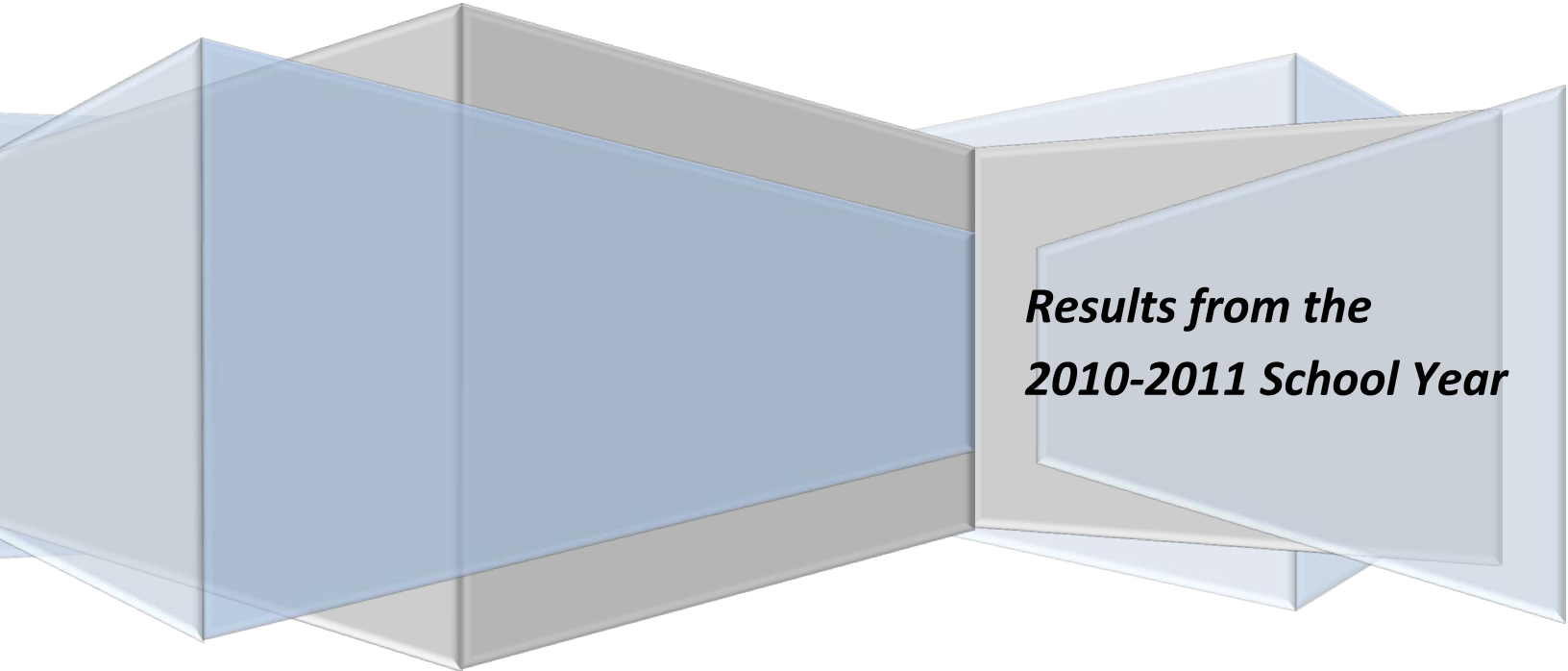




BEATING THE ODDS XI

Executive Summary

Analysis of Student Performance on
State Assessments



*Results from the
2010-2011 School Year*

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2010-2011 School Year***

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Acknowledgments

The Council of the Great City Schools thanks our superintendents, school board members, research directors, and staff for their courage in producing this report and for their commitment to our urban schoolchildren.

Sources

Data were gathered from the Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, “Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey,” and “Local Education Agency Universe Survey.” (All data are labeled preliminary by NCES.) State Department of Education websites.

Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of 67 of the nation’s largest urban school systems. Its Board of Directors is composed of the superintendent of schools and one school board member from each member city. An executive committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between superintendents and school board members, provides oversight of the 501 (c)(3) organization in between board meetings. The mission of the Council is to advocate for and to assist in the improvement of public education in the nation’s major cities. To meet that mission, the Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group convenes two major conferences each year on promising practices in urban education; conducts studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior personnel, communications, curriculum, research, technology, and others. The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961, and has its headquarters in Washington, DC.

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Beating the Odds XI

Executive Summary

Methods for Collecting and Analyzing Assessment Data

This analysis presents a summary of reading and mathematics achievement as well as demographic data for 67 of the nation's major city school systems. It provides an analysis of state assessment data from spring 2008 through spring 2011. It should be noted that previous BTO reports also included data for each individual district; however, those data are not available for this report. If additional information is needed, member districts should contact Council staff.

These state assessment results for big city school districts were collected by Council staff from a number of sources. Each school district's state website was searched for information that described its assessments, the grades and subjects in which the tests were administered, the years in which the tests were given, the format or metric in which results were reported, and changes in test forms, procedures, or scales. The decision was ultimately made to include data only on reading (or language arts) and math, because all states reported results in these critical subject areas. Science results will be added in subsequent reports.

Assessment data were then examined to determine the number of years the state had administered the tests to ensure that the report included only results that were comparable from year to year. Data were eliminated if states changed tests or significantly modified their guidelines about which students to test.

Data were also collected by race where reported by the state. Not all states report their disaggregated data, even if they gather it. Results for Black, Alaskan Native/American Indian, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Hispanic and White students are included in this report.

When available, data were also collected on economically disadvantaged students (usually defined as free & reduced price lunch or Title I eligibility), English language learners (usually defined as bilingual students or students with limited English proficiency), and students with disabilities (usually defined as special education or students with Individualized Education Plans).

The reader should note that data are generally presented in the same way that the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation requires. Every effort was made to report district-wide data in "performance levels" to show the percentage of students who score at or above "*Proficient*" or "*Below basic*" levels as specified in the law. We did not report "below basic" categories that applied to all students who scored below proficient, as this represents only the inverse of proficiency scores rather than a meaningful category of the lowest level of achievement.

We then calculated the annual change for each district and juxtaposed it against the state's progress over the same period so the reader could compare each district's rate of progress with that of its state.

Demographic and Staffing Data

To place the academic gains in context, the Council collected additional data on district demographics and staffing. This information came from various surveys of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) that we collected through the Common Core of Data. The latest reporting year for NCES was 09-10, thus, the time period for these contextual data is slightly different from the period for which test scores were reported.

Data Review and Validation

Once the data were collected, the Council prepared preliminary profiles on each member city. Profiles were e-mailed to the superintendent and the research director of each member district. Districts were asked to review the data, submit corrections, and add clarifying comments and end notes.

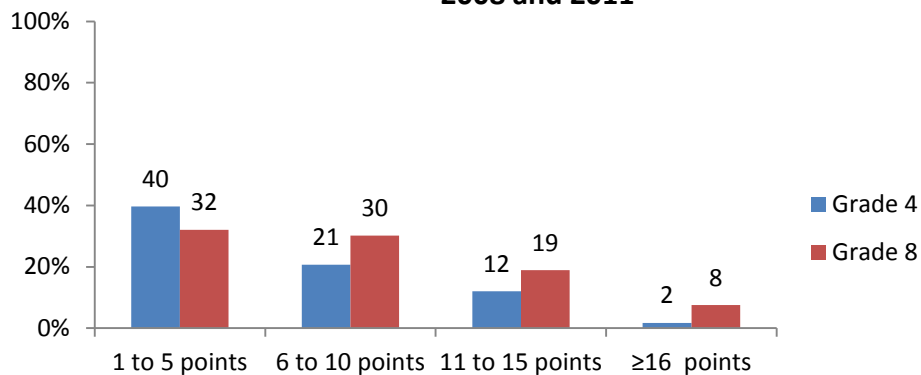
Corrections to the profiles were then made. Few districts adjusted any of the statewide achievement reports, but some provided clarifying information about changes in state testing practices and reporting. Districts were asked to provide documentation in the form of published reports or internet links to support their requested changes. A number of corrections, however, were made to NCES demographic and staffing data. The Council made those corrections but included a note on the profile, so readers would know that data came from NCES but were adjusted by the individual school systems.

Characteristics of Council of the Great City School Districts – 2010

	Characteristics of CGCS public schools	CGCS as percentage of the nation's public schools
Total Student Enrollment	6.9 million	14%
Hispanic	38%	24%
African American	33%	28%
White	20%	5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7%	19%
Alaskan/Native American	1%	6%
Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility	69%	21%
English Language Learners	17%	25%
Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP's)	14%	15%
Total Number of Teachers	433,851	14%
Student-Teacher Ratio	16:1	
Number of Schools	11,684	11%

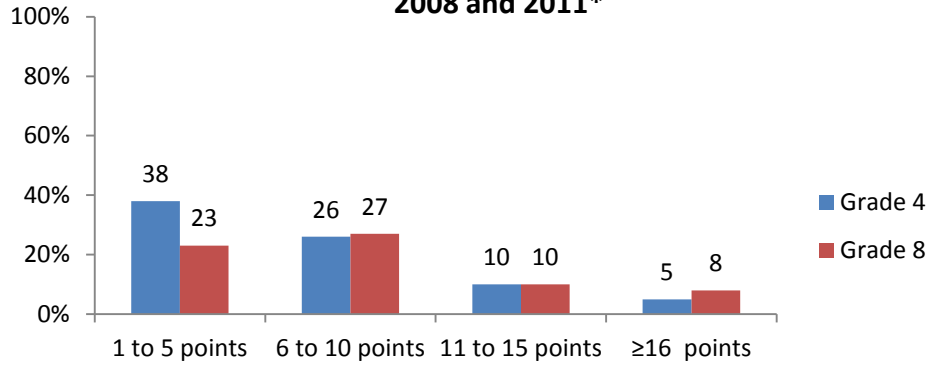
CGCS District Achievement on State Assessments

Figure 1. Percentage of CGCS districts with gains on state reading assessments between 2008 and 2011*



*Percentage point gains do not sum to 100% because not all districts made gains.

Figure 2. Percentage of CGCS districts with gains on state mathematics assessments between 2008 and 2011*



*Percentage point gains do not sum to 100% because not all districts made gains.

Figure 3. Percentage of CGCS districts with gains on state reading assessments by grade between 2008 and 2011

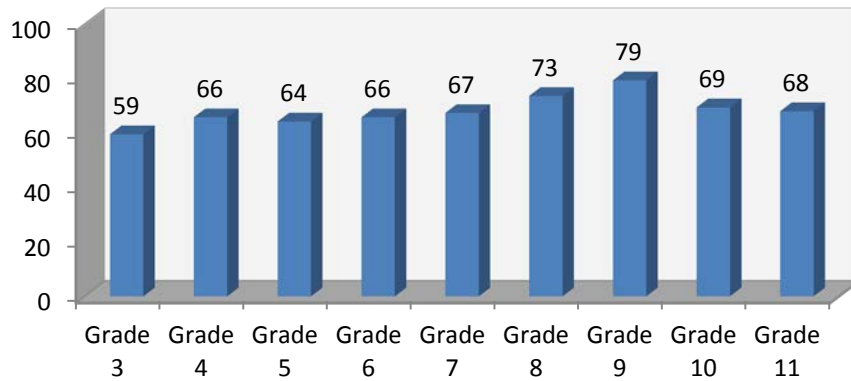


Figure 4. Percentage of CGCS districts with gains on state mathematics assessments by grade between 2008 and 2011

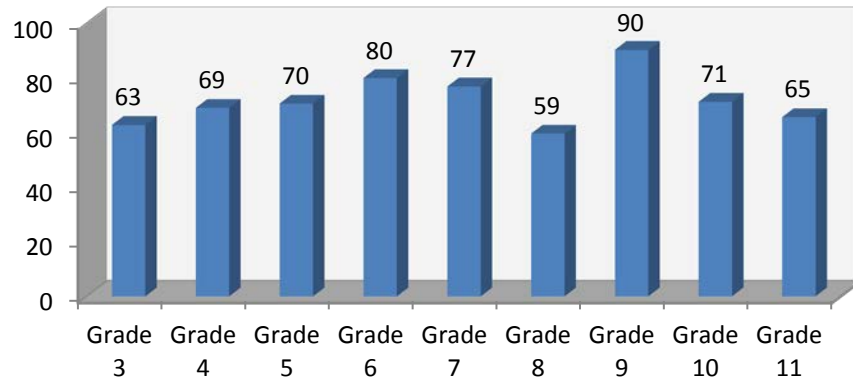
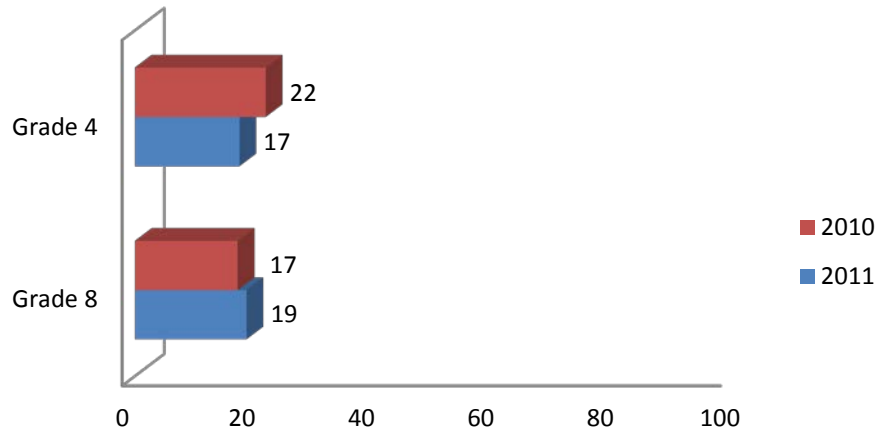
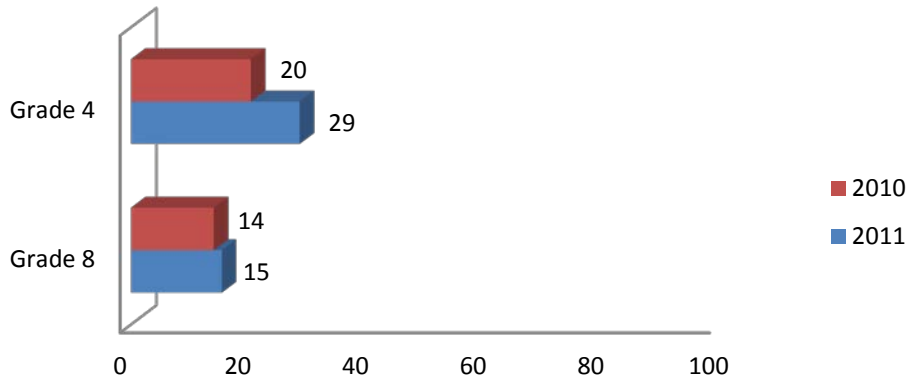


Figure 5. Percentage of CGCS districts performing at or above state proficiency rates in reading, 2010 and 2011*



*Nsizes for grades 4 and 8 may differ as documented in Appendix B.

Figure 6. Percentage of CGCS districts performing at or above state proficiency rates in mathematics 2010 and 2011*



*Nsizes for grades 4 and 8 may differ as documented in Appendix B.

Figure 7. Percentage of CGCS districts with faster growth than their state in mathematics and reading, 2011

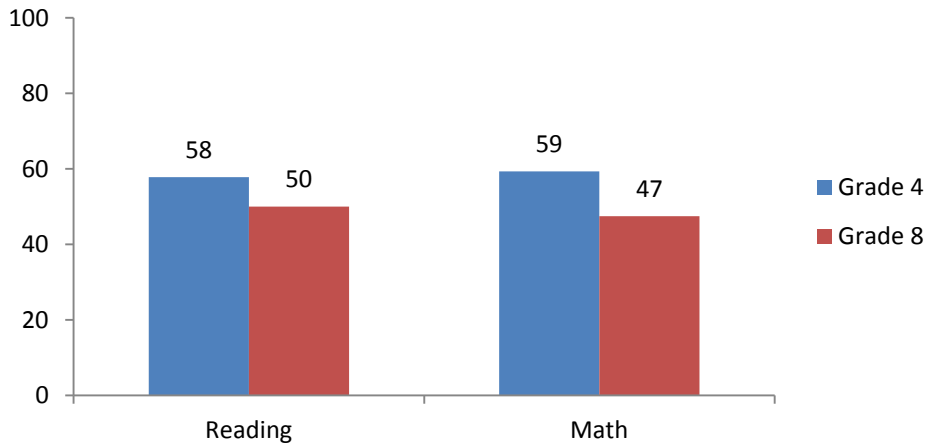
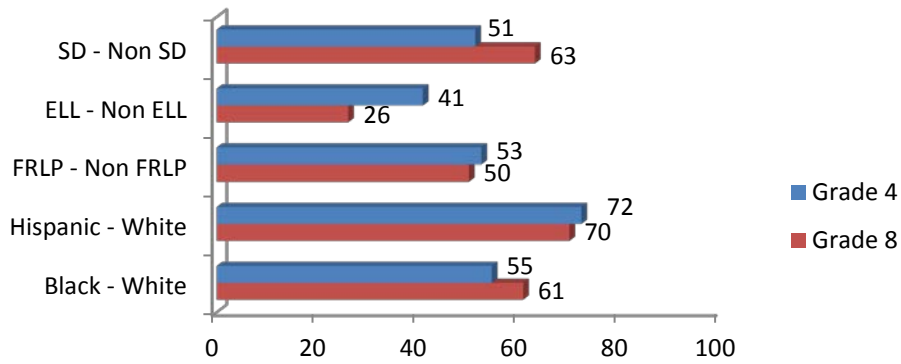
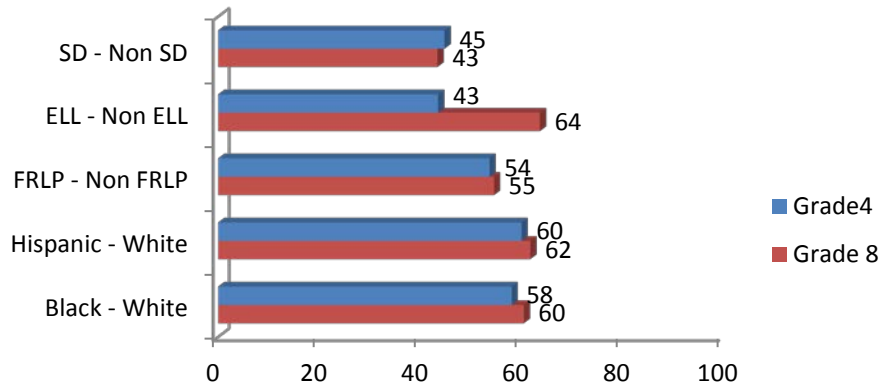


Figure 8. Percentage of CGCS districts reducing achievement gaps on state reading assessments by student groups, 2011*



*Gaps are defined as the difference between the proficiency rates of a given student group districtwide and their comparison group statewide

Figure 9. Percentage of CGCS districts reducing achievement gaps on state mathematics assessments by student groups, 2011*



*Gaps are defined as the difference between the proficiency rates of a given student group districtwide and their comparison group statewide

Appendix A

Data Limitations

The assessment data presented in *Beating the Odds XI: Executive Summary* has a number of important limitations that readers should keep in mind. Many of these problems have existed since our first report was published because states have always changed how they report their results. The reader should be aware of the following limitations in the data—

1. As a result of the nation’s 50-state assessment system, it is not possible to compare assessment data across states. Each state has developed its own test, test administration guidelines, timelines, grades tested, and other technical features. It is not technically sound to compare districts across state lines. Therefore, the report does not rank cities on their performance, nor are test results in one state or city directly compared with any other. Comparisons within a given state can be made but should be done with caution. We look forward to the next generation assessments which will permit such comparisons.
2. Trend lines vary in duration from state to state. Because of differences in testing patterns, data availability, and changes in tests from state to state, some districts have trend lines spanning more years than other districts do. Some may have data for as many as four years (from 2008 through 2011), while others may have data for just one year.
3. No tests of statistical significance were conducted on test-score changes on state assessments, nor are standard errors of measurement included in this report. Most states do not yet publish the statistics necessary to make these calculations possible. As such, the comparisons in this report are made using point estimates rather than confidence intervals.
4. Tests also vary in their degree of difficulty. This report did not attempt to analyze the difficulty or rigor of state assessments. A state with a challenging test may produce lower district scores, while a state with an easy test may have higher district scores. High scores do not necessarily mean an easier test, however.
5. States use similar terminology for the various performance levels (i.e., advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic), but these terms do not mean the same things from state to state. A level of student performance that is considered “proficient” in one state may be “basic” or below in another. In addition, the scale from the highest possible score to the lowest will differ from test to test and will affect how close city averages look compared to their states. Moreover, the distance between any two points on a scale may not be the same.
6. The data in this report are limited by what each state publicly reports. There may be circumstances where the data in this report are incomplete because the state has not posted all of its findings on its website or has not broadly circulated reports containing the findings by our publication date.
7. One part of the analysis compares specific districts to their respective states in the most recent year of testing: 2010-2011. Districts with 2010-2011 data were only included in the analysis if 2010-2011 data was

also available for their state. These calculations are represented in the summary statistics regarding district performance relative to their states.

8. State and aggregate results in the report include data from the respective cities. We have not attempted to remove city data from state or national averages before making comparisons.
9. Some states administer reading tests to their students; other states administer an English language arts test. This report presents both kinds of data under the general “reading” heading. In general, language arts tests include both reading and writing, but states may have such tests with differing mixes of the two areas. In addition, the types of writing included on the state tests may differ from state-to-state and from year-to-year. For instance, one year a state may have a writing component that calls for students to write a narrative, but the next year, the state may have students summarizing information or responding to a literature prompt. Scores can fluctuate accordingly. This report relies mainly on reading tests to summarize our findings, but if language arts tests are available instead of reading tests those results are used here.
10. Finally, the reader should recognize that the state data are not the same as data provided on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The state tests may not measure the same things as NAEP; they are given to all children, not just a sample; they use different scale scores, if they use scale scores at all; they use different definitions—in the vast majority of cases—of what proficiency means; state tests are often much less rigorous; and were designed for different purposes.

Appendix B

Number of Districts Included in Specific Data Analyses

FIGURE 1. Percentage of CGCS districts with gains on state reading assessments between 2008 and 2011	Districts improving	Districts reporting
Grade 4		
1 to 5 percentage points	23	58
6 to 10 percentage points	12	58
11 to 15 percentage points	7	58
≥ 16 percentage points	1	58
Grade 8		
1 to 5 percentage points	17	53
6 to 10 percentage points	16	53
11 to 15 percentage points	10	53
≥ 16 percentage points	4	53
FIGURE 2. Percentage of CGCS districts with gains on state mathematics assessments between 2008 and 2011	Districts improving	Districts reporting
Grade 4		
1 to 5 percentage points	22	58
6 to 10 percentage points	15	58
11 to 15 percentage points	6	58
≥ 16 percentage points	3	58
Grade 8		
1 to 5 percentage points	12	52
6 to 10 percentage points	14	52
11 to 15 percentage points	5	52
≥ 16 percentage points	4	52
FIGURE 3. Percentage of CGCS districts with gains on state reading assessments by grade between 2008 and 2011	Districts improving	Districts reporting
Grade 3	38	64
Grade 4	42	64
Grade 5	41	64
Grade 6	42	64
Grade 7	43	64
Grade 8	47	64
Grade 9	19	24
Grade 10	27	39
Grade 11	19	28

FIGURE 4. Percentage of CGCS districts with gains on mathematics assessments by grade between 2008 and 2011	Districts improving	Districts reporting
Grade 3	40	64
Grade 4	44	64
Grade 5	45	64
Grade 6	51	64
Grade 7	49	64
Grade 8	35	59
Grade 9	18	20
Grade 10	22	31
Grade 11	17	26
Figure 5. Percentage of CGCS districts performing at or above state proficiency rates in reading, 2010 and 2011	Greater than or equal to state scores	Districts reporting
SY 2010-11		
Grade 4	11	59
Grade 8	11	56
SY 2009-10		
Grade 4	14	59
Grade 8	11	56
Figure 6. Percentage of CGCS districts performing at or above state proficiency rates in mathematics, 2010 and 2011	Greater than or equal to state scores	Districts reporting
SY 2010-11		
Grade 4	17	59
Grade 8	7	50
SY 2009-10		
Grade 4	13	59
Grade 8	8	50
Figure 7. Percentage of CGCS districts with faster growth than their state in mathematics and reading, 2011	Faster growth than State	Districts reporting
Reading		
Grade 4	37	64
Grade 8	34	64
Math		
Grade 4	38	64
Grade 8	28	59
Figure 8. Percentage of CGCS districts reducing achievement gaps on state reading assessments by student groups, 2011	Faster growth than state	Districts reporting
Grade 4		
SDD - Non SD	20	39
ELL - Non ELL	9	22

FRPL - Non FRLP	21	40
Hispanic - White	34	47
Black - White	30	55
Grade 8		
SDD - Non SD	24	38
ELL - Non ELL	6	23
FRPL - Non FRLP	20	40
Hispanic - White	35	50
Black - White	31	51
Figure 9. Percentage of CGCS districts reducing achievement gaps on state mathematics assessments by student groups, 2011	Faster growth than state	Districts reporting
Grade 4		
SDD - Non SD	17	38
ELL - Non ELL	10	23
FRPL - Non FRLP	22	41
Hispanic - White	33	55
Black - White	32	55
Grade 8		
SDD - Non SD	13	30
ELL - Non ELL	7	11
FRPL - Non FRLP	18	33
Hispanic - White	29	47
Black - White	29	48

Appendix C

Calculations

Annual Change

$$\text{Annual Change} = \frac{(\text{Data from most recent school year} - \text{Baseline year})}{\text{Number of years} - 1}$$

$$\text{Percentage Point Change} = \text{Data from most recent year} - \text{Data from baseline year}$$

Achievement Gaps

$$\text{Black-White} = \text{Black (district level data)} - \text{White (state level data)}$$

$$\text{Hispanic-White} = \text{Hispanic (district level data)} - \text{White (state level data)}$$

$$\text{FRPL - Non FRPL} = \text{FRPL (district level data)} - \text{Non FRPL (state level data)}$$

$$\text{ELL - Non ELL} = \text{ELL (district level data)} - \text{Non ELL (state level data)}$$

$$\text{SWD - Non SWD} = \text{SWD (district level data)} - \text{Non SWD (state level data)}$$

Change in Achievement Gaps

$$\text{Change in Gap} = \text{Achievement gap from baseline year} - \text{Achievement gap from most current year}$$

**Note: A negative change indicates that the gap is closing. The larger the negative number, the more that gap has closed.

Appendix D

Districts Included in the Analysis

Albuquerque Public Schools
Anchorage School District
Atlanta Public Schools
Austin Independent School District
Baltimore City Public Schools
Birmingham City Schools
Boston Public Schools
Bridgeport Public Schools
Broward County Public Schools
Buffalo City School District
Caddo Parish Public Schools
Charleston County School District
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
Chicago Public Schools
Cincinnati Public Schools
Clark County School District
Cleveland Metropolitan School District
Columbus City Schools
Dallas Independent School District
Dayton Public Schools
Denver Public Schools
Des Moines Independent Community School District
Detroit Public Schools
District of Columbia Public Schools
Duval County Public Schools
East Baton Rouge Parish School System
Fort Worth Independent School District
Fresno Unified School District
Guilford County Schools
Hillsborough County Public Schools
Houston Independent School District
Indianapolis Public Schools
Jackson Public Schools
Jefferson County Public Schools
Kansas City Public Schools
Little Rock School District
Long Beach Unified School District
Los Angeles Unified School District
Memphis City Schools
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Milwaukee Public Schools
Minneapolis Public Schools
New Orleans Public Schools
New York City Department of Education
Newark Public Schools
Norfolk Public Schools
Oakland Unified School District
Oklahoma City Public Schools
Omaha Public Schools
Orange County Public Schools
The School District of Palm Beach County
The School District of Philadelphia
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Portland Public Schools
Providence Public School District
Richmond Public Schools
Rochester City School District
Sacramento City Unified School District
San Diego Unified School District
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St. Paul Public Schools
Toledo Public Schools
Wichita Public Schools