AT EACH PERFORMANCE LEVEL ELEMENTARY- AND MIDDLE-LEVEL SOCIAL STUDIES AND MIDDLE-LEVEL SCIENCE

PAGE 80

Regents Examinations

While students with disabilities are allowed to meet the assessment requirement for a local diploma by passing the RCTs, all students must take five Regents examinations before graduation; consequently, larger numbers of students with disabilities are taking Regents examinations (Table 3.17). Between 2000–01 and 2002–03, on four out of five Regents examinations required for graduation, the number of students with disabilities tested has increased. In two required areas — mathematics (sequential math, course I, and mathematics A) and U.S. history and government — the percentage of students with disabilities tested who scored 55 or above also increased.

TABLE 3.17

TRENDS IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TESTED AND THE NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGE OF TESTED SCORING 55 OR ABOVE ON NEW YORK STATE REGENTS EXAMINATIONS

PAGE 81

Cohort Performance after Four Years of High School

The percentage of students with disabilities in the 1999 cohort meeting the graduation requirement in English was 8 percentage points fewer than the percentage in the 1998 cohort after four years (57 percent compared with 49 percent) (Figure 3.30). In mathematics, it was 5 percentage points fewer (44 percent compared with 39 percent). However, these percentage increases are only relative to the increase in the sizes of the cohorts. The 1998 cohort contained only 13,000 students with disabilities, but the 1999 cohort contained 17,000 (Figure 3.31).

Figure 3.30
Percentage of Students with Disabilities in the 1996 to 1999 Cohorts Meeting Graduation Requirements in Regents English after Four Years
All Public Schools

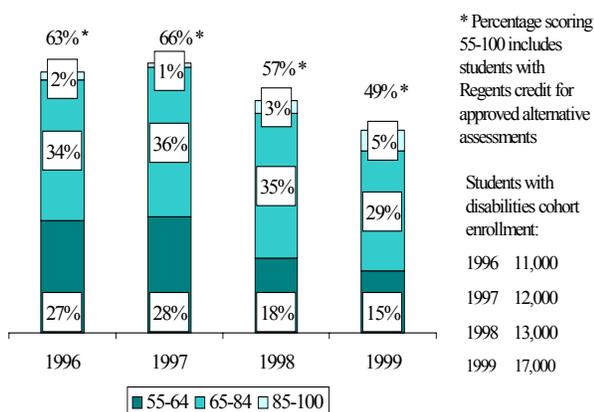
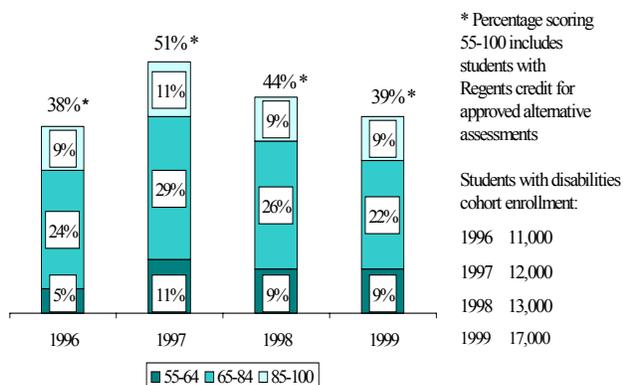


Figure 3.31
Percentage of Students with Disabilities in the 1996 to 1999 Cohorts Meeting Graduation Requirements in Regents Mathematics after Four Years
All Public Schools



Regents Competency Tests

In mathematics, reading and writing, the number of students taking the RCT increased between 1999 and 2003 (Table 3.18). The greatest percentage of increase (52.1 percent) was in mathematics. In science, global studies, and U.S. history and government, the number of students taking the RCT decreased between 1999 and 2003. The greatest percent of decrease (46.0) was in science.

TABLE 3.18

TRENDS IN THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TESTED AND PERCENTAGE PASSING REGENTS COMPETENCY TESTS

PAGE 82

New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA)

The New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) was administered for the first time in 2001–02 to students designated by a district Committee on Special Education as having severe cognitive disabilities. In 2002–03, the NYSAA was offered in four subjects: English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Students eligible to take the NYSAA used this assessment rather than the general assessment to gauge progress. In English language arts, 435 students at the elementary level; 549 students at the middle level; and 410 students at the secondary level took the NYSAA (Table 3.19). In mathematics, 425 students at the elementary level; 548 students at the middle level; and 389 students at the secondary level took the NYSAA. The majority of tested students at all three levels met the standards (scored at level 3 or above) on the NYSAA in all subjects.

TABLE 3.19

**NUMBER OF PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES TESTED AND PERCENT SCORING AT EACH PERFORMANCE LEVEL
NEW YORK STATE ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT**

PAGE 83

Performance of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students

The percentage of limited English proficient (LEP) students scoring at Level 3 or above in 2003 decreased from the previous year on the elementary-level English language arts assessment; the percentage of English proficient students doing so increased. A slightly smaller percentage of limited English proficient (LEP) students scored at Level 3 or above on the elementary-level English language arts assessment in 2003 than in 2002 (11.8 percent compared to 14.0) (Figure 3.32). A slightly larger percentage of English proficient students scored at Level 3 or above in 2003 than in 2002 (65.3 percent compared to 62.7). As expected, more English proficient than LEP students achieved the standards by scoring at Level 3 or above in both years. A similar pattern can be seen in middle-level English (Figure 3.33). More than half of the LEP students in the 1999 cohort scored 55 or higher in Regents English after four years of high school; one-third scored 65 or higher (Figure 3.34). Nearly 60 percent did so in Regents mathematics (Figure 3.35).

Figure 3.32
Performance of LEP and Not LEP Students
on the Elementary-Level English
Language Arts Assessment
2002 and 2003

2003 Count of Tested Students:
 Limited English Proficient (LEP): 4,000
 Not Limited English Proficient (Not LEP): 206,000

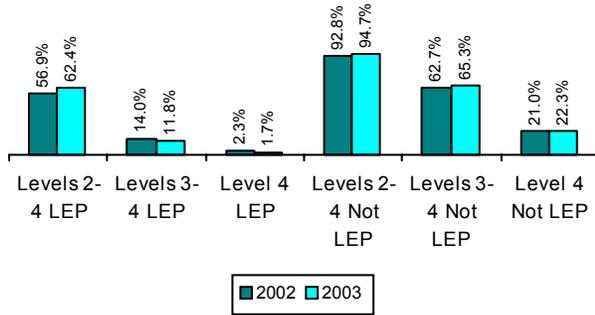


Figure 3.33
Performance of LEP and Not LEP
Students on the Middle-Level English
Language Arts Assessment
2002 and 2003

2003 Count of Tested Students:
 Limited English Proficient (LEP): 5,000
 Not Limited English Proficient (Not LEP): 208,000

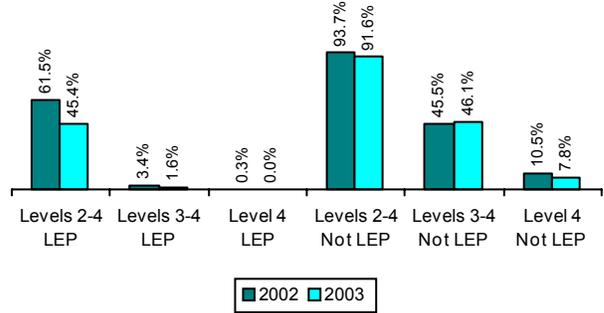


Figure 3.34
Performance of LEP and Not LEP
Students in the 1998 and 1999 Cohorts
on the Regents English Assessment
after Four Years

2003 Count of Students in the 1999 Cohort:
 Limited English Proficient (LEP): 6,000
 Not Limited English Proficient (Not LEP): 165,500

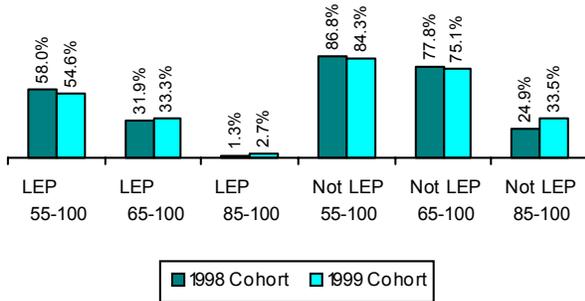
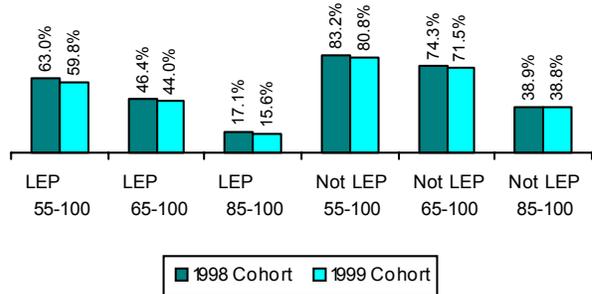


Figure 3.35
Performance of LEP and Not LEP
Students in the 1998 and 1999 Cohorts
on the Regents Mathematics Assessments
after Four Years

2003 Count of Students in the 1999 Cohort:
 Limited English Proficient (LEP): 6,000
 Not Limited English Proficient (Not LEP): 165,500



**Table 3.10
Percentage of Students in the 1996 Cohort Scoring 55–100 and 65–100 in Regents English after Four Years: New York State**

Subject	Location	General-Education Students			Students with Disabilities			All Students		
		Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100	Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100	Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100
English	New York City	46,870	77.0%	53.3%	1,485	55.4%	16.5%	48,355	76.3%	52.2%
	Large City Districts	4,939	84.4	57.9	365	40.3	16.7	5,304	81.4	55.1
	Districts Excluding Big 5	91,740	97.0	86.2	8,988	65.2	39.5	100,728	94.1	69.1
	Total Public*	143,549	90.0%	74.5%	10,838	63.0%	35.6%	154,387	88.1%	71.8%

*Total public includes data for charter schools, which are not included in the N/RC categories.

Table 3.11
Percentage of Students in the 1997 Cohort Scoring 55–100 and 65–100 in Regents English and Mathematics after Four Years
New York State

Subject	Location	General-Education Students			Students with Disabilities			All Students		
		Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100	Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100	Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100
English	New York City	47,554	76.7%	55.6%	1,698	50.4%	18.7%	49,252	75.8%	54.4%
	Large City Districts	4,812	80.7	54.1	537	32.8	14.9	5,349	75.9	50.1
	Districts Excluding Big 5	92,738	95.9	87.3	9,820	69.9	42.2	102,558	93.4	83.0
	Total Public*	145,237	89.1%	75.8%	12,060	65.5%	37.7%	157,297	87.3%	72.8%
Mathematics	New York City	47,554	72.2%	58.7%	1,698	30.2%	18.0%	49,252	70.5%	57.3%
	Large City Districts	4,812	70.2	55.6	537	15.1	10.4	5,349	64.7	51.5
	Districts Excluding Big 5	92,738	95.0	89.1	9,820	56.4	45.5	102,558	91.3	85.0
	Total Public*	145,237	86.6%	78.0%	12,060	50.8%	40.1%	157,297	83.9%	75.1%

*Total public includes data for charter schools, which are not included in the N/RC categories.

Table 3.12
Percentage of Students in the 1998 Cohort Scoring 55–100 and 65–100 in Regents English, Mathematics, Global History and Geography, and U.S. History and Government after Four Years: New York State

Subject	Location	General-Education Students			Students with Disabilities			All Students		
		Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100	Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100	Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100
English	New York City	45,591	79.1%	63.5%	2,842	39.6%	19.9%	48,433	76.8%	60.9%
	Large City Districts	4,684	81.3	63.6	485	36.9	20.0	5,169	77.2	59.5
	Districts Excluding Big 5	94,327	93.4	88.4	9,866	62.6	45.1	104,193	90.4	84.2
	Total Public*	144,644	88.5%	79.7%	13,202	56.7%	38.8%	157,846	85.8%	76.3%
Mathematics	New York City	45,591	74.4%	59.1%	2,842	25.6%	14.7%	48,433	71.6%	56.5%
	Large City Districts	4,684	73.2	53.3	485	23.9	16.7	5,169	68.6	49.8
	Districts Excluding Big 5	94,327	92.3	86.7	9,866	50.8	41.7	104,193	88.4	82.5
	Total Public*	144,644	86.0%	76.9%	13,202	44.4%	35.0%	157,846	82.5%	73.4%
Global History & Geography	New York City	45,591	78.7%	61.5%	2,842	39.6%	19.9%	48,433	76.4%	59.1%
	Large City Districts	4,684	85.1	62.3	485	40.2	26.0	5,169	80.9	58.9
	Districts Excluding Big 5	94,327	92.1	86.2	9,866	65.3	47.8	104,193	89.5	82.6
	Total Public*	144,644	87.7%	77.7%	13,202	58.8%	40.9%	157,846	85.3%	74.6%
U.S. History & Government	New York City	45,591	73.0%	60.8%	2,842	30.5%	18.6%	48,433	70.5%	58.4%
	Large City Districts	4,684	77.2	57.9	485	35.1	21.9	5,169	73.2	54.6
	Districts Excluding Big 5	94,327	91.1	85.0	9,866	60.2	45.6	104,193	89.2	82.2
	Total Public*	144,644	85.0%	76.5%	13,202	52.9%	38.9%	157,846	82.3%	73.3%

*Total public includes data for charter schools, which are not included in the N/RC categories.

Table 3.13
Percentage of Students in the 1999 Cohort Scoring 55–100 and 65–100 in Regents English, Mathematics, Global History and Geography, U.S. History and Government, and Science after Four Years
New York State

Subject	Location	General-Education Students			Students with Disabilities			All Students		
		Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100	Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100	Cohort Enrollment	Percent 55–100	Percent 65–100
English	New York City	48,878	75.9%	61.0%	3,621	31.2%	15.1%	52,499	72.9%	57.8%
	Large City Districts	5,056	79.7	61.1	832	32.0	16.1	5,888	73.0	54.8
	Districts Excluding Big 5	100,587	92.7	87.0	12,425	55.4	41.1	113,012	88.6	82.0
	Total Public*	154,521	87.0%	77.9%	16,878	49.1%	34.3%	171,399	83.3%	73.6%
Mathematics	New York City	48,878	70.4%	54.5%	3,621	18.4%	9.3%	52,499	66.8%	51.4%
	Large City Districts	5,056	70.8	50.4	832	15.4	10.8	5,888	63.0	44.8
	Districts Excluding Big 5	100,587	92.0	86.1	12,425	47.1	38.2	113,012	87.0	80.8
	Total Public*	154,521	84.4%	74.9%	16,878	39.4%	30.6%	171,399	80.0%	70.6%
Global History & Geography	New York City	48,878	78.7%	64.1%	3,621	38.9%	19.7%	52,499	76.0%	61.1%
	Large City Districts	5,056	85.4	69.2	832	41.7	25.8	5,888	79.2	63.1
	Districts Excluding Big 5	100,587	93.5	89.7	12,425	67.4	54.0	113,012	90.6	85.8
	Total Public*	154,521	88.5%	81.0%	16,878	60.0%	45.3%	171,399	85.7%	77.4%
U.S. History & Government	New York City	48,878	72.3%	57.7%	3,621	28.9%	16.0%	52,499	69.3%	54.9%
	Large City Districts	5,056	76.9	58.7	832	35.9	19.2	5,888	71.1	53.1
	Districts Excluding Big 5	100,587	91.9	85.3	12,425	59.1	44.4	113,012	88.3	80.8
	Total Public*	154,521	85.2%	75.7%	16,878	51.5%	37.1%	171,399	81.9%	71.9%
Science	New York City	48,878	74.4%	59.2%	3,621	26.9%	14.4%	52,499	71.1%	56.1%
	Large City Districts	5,056	85.7	70.2	832	40.5	27.3	5,888	79.3	64.1
	Districts Excluding Big 5	100,587	94.0	90.7	12,425	62.3	51.9	113,012	90.5	86.4
	Total Public*	154,521	87.5%	80.1%	16,878	53.6%	42.7%	171,399	84.2%	76.4%

*Total public includes data for charter schools, which are not included in the N/RC categories.

Table 3.14
Number of Public and Nonpublic School Students with Disabilities
Tested and Percent Scoring at Each Performance Level
New York State Assessment Program
1999 to 2003

Assessment	Year Tested	Number Tested	% at Level 1	% at Level 2	% at Level 3	% at Level 4
Elementary-Level ELA	1999	27,064	31%	49%	19%	1%
	2000	30,528	30	43	24	3
	2001	29,156	35	40	23	3
	2002	28,364	27	43	26	4
	2003	27,633	28	49	20	3
Elementary-Level Math	1999	29,170	30	34	30	6
	2000	31,392	28	36	31	6
	2001	34,222	28	32	32	8
	2002	28,620	26	37	31	6
	2003	28,300	20	32	39	9
Middle-Level ELA	1999	24,594	33	57	9	*
	2000	28,331	42	47	10	1
	2001	27,520	47	45	8	1
	2002	29,579	28	63	9	1
	2003	31,317	38	54	8	*
Middle-Level Math	1999	25,257	66	26	7	1
	2000	28,508	57	31	11	1
	2001	26,995	62	29	9	*
	2002	29,169	51	34	14	1
	2003	31,070	48	35	16	1

* Less than 0.5%

Table 3.15
Number of Public and Nonpublic School Students with Disabilities
Tested and Percent Above and Below State Designated Level (SDL)
Elementary-Level Science
2002 and 2003

Year	Number Tested	% above SDL	% below SDL
2002	28,369	41.3%	58.7%
2003	27,870	42.2	57.8

Table 3.16
Number of Public and Nonpublic School Students with Disabilities
Tested and Percent Scoring at Each Performance Level
Elementary- and Middle-Level Social Studies and Middle-Level Science
2002 and 2003

Assessment	Year	Number Tested	% at Level 1	% at Level 2	% at Level 3	% at Level 4
Elementary-Level Social Studies	2002	29,680	21.8%	10.6%	56.9%	10.6%
	2003	29,217	35.3	22.0	39.3	3.5
Middle-Level Social Studies	2002	26,473	9.0	59.6	30.4	1.1
	2003	27,937	25.6	55.4	18.1	0.9
Middle-Level Science	2002	25,973	17.5	33.9	40.3	8.3
	2003	26,632	18.1	36.4	38.4	7.2

Table 3.17
Trends in the Number of Students with Disabilities Tested and the Numbers and
Percentage of Tested Scoring 55 or Above on New York State Regents Examinations
2000–01 to 2002–03

Regents Examinations	2000–01			2001–02			2002–03		
	Number Written	55 or Above	% at or Above 55	Number Written	55 or Above	% at or Above 55	Number Written	55 or Above	% at or Above 55
Comprehensive English	15,354	10,461	68.1%	14,101	8,606	61.0%	16,309	9,680	59.4%
Sequential Mathematics, Course I, and Mathematics A	18,483	8,267	44.7	13,016	4,867	37.4	16,826	7,709	45.8
Global Studies and/or Global History and Geography*	18,615	13,770	74.0	16,636	10,911	65.6	19,864	11,267	56.7
U.S. History & Government *	12,956	8,616	66.5	13,314	9,482	71.2	15,668	11,824	75.5
Biology and/or Living Environment **	13,832	10,614	76.7	13,314	11,017	82.7	16,001	11,427	71.4

* The U.S. History & Government examination based on the old syllabus was replaced by a new U.S. History & Government examination based on a new core curriculum in June 2001. The 2000–01 data include results for both examinations.

** Biology was replaced by Living Environment in June 2001. The 2000–01 data include results for both examinations.

Table 3.18
Trends in the Number of Students with Disabilities Tested
and Percentage Passing Regents Competency Tests
New York State
1999 to 2003

Regents Competency Test	1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Number Written	Percent Passing								
Mathematics	11,896	43.8%	12,476	57.3%	16,181	63.7%	13,051	55.1%	18,093	62.7%
Science	25,678	40.4	16,223	43.0	14,723	39.8	11,536	38.9	13,877	38.6
Reading	8,151	65.0	6,234	65.7	7,130	60.3	6,762	58.7	9,837	61.2
Writing	5,758	71.5	5,870	68.5	6,465	69.9	5,380	69.2	7,181	68.2
Global Studies	16,003	34.7	11,644	23.2	9,624	31.9	8,381	31.6	11,665	35.7
U.S. History and Government	9,915	53.3	9,089	54.2	7,254	42.9	5,216	46.7	6,504	45.4

Table 3.19
Number of Public and Nonpublic School Students with Severe Disabilities
Tested and Percent Scoring at Each Performance Level
New York State Alternate Assessment
2002–03

Assessment	Number Tested	% at Level 1	% at Level 2	% at Level 3	% at Level 4
English Language Arts					
Elementary Level	435	5.1%	9.2%	30.6%	55.2%
Middle Level	549	0.9	8.7	41.4	49.0
Secondary Level	410	2.9	10.7	35.6	50.7
Mathematics					
Elementary Level	425	3.5%	16.0%	27.3%	53.2%
Middle Level	548	1.6	10.8	38.3	49.3
Secondary Level	389	2.3	10.5	38.6	48.6
Science					
Elementary Level	420	4.1%	20.0%	35.7%	40.2%
Middle Level	542	2.0	17.3	41.1	39.5
Secondary Level	385	2.3	15.3	41.3	41.0
Social Studies					
Elementary Level	270	4.4%	15.2%	29.3%	51.1%
Middle Level	548	1.5	8.8	38.0	51.8
Secondary Level	387	2.3	9.3	34.4	54.0

4 Other Performance Measures

Performance measures other than State tests can be used to assess student achievement. These measures include Regents and local diplomas awarded, college-going rates, national scholarships, and results of national assessment programs. Descriptions of current and future graduation requirements can be found in *Part I: Overview*.

State Measures

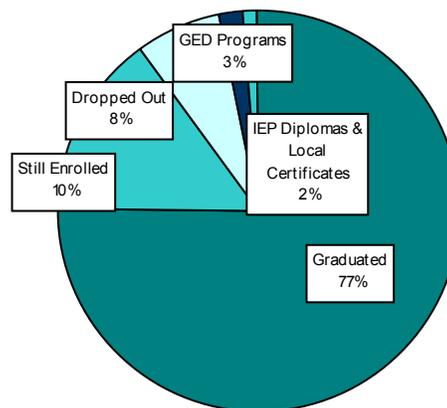
The ultimate goal of elementary, middle, and secondary education is for students to acquire the proficiencies required for employment and postsecondary education. Credentials awarded by secondary schools and college-going rates are two measures of success in accomplishing this goal. The measures are displayed by the following categories of public schools: New York City, Large City Districts, and Districts Excluding the Big 5.

Credentials

In New York State, a Regents-endorsed local diploma (Regents diploma) is generally regarded as an indicator of rigorous effort and excellent accomplishment. The percentage of students receiving Regents diplomas each year is an indicator of attainment for the educational system. It should be noted, however, that many public schools offer courses of study that exceed the minimum standards established by the State Education Department for awarding Regents diplomas.

In 2001–02, data for the graduation-rate cohort was collected for the first time. The graduation-rate cohort includes all students in the school accountability cohort (defined in section three of this chapter) as well as all students excluded from the accountability cohort solely because they transferred to high school equivalency programs. As of August 2002, over three quarters of the 1998 graduation-rate cohort earned a local diploma (Figure 3.36). Only two percent received IEP diplomas or local certificates and three percent transferred to General Educational Development (GED) programs. Ten percent of the cohort were still enrolled as of August 2002.

Figure 3.36
1998 Graduation-Rate Cohort Status Including Credentials Earned as of August 2002



Statewide Results

In 2003, 143,818 public school students statewide graduated from high school, compared with 136,754 in 1996 when the new standards were adopted (Figure 3.37). This increase was primarily seen in schools outside New York City. The slight decrease in New York City graduates between 2001–02 and 2002–03 can be attributed to an underreporting by a number of schools in New York City in 2002–03. The percentage of high school graduates receiving Regents diplomas dropped dramatically in 1988–89, the year that the provisions of the Regents Action Plan increasing graduation requirements were fully implemented (Figure 3.38). Thirty-six percent of the graduates of New York State’s public schools earned Regents diplomas in 1988–89, compared with 49 percent the previous year. Between 1989–90 and 1998–99, only small increases were achieved in the percentage of graduates earning Regents diplomas. Between 1998–99 and 2002–03, the percentage of graduates earning Regents diplomas increased by 11 percentage points: 56 percent of graduates earned Regents endorsements in 2002–03. Since 1988–89, schools outside the Big 5 have increased their Regents diploma rate by 26 percentage points, New York City schools by 10 points and Large City Districts by 11 points.

Figure 3.37
Number of Public High School Graduates
1995-96 to 2002-03

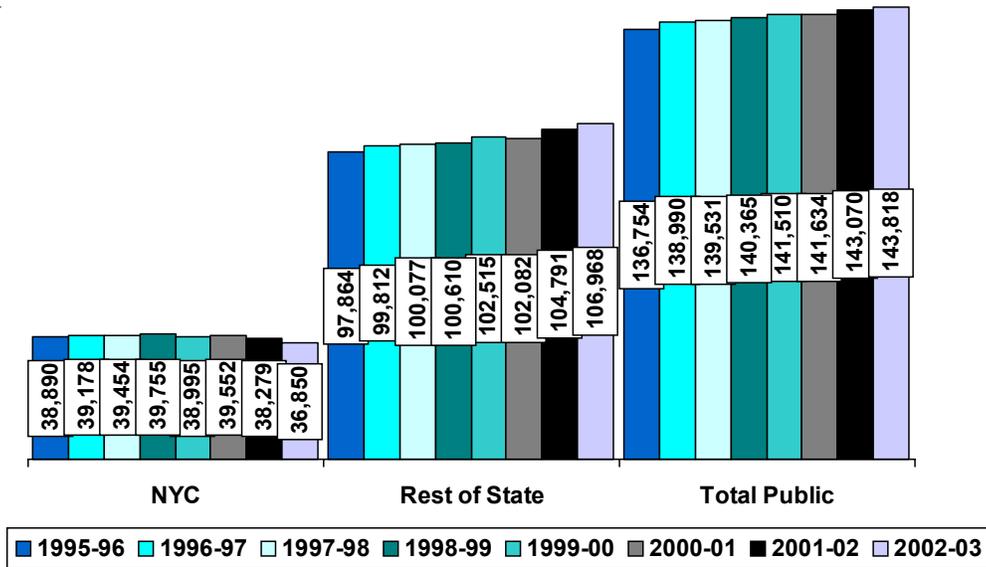
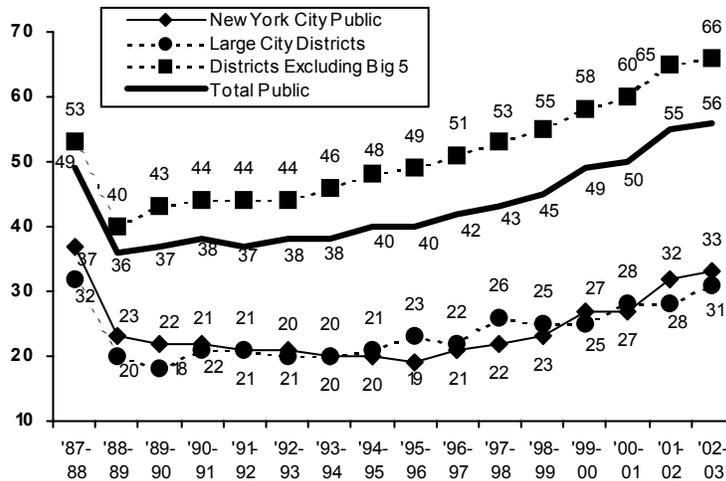


Figure 3.38
Percent of Public High School Graduates Receiving Regents Diplomas
1987-88 to 2002-03



College-Going Rate

Table 3.20 shows trends in the college-going rate of New York State high school graduates. The rate is based on secondary schools' reports of the number of graduates who intend to enroll in four-year and two-year postsecondary institutions as well as other postsecondary education programs.¹ A total of 83.6 percent of State seniors graduating from public and nonpublic schools in 2003 intended to pursue some form of postsecondary education. Public and State graduation rates for 1980 and 1990 are not directly comparable to those for 1998 and later. Prior to 1998, New York City apportioned students with no specified plans among all categories, including a share to the postsecondary education categories. In 1998, New York City placed unknowns in "Other," reducing the counts in postsecondary education categories for all public schools and for the Total State category, including public and nonpublic.

TABLE 3.20

**TRENDS IN COLLEGE-GOING RATE OF
PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS
GRADUATING CLASSES OF
1980, 1990, AND 1998 TO 2003**

PAGE 90

The statewide college-going rate in 2003 (83.6 percent) was substantially higher than that in 1980 (69.0 percent). Increases in the percentage of high school graduates planning to attend a four-year institution accounted for most of the increase; this group increased from 41.3 to 56.1 percent. The percentage of graduates who planned to pursue their education at two-year institutions has declined slightly in recent years, from 27.1 percent in 1990 to 25.6 in 2003. The percentage of graduates planning to attend other postsecondary institutions has declined since 1980; 1.9 percent of 2003 graduates planned to attend these institutions.

Since public school graduates greatly outnumber nonpublic school graduates, it is not surprising that public school and statewide trends in college-going rates are similar. Public schools reported that over four in five 2003 graduates (81.9 percent) planned to attend some kind of postsecondary institution. Planned attendance at four-year institutions has increased from slightly more than one student in three (37.8 percent) in 1980 to over half (52.9 percent) in 2003. Planned attendance at two-year institutions is now only slightly higher than in 1980, standing at 27.7 percent in 2003. Planned attendance at other postsecondary institutions (such as proprietary schools) has decreased from 3.8 percent in 1980 to 1.3 percent in 2003.

National Programs

The performance of New York State and national students can be compared on national scholarship programs and College Entrance Examination Board programs. New York State students, who accounted for six percent of 1994–95 national high school graduates, were significantly overrepresented among high achievers in these programs. (Information about the participation of minority students in national standardized testing programs can be found in *Part V: Minority Issues*.)

College Entrance Examination Board

The College Entrance Examination Board sponsors a series of tests for secondary school students. The Scholastic Assessment Test or SAT I (formerly the Scholastic Aptitude Test) is designed to measure verbal and quantitative reasoning skills, developed over many years of education, that are related to academic performance in college. The SAT II: Subject Tests (formerly achievement tests) measure achievement in a wide range of secondary-level courses. The Advanced Placement Program measures achievement in college-

¹ Prior to 2002, these data were based on aggregate data provided by principals. These data do not reflect actual postsecondary enrollment data. The 2002 and 2003 data for public schools were taken from individual student records submitted to the Department using the System for Tracking Education Performance (STEP) and may be more accurate.

level courses offered in secondary schools to determine whether participants are qualified for college credit.

Scholastic Assessment Test

Each year about one million college-bound students nationwide take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT I). There are two components to the SAT I: the verbal test measures vocabulary and reading comprehension skills, and the mathematics test measures the ability to solve problems involving arithmetic reasoning, algebra, and geometry. The SAT is intended to predict student performance in college; it measures abilities that are developed over years of study and use, both in and out of school. Since it does not measure achievement in a particular curriculum, it is not an appropriate measure of a given instructional program's quality and effectiveness.

In April 1995, the College Board recentered the score scales for the SAT I and II. These tests were originally developed with scales ranging from 200 to 800 and a mean of 500. As larger and larger percentages of high school students took the SAT, the mean of tested students dropped substantially below 500. The recentering, based on a sample from the senior class of 1990, reestablished the mean at about 500.

In 1996, for the first time, the College Board reported State SAT results on the recentered scale. Figures 3.39 and 3.40 show recentered scores for senior classes from 1993 to 2003.¹ In New York State, approximately 145,500 students, or 78 percent of the senior class of 2003, took the SAT during their high school years. The mean composite score for these students was 1006, which was six points higher than the mean of the classes of 2000, 2001, and 2002, and 18 points higher than the mean of the class of 1993.

A 1993 research study examined the mean SAT scores in 38 states with adequate numbers of test-takers.² The study concluded that when factors known to be related to SAT scores – family income, parental education, race, and gender of test-taker – were controlled, New York State had the highest adjusted-mean SAT score among states examined. A study by John Bishop of Cornell University attributes New York's high ranking to the Regents examinations.³ This attribution was based on his study of the Canadian education system, which led him to conclude that externally set curriculum-based examinations (such as the Regents examinations) were associated with higher performance on the International Assessment of Education Progress in mathematics and science. The examinations apparently influence students, parents, teachers, and administrators in ways that lead to higher achievement.

An analysis conducted by the Texas Education Agency supports the contention that New York State students do exceptionally well on the SATs. The Texas analysis examined the percentage of 1994 high school graduates in each state who scored 500 or above on the verbal and the mathematics sections of the SATs. Nationally, 11.1 percent of high school graduates scored at least 500 on the verbal section; 18.7 percent scored that high on the mathematics section. In New York State, 18.8 percent of high school graduates achieved that criterion on the verbal section; 32.3 percent did so in mathematics. New York State ranked fourth among states in verbal and third in mathematics. It should be noted that just as states with the largest percentages of test-takers are disadvantaged in the traditional ranking of states by SAT scores, by the Texas criterion, those states with the smallest percentages of test-takers are disadvantaged. In both cases, the percentage of SAT-takers in a state strongly influences its ranking.

Figure 3.39
Mean Verbal SAT I Scores
Senior Classes of 1993 to 2003

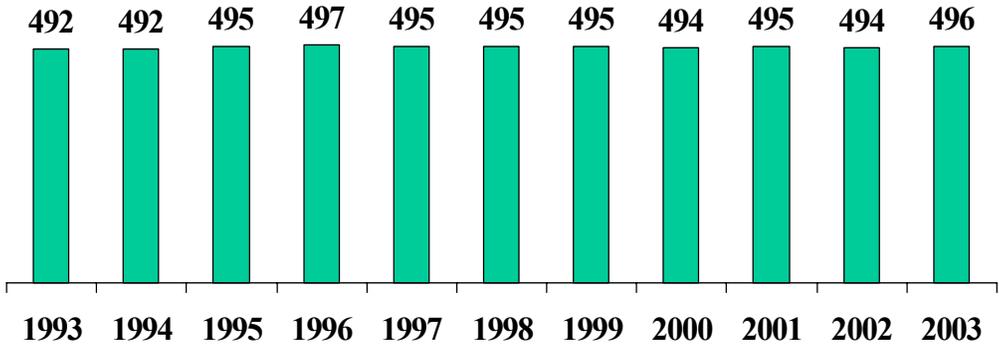
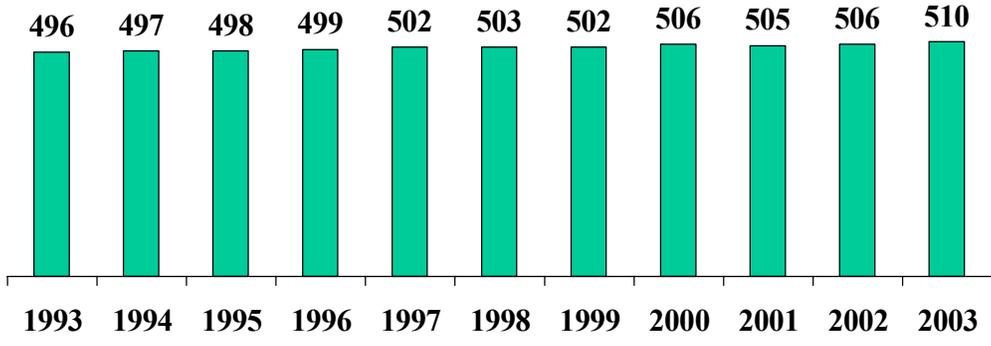


Figure 3.40
Mean Mathematics SAT I Scores
Senior Classes of 1993 to 2003



The Advanced Placement (AP) Program

The advanced placement program consists of 31 AP subjects. High school students may earn college credit at postsecondary institutions throughout the country using this program. The 89,200 New Yorkers who participated composed 8.9 percent of

national participants and wrote 8.8 percent of examinations. Since 1990, the number of New Yorkers participating has more than doubled (Figure 3.41) and the number of exams taken has almost tripled (Figure 3.42). Sixty-four percent of tests written by New York State students received a score of three or more, qualifying them for college credit.

Figure 3.41
Advanced Placement Candidates
New York State Public and Nonpublic Schools (in thousands)
1990 to 2003

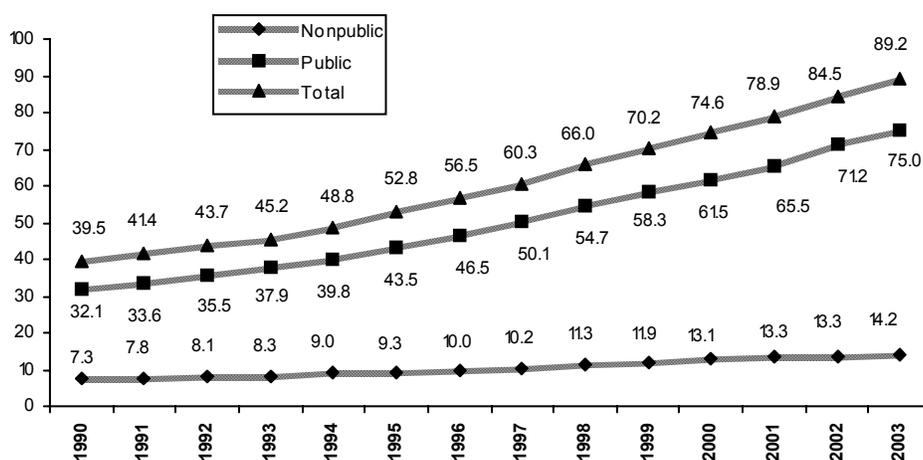
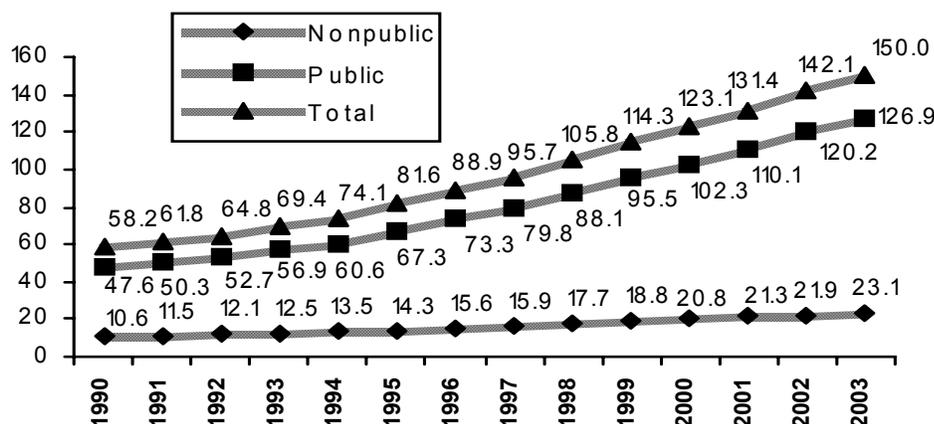


Figure 3.42
Advanced Placement Examinations Written
New York State Public and Nonpublic Schools (in thousands)
1990 to 2003



¹ If students took the test more than once, their most recent score was used in this calculation.

² Amy Graham and Thomas Husted. "Understanding State Variation in SAT Scores," *Economics of Education* 12 (1993): 197-202.

³ John Bishop. *Impact of Curriculum-Based Examinations on Learning in Canadian Secondary Schools* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, December 1994).

Table 3.20
Trends in College-Going Rate of Public School Students
Graduating Classes of 1980, 1990, and 1998 to 2003
New York State

Postsecondary Plans by Category of High School	Percent of High School Graduates Entering Postsecondary Education in the Fall of:							
	1980	1990	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Public								
4-Year	37.8%	44.7%	49.5%	48.9%	50.1%	50.9%	52.6%	52.9%
2-Year	24.7	29.4	26.3	25.4	25.1	26.2	26.8	27.7
Total	62.5	74.1	75.8	74.7	75.1	77.1	79.3	80.6
Other Postsecondary	3.8	2.5	1.8	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.3
Total Postsecondary	66.3%	76.6%	77.6%	76.2%	76.7%	78.6%	80.6%	81.9%
Total State (including Nonpublic)								
4-Year	41.3%	48.7%	53.0%	52.5%	53.4%	54.2%	56.0%	56.1%
2-Year	23.6	27.1	24.0	23.6	23.3	24.3	24.6	25.6
Total	64.9	75.8	77.0	76.1	76.7	78.5	80.6	81.7
Other Postsecondary	4.1	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.1	2.0	1.8	1.9
Total Postsecondary	69.0%	78.7%	79.9%	78.6%	78.8%	80.4%	82.4%	83.6%

Note: New York City's methodology for reporting these data changed in 1998. Prior to 1998, New York City apportioned students with no specified plans among all categories. In 1998, New York City placed unknowns in the "Other" category, reducing the percentage going to postsecondary education.

5 Attendance, Dropout, and Suspension Rates

Attendance, dropout, and suspension rates are important indicators of student achievement and behavior. Previous analysis has demonstrated the relationship between school attendance rates and the percentage of students scoring above the minimum standard on the elementary-level reading test. Suspensions and dropout rates are indicators of the school's ability to engage students in learning and retain students in school until completion.

Attendance Rates

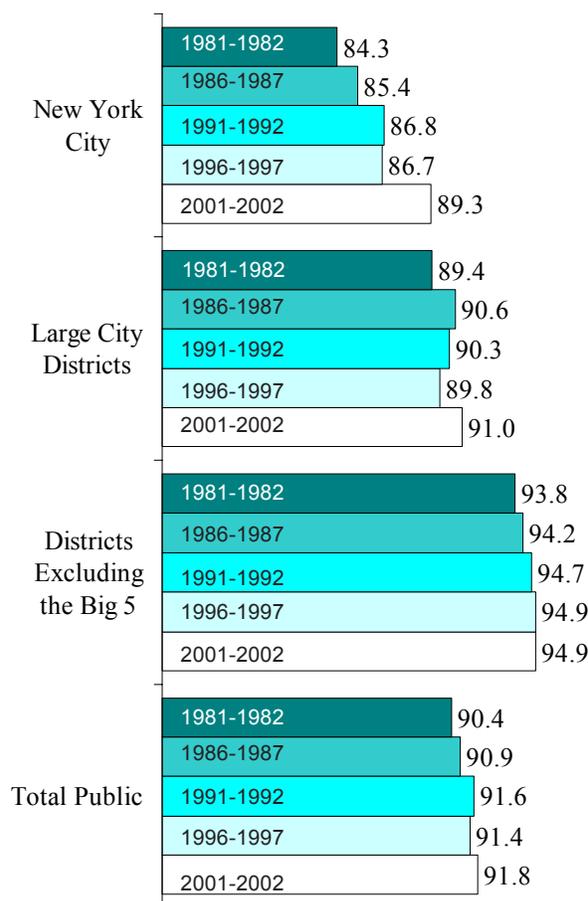
The average attendance rate in State public schools for 2001–02 (the most recent year for which complete data are available) was 91.8 percent (Figure 3.43). In other words, on average, nearly 92 out of every 100 enrolled students attended school for some portion of each school day. Attendance has improved statewide and in every major summary group in 2001–02 compared to 1981–82.

Student Suspensions

Suspension from school is a form of discipline imposed for serious or repeated infractions of school rules. Variations in school suspension rates are difficult to interpret because they may result from either differing incidence of misconduct or varying school discipline policies. Some schools serve large numbers of students whose home and community circumstances place them at risk of school failure. If these students become alienated from school, they may be less likely than other students to conform to school rules and thus be subject to disciplinary measures more frequently. On the other hand, some schools may impose suspensions in situations where other schools would not.

For the tenth year, the Department has collected data on the number of students who were suspended from school for one or more days. In 2001–02, 4.4 percent of State students were suspended one or more times (Figure 3.44). While slight variations in rate have occurred since 1992–

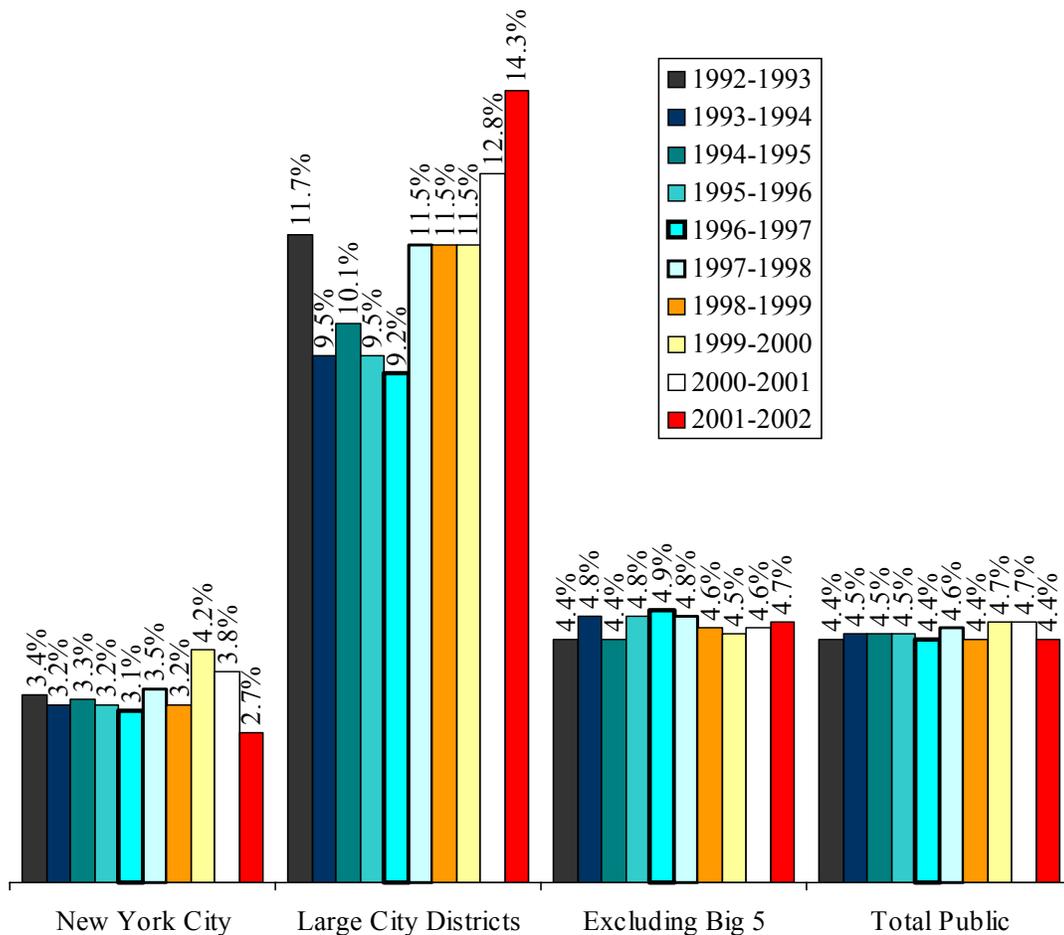
Figure 3.43
Public School Annual Attendance Rate
1981-82 to 2001-02
in Five-Year Intervals



93, the total public rate was identical in 1992–93 and 2001–02. The majority of suspensions occurred at the middle and secondary levels: 6.6 percent of middle-level students and 7.3 percent of secondary-level students were suspended. In contrast, elementary schools suspended only 1.7 percent of their students.

Suspensions result in missed classes and, possibly, increased alienation from school. Because of the relationship between suspension and dropout rates and because suspension rates vary dramatically among racial/ethnic groups (see *Part IV: Minority Issues*), high rates of suspension are of grave concern. The Department is examining ways to assist schools in providing appropriate support

Figure 3.44
Public High School Annual Suspension Rates by Location
1992-93 to 2001-02



systems for students to prevent the behaviors that lead to suspension and eventually to dropping out.

High School Completion

To assess efforts at improving student retention, accurate and consistent measures of the incidence of dropping out are necessary. One major obstacle to measuring dropouts is failure to agree on a standard definition. Should all premature school leavers be defined as dropouts? What about students not enrolled in a regular school program who are pursuing formal education through general-education development classes, alternative night schools, the military, or community colleges? Where a standard definition exists, districts may not always know whether a student has transferred to another program or dropped out. A related issue is timing: At what point does a youth's status change from chronic truant to dropout?

The incidence of dropping out is measured in a variety of ways. The first, the status dropout rate, conforms to our intuitive notion of what we mean by dropout rate: that is, the number of individuals at a given time in a given age group who are not enrolled in school and have not earned a diploma or its equivalent. The status dropout rate is important because it indicates the extent of the problem in the population and provides a basis for planning alternative programs for preparing dropouts to participate fully in society.

Status dropout rates, however, are not sensitive to year-to-year changes in the number of students leaving school and thus cannot be used to evaluate the short-term success of dropout prevention efforts. Therefore, an alternative measure, the event dropout rate, is used for measuring retention power in the State and the nation. It represents

the share of students who leave without completing high school during a single year. The event (or annual) dropout rate can be calculated using statistics that are readily available for all high schools; it is easily usable when computing statistics at the district, regional, and State levels.

The event dropout rate, however, does not address the number who return to school at some later date and eventually graduate or earn high school equivalency diplomas. To determine patterns of leaving and reentering school, educators must track the progress of individual students through their education careers. This longitudinal tracking allows the computation of a cohort dropout rate, indicating the educational attainment of a single group (or cohort) of students. Deriving cohort statistics requires a commitment to tracking former students that has previously been considered too burdensome for most schools, districts, and states. Thus, traditionally, cohort dropout rates have been available only from longitudinal research studies, such as those sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. Now, however, with the implementation of the STEP data collection system, the Department has begun to track the progress of students from first entry into grade 9 through the ending of their enrollment in public schools, whether the enrollment ends with earning a credential, transferring to a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma, or dropping out. (Figure 3.36 shows the students in the 1998 graduation-rate cohort.) The State's ability to determine a cohort dropout rate will be enhanced by the implementation of a unique student ID system. The State will begin to implement this system in the 2004–05 school year.

During the 1990s, approximately 472,500 students left New York State public schools without completing requirements for high school graduation. In 2002–2003, the most recent year for which statistics are available, 38,292 students dropped out of school. Nearly three-fourths (70.4 percent) of these students attended school in the Big 5 districts. A disproportionate percentage of these students were minorities. (See *Part V: Minority Issues*.)

The dropout statistics for 2002–03 are based on data submitted electronically using the System for Tracking Education Performance by public school principals and the New York City Department of Education. In New York State, a dropout is any student, regardless of age, who left school prior to graduation for any reason except death and has not been documented as having entered another school or a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma.

The event (or annual) dropout rate has been the standard for measuring dropout rates in New York State for many years and is calculated by dividing the number of dropouts during a single year by the grade 9–12 enrollment for that year.

Annual Dropout Rate

In 2002–03, 4.6 percent of secondary students left school without earning a credential and without entering a high school equivalency preparation program (Figure 3.45). The decrease in the statewide dropout rate from the previous year (from 5.7 percent in 2001–02 to 4.6 percent in 2002–03) was due to a significant decrease in the New York City dropout rate (from 11.2 to 8.2 percent), which in turn was due to variations in New York City reporting. Rest of State rates were the same in 2001–02 and 2002–03: 2.5 percent. The increase from 1996–97 to 2001–02 in part reflects changes in reporting procedures by New York City. In previous years, only students who dropped out of high school were included in the dropout counts. Due to revised reporting rules, all students, including those in junior high schools and middle schools, who dropped out were included in the 2001–02 dropout counts. In addition, New York City made further changes to decision rules for counting dropouts and began reflecting student status as of June 30th of the reporting year, rather than the fall of the following year. These changes affected New York City's 2001–02 dropout counts.

Programs Leading to a High School Equivalency Diploma

In response to growing concern about the number of students who are failing to complete high school and the consequences of this failure, many districts provide students who are not succeeding in the traditional school structure with preparation programs for the General Educational Development (GED) test. Applicants who meet required standards on the GED are eligible for a high school equivalency diploma from New York State. In 2002–03, 2.0 percent of students left their schools to attend equivalency preparation programs, compared with 1.6 percent in the previous year (Figure 3.46). The percentage of students moving to these programs was 3.5 in New York City, 0.9 percentage points higher than the previous year but 2.4 percent lower than in 2000–01.

Figure 3.45
Public High School Annual Dropout Rates by Location
1995-96 to 2002-03

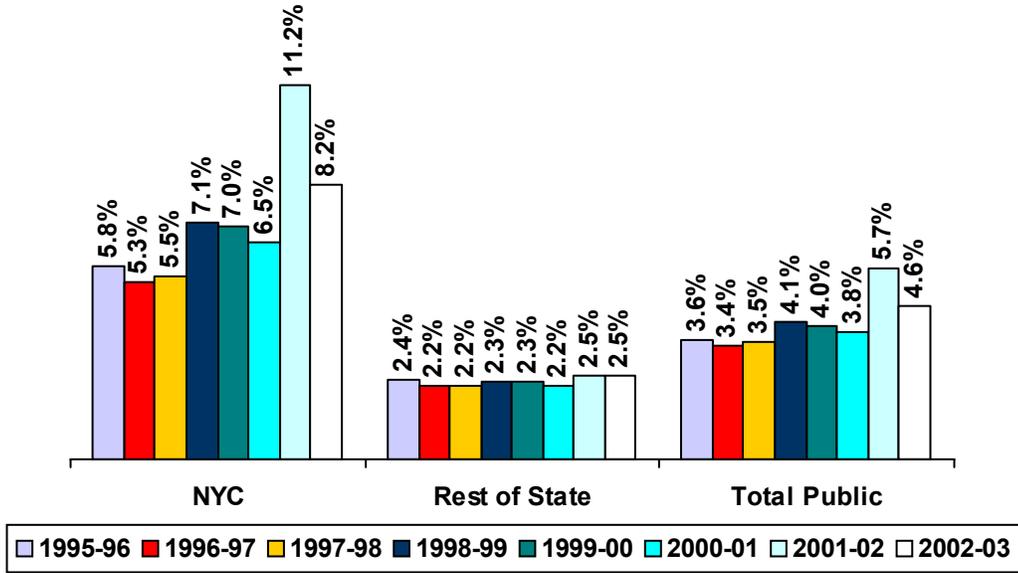
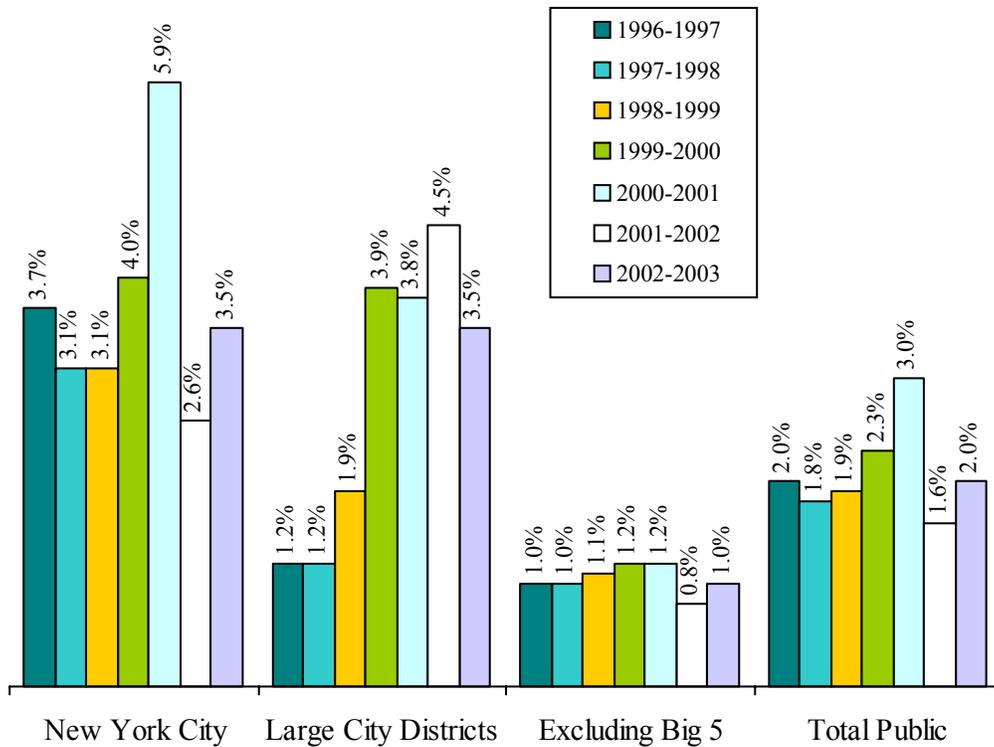


Figure 3.46
Percentage of Public School Students Transferring to
High School Equivalency Diploma Preparation Programs
1996-97 to 2002-03



? Policy Questions

- ? How can the State assist districts that have insufficient building capacity to accommodate increasing enrollments?
- ? How can State funds best be allocated to meet the needs of students placed at risk by poverty and limited English proficiency?
- ? What special services and programs are needed to assist newly immigrated students in adjusting to school?
- ? What kinds of staff development programs are needed to give teachers the skills to prepare all students to meet the new higher standards?
- ? What programs are most successful in helping ill-prepared students succeed in Regents-level courses?
- ? What changes in program and policy are needed to better prepare students for skilled employment following high school graduation?
- ? How does student performance in the Regents curriculum relate to postsecondary performance?
- ? What new policies and programs are needed to improve attendance in low-performing schools?
- ? As the State implements higher academic standards for students, what is the effect on the dropout rate and on the rate of transfer to preparation programs leading to alternative credentials?
- ? What percentage of students who leave general high school programs for alternative programs leading to high school equivalency diplomas eventually earn credentials?