

The Students

of Prince George's County, MD

Nearly 85 percent of adults 25 years and older residing in Prince George's County have a high school diploma, and 27 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher, according to the 2000 census data (STAT Indiana 2008). Advanced educational attainment is higher for immigrants than the native born for those ages 25 and older. For the foreign born, nearly a third have a bachelor's degree or higher compared to just over a quarter of the native born. On the other hand, the proportion of the foreign born with less than a high school education (28.2 percent) is more than twice that of the native born (12.6 percent) (Maryland Department of Planning 2000).

Public School System

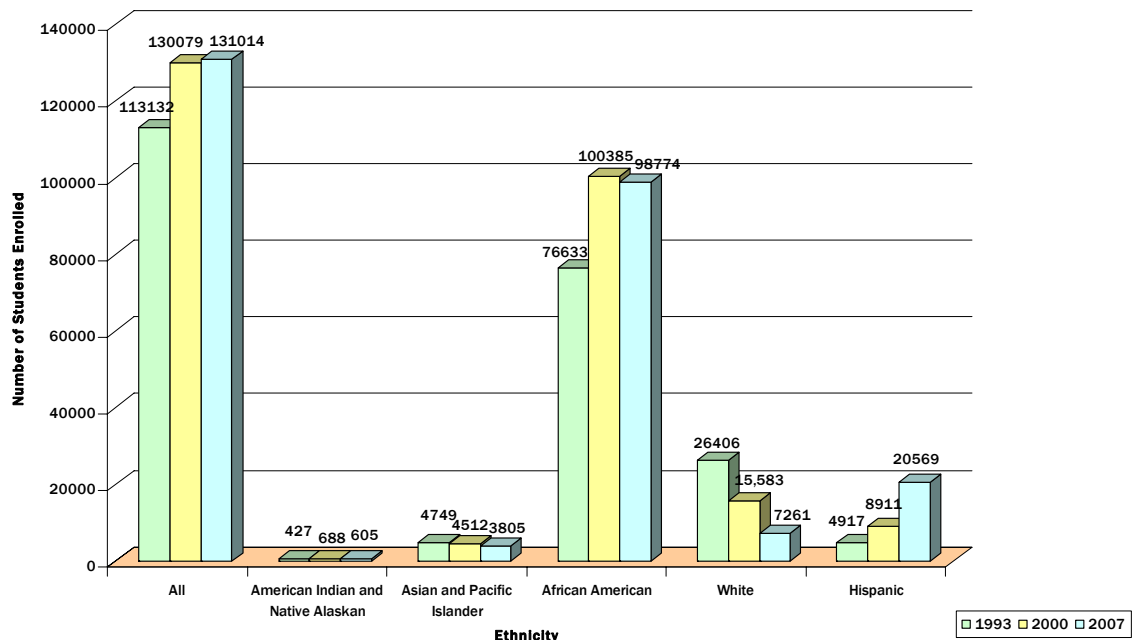
Prince George's County Public Schools is the second largest school system in the state of Maryland and the 18th largest in the nation. The school system currently employs approximately 16,000 full-time employees, including approximately 10,000 teachers (Prince George's County Board of Education 2008b).

During school year 2007, 131,014 students were enrolled in Prince George's County schools (15.6 percent of the total population). Elementary schools had the highest number of students enrolled (34.3 percent), with high school a close second (32.1 percent) (Maryland State Department of Education 2008a).

African Americans make up 75.4 percent of all students enrolled in all grades. Since 1993, Latino student enrollment has risen significantly by 15.3 percent, while White student enrollment has decreased significantly by 22.7 percent.

Among all the 20,984 students from 143 countries who attend Prince George's County public schools, 153 languages are spoken: 71 percent speak Spanish, 7.3 percent speak English, 3.1 percent speak French, and the remainder speak Yoruba (one of the official languages of Nigeria), Tagalog (Philippines), Vietnamese, Krio (Sierra Leone creole), Ibo (another official Nigerian language), Mandarin (China), Urdu, (Pakistan and parts of India), or Amharic (Ethiopia).

Figure 1. Enrollment by Ethnicity for 1993, 2002, and 2007
(Maryland State Department of Education 2008a)



Indicators of Student Performance

Over the past four school years, Prince George's County Maryland School Assessment (MSA) performance in reading and math has improved. Reading proficiency for elementary and middle school students in grades 3 through 8 improved by 20 percent (2003: 35 percent; 2007: 65 percent), while math proficiency improved by 26 percent (2003: 33 percent; 2007: 59 percent). However, performance rates vary significantly by ethnicity with Latino children having the lowest performance rates in grades 3–5.

Figure 3. MSA Performance in Reading and Mathematics in Grade 3 by Ethnicity and Gender, SY2007

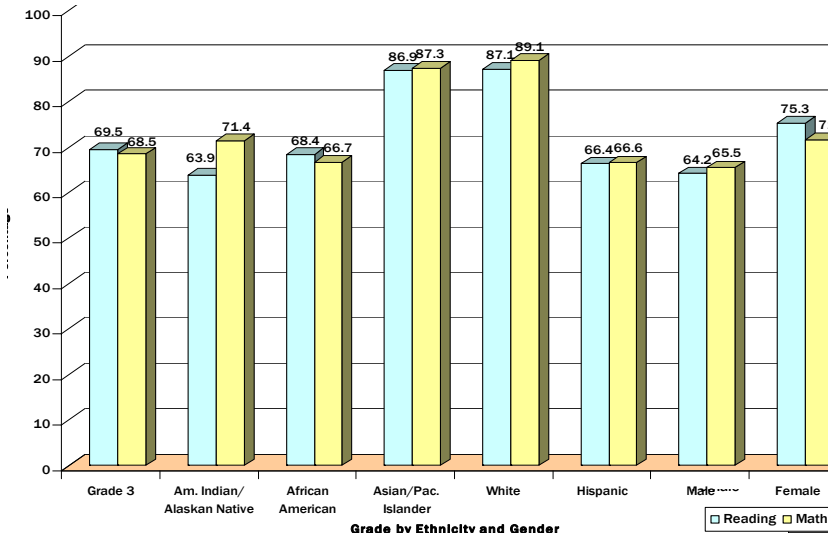


Figure 4. MSA Performance in Reading and Mathematics in Grade 4 by Ethnicity and Gender, SY2007

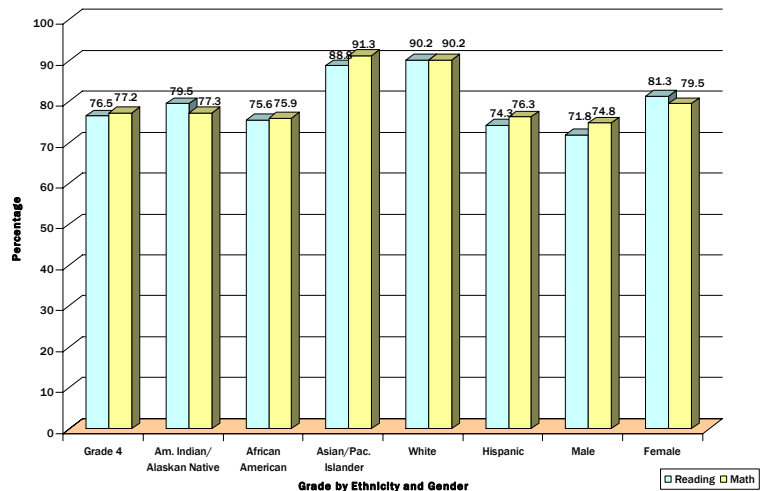
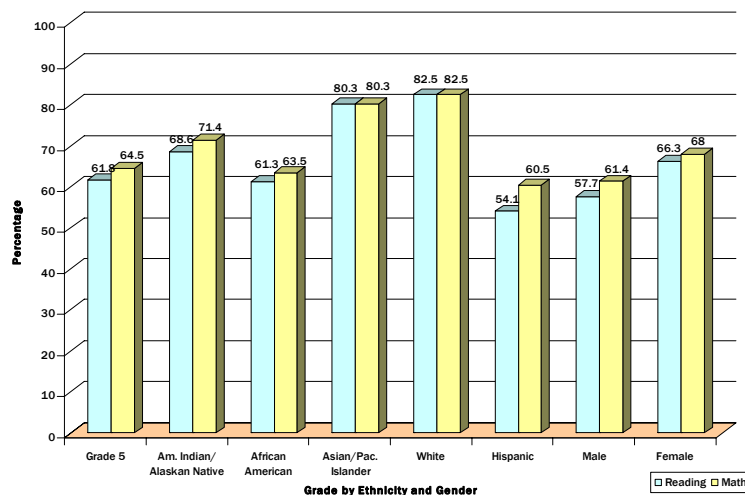


Figure 5. MSA Performance in Reading and Mathematics in Grade 5 by Ethnicity and Gender, SY2007



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