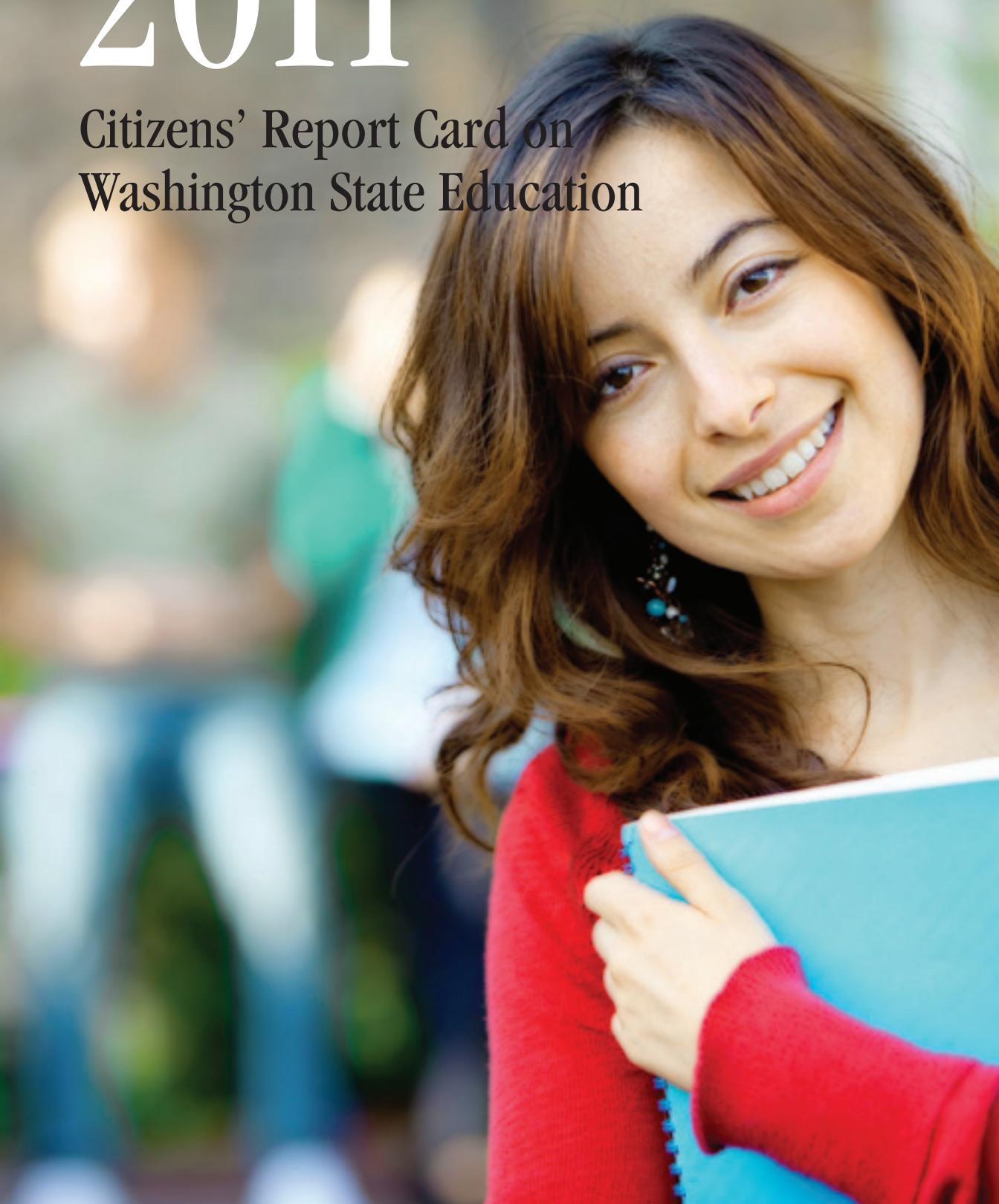




2011

Citizens' Report Card on
Washington State Education





2011 Citizens' Report Card on Washington State Education

Foreword

The past two years have seen historic advances in education policy. The Race to the Top initiative, along with other federal grants, has driven huge change nationwide, from the way teachers are evaluated to the standards we teach and the way kids are assessed. Our own state took huge steps (for us) to catch up and compete with the rest of the nation. While all of this is good news, the downside is what we learned about our own state's readiness and commitment to improving achievement for all kids — we still don't measure up when it comes to the fundamentals.

In our last *Report Card*, I wrote that whether we make progress will come down to our collective will to do the things that matter. Invest in early learning; make sure kids read by third grade; focus on cutting our dropout rates. Well, we didn't do those things. Our reading scores have flatlined. We are near the bottom of national rankings for college-going, we are one of nine states where the achievement gap is actually growing, our graduation rates are in the bottom third, and a full 18 points behind the national leader. While our SAT scores rank us at the top, the test is voluntary, taken by kids intent on going to college. The good news: for kids who believe they're going to college — mostly White, affluent, or Asian kids — we do pretty well. For everybody else, we don't prepare them for much of anything.

Kids who can't read by third grade don't catch up. Eighth grade proficiency in math is a key contributor to whether kids go on and succeed in college. Students who spend their first year of college taking the courses they should have mastered in high school don't return for their second year. Data are clear on these things. Our state's plan for education needs to be equally clear in its focus.

So, what to do? We keep at it. We focus. We prioritize. We work together with unusual partners. We take on new strategies. LEV cut its teeth on evidence-based advocacy, and we remain true to those roots today.

And finally — and most importantly — we put kids first, and we tell the truth.



Chris Korsmo, CEO
LEAGUE OF EDUCATION VOTERS FOUNDATION

*A really smart colleague once told me, "What gets measured gets done." This is exactly why we publish the **Report Card**; to call out the indicators that matter most in kids' progress and hold ourselves accountable to whether we're getting there.*

About LEV Foundation



Who We Are

We are parents, students, leaders, and community members who believe in a quality education from cradle to career. LEV Foundation is the only Washington-based organization working to improve public education from early learning through higher education. We shape the debate, build powerful coalitions, and grow the grassroots to achieve meaningful reform and adequate resources for education.

Key accomplishments of LEV Foundation and LEV:

- **I-728:** Voters passed Initiative 728, the class-size initiative, by nearly 72 percent in November 2000. I-728 demonstrates that targeted new investments can create significant results for students, whether it is tackling class size problems or increasing early learning opportunities. Since 2001, I-728 has provided \$2.5 billion in funding to improve student learning.
- **Simple majority:** In 2007, after 30 years of effort, citizens approved EHJR 4204, which lowered the passage threshold for school levies from a super majority (60 percent) to a simple majority (50 percent plus one). Thanks to simple majority, we have now raised \$2.9 billion more for 567,765 students.
- **Seamless system:** LEV helped frame education policy as an early learning through higher education pipeline, advocating for creation of a kindergarten readiness assessment and aligning requirements for high school graduation with post-secondary entrance.
- **Key reforms:** Our work has moved education forward through efforts that gave the state authority to intervene in chronically failing schools, designed a new teacher evaluation system, and reformed the K-12 funding system. LEV's focus on our youngest learners led to legislation safeguarding funding for high-quality pre-kindergarten and the creation of a new program of early learning that will serve all eligible children.

Our Story

Lisa Macfarlane and Nick Hanauer founded LEV Foundation a decade ago out of frustration with our state's broken education finance system. They turned that energy into a force for change by recruiting like-minded leaders in the community — levy chairs, school directors, and citizens — who shared the common goals of improving and adequately funding our public schools.

Washington's children are our first and most important constituents. Our future as a state and nation depends on preparing ALL of our children for success in college, job training, careers, and life. We know our education system needs help. Too many young children enter kindergarten unprepared for school. Too many students do not receive the support they need to achieve their full potential. Too many students drop out of school or graduate unprepared for college and the workforce.

We, along with our public schools and leaders, must do a better job of educating every child for success in our knowledge-based economy. A decade after our humble beginnings, we have made important progress — but to achieve our goal of every child ready for college and career, we need your help. Join the movement by visiting educationvoters.org today!

2011 Citizens' Report Card on Washington State Education

GRADE

Invest in early learning.

Ensure every child reads by third grade — and close the achievement gap.

C+

78%

Prepare all children for college, work, and life.

Provide every high school student with the opportunity to graduate with a meaningful high school diploma.

C+

77%

Focus on math, science, and engineering.

Support every student in passing Algebra I by 8th grade.

C-

71%

Prepare everyone for the 21st century job market.

Increase the number of students who complete one year of education after high school and return for a second year.

D+

69%

Invest in what works.

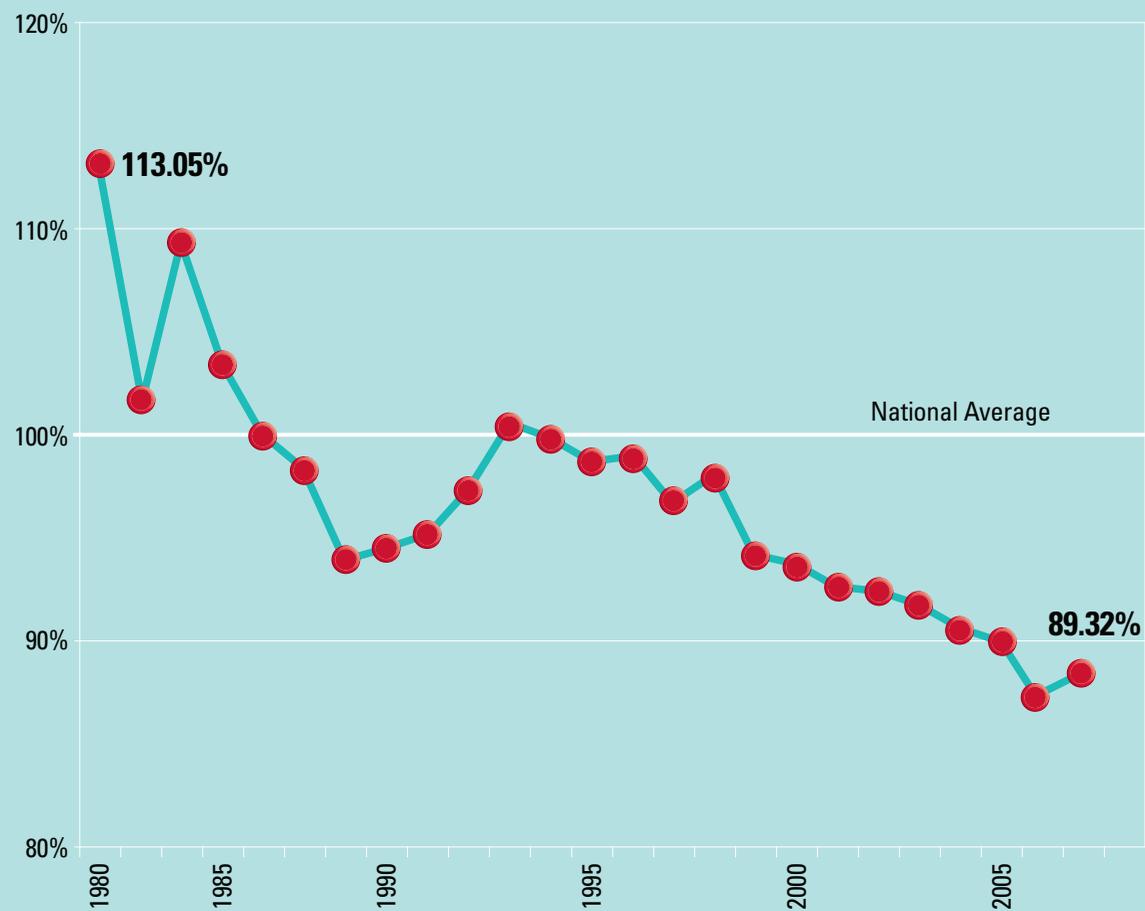
Improve the transparency, accountability, and funding necessary to drive student achievement.

C-

71%



Washington's K-12 Per-Pupil Expenditures Compared to the National Average



After implementation of the Basic Education Act in 1977, total Washington K-12 spending per pupil, from all sources, peaked at 13 percent above the national average. This was a level typical of the 1960s. In 1992-93, Washington's K-12 spending equaled the national average, and by 2006-07 fell to 11 percent below the national average.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Washington's Leaky Education Pipeline



Of 100 9th graders:



69 graduate from high school on time



35 enter a community college or university



25 return for their sophomore year



18 receive a diploma within 6 years

Source: NCHEMS/IPEDS, 2008

NOTE: The available college going rate is significantly understated and does not include many high school graduates with uncertainty about their enrollment goal and those who took college courses while in high school (through dual enrollment programs like Running Start).

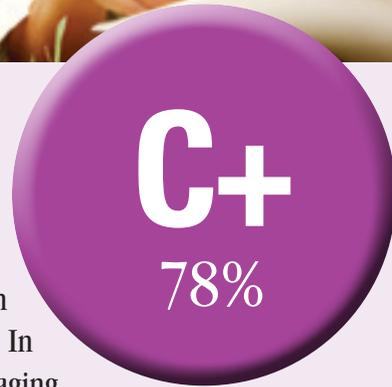
Invest in early learning.

Ensure every child reads by third grade — and close the achievement gap.



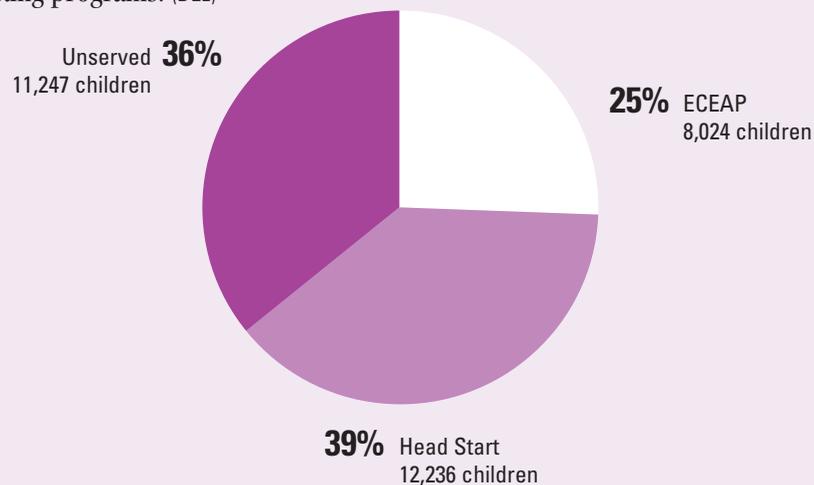
2011 PROGRESS REPORT

We know that quality early learning is one of the best investments we can make. As part of its commitment to improving early learning opportunities for children, Washington State has drafted a comprehensive and visionary statewide plan. In tandem, the Legislature made landmark commitments — leveraging private funds for home visiting programs, requiring a plan for the early learning professional development system, promising all low-income children access to pre-kindergarten by 2018, adding full-day kindergarten to basic education, and piloting a kindergarten readiness assessment. Yet, while early learning has grown in prominence in the public policy arena, Washington State has not seen an improvement in outcomes for children and families. The economic climate has caused the state to slowdown or postpone necessary investments. To make headway in this area, Washington needs to stop planning and start doing.



ELIGIBILITY

Thousands of eligible, low-income preschoolers unserved: In 2010, 8,024 of eligible low-income preschoolers were served by the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and 12,236 were enrolled in Head Start programs leaving 11,247 eligible low-income preschoolers still unserved by existing programs. (DEL)

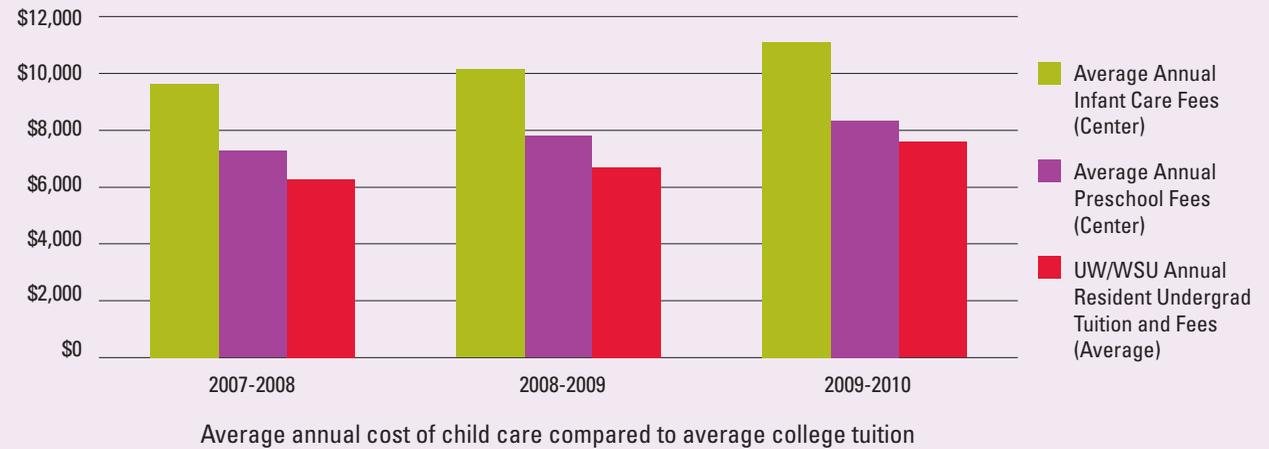


Participation of eligible preschoolers, 2010-11

Source: DEL

AFFORDABILITY

Annual child care costs continue to exceed annual tuition at public 4-year universities: In 2009-10, the average annual cost of infant care in Washington was \$11,106 and preschool was \$8,350, which is greater than the average annual tuition at UW and WSU (\$7,587). (HECB, NACCRRA)



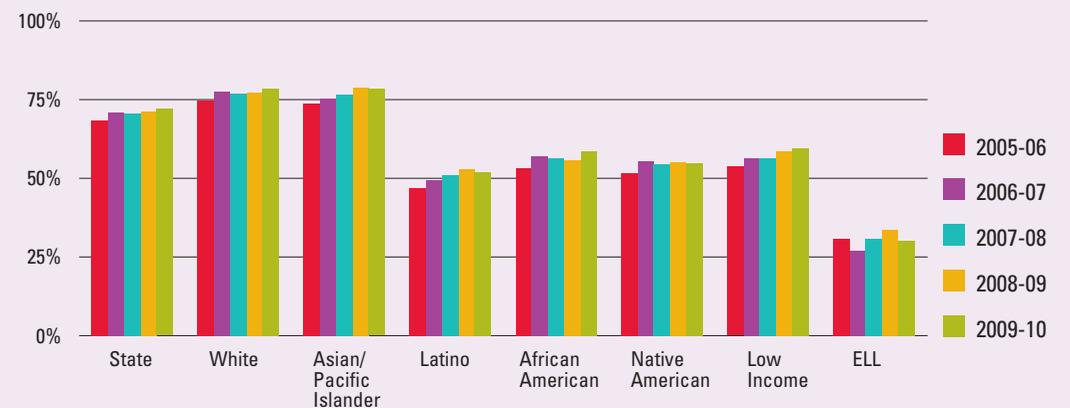
Source: HECB, NACCRRA

ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

More kindergarteners served in all-day programs: In 2009-10, 21.2% of kindergarteners were in a state-funded all-day program, which is double the percentage from 2007-08. (OSPI)

THIRD GRADE READING

Slow gains in third grade reading levels: In 2009-10, 72% of third graders were reading at grade level, up from 70.7% in 2007-08. There were small but steady increases across all subgroups in reading scores, but achievement gaps still persist with a 20 to 26 percentage point difference between African American (58.6%), Latino (51.9%), and Native American (54.8%) students and their White (78.5%) and Asian (78.3%) peers. (OSPI)



Percentage of third graders who passed the state reading exam, by subgroup

Source: OSPI

Prepare all children for college, work, and life.

Provide every high school student with the opportunity to graduate with a meaningful high school diploma.

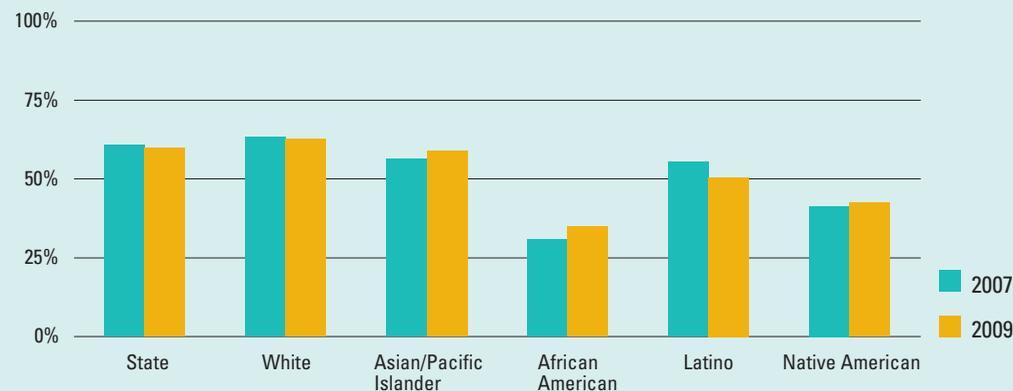


2011 PROGRESS REPORT

Our state's education system prepares our children for yesterday while they rush toward tomorrow. We need a system that sets them up for success in a constantly changing global economy and society. The passage of education reform bills (ESHB 2261 and E2SSB 6696), which begin to move our K-12 system forward, and adoption of increased graduation requirements by the State Board of Education are steps in the right direction. However, we will never provide opportunity for all of our children if we continue to push out full implementation six, seven, eight years. We need to hold ourselves and our children to high expectations, while providing adequate supports to ensure success.

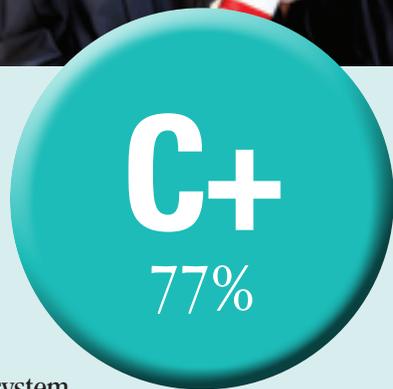
ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)

Achievement gap continues in AP exam passage: The percentage of high school students passing AP tests with scores of 3 or above slightly decreased to 59.9% in 2009, and a 27 percentage point gap exists between the passage rate for White students (62.6%) and African American students (35%). Achievement gaps among other subgroups are also significant: Latino (50.4%), Native American (42.5%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (58.9%). (College Board)



Percentage of students earning a score of 3 or higher on AP exams

Source: College Board



DUAL ENROLLMENT

Increased participation in Dual Enrollment Programs: In 2008-09, 32.7% of high school juniors and seniors participated in dual enrollment programs including Running Start, Tech Prep, and College in the High School, up from 22% in 2006-07. (SBCTC)

GRADUATION RATES – NATIONAL RANKING

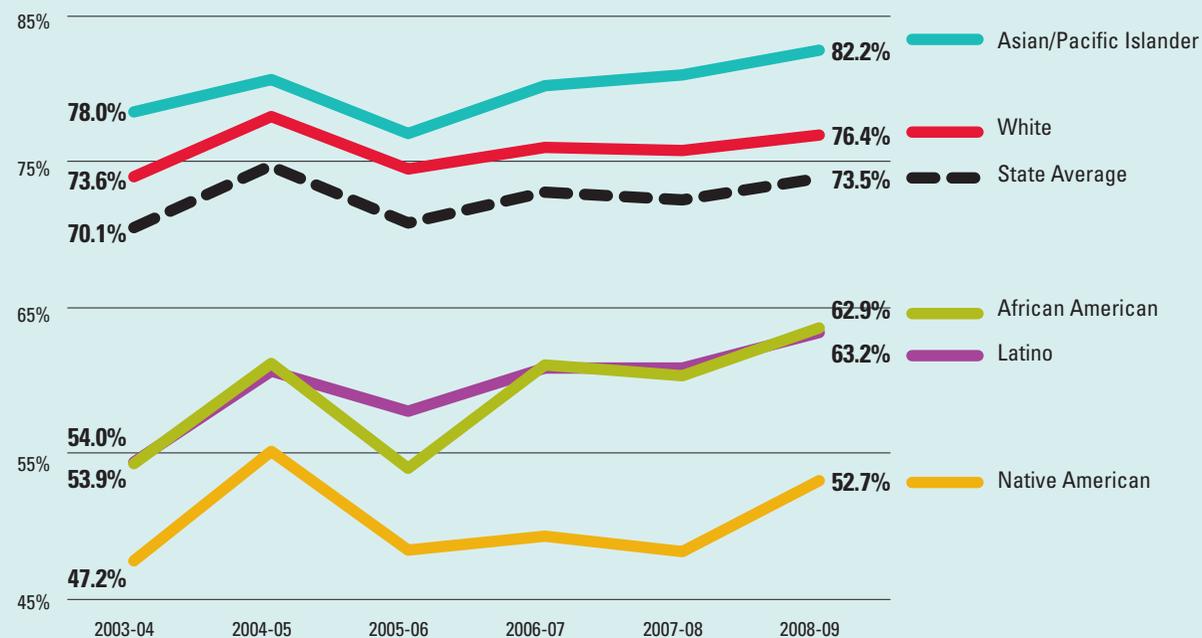
Graduation rates in bottom third nationally: Washington ranked 38th in on-time high school graduation rates with 71.9% in 2007-08, the most recent year for which national rankings are available (best state Wisconsin: 89.6%; national average: 74.9%). (NCES)

DROPOUT RATES

Dropout rates decreasing, but gap remains: Dropout rates for Native American (10.1%), African American (7.8%), and Latino (7.2%) students were nearly double the rates for White (4.5%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (3.3%) students in 2008-09. (OSPI)

GRADUATION RATES – DISAGGREGATED

Graduation rate increases, but opportunity gaps persist: Washington's on-time graduation rate increased from 70.4% in 2005-06 to 73.5% in 2008-09. The gap between the average graduation rate of Whites (76.4%) and Asian/Pacific Islanders (82.2%) and the average rate of African Americans (62.9%), Latinos (63.2%), and Native Americans (52.7%) decreased from 21.1% in 2005-06 to 16.8% in 2008-09. (OSPI)



On-time high school graduation rates, by subgroups

Source: OSPI

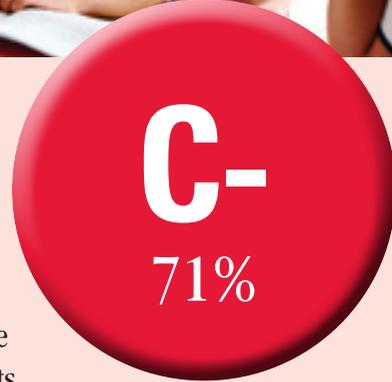
Focus on math, science, and engineering.

Support every student in passing Algebra I by 8th grade.



2011 PROGRESS REPORT

It is no secret that the industries connected to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) make up a growing portion of Washington's economy. Yet, we do not do enough to prepare our children to succeed in these fields. Naysayers cause us to drag our feet on increasing math and science requirements while Washington is one of the few states where the achievement gap in math is growing, and math remediation rates continue to increase at our community colleges. Washington must better support elementary teachers in effective math and science instruction, and entice more secondary teachers to earn teaching endorsements in these fields. We need to stop waiting until children arrive at college to figure out if they are ready to be successful; instead we should offer college placement tests to all 10th-graders to help inform their course-taking decisions in the second half of high school. To help our local businesses, economy, and children thrive, Washington must put more emphasis on proficiency in STEM.



COMMUNITY COLLEGE MATH REMEDIATION

Math remediation rates are increasing at 2-year colleges: Almost half (48%) of all recent high school graduates enrolled in remedial math courses at community and technical colleges in 2008-09, up from 45% in 2006-07. (SBCTC)

EIGHTH GRADE MATH

Eighth grade algebra participation rates remain flat: Washington is ranked 41st in the nation with 24% of eighth graders taking Algebra I in 2008, the same as in 2005. (NCPPE)

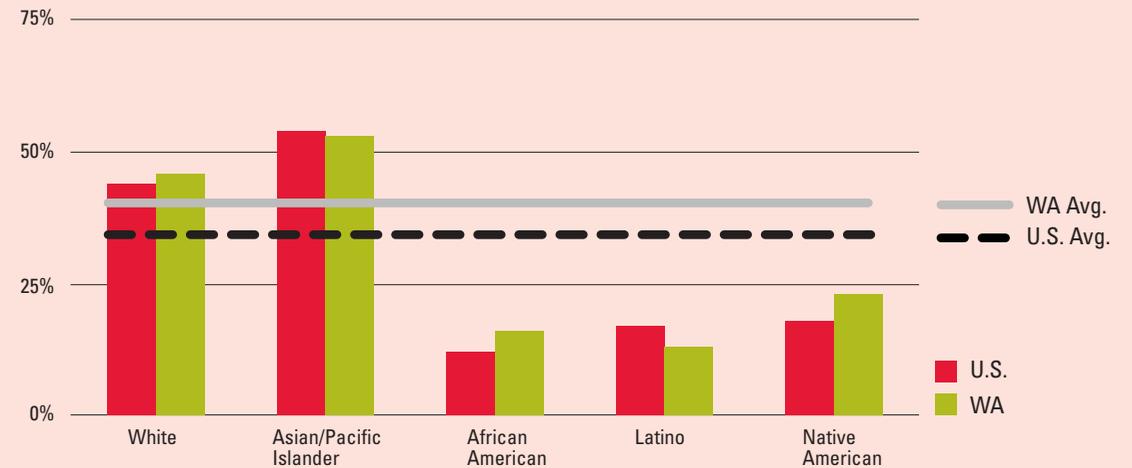
MATH – NATIONAL EXAM

Math achievement barely improving: Washington ranked 17th nationally in the percentage of fourth graders at or above proficient on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) with 43% in 2008-09, a decrease from 44% in 2006-07 (best state: Massachusetts, 57%; national average: 39%). Eighth grade scores improved to 40% passing at or above proficient in 2008-09, up from 36% in 2006-07 (best state: Massachusetts, 51%; national average: 34%). (NCES)

MATH – DISAGGREGATED

Huge math achievement gap between subgroups: Proficiency rates for White (51%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (56%) fourth graders were more than double the rates for African American (24%), Latino (20%), and Native American (21%) students on the 2009 Math NAEP.

White and Asian/Pacific Islander eighth graders in Washington passed the NAEP exam at or above proficient with rates more than double their peers (46% and 53%, respectively): African Americans (16%), Latinos (13%), and Native Americans (23%). (NCES)



Percentage of eighth graders passing the 2009 Math NAEP

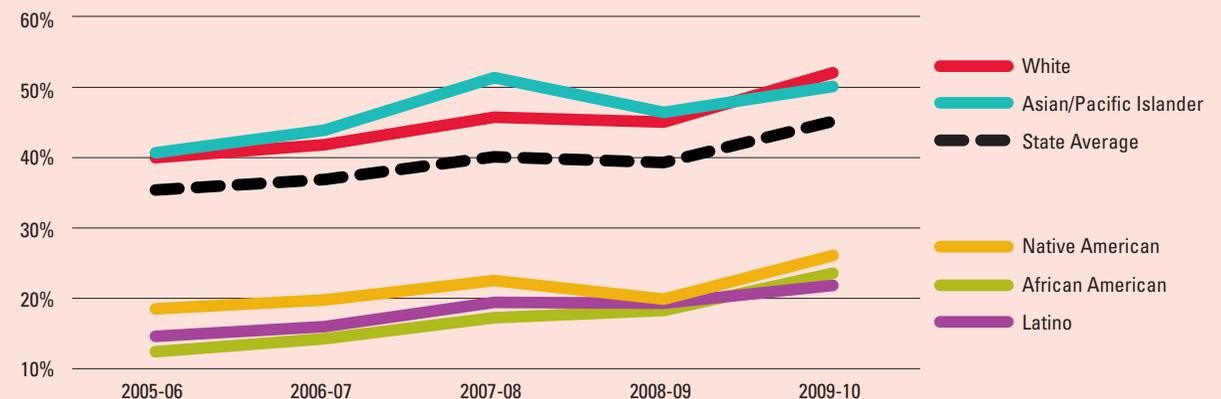
Source: NCES

SCIENCE – STATE EXAM

10th grade science scores inching up, although less than half of students pass: Washington's 10th graders continue to improve on the state science exam, with 44.7% passing in 2009-10, up from 39.7% in 2007-08. (OSPI)

SCIENCE – DISAGGREGATED

Achievement gap continues to grow in science: Gaps in proficiency rates between subgroups continue to grow, with the pass rates of White (51.6%) and Asian/Pacific Islander (49.6%) students averaging 28 points higher than their African American (23.1%), Latino (21.4%), and Native American (25.6%) peers in 2009-10. (OSPI)



Percentage of 10th graders passing the state science exam

Source: OSPI

Prepare everyone for the 21st century job market.

Increase the number of students who complete one year of education after high school and return for a second year.

2011 PROGRESS REPORT

In today's economy, a high school diploma is no longer enough to hold a family-wage job. Two-thirds of all new living-wage jobs require some sort of post-secondary credential, and that's just to get a foot in the door. In Washington, not enough young adults are continuing on to 2- and 4-year colleges, and of the ones that do, more than one-third arrive unprepared for college-level courses. We can and must do more to get students into and through post-secondary programs, without taking on crippling amounts of debt. We know that as tuition increases, sticker shock sets in and low-income student enrollment decreases. The cost of college must not be a barrier to any student.



READINESS

No improvement in college readiness: More than a third of students from the Class of 2006 (37%) who attended a 2- or 4-year college in Washington enrolled in remedial courses within a year after high school graduation. (SESRC)

CHANCE FOR COLLEGE

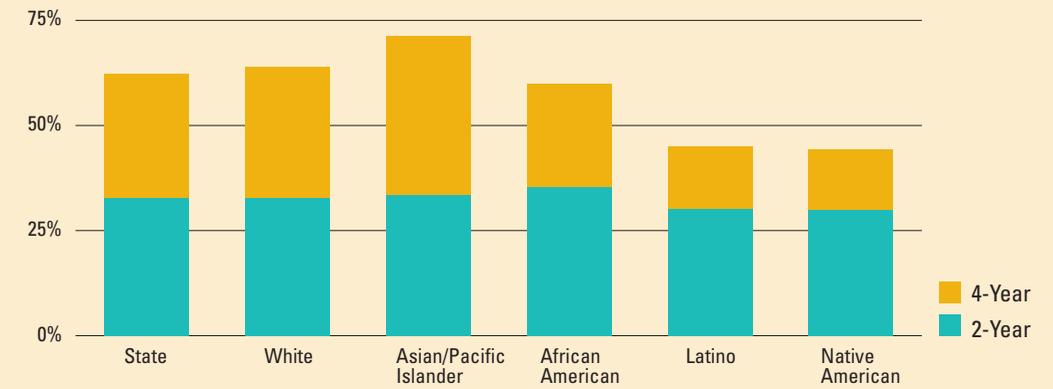
Slight increase in chance for college, but still in bottom five nationally: Washington ranks 46th in the nation in the chance for college by age 19 with 34.8% in 2008, a 1.8 point increase from 2006 (best state: South Dakota, 59.6%; national average: 44%). (PEO)

ECONOMY

Two-thirds of all new jobs will require education after high school: Washington ranks 6th in the nation in the percentage of new jobs that will require post-secondary training in 2018. (GUCEW)

OPPORTUNITY GAP

College opportunity gap shrinking slightly: Between 2006 and 2008, college attendance rates have increased to 62%. The greatest gains were seen among Latino students with a 5 percentage point increase to 45% and African American students with a 4 percentage point increase to 60%. Whites (64%) and Asian/Pacific Islanders (71%) still outpace other subgroups. (SESRC)



Percentage of students enrolling in 2- and 4-year colleges, Class of 2008

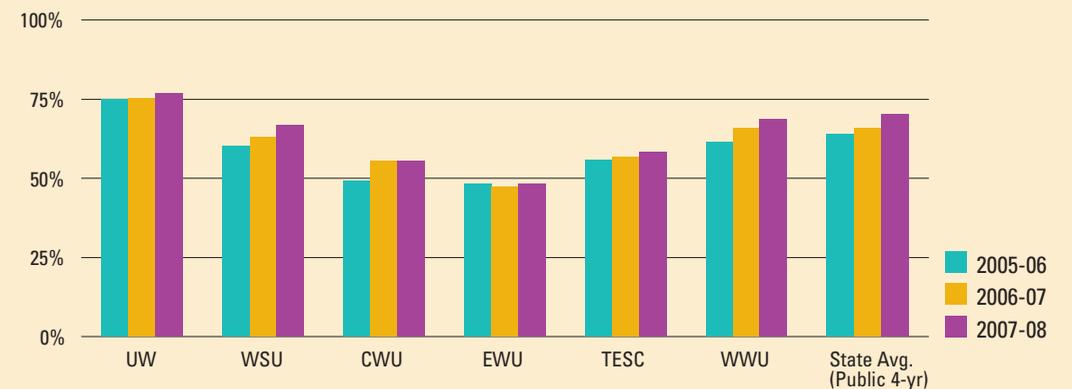
Source: SESRC

STUDENT DEBT

Average student debt continues to rise: The average undergraduate student in Washington borrowed \$7,346 in 2008-09, which was \$504 more than in 2006-07. (HECB)

GRADUATION RATES FOR 4-YEAR COLLEGES

Graduation rates at 4-year colleges improving: In 2008, 70.3% of full-time students at Washington's 4-year universities graduated within six years of enrolling, a 4 percentage point increase from 2006-07. (HECB)



Percentage of full-time undergraduate students earning a degree within six years of enrolling

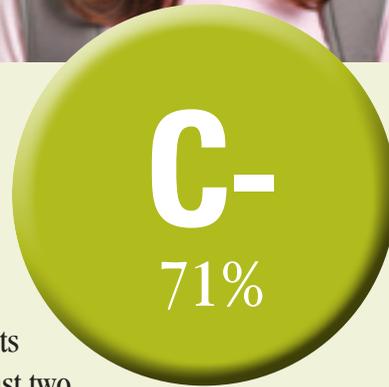
Source: HECB

Invest in what works.

Improve the transparency, accountability, and funding necessary to drive student achievement.

2011 PROGRESS REPORT

The last two years were tough fiscal times for families, states, and the nation as a whole. But we cannot use that as an excuse to back away from our commitment to educating our children. Washington's constitution is clear: education — and its funding — is the paramount duty of the state. And yet, in the past two years, we've pushed a larger funding burden onto our local school districts and neglected our paramount duty to make ample provision for the education of all children. The Legislature took steps forward by creating a framework for improvement by passing an education reform bill in 2009 (ESHB 2261). Now, the state needs to step up and fully implement these reforms to bring accountability, transparency, and adequate funding to our system. Our children depend on it.



PER-PUPIL FUNDING

Per-pupil spending increasing, but gap between national leader growing: Washington ranked 30th with per-pupil spending of \$10,346 in 2008-09, which was \$8,567 less than the national leader (best state: Vermont, \$18,913; national average: \$10,736). (NEA)



Average per-pupil expenditures among Global Challenge States, 2008-09

Source: NEA

PUBLIC EFFORT – K-12

Education spending low compared to personal income: Washington ranked 47th when public school financing was compared to personal income with \$40.98 per \$1,000 in 2007-08, a \$2 decrease from 2005-06 (best state: Alaska, \$78.08; national average, \$49). (U.S. Census Bureau)

SIMPLE MAJORITY

\$2.9 billion additional local funds available for schools: Since passage of the simple majority constitutional amendment in 2007, 154 local levies passed which would have otherwise failed, generating an additional \$2.9 billion for Washington schools. (OSPI)

HIGHER EDUCATION R&D

Investments in higher education research stagnate: Washington ranked 31st in academic research and development with \$3.28 per \$1,000 of GDP in 2008, a slight decrease from \$3.32 in 2005 (best state: Maryland, \$10.05; national average: \$3.66). (NSB)

PUBLIC EFFORT – HIGHER EDUCATION

State funding of higher education down 20 percent: Washington ranked 30th in state financial support for higher education when compared to personal income with \$5.62 per \$1,000 in 2010, a \$1.40 decrease from 2008 (best state: New Mexico, \$13.23; national average: \$6.18). (PEO)



Percent change in state funding of higher education among Global Challenge States between 2008 and 2010

Source: PEO

DATA

Improvements in state data system: Washington is one of 12 states to have met all 10 of the Data Quality Campaign's essential elements for longitudinal data systems, although only three of 10 state actions have been completed. (DQC)

How We Grade

STEP 1. IDENTIFY THE INDICATORS

Indicators, or measures, are selected for each performance category. All indicators used in the *Citizens' Report Card*:

- Are important to assessing performance in the category,
- Are collected regularly by reliable, public sources that use accepted scientific practices for data collection, and
- Measure progress and/or rank (either national or compared to Global Challenge States).

STEP 2. WEIGHT INDICATORS

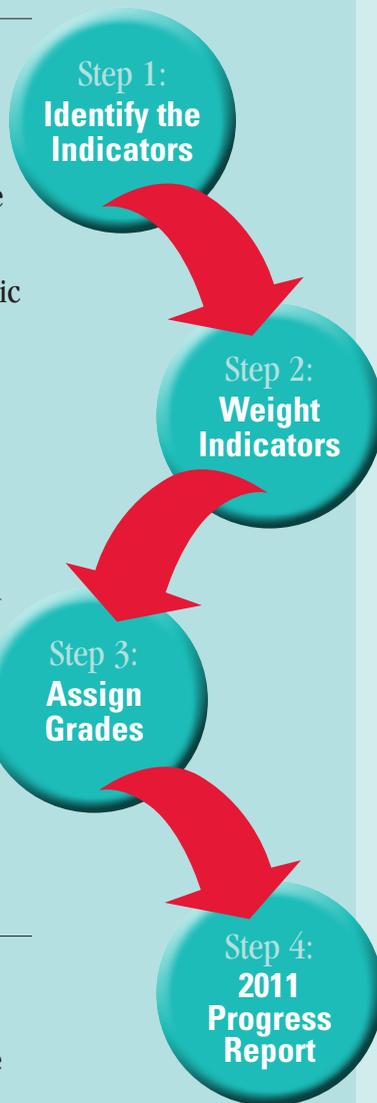
Each indicator is assigned a weight based on its importance to the performance category. For each category, the sum of all weights is 100. Weights for each performance category can be found at educationvoters.org.

STEP 3. ASSIGN GRADES

Each indicator is given an index score (1-100) based on one of three methods: progress made based on past performance (typically in the past two years), national rank, or rank among the eight Global Challenge States. When more than one method is used, index scores are averaged to create an overall score for the indicator.

STEP 4. 2011 PROGRESS REPORT

Improving our education system depends on incremental progress by implementing key strategies. We want to highlight progress made as well as current challenges. While assessing each initiative, we look at whether indicators have improved, gone backward, or made no measurable change.



GRADING SCALE

A+	=	97+
A	=	94 – 96
A-	=	90 – 93
B+	=	87 – 89
B	=	84 – 86
B-	=	80 – 83
C+	=	77 – 79
C	=	74 – 76
C-	=	70 – 73
D+	=	67 – 69
D	=	64 – 66
D-	=	60 – 63
F+	=	57 – 59
F	=	54 – 56
F-	=	50 – 53

DESIGN: DavidOwenHastings.com

Acknowledgements

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This report could not have been written without the gracious assistance of many people around the state. LEV Foundation would like to thank all those who provided ideas, comments, data, and encouragement. Your help was invaluable.

References

DEL:	Department of Early Learning
DQC:	Data Quality Campaign
GUCEW:	Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
HECB:	Higher Education Coordinating Board
NACCRRRA:	National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
NCES:	National Center for Education Statistics
NCHEMS:	National Center for Higher Education Management Systems
NCPPHE:	National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education
NEA:	National Education Association
NSB:	National Science Board
OSPI:	Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
PEO:	Postsecondary Education Opportunity
SBCTC:	State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
SESRC:	Social and Economic Science Research Center, Washington State University

For complete list of all sources, please go to our website: educationvoters.org.





The League of Education Voters Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization dedicated to engaging ordinary citizens, educators, policymakers and the media in the effort to provide a quality education for all students in Washington state – from preschool through college.

In Washington:

- One out of every four third graders is not reading at grade level.
- Only 40 percent of eighth graders are proficient in math.
- Less than 75 percent of students graduate from high school in four years.
- Nearly half of all community college students must take remedial math.
- We spend \$8,567 less per student than the national leader.

Take action to change this!

Go to educationvoters.org to learn more.