

VIII. NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

In 1971, the Nevada Legislature appropriated \$30,000 for an in-depth study of the status of the state's public school system. The Governor appointed a committee for this purpose and it issued a report in August 1972. Among the recommendations contained in this report were the following accountability-related proposals:

- Identification and clarification of the significant and realistic educational goals and objectives;
- Accountability and wise use of educational resources; and
- Evaluation of teachers, supervisory staff, principals, and superintendents.

Following several sessions of discussion, in 1977 the Legislature adopted a mandated student testing program – the Nevada Proficiency Examination – to provide a statewide measure of student accountability that was not previously available. Since 1977, the Legislature has required statewide testing to measure how Nevada's pupils compare to those in other states and the nation as a whole. These tests included the following: a standardized, norm-referenced test (NRT) in reading, language arts, mathematics, and science in grades 4 and 8; a state-designed, direct writing assessment in grades 8 and 11; and a High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE) beginning in grade 11 covering reading and mathematics.

The 1997 Nevada Education Reform Act (NERA) increased testing requirements as a part of increased accountability for public schools. A NRT for grade 10 was added, as was a writing test for 4th grade. Science was added as a subject to be tested at grades 4, 8, 10, and 11. The NERA also established a policy linkage between the proficiency testing program and school accountability by creating a procedure for ranking schools on the basis of the NRT scores. Schools designated “in need of improvement” are required to prepare plans for improvement and to adopt proven remedial education programs based upon needs identified using the NRT scores.

Indicators of post secondary education plans are reflected in the percentage of high school students who take the college entrance examinations, the scholastic aptitude test (SAT), and the American College Test (ACT). While the average ACT scores for Nevada seniors have remained comparatively flat for the past several years, the percentage of students taking the ACT has decreased steadily since 1995. Over that same period, the percentage of seniors taking the SAT has fluctuated from a low of 32 percent to a high of 36 percent. The SAT scores peaked in 1999 and have been somewhat flat since that time.

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In the 1999 Session, the Legislature added a requirement for criterion-referenced tests (CRTs) linked to the academic standards for selected grades and required that the HSPE be revised to measure the performance of students on the academic standards starting with the class graduating in 2003. Criterion-referenced tests in reading and mathematics for grades 3 and 5 were administered for the first time in spring of 2002. In addition, a CRT in science has been piloted for grades 5 and 8. The 2001 Legislature also moved the administration of the NRT from grade 8 to grade 7.






















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The Nevada Department of Education changed the NRT in the fall of 2002 from *TerraNova* (CTB/McGraw Hill) to the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills* (Riverside Publishing Co.).

CURRENT SYSTEM (19 TESTS) 2005

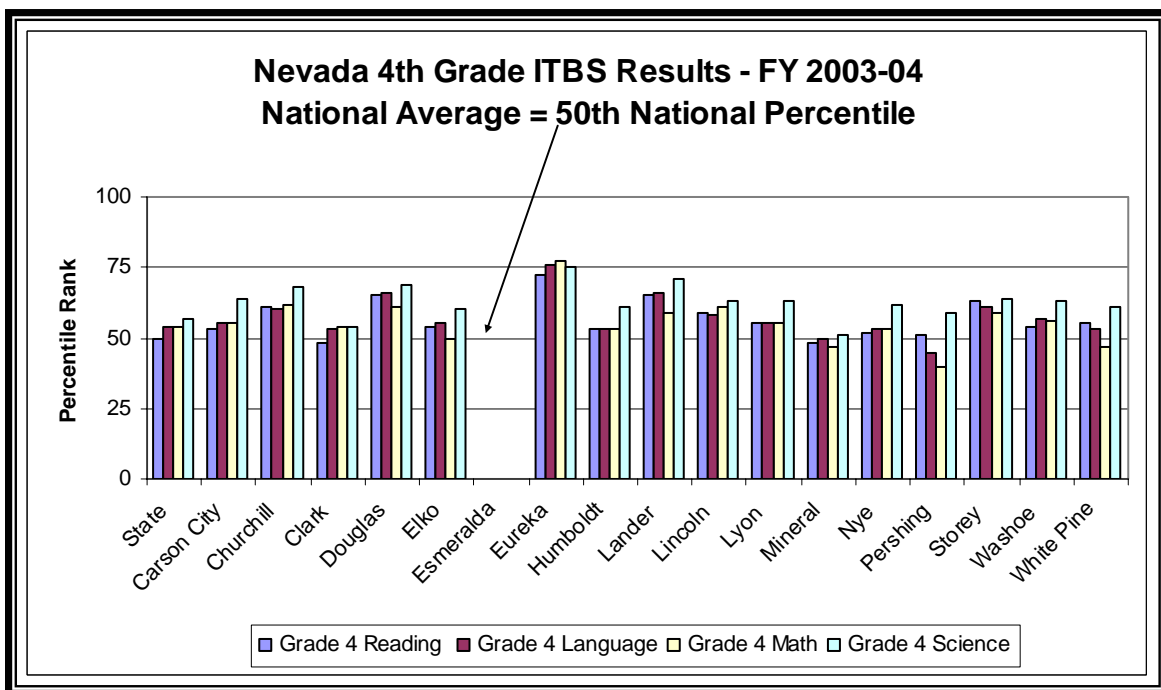
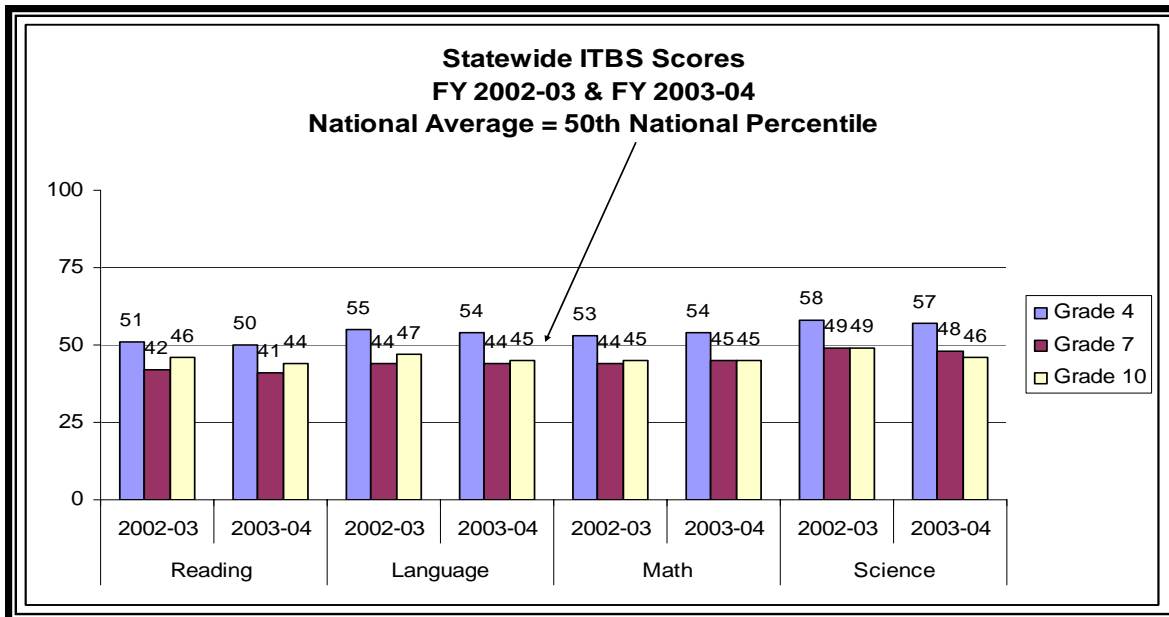
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Norm-Referenced Test– <i>Iowa Test of Basic Skills</i>										
National Assessment of Education Progress (<i>NAEP</i>) (sample only)										
Writing Exam (4 th grade is diagnostic only)										
High School Proficiency Exam										
Nevada Criterion-Referenced Test										

In the 19th Special Session of 2003, to comply with the Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLBA), the Legislature modified the assessment system to add tests aligned to the academic standards in reading and mathematics for grades 3 through 8 and revised the state accountability system to meet federal requirements for making adequate yearly progress (AYP); the legislation, S.B. 1, also imposed sanctions on certain schools and school districts that consistently fail to meet AYP targets.

The HSPE is a “high stakes” test since students are required to pass it as a condition for graduation and for eligibility for the state’s Millennium Scholarship Program. The changes required by NCLB also created high stakes for schools and school districts after several consecutive years of being classified as in need of improvement.

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IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS (ITBS)

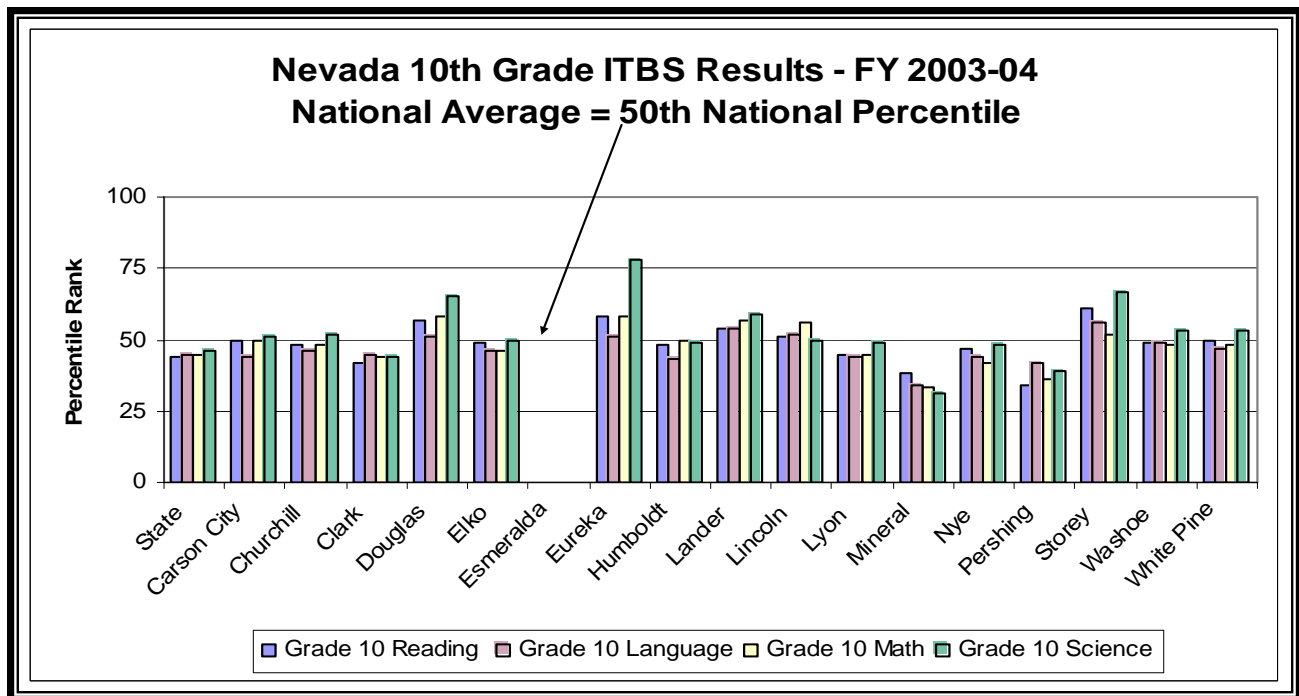
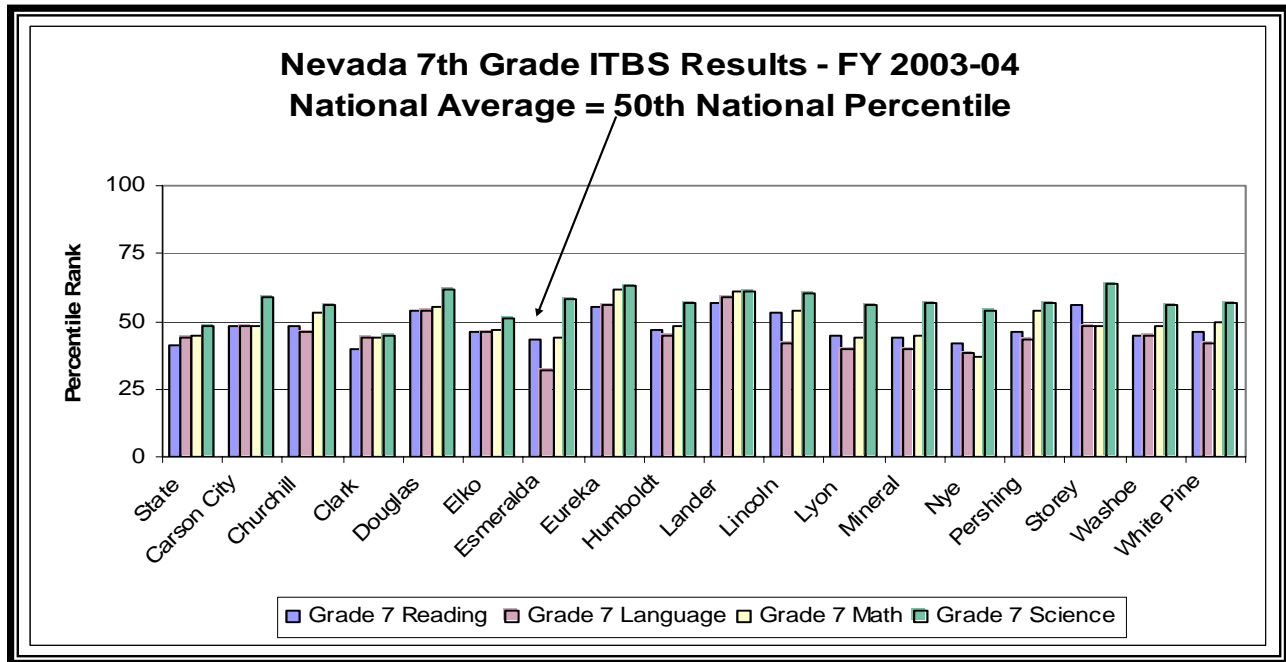


Note: Esmeralda County has fewer than 10 students to report on in 4th grade. Therefore, due to confidentiality factors there is no ranking for Esmeralda County.

Source: Nevada Department of Education

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IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS (ITBS)



Note: There is no high school in Esmeralda County; therefore, there is no 10th grade percentile ranking.

Source: Nevada Department of Education.

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HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS

Western States With an Exit Examination (Similar to the High School Proficiency Examination)



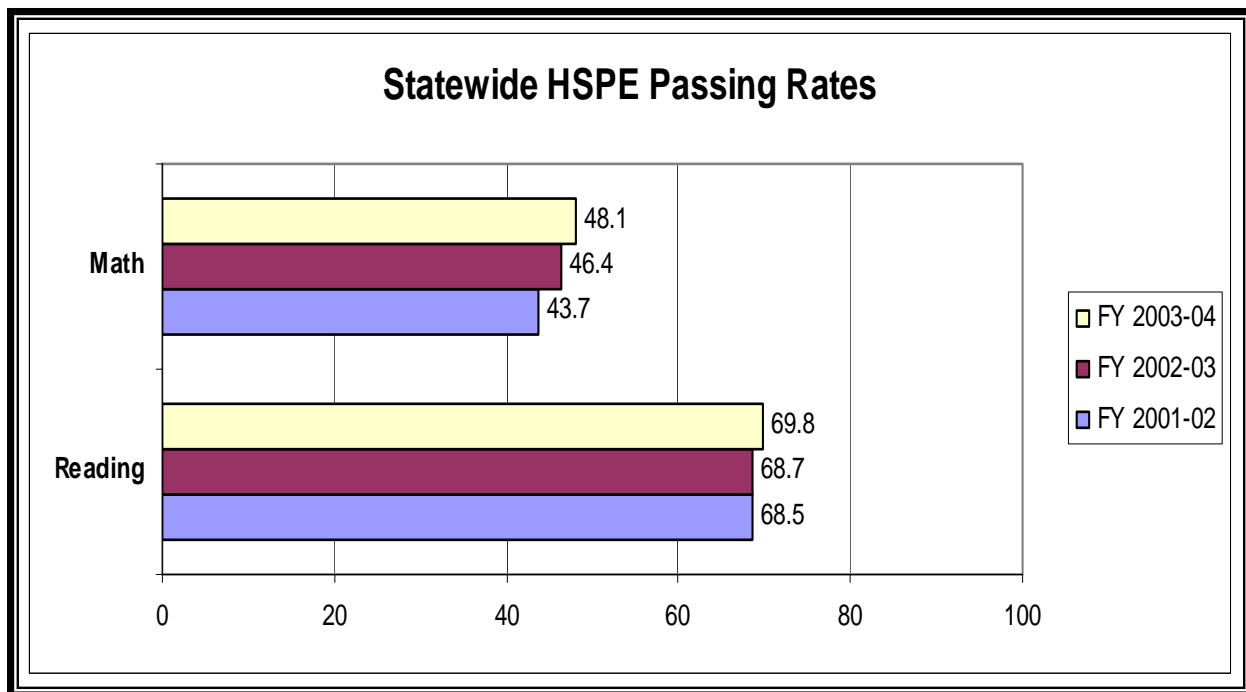
Source: Center on Education Policy: State High School Exit Exams, August 2004.

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HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION (HSPE)

Prior to FY 2001-02, the reading, math, and writing portions of the High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE) were traditionally administered to pupils in grades 11 and 12, with the first administration of the examination in October for pupils in grade 11. Beginning in FY 2001-02, the reading and math portions of the HSPE were administered, for the first time, to pupils in grade 10; for this administration, the examination is provided in April.

The chart below shows the HSPE passing rates in FYs 2001-02 through FY 2003-04 for pupils in grade 10. In addition, beginning with the 2001 administration of the HSPE, only those pupils who have sufficient credits are eligible to take the HSPE (*Nevada Administrative Code* [NAC] 389.445).

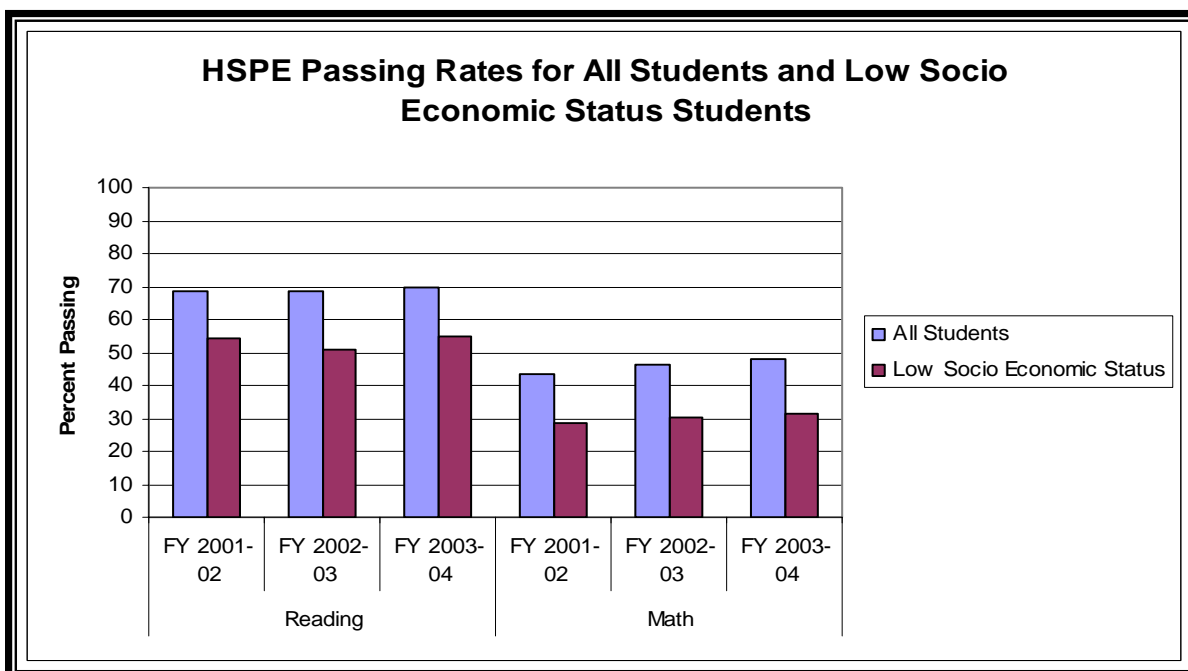
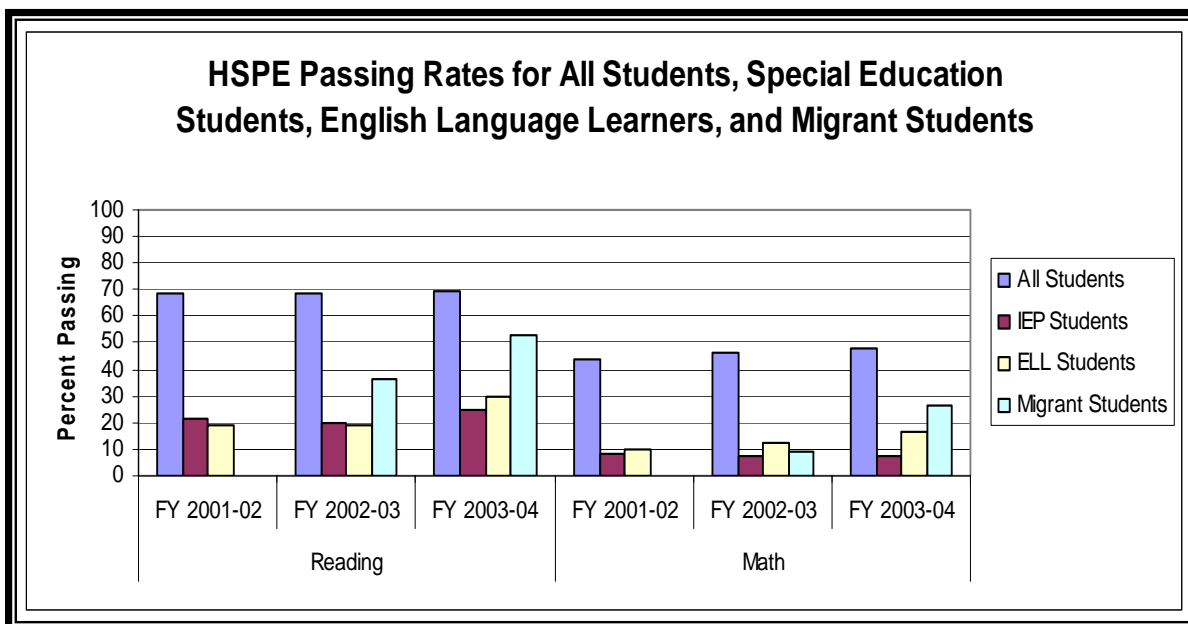


Source: Nevada Department of Education

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

Passing Rates by Population



Source: Nevada Department of Education.

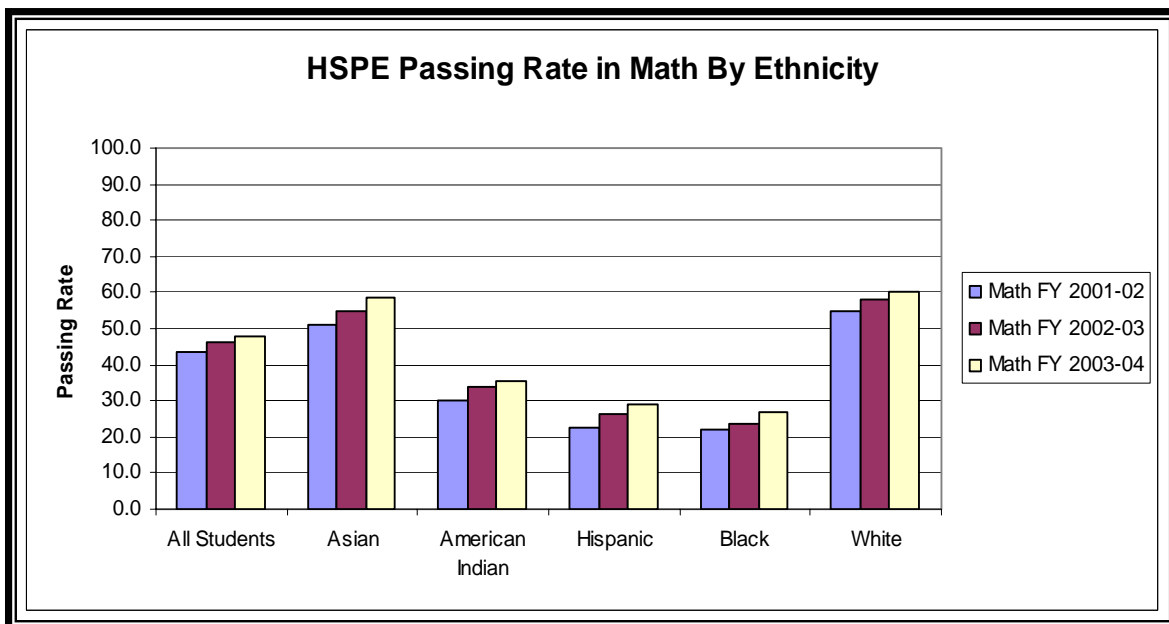
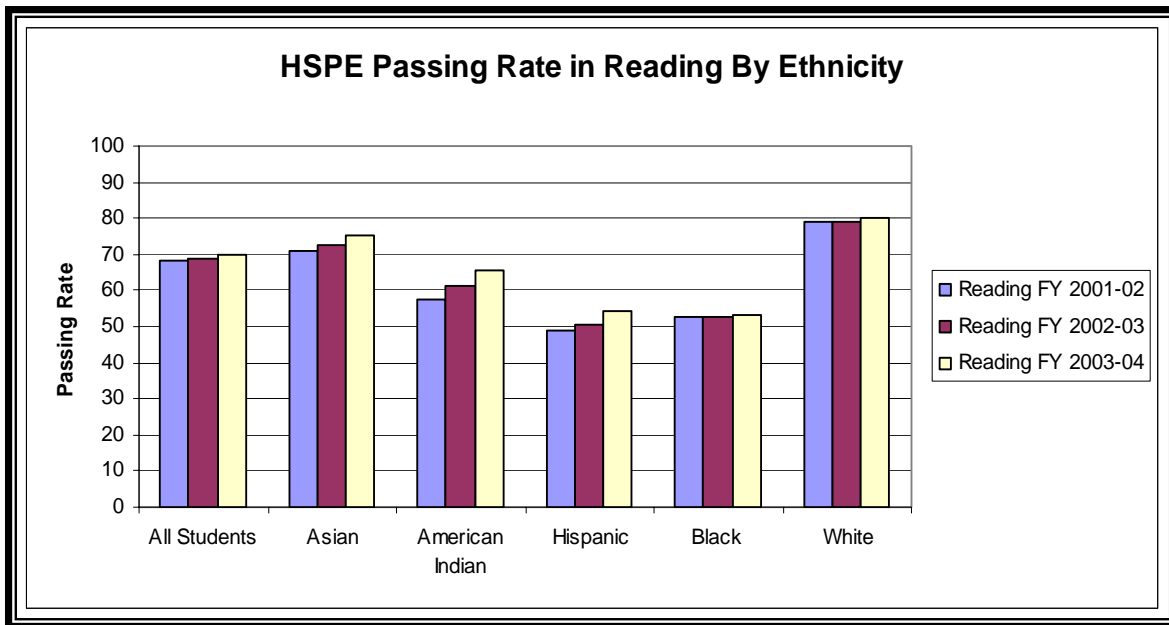
*Results based on the April administration to 10th grade pupils.

Note: Beginning in 2001, only those pupils who have sufficient credits are eligible to take the HSPE (NAC 389.445).

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

Passing Rates By Population



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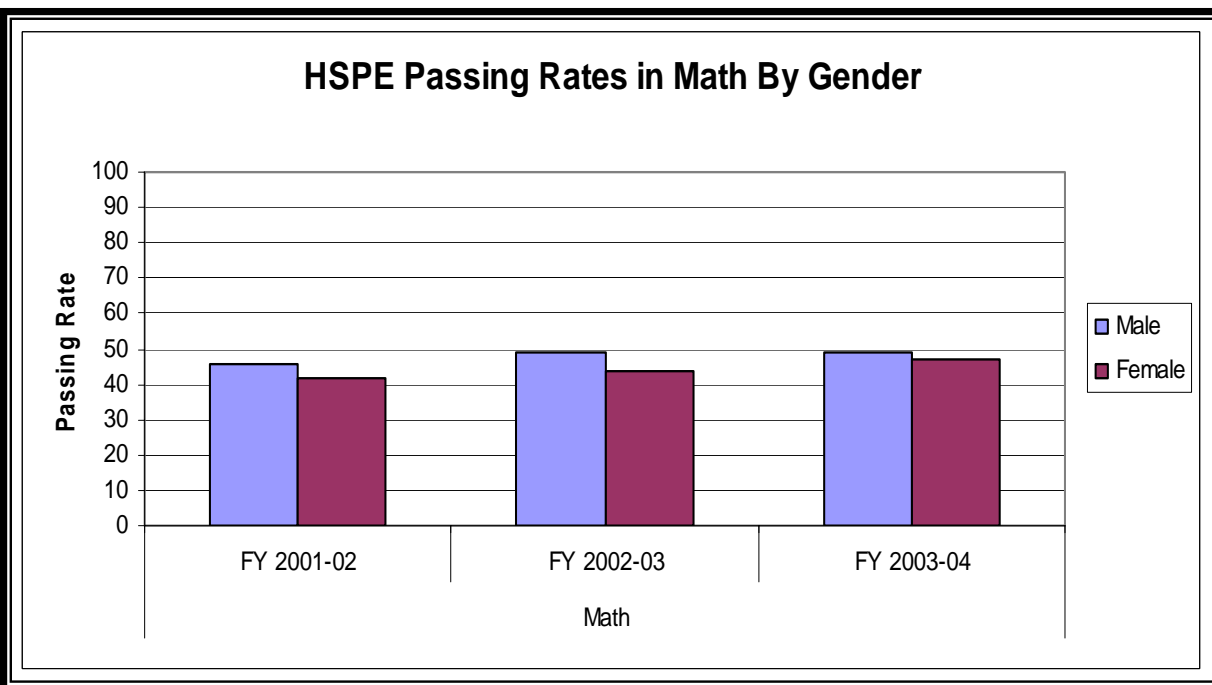
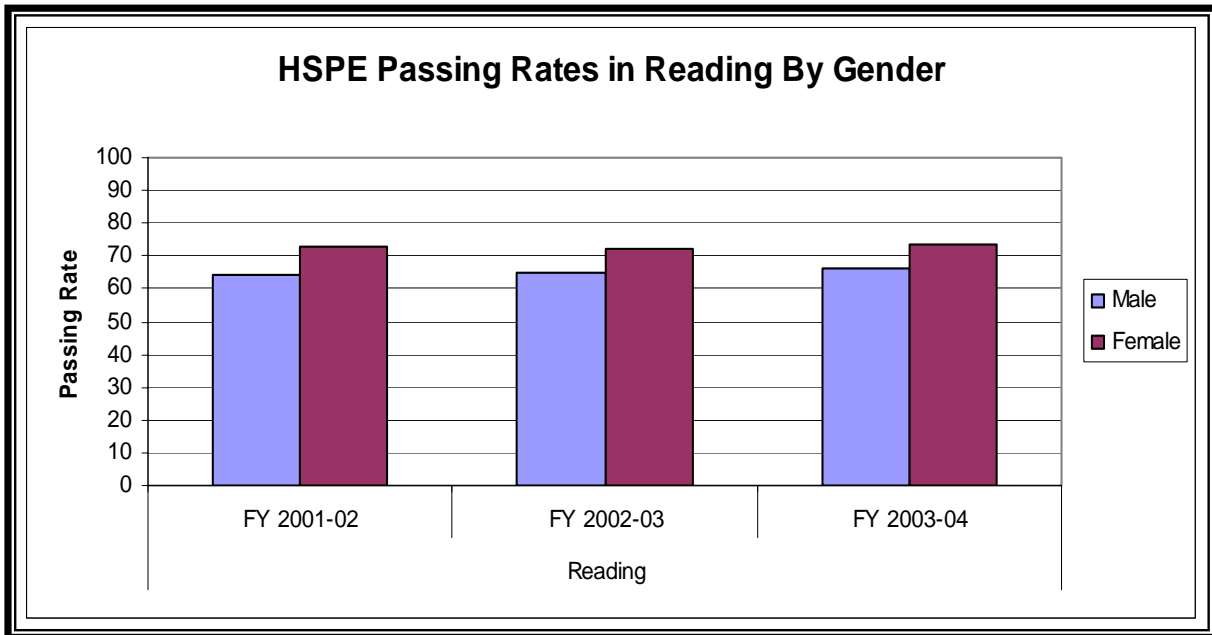
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HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

Passing Rates By Population

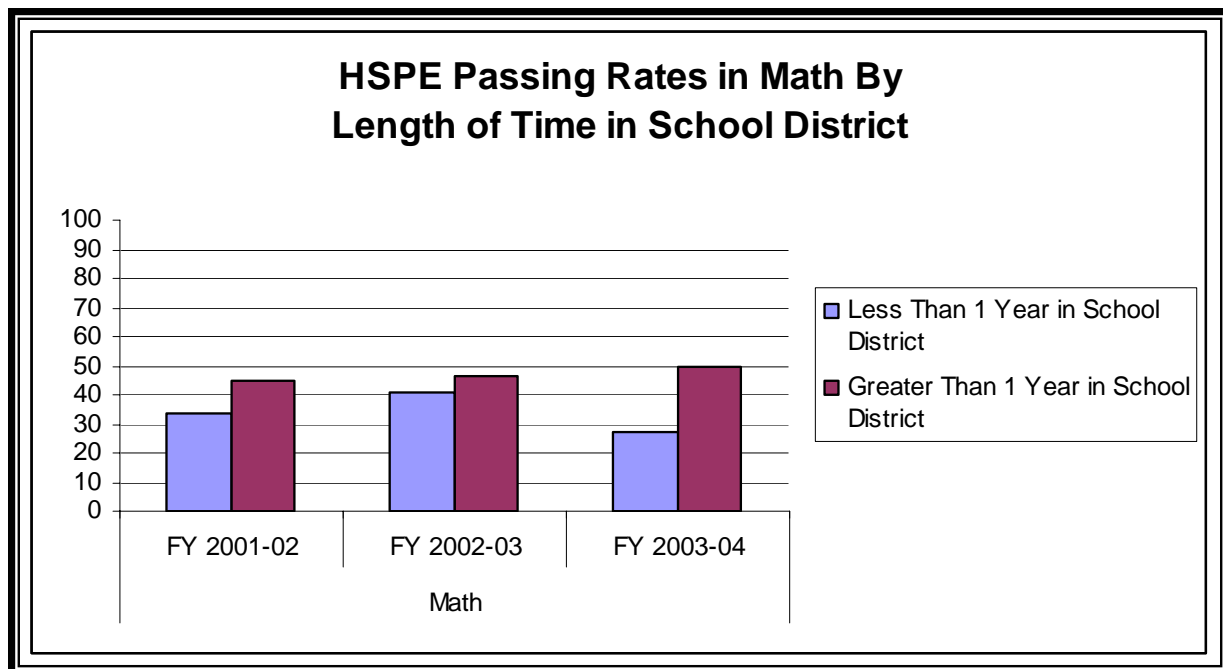
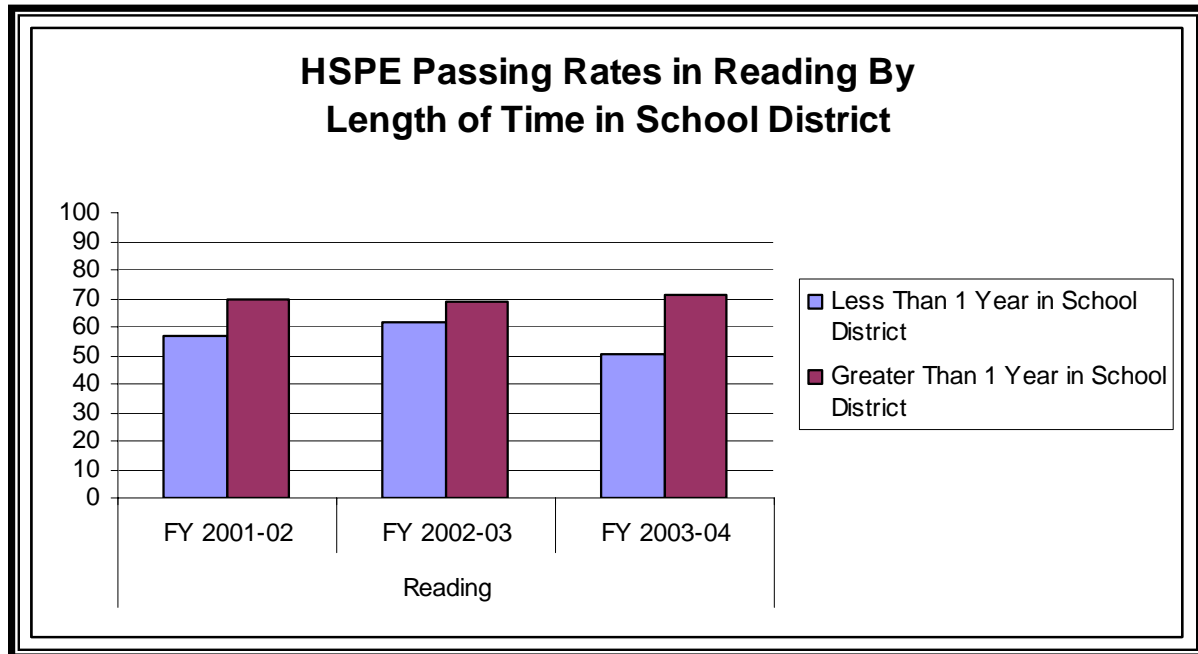


Source: Nevada Department of Education

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

Passing Rates By Population
















Source: Nevada Department of Education

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

WRITING ASSESSMENT

The Nevada Proficiency Examination Program in Writing has been administered to 12th grade students since 1979. In 1989, the examination was expanded to include 11th grade students, to provide more opportunities for students to fulfill graduation requirements. Assessments in 9th grade began in fall 1988 and were subsequently replaced with an 8th grade test in fall 1994. The 4th grade writing assessment was piloted in spring 1998 and was first administered in fall 1998. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, the Writing Assessment is a part of AYP calculations for English Language Arts.

WRITING ASSESSMENT HISTORY Grades Tested

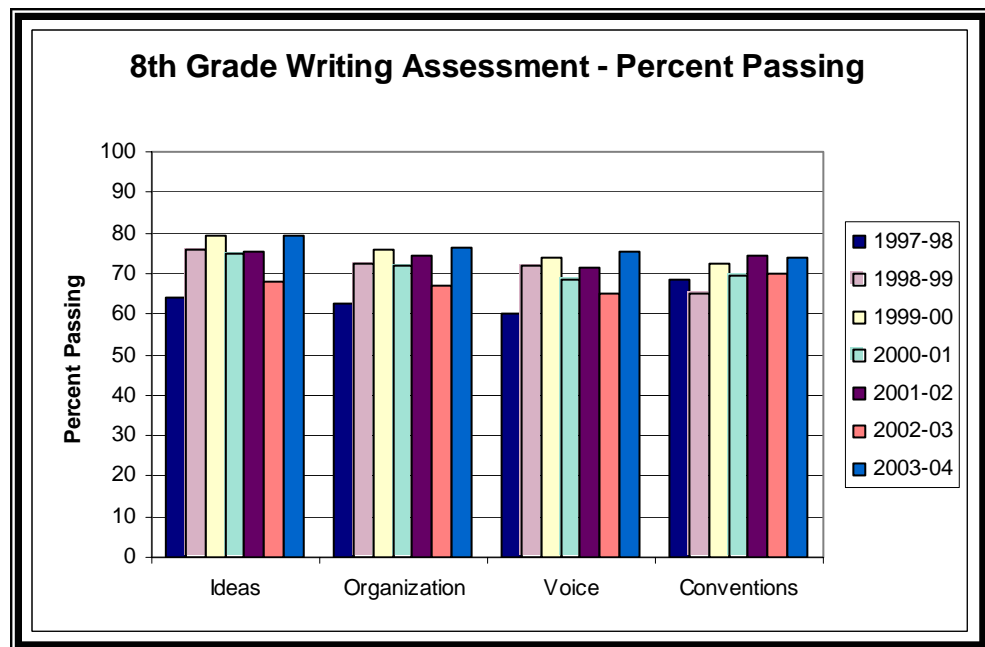
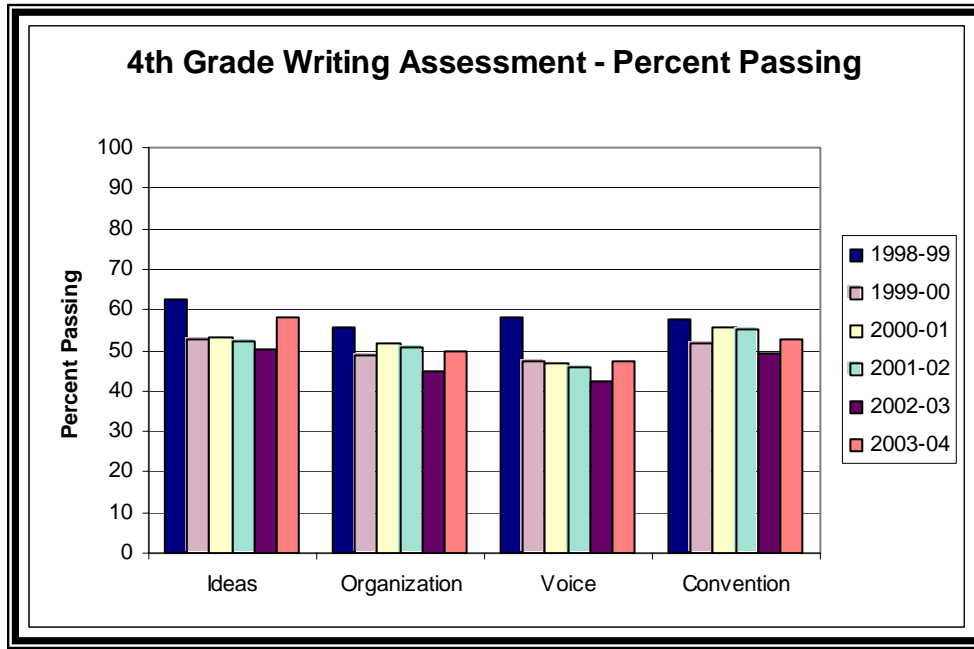
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 11	Grade 12
1979					
1988					
1989					
1994					
1998					
To Present					

Source: Nevada Department of Education, 2004.



NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

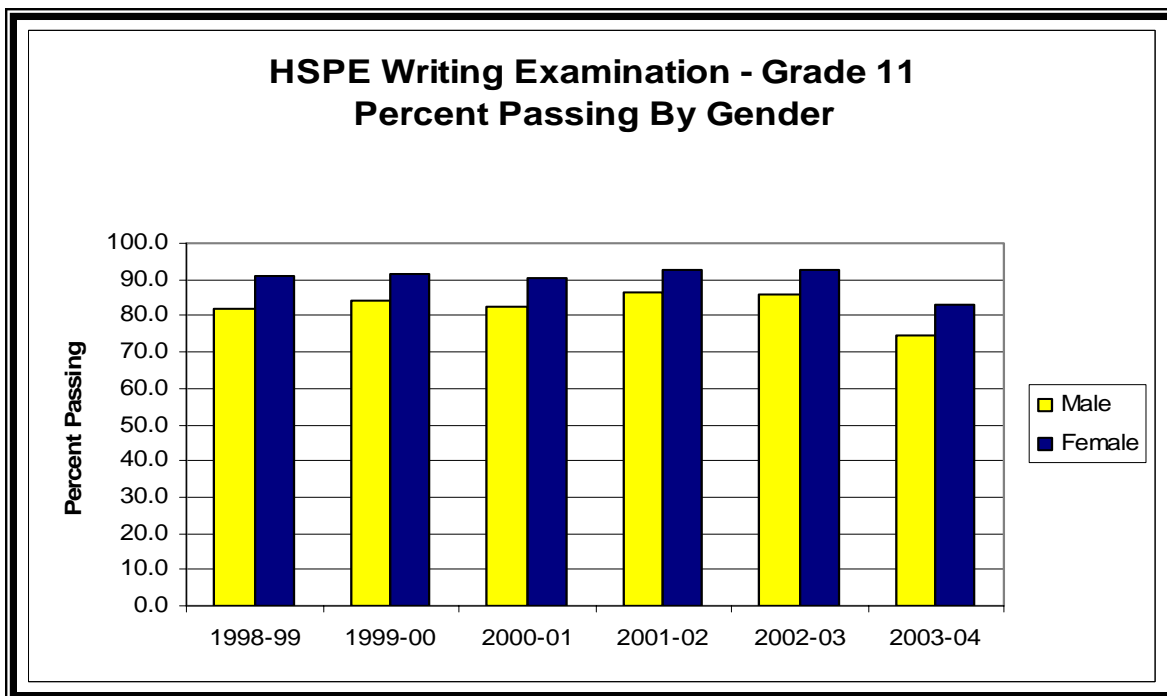
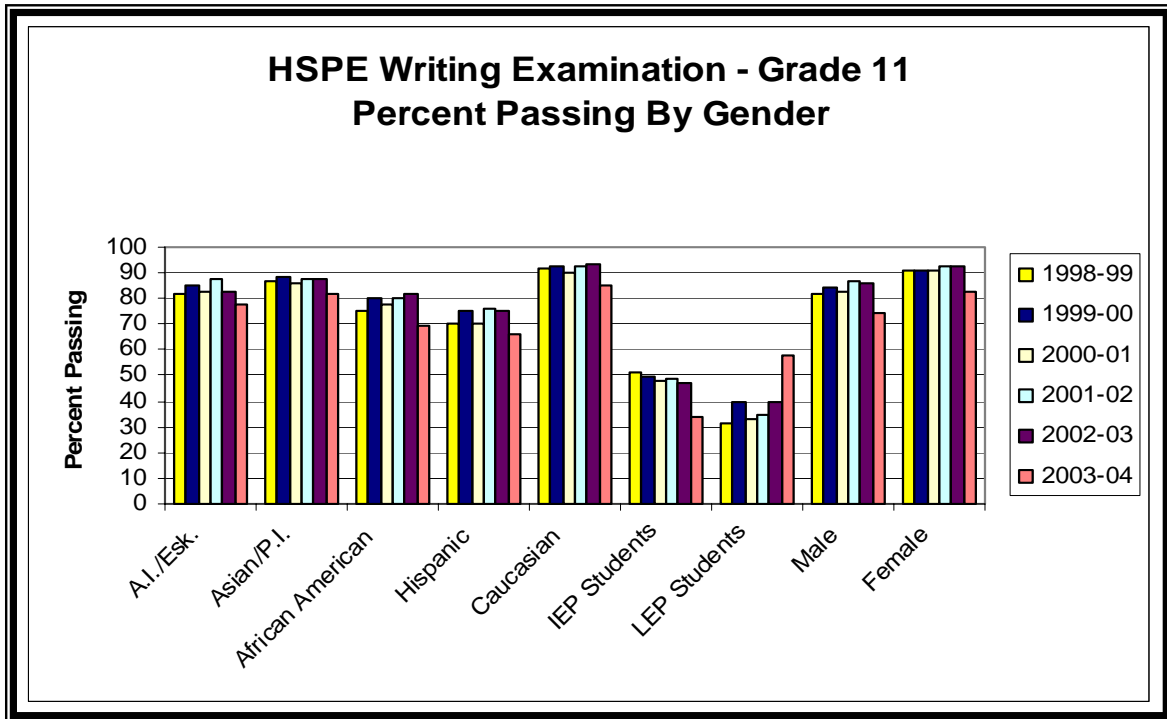
WRITING ASSESSMENT



Source: Nevada Department of Education.

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

WRITING ASSESSMENT

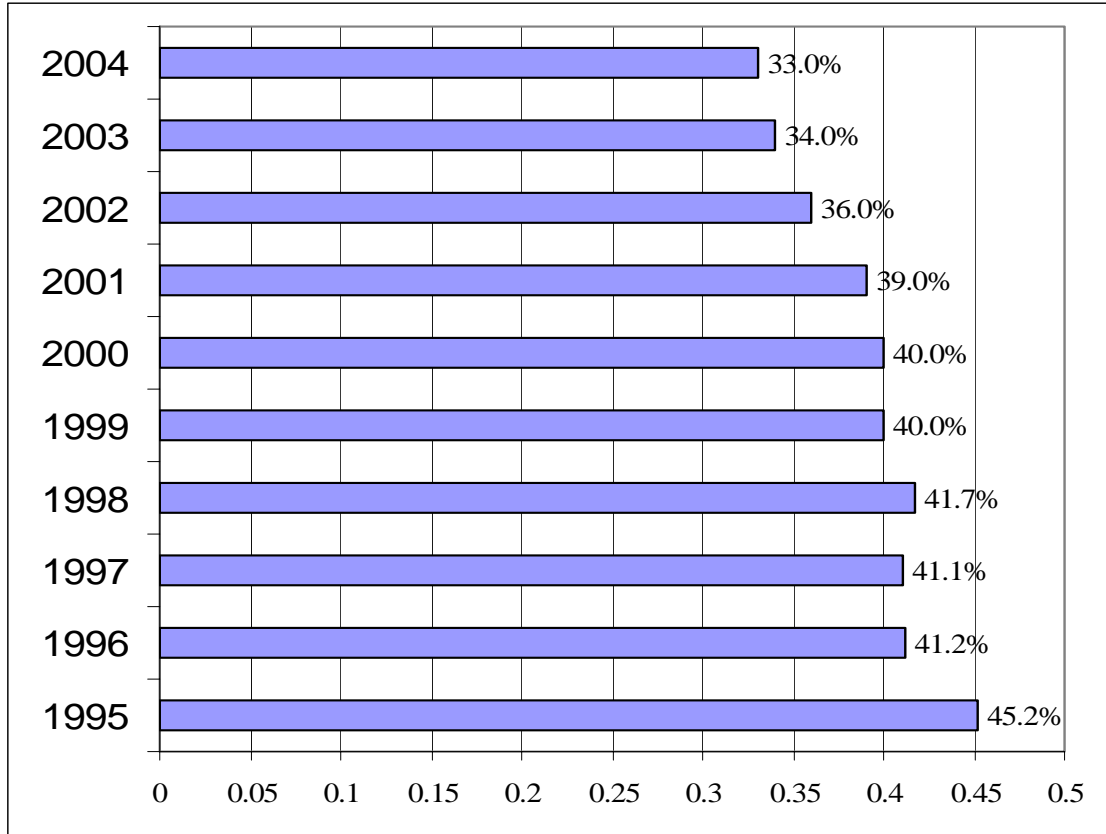


Source: Nevada Department of Education.

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT)

PERCENT OF NEVADA HIGH SCHOOL GRADATES
TAKING ACT FROM 1995 - 2004



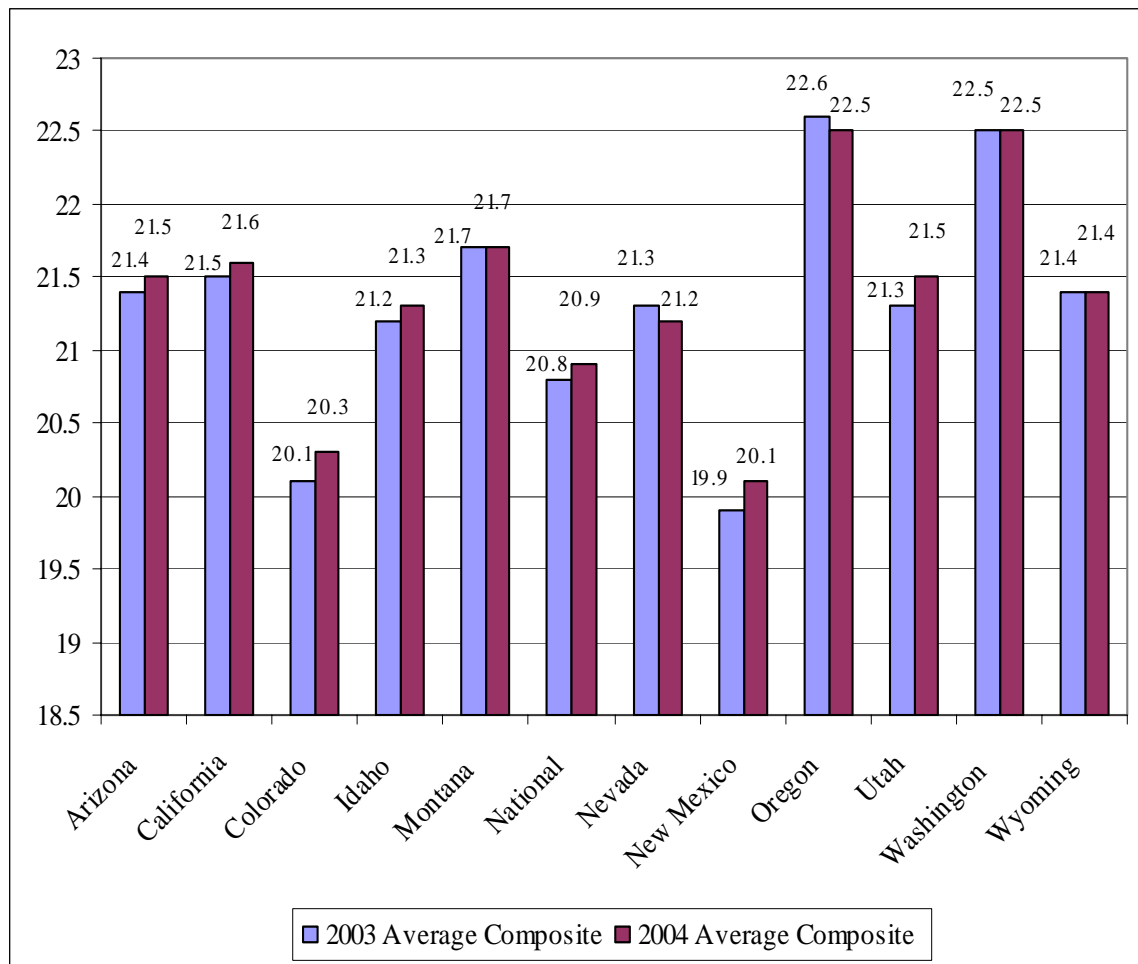
Source: ACT, Inc. 2004 ACT National and State Scores, www.act.org.



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AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT)

AVERAGE COMPOSITE ACT SCORES FOR WESTERN STATES 2003 AND 2004

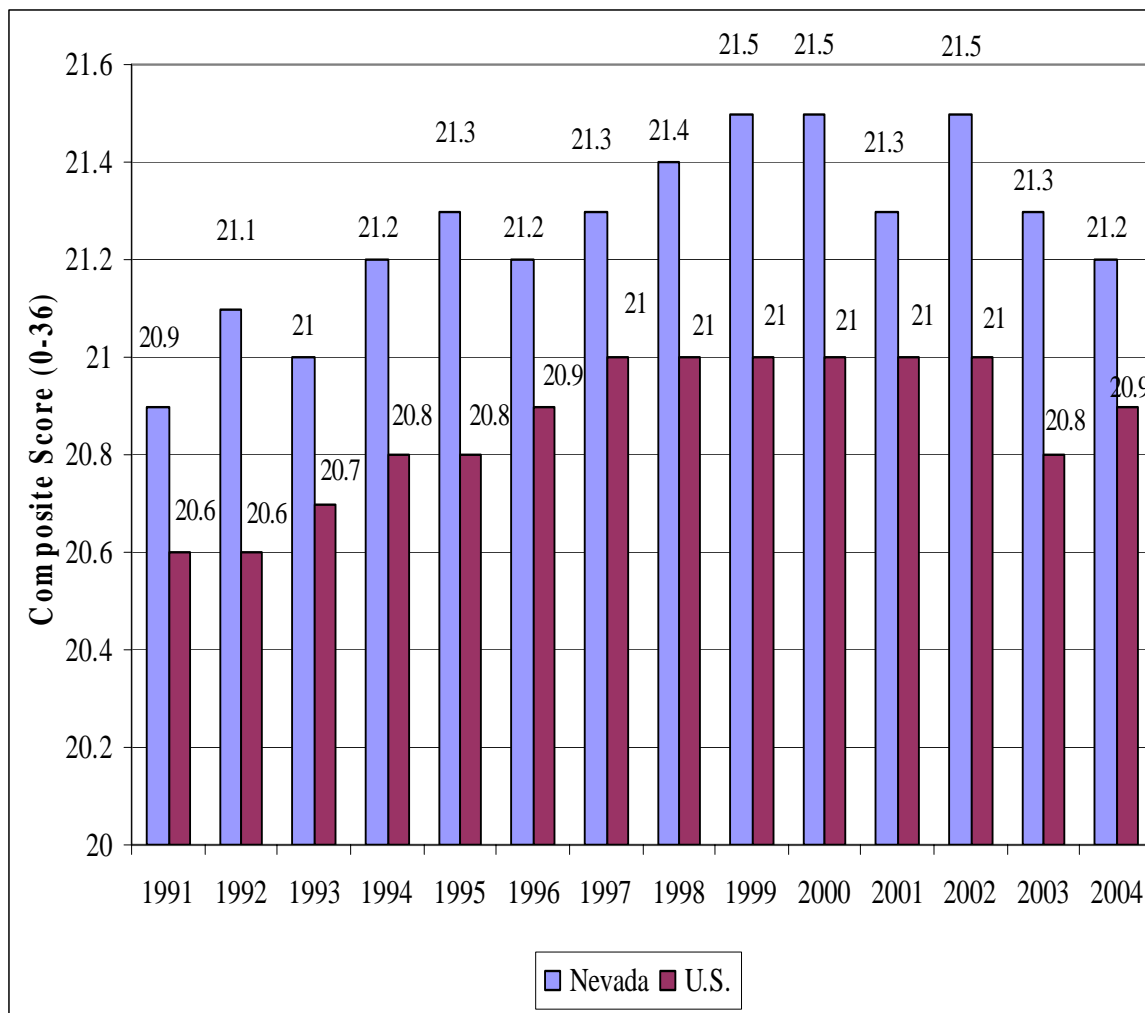


Source: ACT, Inc. 2004 ACT National and State Scores, www.act.org.

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT)

AVERAGE ACT SCORES FOR NEVADA AND U.S. 1991-2004



Source: ACT, Inc. 2004 ACT National and State Scores, www.act.org



NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT)

Average ACT Scores by Level of Academic Preparation 1994-2004

Year	Total		Core Course Completers		Non-Core Course Completers	
	% of Graduates Tested	Average Composite Score	% of Total Tested	Average Composite Score	% of Total Tested	Average Composite Score
1993-94	43	21.2	61	22.2	36	19.4
1994-95	42	21.3	62	22.2	35	19.6
1995-96	39	21.2	63	22.0	35	19.6
1996-97	39	21.3	62	22.1	36	19.8
1997-98	43	21.4	64	22.2	33	19.7
1998-99	41	21.5	65	22.3	33	19.9
1999-00	40	21.5	61	22.4	36	19.9
2000-01	39	21.3	61	22.2	36	19.8
2001-02	36	21.3	59	22.1	36	20.0
2002-03	34	21.3	59	22.0	35	20.0
2003-04	33	21.2	56	22.0	37	20.0

Source: ACT, Inc. 2004 ACT National and State Scores, www.act.org

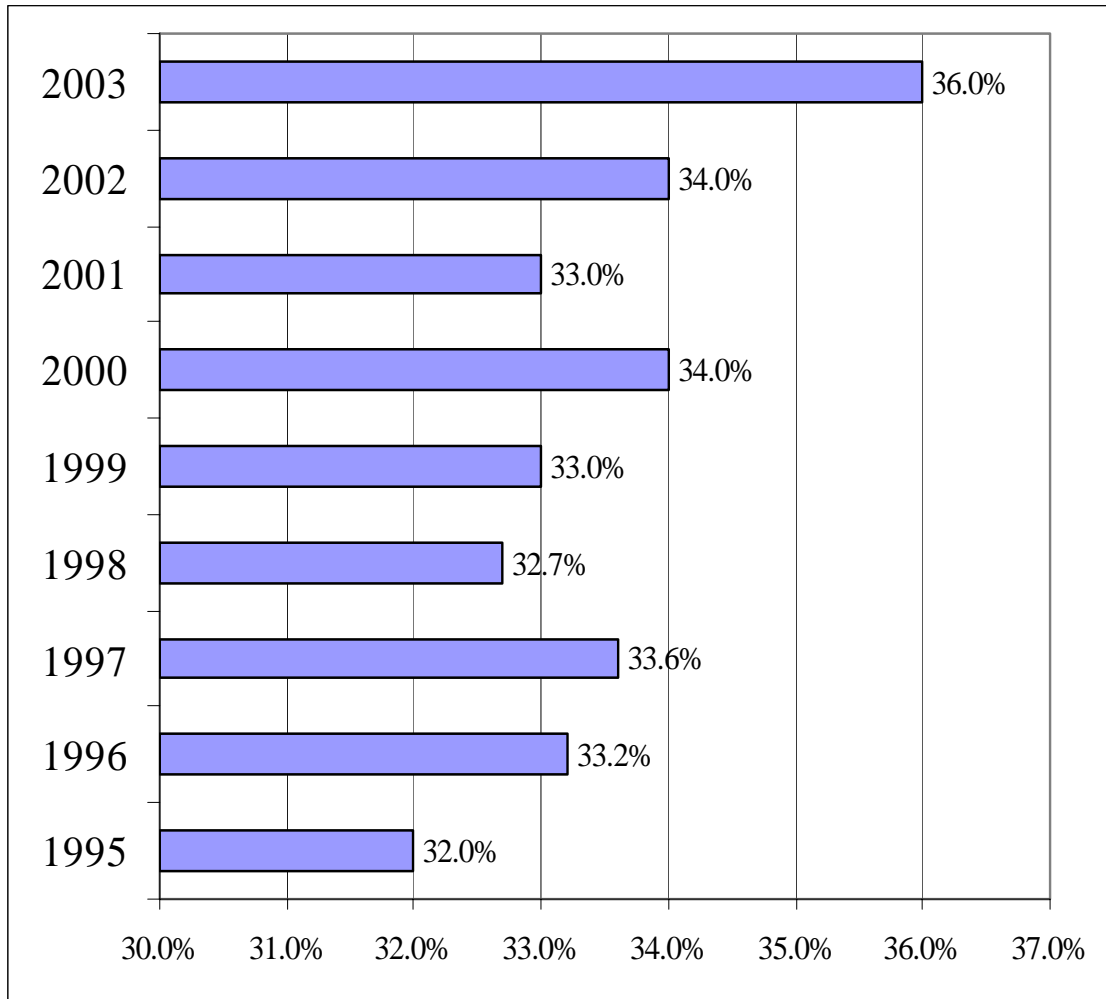
The ACT defines Core Course curriculum as at least four years of English and three years each of mathematics (algebra and above), social sciences, and natural sciences.



NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST (SAT)

PERCENT OF NEVADA STUDENTS TAKING SAT 1995-2003

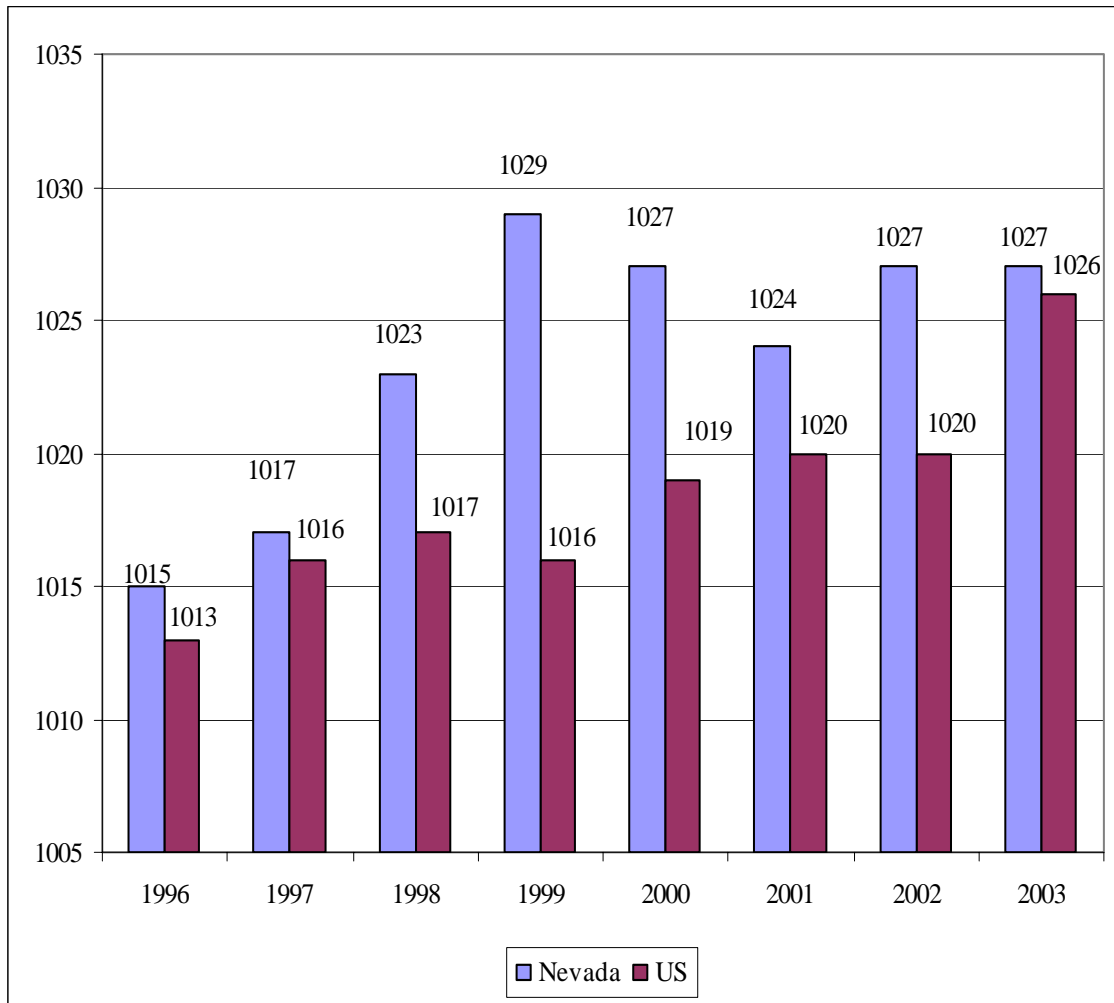


Source: The Digest of Education Statistics, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST (SAT)

SAT SCORES FOR NEVADA AND U.S. 1996 - 2003



Source: The Digest of Education Statistics, National Center for Education Statistics,
U.S. Department of Education.

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT TEST (SAT)

SAT SCORES FOR WESTERN STATES VERBAL AND MATHEMATICS 2002 AND 2003

	2002			2003		
	Verbal	Math	Percent of Graduates Taking SAT	Verbal	Math	Percent of Graduates Taking SAT
Arizona	520	523	36	524	525	38
California	496	517	52	499	519	54
Colorado	543	548	28	551	553	27
Idaho	539	541	18	540	540	18
Montana	541	547	23	538	543	26
Nevada	509	518	34	510	517	36
New Mexico	551	543	14	548	540	14
Oregon	524	528	56	526	527	57
Utah	563	559	6	566	559	7
Washington	525	529	54	530	532	56
Wyoming	531	537	11	548	549	11
National	504	516	46	507	519	48

Source: The Digest of Education Statistics, National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.



NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (PSAT)

PSAT SCORES FOR COLLEGE-BOUND SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS NEVADA AND NATIONAL — 2003-04

NEVADA SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS TAKING PSAT

	Sophomores		Juniors	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	2,930	45.9	2,471	42.5
Female	3,458	54.1	3,345	57.5

Source: The College Board, www.collegeboard.com

MEAN SCORES—NATIONAL AND NEVADA—SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS

	Sophomores		Juniors	
	Nevada	National	Nevada	National
Verbal	41.8	43.0	47.3	47.2
Math	42.1	43.9	48.3	48.1
Writing	44.9	46.3	49.6	49.8

Source: The College Board, www.collegeboard.com

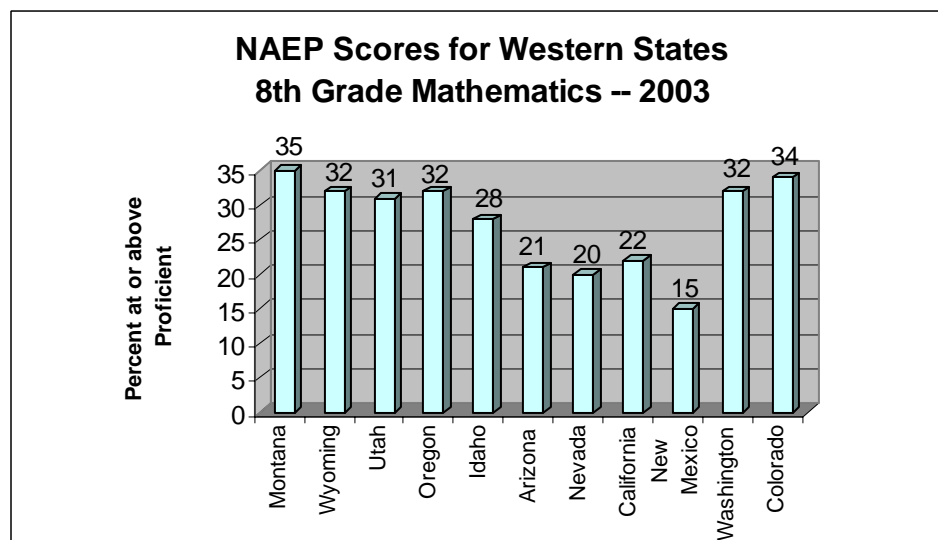
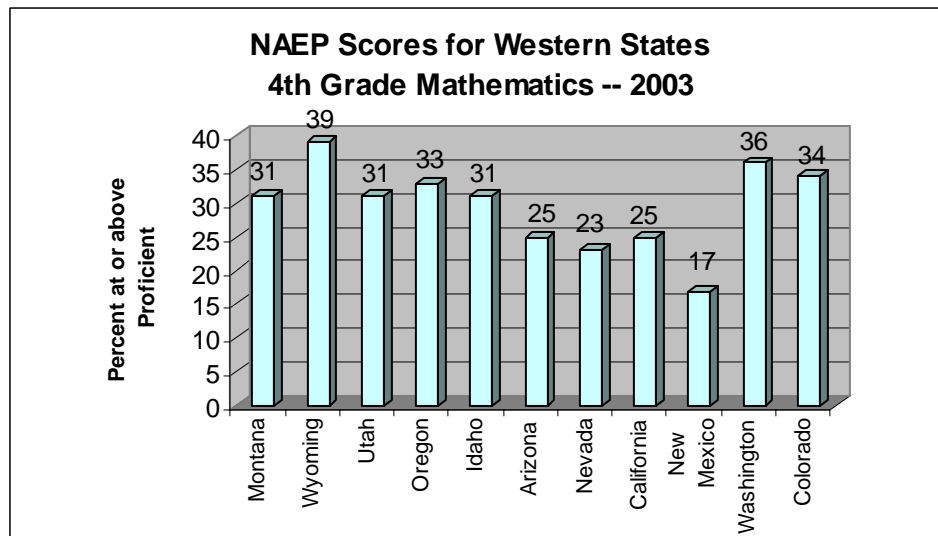
ETHNIC BACKGROUND—NEVADA SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS

	Sophomores		Juniors	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
American Indian	95	1.5	71	1.2
Asian American	654	10.4	728	12.7
African American	321	5.1	335	5.8
Hispanic	903	14.4	698	12.1
White	4,109	65.5	3,745	65.1
Other	194	3.1	173	3.0
No Response	124		73	

Source: The College Board, www.collegeboard.com

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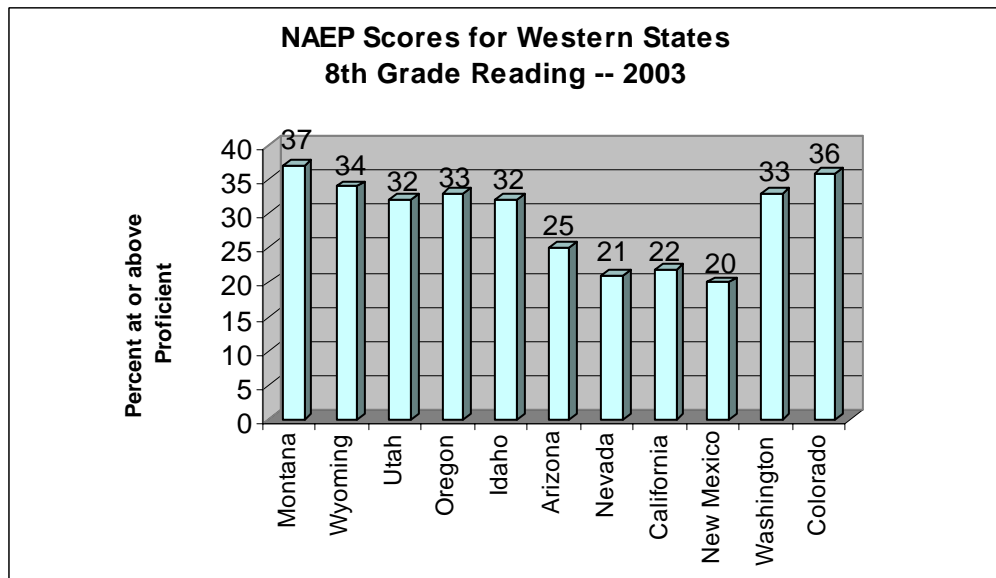
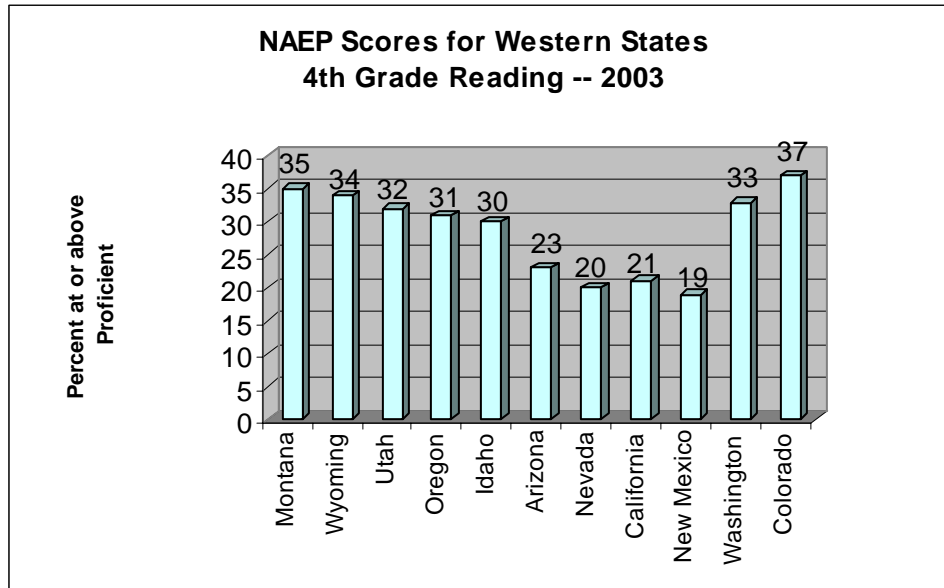
NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)



Source: NAEP, State Reports 2003 (<http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/profile.asp>)

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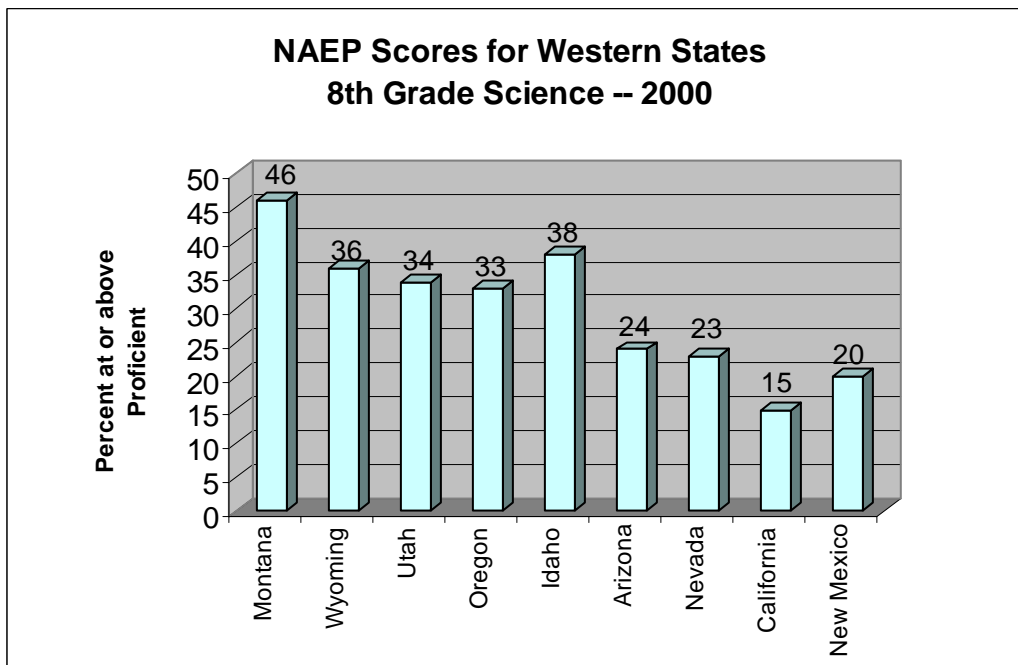
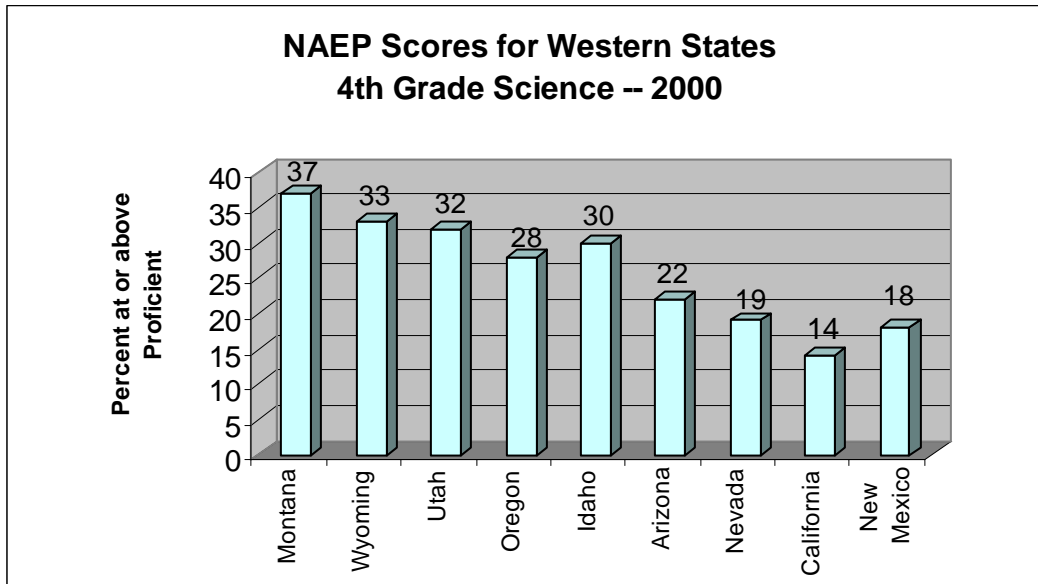
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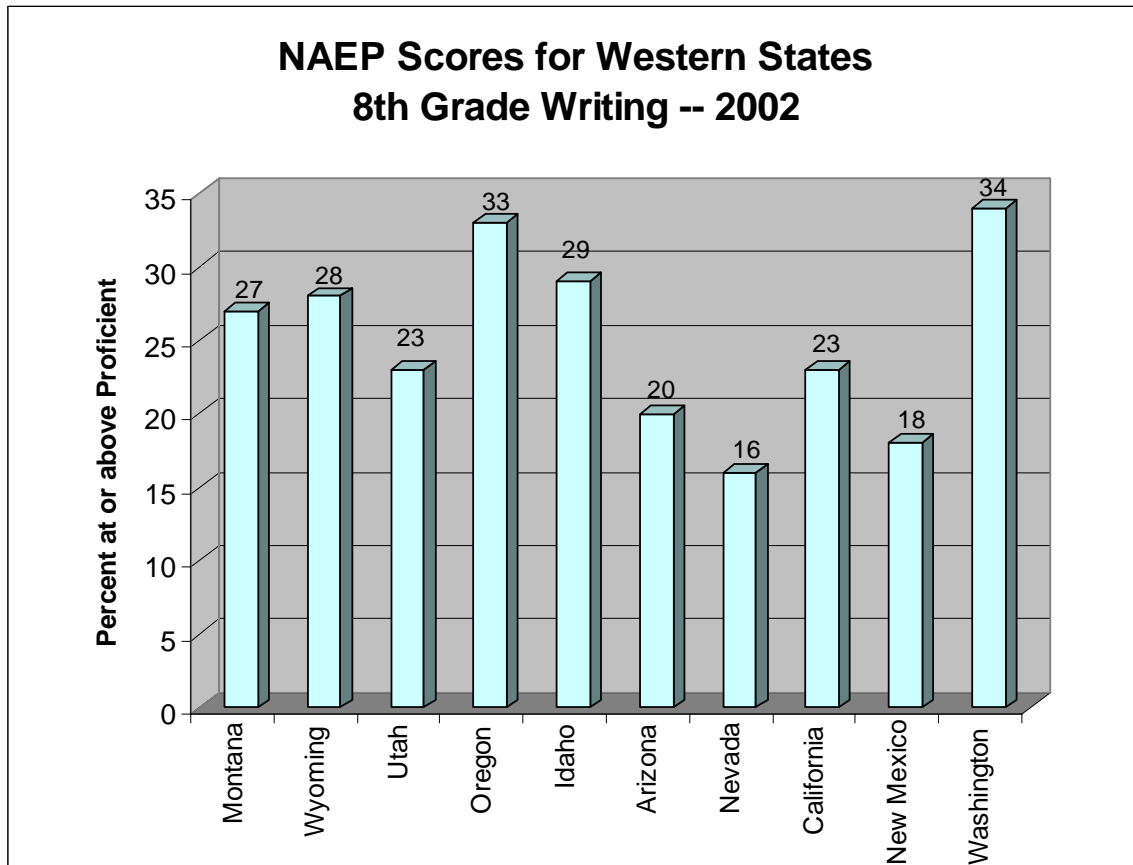
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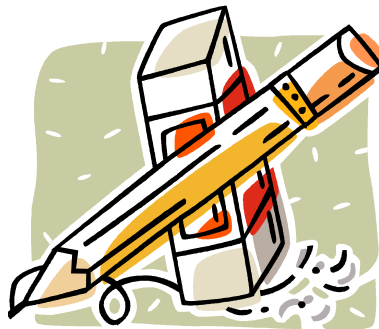
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NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)



Source: NAEP, State Reports 2002 (<http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/profile.asp>)



NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

STUDENTS — ADVANCED COURSES

Core Course-Taking Patterns Nevada and Participating Western States, 2000 and 2002

	Percent of Eighth Graders Taking Algebra I		Percent of Students Grades 9-12 Taking One or More Upper Level Math Course		Percent of Students Taking Physics by Graduation	
	2000	2002	2000	2002	2000	2002
California	33	39	59	54	16	16
Idaho	20	27	62	63	15	13
Nevada	13	13	55	47	22	17
New Mexico	17	15	52	55	11	8
Wyoming	16	23	56	76	21	21
Nation	20	22	70	73	23	25

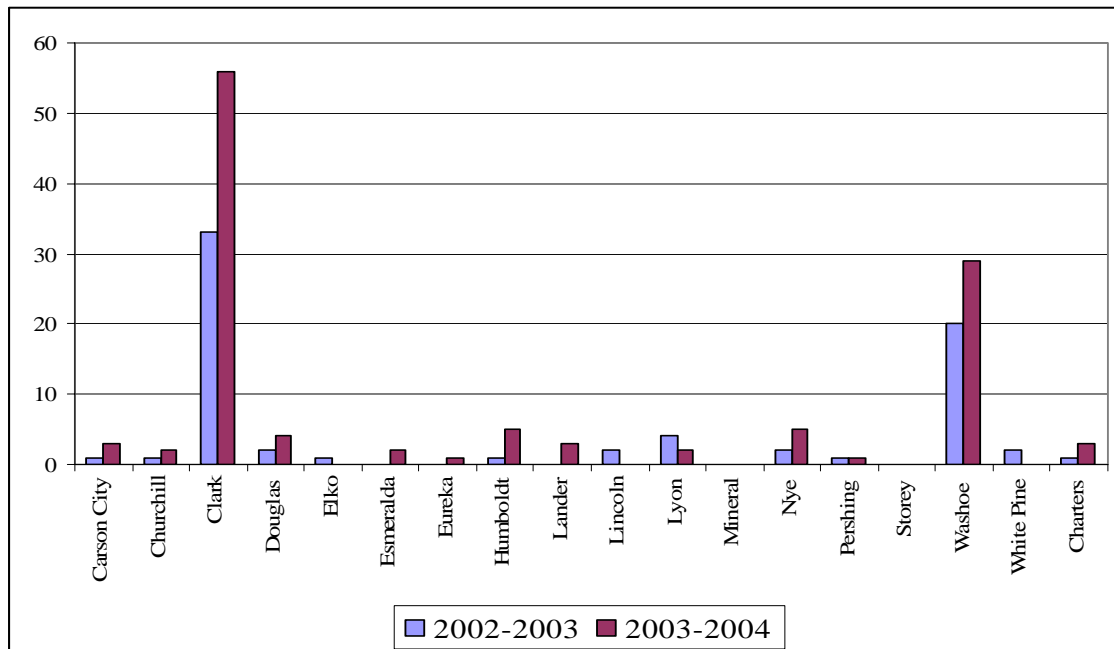
Source: Council of Chief State School Officers. State Indicators of Science and Mathematics Education, 2000 and 2002.



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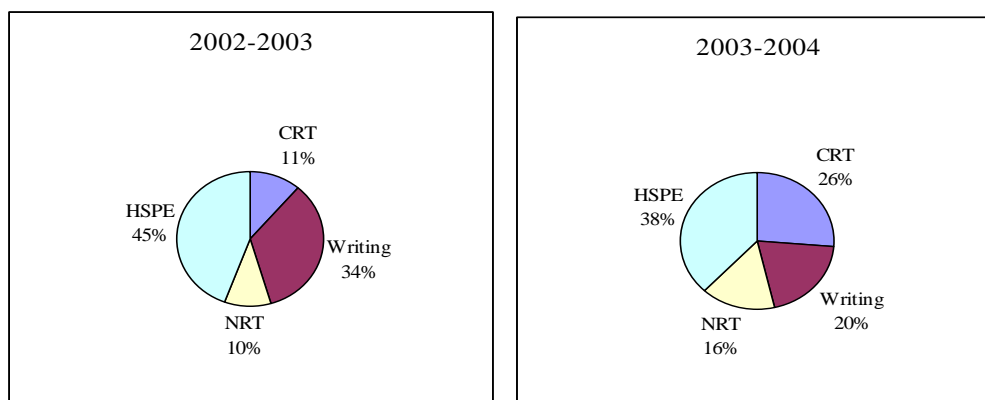
TESTING IRREGULARITIES IN SECURITY OR ADMINISTRATION

Testing Irregularities in Nevada Public Schools by District
2002-2003 and 2003-2004



Source: Report of Test Security for Nevada Public Schools Pursuant to NRS 389.648, Nevada Department of Education

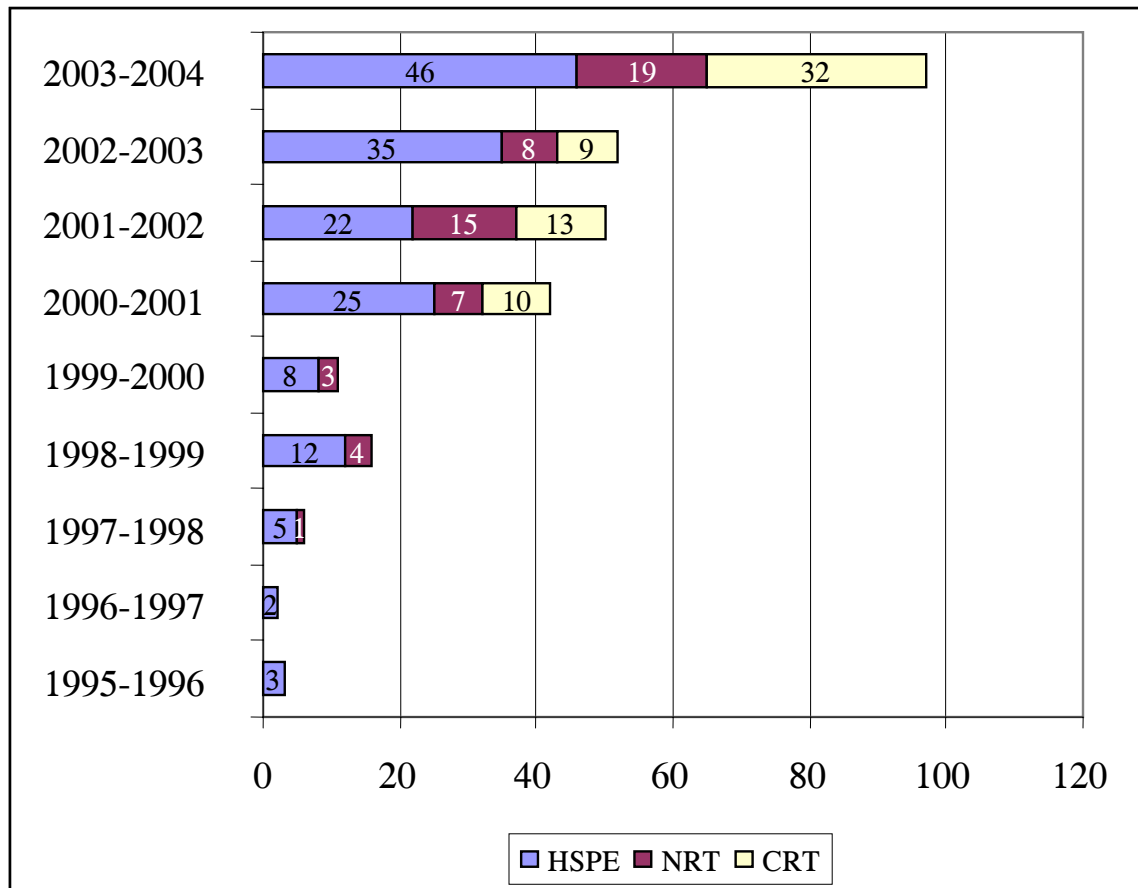
Testing Irregularities in Nevada Public Schools by Test Type
2002-2003 and 2003-2004



NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

TESTING IRREGULARITIES IN SECURITY OR ADMINISTRATION

**Number of Incidents of Testing Irregularities
High School Proficiency Examination, Norm-Referenced Tests,
and Criterion-Referenced Tests
1995-1996 through 2003-2004**

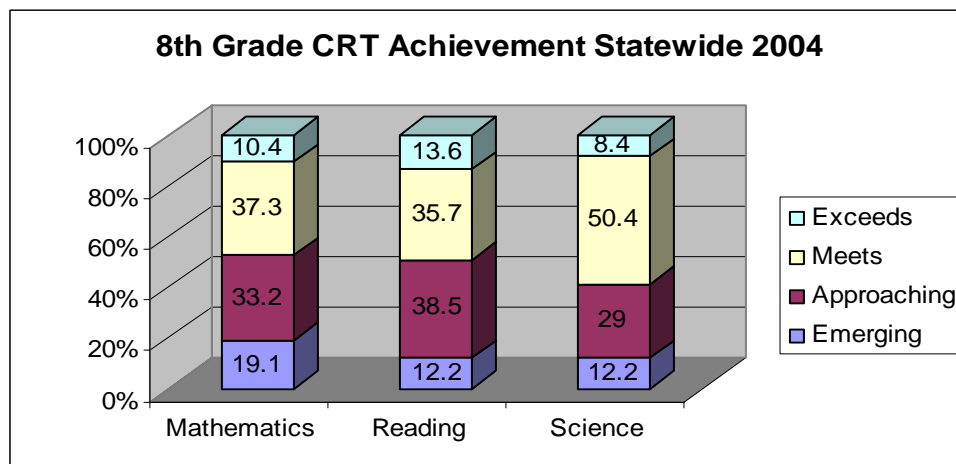
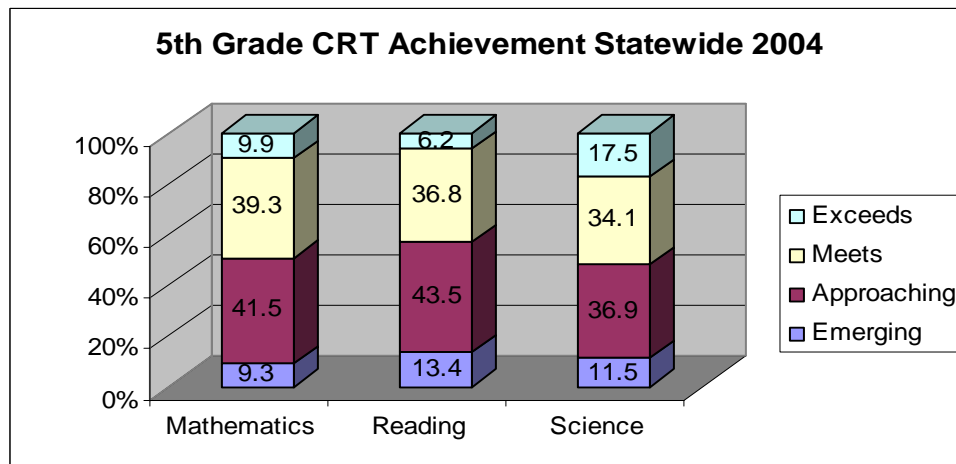
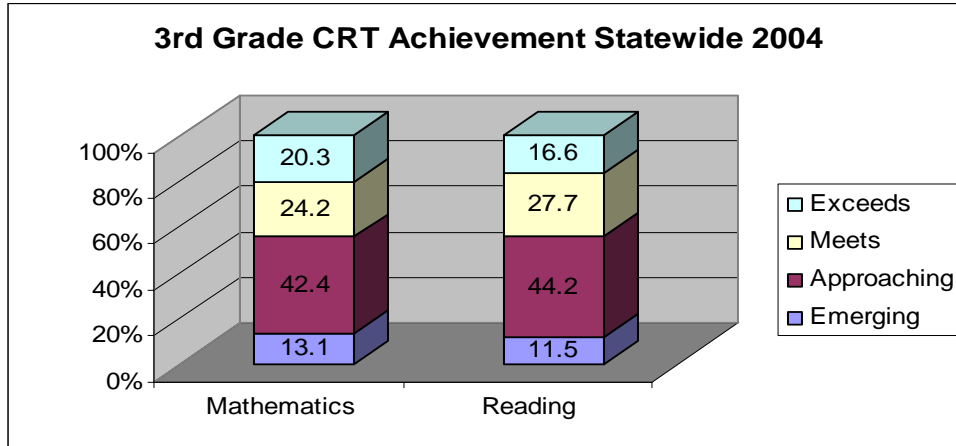


Source: Report of Test Security for Nevada Public Schools Pursuant to NRS 389.648, Nevada Department of Education

Note: The annual reporting requirements and new definitions of testing irregularities became effective for the 2001-2002 School Year. Also, the testing irregularities in School Year 2000-2001 for the CRTs were during the pilot administration.

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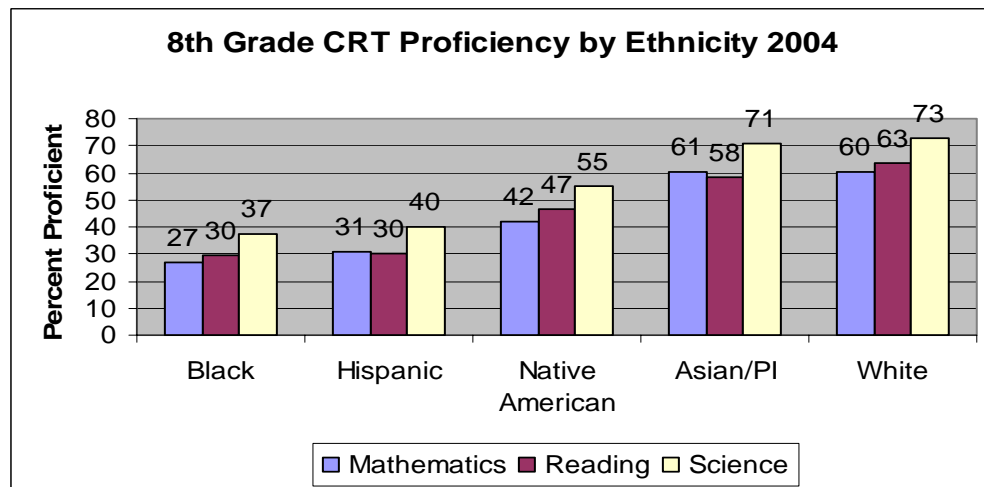
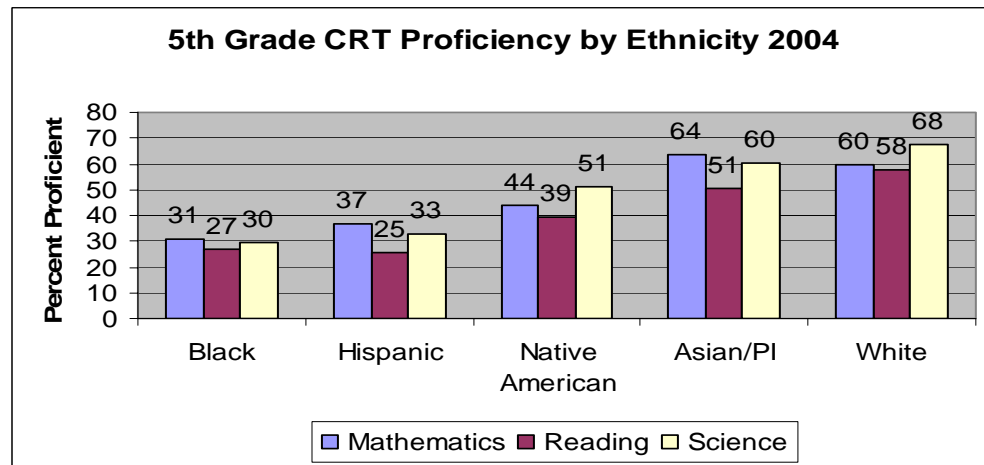
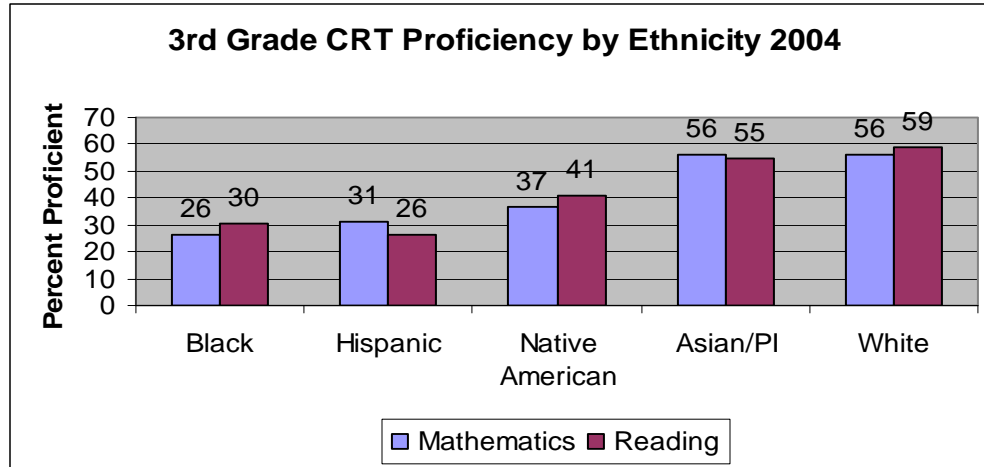
CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS (CRTs)



Source: Nevada Department of Education

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

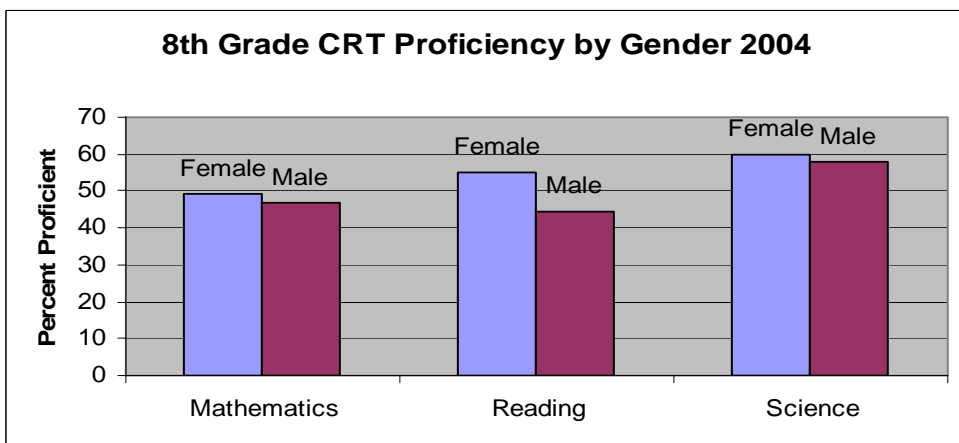
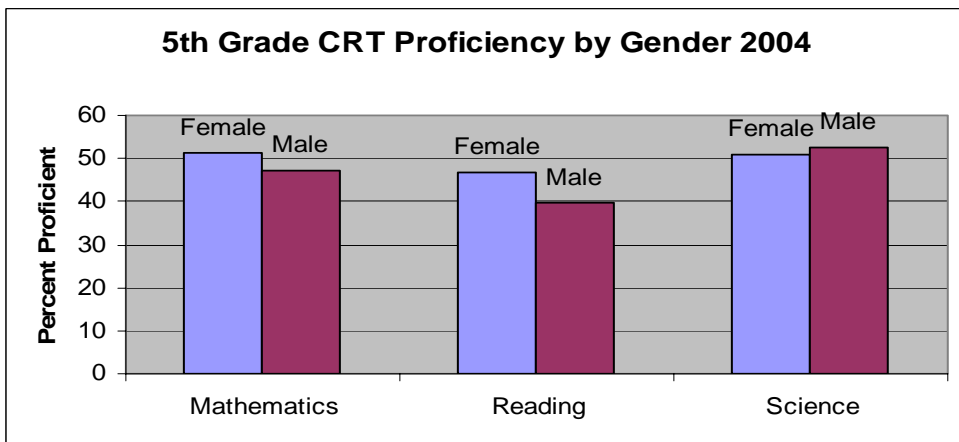
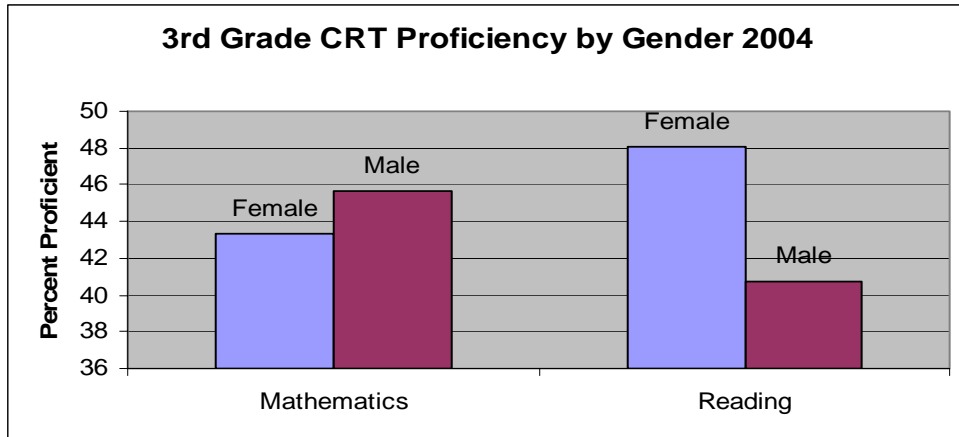
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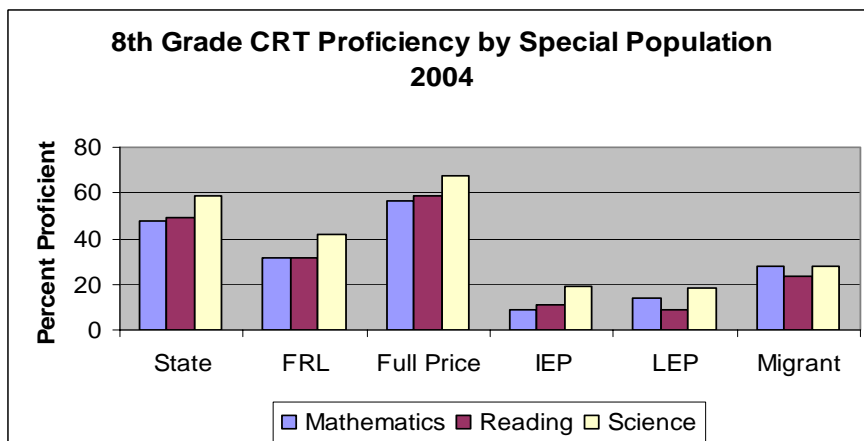
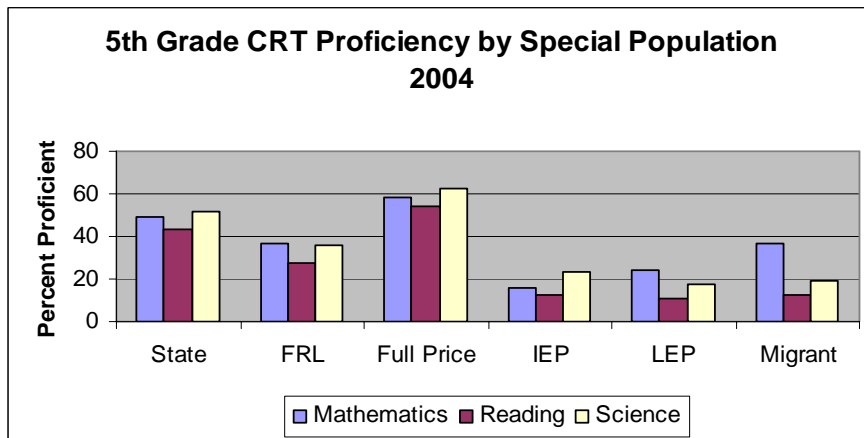
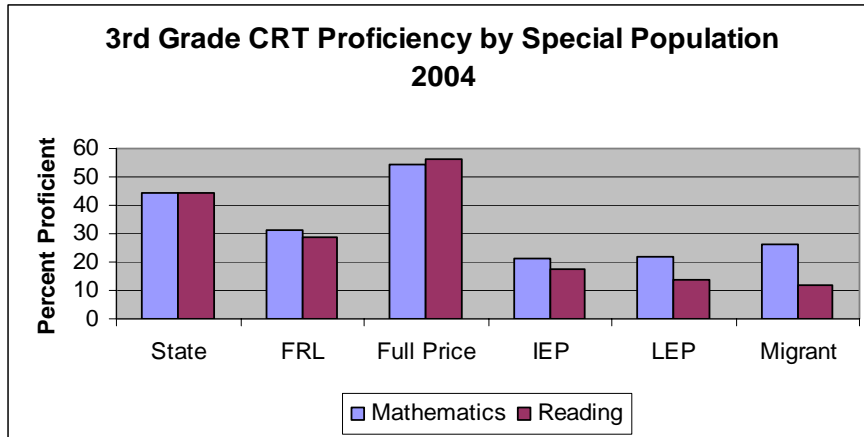
CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS (CRTs)



Source: Nevada Department of Education

NEVADA STATEWIDE EDUCATION PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS (CRTs)



KEY

State = total tested population

FRL = students qualified for free and reduced price lunch (i.e., low socio-economic)

Full Price = not qualifying for FRL status

IEP = student receiving services consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

LEP = Limited English Proficient

Migrant = student was not born in United States and who has not been attending school in U.S. for more than 3 academic years

Source: Nevada Department of Education

