



## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

July 2006

Dear Board of Directors:

The 2005-2006 Superintendent's Monitoring Report, the first of its kind developed under our reworked system of governance, reflects the efforts of the Little Rock School District staff to provide information to you and to our community on the district's progress toward reaching the 15 goals you have established. The compilation of this monitoring report was made possible by your vision in identifying the principles which guide the district and by attaching to them measurable objectives. The result is an educational system driven by data and performance which clearly and concisely reports its outcomes to the community the district serves.

The data contained in this report were compiled from parent, teacher and student surveys, state reports, achievement results and other assessment measures to provide you with the necessary information to accurately measure district performance against the standards you have set. Because this report is the first of its kind for the Little Rock School District, most of the academic performance information provides only baseline data.

However, this performance information serves another critical purpose. The results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and Arkansas Benchmarks tests are from the 2004-2005 school year, which was the final academic year prior to the district reorganization that began in July 2005. As you will see, the academic performance of the Little Rock School District contained in this report leaves significant room for improvement. In fact, the baseline data is proof that the old system was not adequately serving the children of the district and that the restructuring begun last July was warranted. The data also make a compelling argument that the district must continue to aggressively pursue those new strategies and educational reforms that will finally enable all of our students to firmly grasp the bar of academic achievement set by the state and federal governments.

On behalf of the Executive Cabinet, the Cabinet, our division and department directors and site administrators, we express our sincere appreciation for your sense of focus, collaboration and support. Working with you we have devised a sound monitoring practice that provides clear direction for the future of our district and the children of Little Rock. This governance process and the accountability it demands are the means by which our district builds the foundation beneath its vision of becoming the highest achieving urban school district in the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roy Brooks".

Roy G. Brooks, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hugh Hattabaugh".

Hugh Hattabaugh  
Deputy Superintendent

# LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Guiding Principles and Goals

2005-2006

**1. We expect all students to reach their full potential related to meaningful work, higher learning, citizenship and service to others.**

- A. Students will demonstrate continued and improved academic achievement.
- B. Students will be provided a comprehensive and rigorous curriculum.
- C. Students will demonstrate positive citizenship and service to others.

**2. We effectively manage resources in order to achieve the district's mission.**

- A. District resources will be allocated in an equitable manner.
- B. A positive fund balance will be maintained to ensure the fiscal solvency of the district.
- C. District facilities will be operated in an efficient and effective manner.

**3. We encourage parents to be knowledgeable about and participate in their child's educational program.**

- A. The district will support outreach programs that engage parents in their child's education.
- B. Parents will feel welcome at school.
- C. Staff will assist parents in accessing those school resources necessary to support their child's education.

**4. We are committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment.**

- A. Schools will promote a safe learning environment.
- B. School facilities will be clean, secure, and well maintained.
- C. Students will treat each other with respect and demonstrate socially acceptable behavior.

**5. We expect all employees to be responsible for providing or supporting quality educational experiences for all students.**

- A. A qualified and well-trained staff will provide an effective and supportive environment for students.

**6. We are committed to building effective community partnerships.**

- A. Meaningful private and public relationships will be established and the community will feel valued and recognized for its contributions.
- B. Schools will establish partnerships to address local social and economic issues.

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# LITTLE ROCK SCHOOL DISTRICT

## A REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

July 2006

### **Guiding Principle 1: Every Student Learning**

We expect all students to reach their full potential related to meaningful work, higher learning, citizenship and service to others.

### **Goal 1A**

***Students will demonstrate continued and improved academic achievement.***

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Goal 1A is the heart of the district's mission: to provide the educational services that enable students to demonstrate continued and improved academic achievement.

To measure the progress each student is making in pursuit of this goal, the Little Rock School District (LRSD) annually administers standardized academic tests which compare LRSD students with other students around the nation and which measure how well LRSD students have mastered the mandated Arkansas classroom curriculum. In addition, students can participate in national exams such as American College Testing (ACT) and Advanced Placement (AP).

The Arkansas Comprehensive Testing and Accountability Program, or ACTAAP, is administered every spring to students in grades K through 11. ACTAAP has two components: (1) the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), a norm-referenced test designed to compare LRSD students to students nationally; and (2) the Benchmark exam, a criterion-referenced test which measures students' mastery of state-mandated academic skills. Severely handicapped students and students who have been identified as being Limited English Proficient (LEP) are administered an Alternate Portfolio instead of the Benchmark exams.

Both the ITBS and the Benchmark exams test students in two general subject areas: literacy and math.

### **Literacy Skills – ITBS**

The ITBS measures LRSD students against students nationwide who took the same test. In the early grades, ITBS measures a variety of skills but narrows its skills testing among older students. For purposes of clarity, this report presents the results of language testing for students in kindergarten through second grade. Students in grades three through nine are tested solely in reading comprehension.

The test results show that achievement levels were stable in kindergarten through second grade with students scoring overall at or very near the national mean. When disaggregated by student subgroups, the results show that Caucasian students consistently scored well above the national mean and African American and Hispanic students scored slightly below the national mean. The same general pattern held true in grades one through nine. Overall, the best student performance was among first graders with scores dropping off in each successive grade, dipping below the national norm at the third grade and continuing to decline.

### **Literacy Skills – Benchmark**

The Benchmark exam results showed that the percentage of LRSD students meeting the state performance standard varied moderately in grades three through eight. Third graders were on the low side with 39 percent meeting the state standard. On the opposite end, 58 percent of eighth graders met the standard. Compared with other students in Arkansas, only the LRSD eighth graders surpassed the state average.

When reviewing results by student subgroups, LRSD students showed mixed results when compared to their counterparts around the state. For example, in every grade but eighth, LRSD Caucasian students outscored Caucasian students in Arkansas. Other subgroup comparisons showed that LRSD African American students scored about the same as African American students statewide. LRSD Hispanic students, with the exception of those in eighth grade, scored lower than Hispanic students statewide.

### **Literacy Skills – End of Course**

The ACTAAP End of Course exam is used to measure how well 11th grade students meet the state literacy standard. Overall, 43 percent of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade LRSD students met the standard compared to 46 percent statewide. However, when results are broken down into student subgroups, African American, Hispanic and Caucasian students in the LRSD all outperformed their Arkansas counterparts.

### **ACT - English**

The ACT exam, a college entrance exam administered to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, assesses the students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The exam consists of four tests: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. The score range for each of the four tests is 1 – 36. The composite score, as reported by ACT, is the average of the four test scores earned during a single test administration, rounded to the nearest whole number.

### **Math Skills – ITBS**

The ITBS measures LRSD students against students nationwide who took the same test. ITBS tests more math skills among kindergarten through second grade than it does for older children. Results for the total math score in kindergarten through second grade showed that LRSD students overall scored slightly below the national mean at each grade level. When the results were broken down by student subgroups, only Caucasian students in each of the three grades scored above the national mean.

The common ITBS test component for kindergarten through ninth grade is math operations. Compared to students nationwide, LRSD students in kindergarten and fourth grade scored slightly higher than the national mean and the remainder scored slightly lower. Among subgroups, Caucasian students at all grade levels and Hispanic students in grades three and five scored above the national mean. The remaining students were slightly below the national mean.

### **Math Skills – Benchmark**

The Benchmark exam results showed that more than twice as many LRSD third grade students met the state achievement standard than their LRSD counterparts in the eighth grade. Still, the percentage of LRSD students meeting the state standard was lower than the state average at every grade level. In addition, the percentage of LRSD students able to meet the state standard declined steadily through the upper grades, with the exception of the seventh grade. A similar trend occurred statewide. When broken down by student subgroups, the results showed that LRSD Caucasian students outperformed their state counterparts at every grade level. With few exceptions, the percentage of African American and Hispanic students meeting the state standard was slightly lower than their counterparts statewide.

### **Math Skills – Benchmark Algebra I and Geometry**

The math skills lost in elementary and middle school seem to have been recaptured somewhat by students taking the Benchmark Algebra I and Geometry tests. The percentage of LRSD students who met the state standard on the Algebra I and Geometry exams was almost twice as large as those taking the eighth grade math test. LRSD students, however, still scored well below the state average. As in the other math testing, LRSD Caucasian students outscored their statewide counterparts, with 71 percent in Algebra I and 70 percent in Geometry reaching the state standard.

### **Advanced Placement Program (AP)**

The Advanced Placement Program is a cooperative educational endeavor between secondary schools and colleges and universities. The AP program provides motivated high school students with the opportunity to take college-level courses while still in high school. Students who participate in the AP program gain college-level skills. During the 2004-2005 school year, 968 students achieved scores of 3 or greater, enabling them to earn college credit at many universities while still attending high school.

### **Graduation Rate**

The graduation rate measures the progress of ninth-grade student cohorts four years later when they should finish the twelfth grade. The formula, furnished by the Arkansas Department of Education, calculates the completion rate for each of a cohort's four years using enrollment as of October 1 of that year as the denominator. (Since districts count students who drop out—a much smaller number than those who complete each year—the dropout rate is calculated first; then the completion rate is the complement of the dropout rate.) For purposes of adequate yearly progress (AYP), the state's policy allows two additional years to complete high school for any student with a disability following an individual education plan (IEP).

It should be noted that there is no set standard for determining a graduation rate. An analysis by the Editorial Projects in Education Research published in a June 2006 edition of *Education Week* placed the Arkansas graduation rate at 71.8 percent, compared to 69.6 percent nationwide. The report was based on 2002-2003 data. The graduation rate determined by the state of Arkansas, which is based on the percentage of students that remain in school from grades nine to 12, was 81.3 percent for 2005. The state graduation rate calculated in April 2006 by researchers at the University of Arkansas put the rate at 74 percent. The LRSD graduation rate for 2005 calculated by the district was 69.9 percent.

## **Benchmark Literacy and Math Comparisons**

Results of the 2005-2006 ACTAAP just released from the Arkansas Department of Education show significant improvement in Benchmark and End-of-Course testing in literacy and math among LRSD students at nearly every grade level. The timing of the release did not afford the LRSD to make comparisons with state averages or to report scores by student subgroups.

It can be tricky business trying to connect specific strategies with specific test results. However, since the reorganization of July 2005, the district has made a concerted effort to link curriculum, instruction and assessment in order to raise the levels of student achievement. The creation of the curriculum maps, for example, created a comprehensive and consistent approach to classroom instruction in literacy and math.

The significance of the district's partnership with the Public Education Foundation of Little Rock and the creation of the Student Online Achievement Report (SOAR) that resulted cannot be overlooked. SOAR, which is in place in 18 elementary and eight middle schools in the LRSD, enables teachers to go beyond single snapshot assessments and provides them with opportunities to gather information about their students' academic strengths and weaknesses in a timely manner.

Professional development has been refocused, built upon the analysis of student testing data and results obtained from needs assessments among teachers and principals. In addition, instructional coaches were allocated to schools that had little or no internal support or were in need of intensive assistance. These coaches along with existing literacy and math coaches created an extra layer of instructional support for teachers.

## **Conclusions**

The 2004-2005 test data show LRSD students struggling to keep pace with students nationally and in Arkansas.

- ITBS Literacy results show that first graders are the highest performing students in the LRSD, scoring above the national norm. Performance in subsequent grades drops steadily so that by the third grade, scores have dipped below the national norm.
- A similar pattern is repeated in the Benchmark Literacy results for LRSD grades three through eight. The LRSD eighth grade is the only LRSD grade level where the percentage of students meeting the state standard exceeds the statewide average.
- ITBS Math results show LRSD test scores generally hovering slightly below the national norm score. Only kindergarten and fourth grade students managed to score slightly above the national norm.
- The Benchmark Math results for grades three through eight show that at every grade level the percentage of LRSD students meeting the state standard was below the state average.
- Among student subgroups, only Caucasian students consistently scored above the national norm or statewide averages.

- LRSD students in the economically disadvantaged subgroup were outperformed – sometimes significantly – by their counterparts statewide in all Benchmark math tests and in all Benchmark literacy tests with the exception of eighth grade literacy. This has important implications for equitable school funding under Goal 2A.
- Results of the 2005-2006 Benchmark literacy and math exams received just prior to the publication of this report shows marked improvement in the scores of LRSD students over 2004-2005.

## TEST DATA

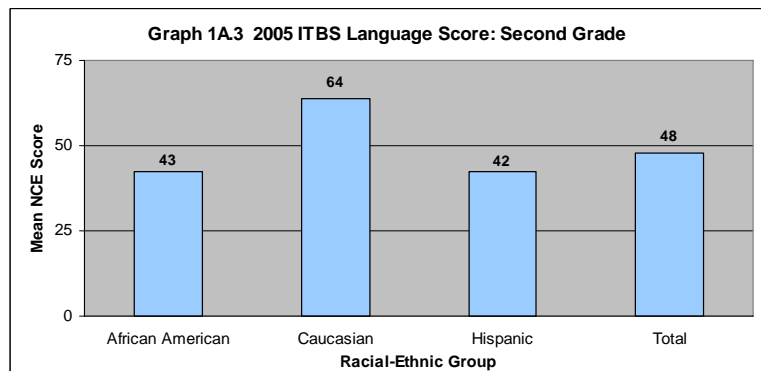
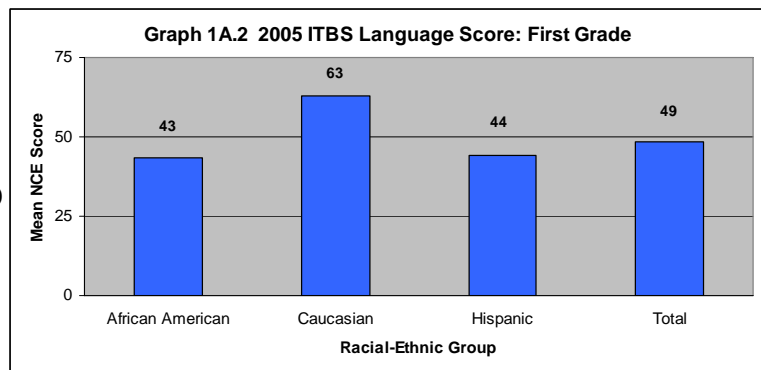
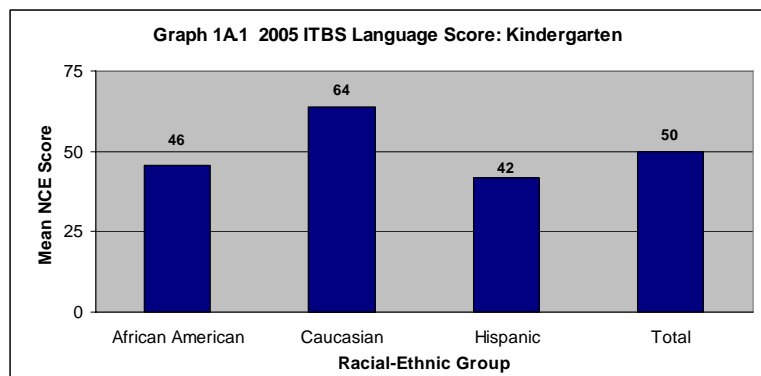
Results from different tests are reported differently. In the ITBS series, students' raw scores are converted to normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores which permit more accurate comparisons among groups of students. The graphs for ITBS results in this report display these NCE ranked scores. On the NCE scale, 50 is the mean point, meaning that half of the students who took the ITBS test scored an NCE higher than 50 and half of the students who took the test scored lower than 50. Thus, an NCE score of 75 is a far better score than an NCE of 25.

Please note that some percentages reported in the graphs illustrating the results of the Benchmark exams may not total 100 percent because percentages were rounded.

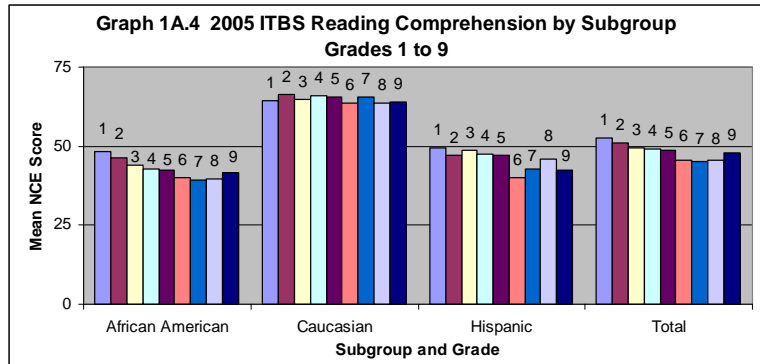
### Literacy Skills – ITBS

The ITBS tests kindergarten students in vocabulary, word analysis, listening, and language. First and second grade students are tested in these same areas plus reading comprehension and reading total. Students in grades three through nine are tested only in reading comprehension. Graphs 1A.1, 1A.2 and 1A.3 show the results of ITBS testing for kindergarten through second grade.

An NCE score of 50 is the mean score for all of the students nationally who took the test. Half of those students scored higher than 50 and half scored lower than 50. The graphs show that, overall, LRSD students in kindergarten through second grade scored at or slightly below the national mean.



Graph 1A.4 shows ITBS reading comprehension test results for students in first grade through ninth grade. Reading comprehension is the only portion of the ITBS literacy test common to those grades. Again, an NCE score of 50 is the mean nationally for all students who took the test. Half of the students scored above 50 and half below 50. Overall, LRSD student performance in the first grade scored above the national mean, but dropped steadily in the successive grades.



### **Literacy Skills – Benchmark**

In the Benchmark and End of Course exams, students’ raw scores are converted into academic performance categories of below basic, basic, proficient or advanced. These categories define what a student knows, as determined by the test, compared to what the Arkansas Department of Education Benchmarks expect the student to know at his or her grade level. The Benchmark performance levels are defined below:

**Advanced:** Students demonstrate superior performance well beyond proficient grade level performance. They can apply Arkansas-established reading, writing and mathematics skills to solve complex problems and complete demanding tasks on their own. They can make insightful connections between abstract and concrete ideas as well as provide well-supported explanations and arguments.

**Proficient:** Students demonstrate solid academic performance for the grade tested and are well prepared for the next level of schooling. They can use Arkansas-established reading, writing and mathematics skills and knowledge to solve problems and complete tasks on their own. Students can tie ideas together and explain the ways their ideas are connected.

**Basic:** Students show substantial skills in reading, writing and mathematics; however, they only partially demonstrate the abilities to apply these skills. They demonstrate a need for some additional assistance, commitment or study to reach the proficient level.

**Below Basic:** Students fail to show sufficient mastery of skills in reading, writing and mathematics to attain the basic level.

A student scoring **advanced** or **proficient** is considered to have met the state standard in the grade/subject area tested.

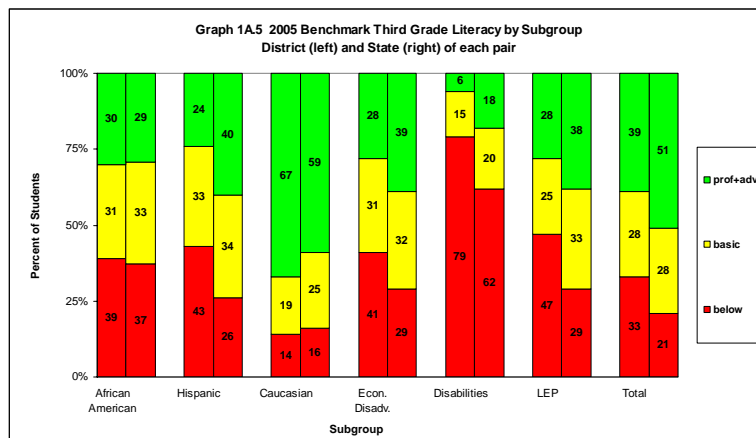
The graphs used in this section combine advanced and proficient categories into one. Thus, three categories are compared. Results in red show the percentage of students who scored at the below basic level; results in yellow show the percentage of students who scored at the basic level; and results in green show the percentage of students who scored at the proficient or advanced levels. In each pair of bars, the left one represents LRSD and the right one represents Arkansas.

Graphs also present the following subgroups as prescribed by the Arkansas Department of Education:

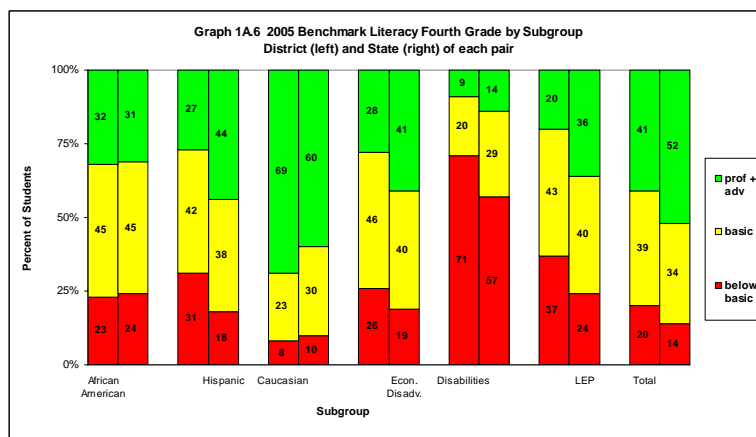
- African American
- Hispanic
- Caucasian
- Economically Disadvantaged or those eligible for the USDA free or reduced lunch program
- Students with Disabilities
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

These subgroupings are important because a lack of annual progress by any group at any school can place that school on the ADE's school improvement list.

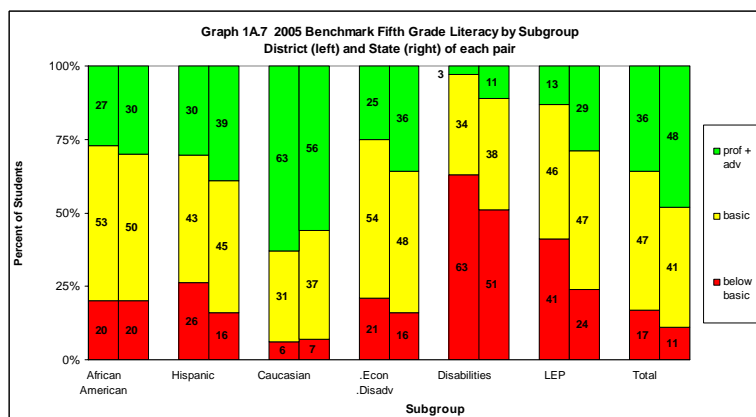
Graph 1A.5 compares LRSD third graders with third graders in Arkansas. The results show that a lower percentage of LRSD third graders met the state literacy standard than third graders around the state. Only one group of LRSD third grade students, Caucasians, outperformed the state average. Likewise, a higher percentage of LRSD third graders scored below basic than third graders in Arkansas. Again, Caucasian students were the exception to the pattern.



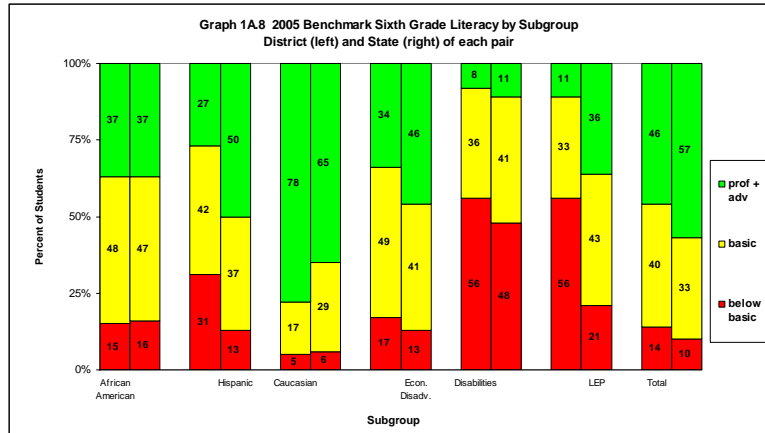
Overall, as Graph 1A.6 illustrates, the results of the Benchmark Literacy exam revealed that slightly less than half of the LRSD fourth graders met the state standard by scoring either proficient or advanced. However, across Arkansas slightly more than half of the state's fourth graders met the state standard. Among LRSD fourth graders, only African American and Caucasian students outperformed the state average.



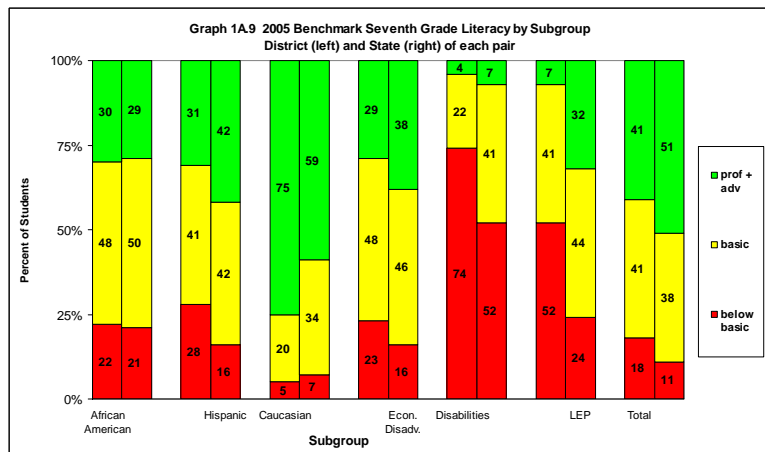
Graph 1A.7 shows that the lowest percentage of LRSD students who met the state literacy standard was the fifth grade. Barely more than one-third – 36 percent – scored proficient or advanced on the Benchmark exam compared to 48 percent around the state.



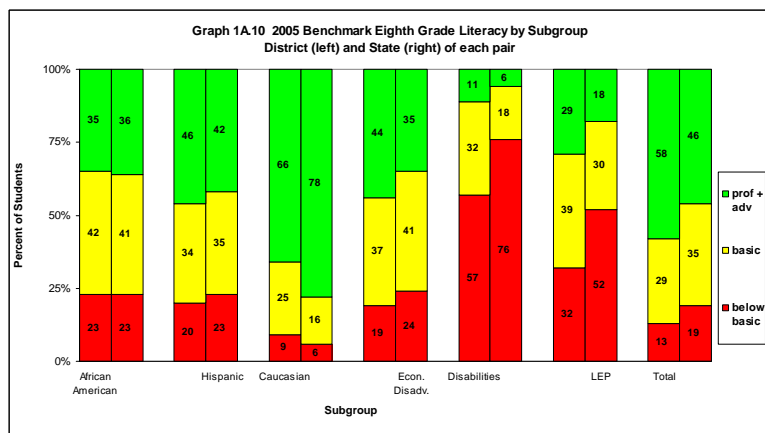
Graph 1A.8 reveals a brighter picture for LRSD students. Nearly half of the LRSD sixth graders – 46 percent – met the state literacy standard, the second highest percentage by grade level among the LRSD students taking the test. However, the sixth graders overall still trailed the state by some 11 percentage points. Among the student subgroups, African American students equaled the state average for meeting the standard, and Caucasian students outperformed the state average.



Among seventh graders, a higher percentage of African American and Caucasian students met the state standard for literacy than did African American and Caucasian students statewide. However, as shown in Graph 1A.9, the overall LRSD seventh grade literacy scores trailed the state total by 10 percentage points.

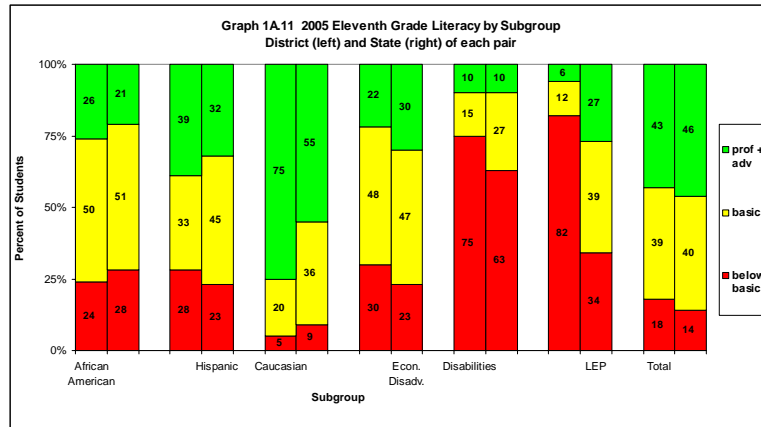


Graph 1A.10 shows that the highest performing students in the LRSD were the eighth graders. Well over half – 58 percent – scored proficient or advanced on the Benchmark test, 12 percentage points higher than the state total. Ironically, African American and Caucasian students who frequently outperformed their counterparts around the state, failed to better the state average.



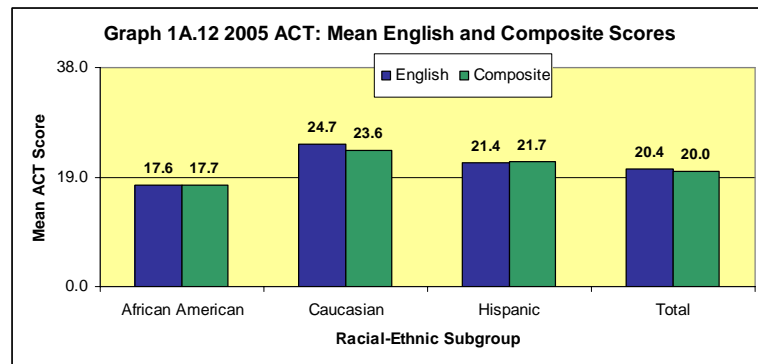
## Literacy Skills – End of Course

The End of Course exam is administered near the end of the school year to 11<sup>th</sup> graders. As with the other Benchmark exams, students are scored based upon how well they have mastered the state curriculum using the same scale of advanced, proficient, basic and below basic. Graph 1A.11 shows that LRSD 11<sup>th</sup> grade students scored nearly the same as 11<sup>th</sup> graders around the state. However, in both cases slightly less than half of the students scored well enough to meet the state standard. Among the LRSD student subgroups, higher percentages of African American, Hispanic and Caucasian students met the state standard than among similar groups statewide.



## ACT - English

Scores from the American College Testing (ACT) Program for English from 2005 are shown in Graph 1A.12. The composite score is the average of the four tests scores in English, mathematics, reading, and science as reported by ACT. The ACT is designed to assess a student's general educational development and the ability to complete college-level work.



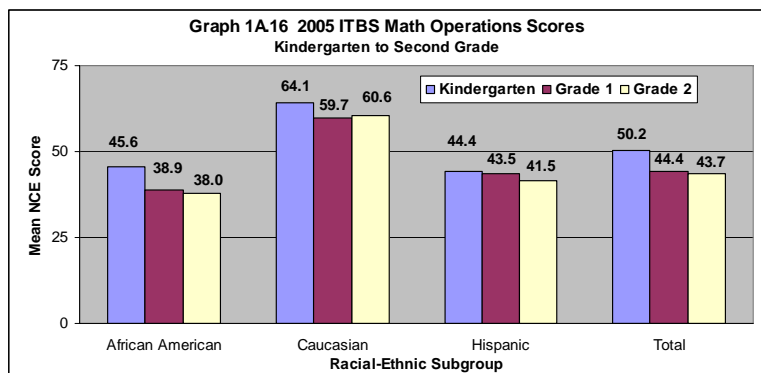
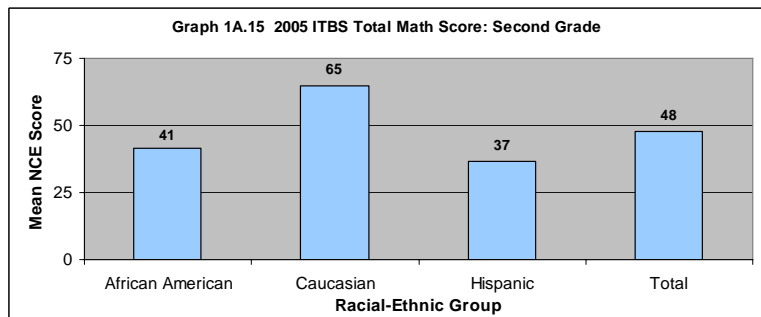
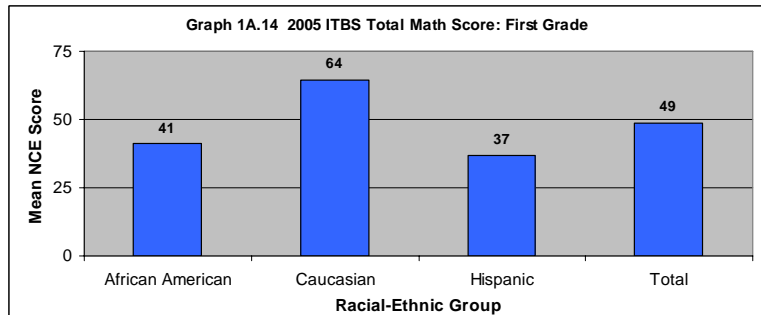
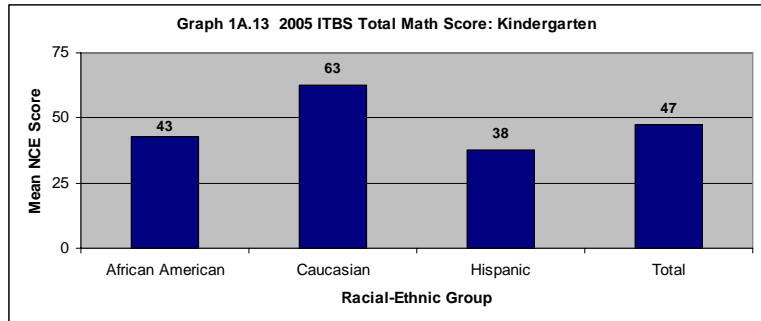
Students whose ACT score is below 19 are eligible for the College Preparatory Enrichment Program. The LRSD mean score for all students taking the test was above the national norm of 19.

## Math Skills – ITBS

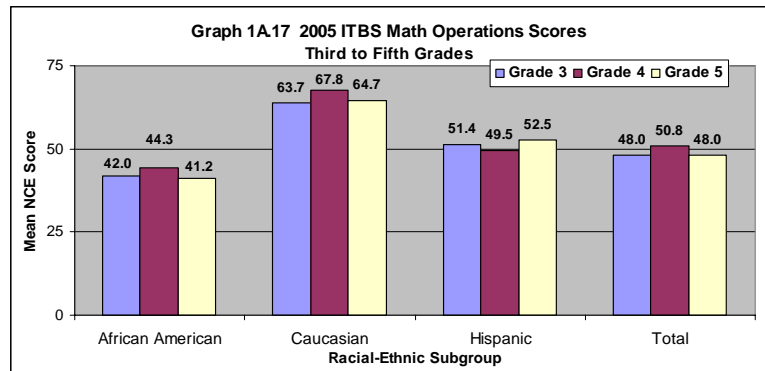
The math ITBS results show a remarkable similarity among students in kindergarten through second grade. LRSD students scored slightly below the national mean of 50 in each of the three grades. Remarkable, too, is the similarity of total math scores among student subgroups from grade to grade. The scores are detailed in Graphs 1A.13, 1A.14, and 1A.15.

Math operations is the only ITBS math test component common to all grades from kindergarten through ninth grade in the 2005 examinations. An NCE score of 50 is the mean score for all of the students nationally who took the test. Half of those students scored higher than 50 and half scored lower than 50.

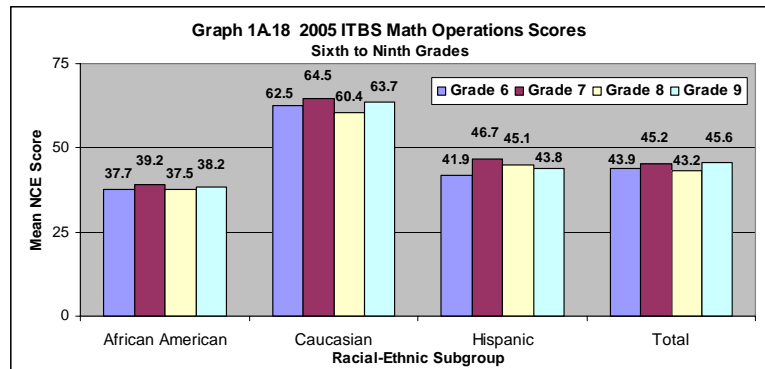
Graph 1A.16 shows that LRSD kindergarten students clearly performed better than LRSD students in the first and second grade when compared to the national group of students who took the test.



Interestingly, however, are the higher scores of LRSD students in the third through fifth grades as illustrated in Graph 1A.17. This is most dramatic among Hispanic students. But greater achievement of third- to fifth-grade students compared to first- and second-grade students is clear among all three subgroups. Scores for all students in grades three through five placed them in the middle of the national norm population.



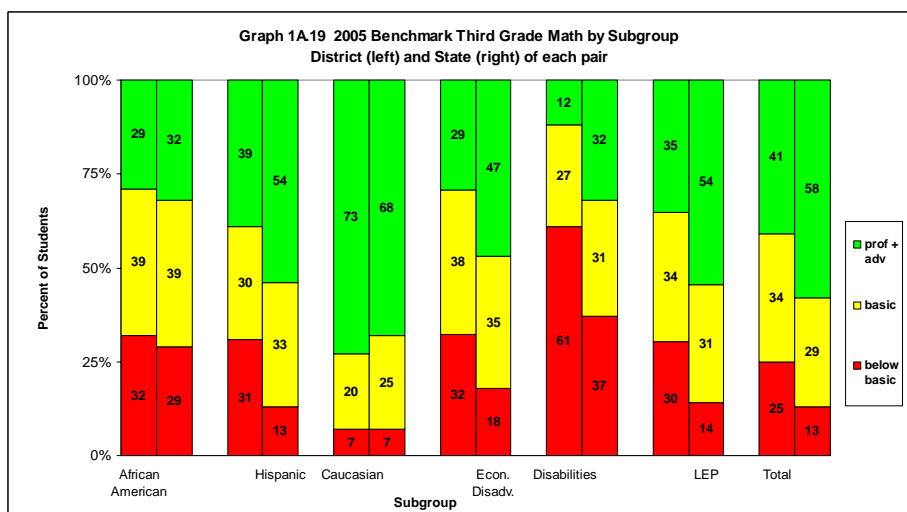
Students in third through fifth grades also performed better on the 2005 ITBS math test than students in grades six through nine, as shown in Graph 1A.18. While the same relative ranking of subgroups remains the same – Caucasian students scoring higher than Hispanic students, and Hispanic students scoring higher than African American students – students in grades six to nine overall ranked below the middle of the national sample. The mean NCE score for every LRSD student subgroup of these older students was lower than those of the younger students.



### Math Skills – Benchmark

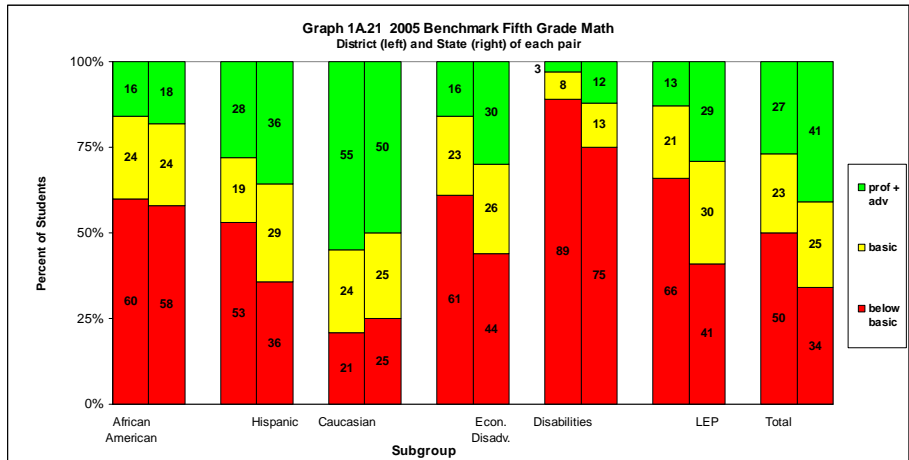
The Benchmark math exam is administered in the third through eighth grades. As with the other Benchmark exams, students are scored based upon how well they have mastered the state curriculum using the same scale of advanced, proficient, basic and below basic. In each pair of bars in the following graphs, the left one represents LRSD and the right one represents Arkansas.

Graph 1A.19 shows that the percentage of all LRSD third graders who met the state standard is significantly lower – 17 points lower – than the statewide percentage. While the scores of LRSD African American students resembled those of students around the state and Caucasian students outperformed students around the state, all other student subgroups fell below statewide levels.

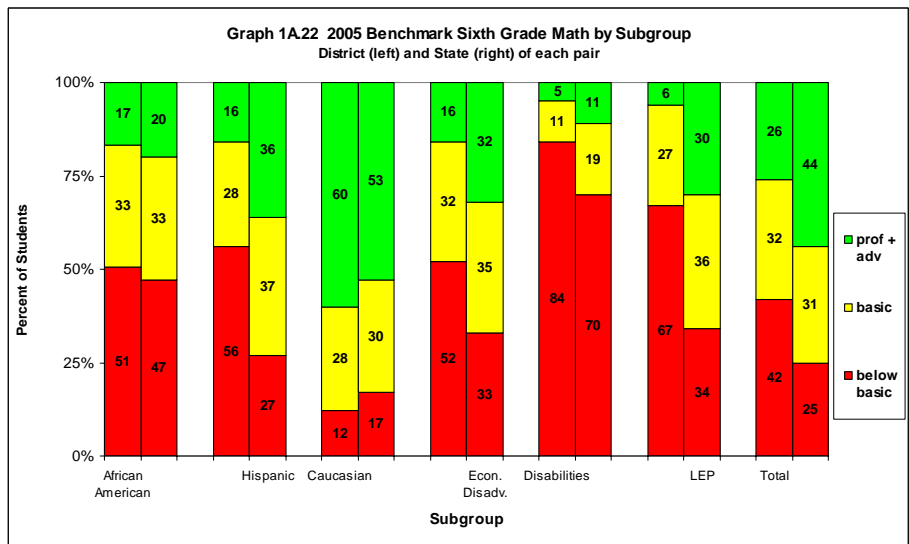


This pattern, beginning with third grade, is repeated consistently across all LRSD grade levels. As a whole, students statewide outperformed LRSD students, and often by wide margins.

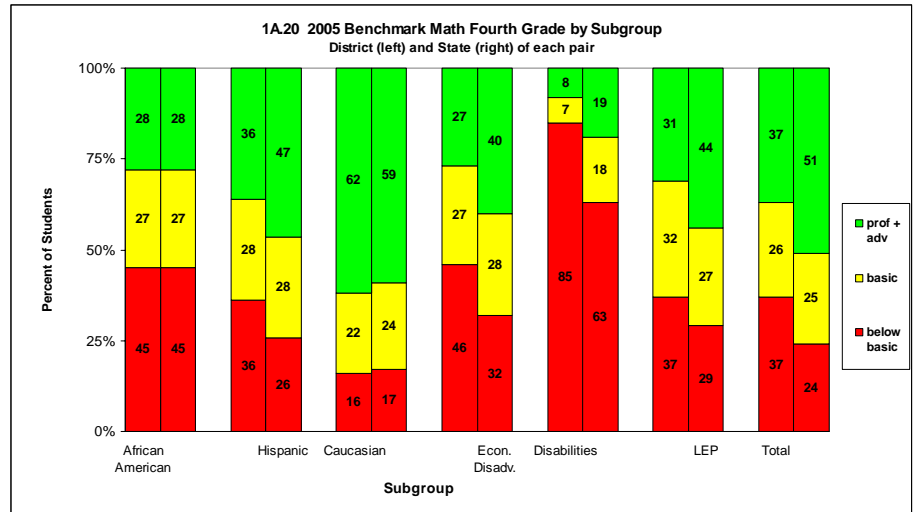
Graph 1A.20 shows that LRSD fourth graders exhibited slightly less mastery of state standards than did students in third grade and fell below statewide levels. Although LRSD African American students and state students shared identical profiles, the LRSD economically disadvantaged student subgroup scored 13 percentage points lower than their counterparts around the state.



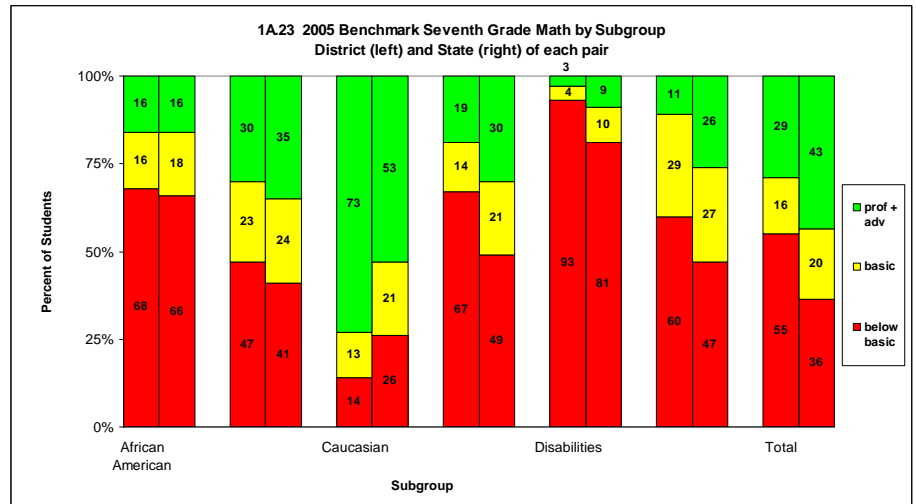
By fifth grade, the steady decline in math performance, both in the LRSD and around the state, is evident. Graph 1A.21 shows that only 27 percent of the LRSD fifth graders met the state standard. That is 14 percentage points below the level of the LRSD third graders. Likewise, the average among fifth graders around Arkansas who met the state standard slipped to 41 percent – 17 points below the statewide third grade level.



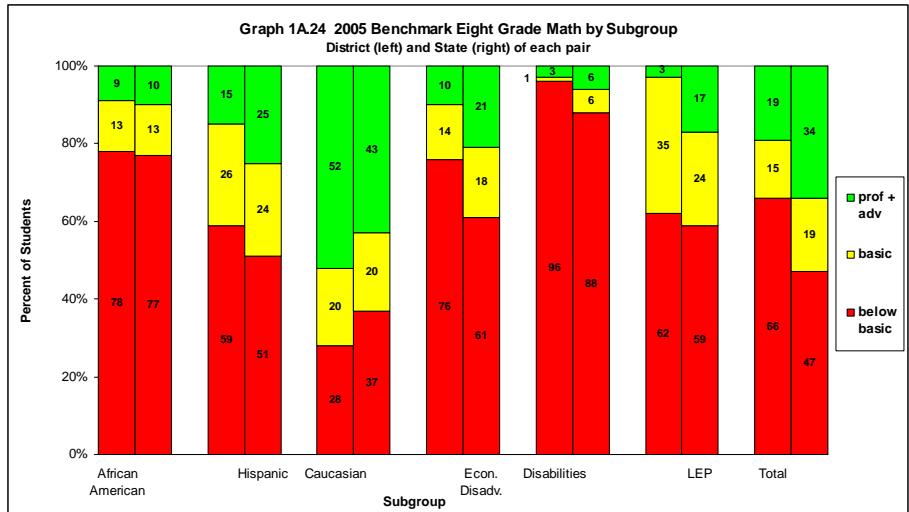
Graph 1A.22 shows that the decline continues among LRSD sixth graders with only 26 percent scoring well enough to meet the state standard. By comparison, 44 percent of the state's sixth graders met the standard, an increase of three percentage points over the state's fifth graders. The pattern remains consistent with LRSD Caucasian students outperforming their statewide student subgroup and the other LRSD student subgroups falling behind the state levels.



Graph 1A.23 shows that LRSD seventh graders scored slightly better than LRSD sixth graders. Overall, 29 percent of the LRSD seventh graders met the state standard, compared to 43 percent statewide. LRSD Caucasian students outperformed their statewide counterparts by 20 percentage points while LRSD African American students matched African American student performance statewide.

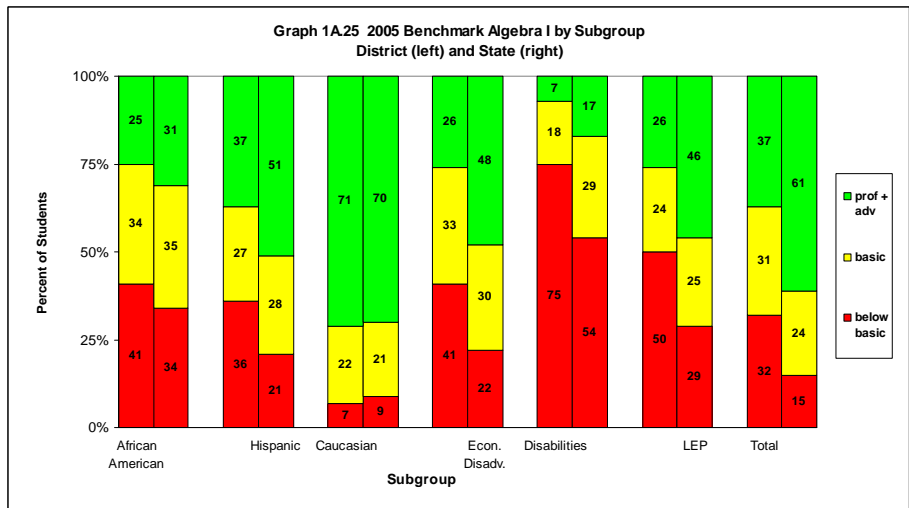


The LRSD eighth graders scored the lowest on the Benchmark math test of any grade in the LRSD system. Graph 1A.24 shows that just 19 percent of the district's eighth grade students met the state standard – a drop of more than 53 percent compared to the LRSD third graders. Likewise, only 34 percent of the eighth graders in Arkansas scored well enough to meet the state standard. That was the lowest percentage of any grade level in the state.

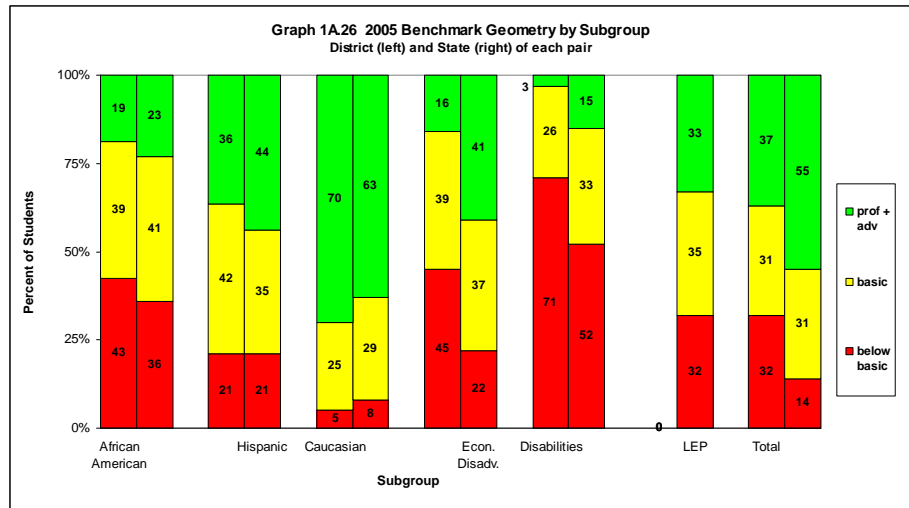


**Math Skills – Benchmark Algebra I and Geometry**

LRSD students taking the Algebra I Benchmark exam, usually ninth graders, fared significantly better in meeting their state standard than the LRSD eighth graders. But as Graph 1A.25 shows, overall results put LRSD students well behind their statewide counterparts. While LRSD Caucasian students scored identically to Caucasian students around the state, all other LRSD student subgroups lagged behind the statewide percentage levels.

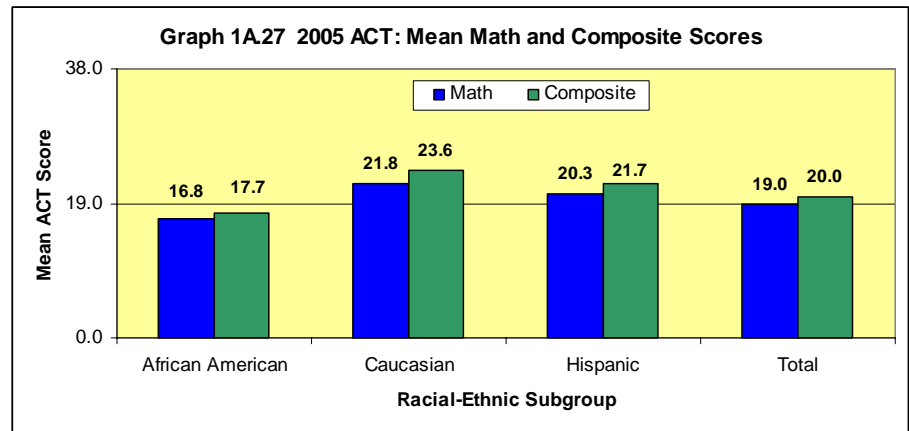


The overall results for the Benchmark Geometry exam were similar to those for Algebra I. Graph 1A.26 shows that while more than half of the students in Arkansas scored well enough to meet the state standard, just over one-third of the LRSD students managed to meet it. While Caucasian students outperformed their statewide counterparts, no other LRSD student subgroup was able to do so. The Benchmark Geometry exam is usually administered to 10<sup>th</sup> graders.



**ACT - Math**

Scores from the American College Testing (ACT) Program for Math from 2005 are shown in Graph 1A.27. The composite score is the average of the four tests scores in English, mathematics, reading, and science as reported by ACT. The ACT is designed to assess a student's general educational development



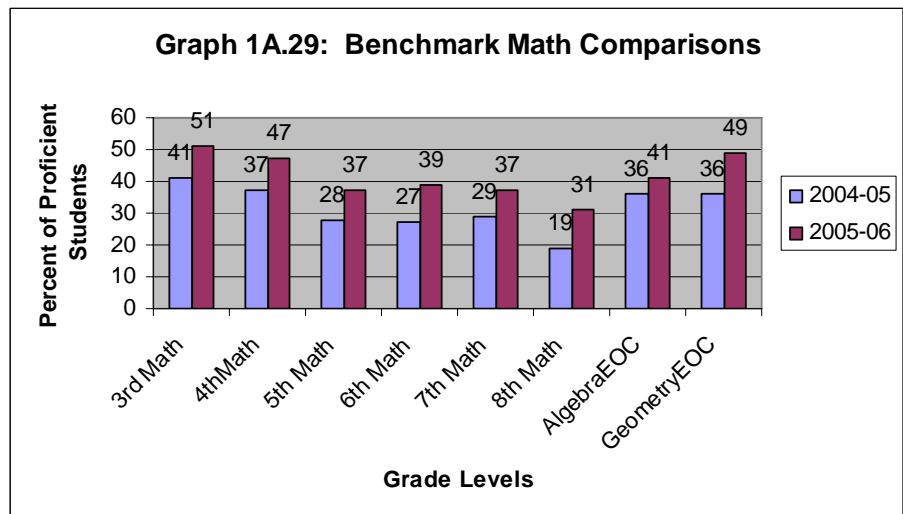
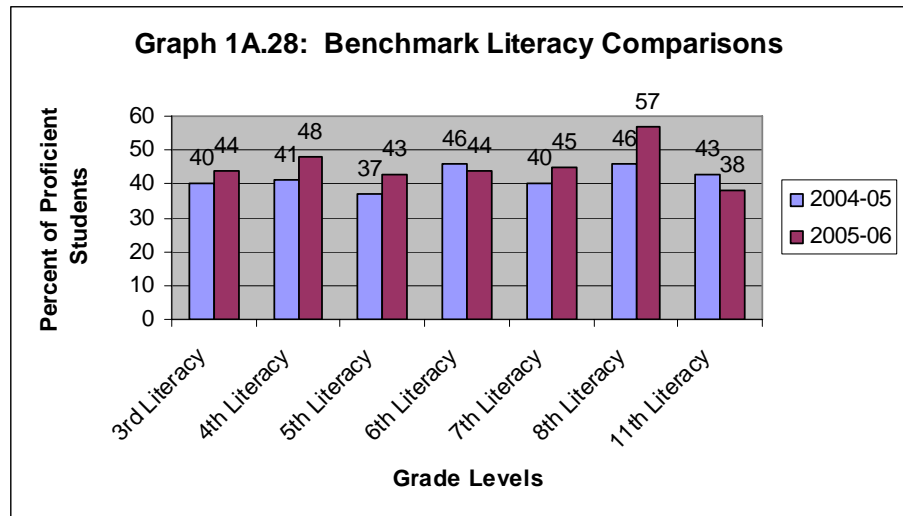
and ability to complete college level work. Students whose ACT score is below 19 are eligible for the College Preparatory Enrichment Program. LRSD students' mean score was 19, meaning half of the students who took the test scored above 19 and half scored below 19.

**AP**

During the 2004-2005 school year, 1,634 LRSD students took 3,793 Advanced Placement exams. The tests are scored on a scale of 1 to 5. A total of 968 LRSD students, or 59 percent, achieved Advanced Placement scores of 3 or greater; many colleges and universities award credit for AP classes in which a 3 or higher was earned on the AP exam.

## Benchmark Literacy and Math Comparisons

Graphs 1A.28 and 1A.29 compare the results of LRSD students in the Benchmark and End-of-Course exams in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. The graphs illustrate the percent of LRSD students at each grade level who scored proficient or advanced.



**Guiding Principle 1: Every Student Learning**

We expect all students to reach their full potential related to meaningful work, higher learning, citizenship and service to others.

**Goal 1B**

***Students will be provided a comprehensive and rigorous curriculum.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Consistent with Goal 1B, the district is creating a coherent, comprehensive, data-driven curriculum that is user-friendly and is embraced by all teachers. In achieving this goal, the district is committed to developing PreK-12 curriculum maps in the core areas of mathematics, English, science and social studies. This is an ongoing process which began with a concentration on mathematics and English.

Approximately 123 teachers participated in the development of the first set of curriculum maps for mathematics, which included Grades PreK-8, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Pre-Calculus, and Statistics, and English, which included Grades PreK-8 & English I, II, III, IV. In creating the maps, teams took a dual-vision approach and used two lenses: a zoom lens to closely examine the year's curriculum for a particular grade; and a wide-angle lens to capture the broad PreK-12 perspective, which provided a deeper understanding of our students' experiences over time. This approach also eliminated redundancy and gaps and guaranteed consistency within and across grade levels.

Parent Curriculum Brochures were developed, which provided a month-by-month overview of the mathematics and English curricula for each grade level. These brochures provided parents with a brief synopsis of the content students learned and the blueprint used by teachers to prepare daily lessons.

During the summer of 2006, two-thirds of the original development team members are returning to evaluate and revise the maps in an effort to ensure that the curriculum remains comprehensive and that the district will continue to produce dynamic, high quality and practical curriculum maps. The district intends to begin designing science maps during the 2006-2007 school year and is planning to develop social studies maps in 2007-2008.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

The LRSD uses a comprehensive approach not only in how courses are taught, but in the number of courses that are available to students. Table 1B.1 shows that LRSD high school course offerings far surpass the number required by the Arkansas Department of Education. The result is greater opportunity for LRSD students to reach their full academic potential. With a significantly higher number of course offerings than mandated by the state, the LRSD creates a higher expectation for its students.

**Table 1B.1 High School Credit Courses 2004-2005**

|                                    |     |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Required by ADE                    | 38  |
| Offered by LRSD                    | 514 |
| Non-credit courses offered by LRSD | 23  |

In addition, there are 40 Advanced Placement courses available to LRSD students. Students enrolled in AP courses during the 2004-2005 school year numbered 3,684 compared to 3,407 enrolled during the previous school year. Graph 1B.2 represents an unduplicated count of students enrolled in AP courses.

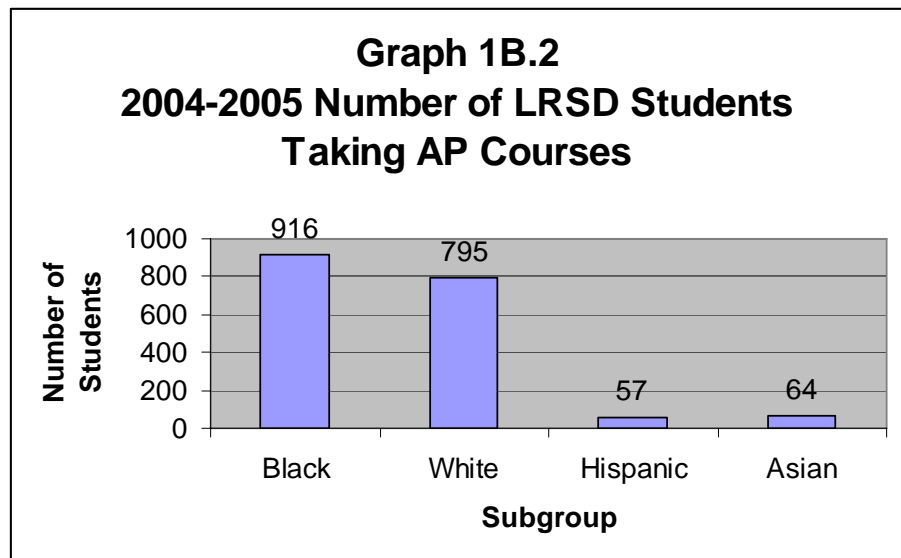


Table 1B.3 shows that graduating LRSD high school students must earn more credits than required by the Arkansas Department of Education.

**Table 1B.3 Credits Required for Graduation**

|      |    |
|------|----|
| ADE  | 22 |
| LRSD | 26 |

**Guiding Principle 1: Every Student Learning**

We expect all students to reach their full potential related to meaningful work, higher learning, citizenship and service to others.

**Goal 1C**

***Students will demonstrate positive citizenship and service to others.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A student's education is not confined to the classroom. Extracurricular activities, from service clubs to interscholastic sports, provide students with opportunities to develop additional social skills and a broader sense of community.

LRSD schools employ a teaching method called service-learning which is designed to enrich students' learning by engaging them in meaningful service to their schools and communities. Service learning teaches young people to apply academic skills to solve real-world issues, thereby linking established learning objectives with genuine needs. Students lead the process, with adults as partners, applying critical thinking and problem-solving skills to concerns such as hunger, pollution and diversity. Students are active participants in a service-learning project and are encouraged to identify community needs and to plan service activities. Students also play active roles in the evaluation of the project and its impact on the community. This nurtures student ownership of the project, which in turn empowers young people to take control of their learning, develop leadership skills and take their places as valuable members of their communities.

Many LRSD schools used service learning projects to provide support to Hurricane Katrina victims during the 2005-2006 school year. In addition, students volunteered at the Arkansas Children's Hospital, local Boys and Girls Club, local animal shelters, the annual ShareFest event and at RiverFest. LRSD students also volunteered at Rice Depot to feed hungry families during the holidays, and students donate their time at many of the area's nursing homes during the holidays and the summer months. Every secondary school in the LRSD system sends students to district elementary schools to assist as volunteers in the before-school and after-school programs.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

Data related to the specific numbers of students involved in service learning projects and other extracurricular activities at district schools is not routinely collected. The lack of data, however, should not lead to the conclusion that LRSD students are disengaged from their communities. To the contrary, anecdotal evidence reveals that students from LRSD elementary and secondary schools were actively involved in community issues during the 2005-2006 school year. A sample of student activities includes:

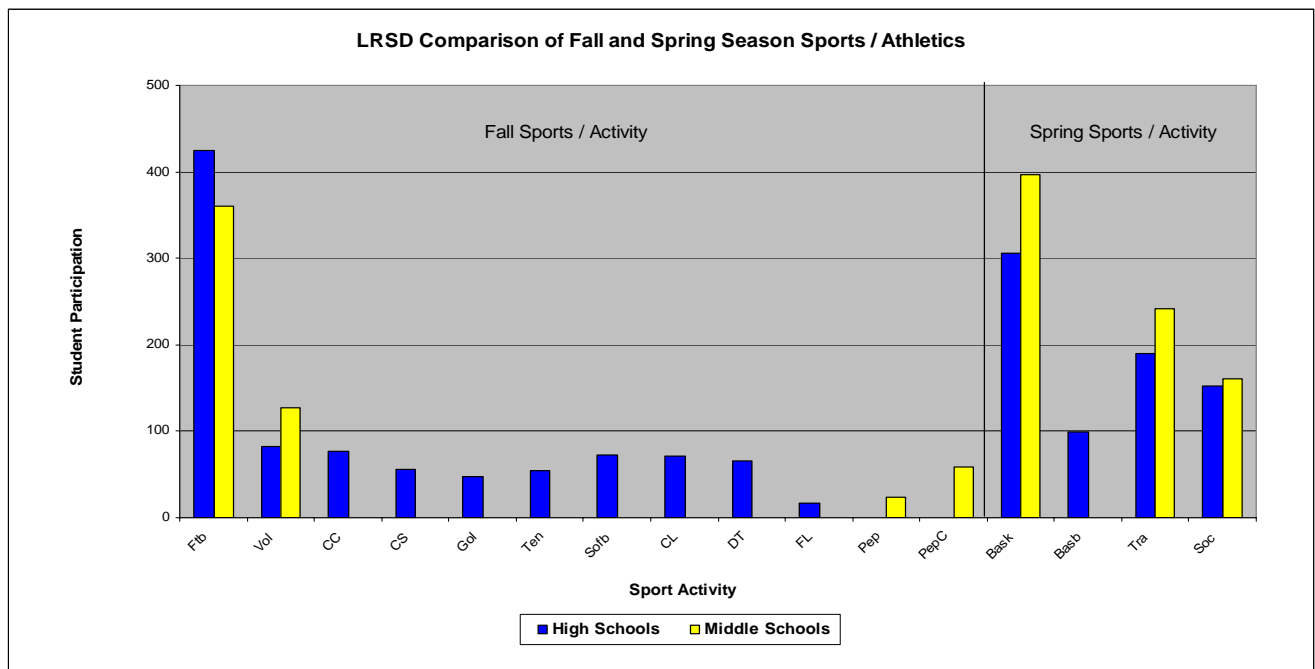
- Geyer Springs Elementary students collected money to send to the Arkansas Red Cross.
- Cloverdale Elementary students collected enough money to provide a pizza lunch for Hurricane Katrina victims staying at a local motel.
- The Forest Heights Middle School Student Council initiated a drive to collect money, water and blankets for victims of Hurricane Katrina.
- Henderson Middle School students conducted a hurricane relief drive through its P.E. classes.
- Otter Creek Elementary students raised hurricane relief funds by paying a dollar for the privilege of not having to wear school uniforms for one day.
- Brady Elementary staff and students brought empty two-liter bottles to school to collect money for hurricane victims during the month of September.
- Fulbright Elementary students, aided by the school's PTA, collected money, food and supplies for hurricane victims.
- The Parkview High School Student Council coordinated the collection of money, canned goods and clothing in support of the hurricane relief effort.
- Romine Elementary students paid a dollar for the privilege of wearing a hat in school during a designated day with the funds raised helping hurricane victims.
- Dodd Elementary students collected bottled water and non-perishable foods for hurricane victims.
- Rockefeller Elementary students collected money to support the Red Cross Hurricane Relief Fund and provided several meals for the family of a Rockefeller ES staff member which relocated to Little Rock after the family lost its home and possessions to flooding in New Orleans.
- Gibbs Elementary launched a program for staff and students to collect money for victims of Hurricane Katrina. The students also collected new toiletry items for hurricane victims who were staying in local shelters.
- McClellan High School students collected money to help hurricane victims.

- Western Hills Elementary students set a goal of collecting 10,000 bottles of water for shipment to the Gulf Coast in support of hurricane relief efforts.
- Dunbar Middle School students collected money and supplies to help families displaced by Hurricane Katrina. Last year, Dunbar students raised over \$2,000, one penny at a time, for the tsunami relief effort.

Interscholastic Athletics attracts a significant number of middle and high school students annually. Table 1C.1 illustrates the number of student athletes participating in fall and spring sports and not the number of individual students. Some students participate in both fall and spring sports.

**Table 1C.1**  
**Little Rock School District**  
**Fall and Spring Season Sports/ Athletics**  
**Comparison of Secondary Level Student Participation**  
**2005 - 2006**

|               | Enrollment | Ftb | Vol | CC | CS | Gol | Ten | Sofb | CL | DT | FL | Pep | PepC | Bask | Basb | Tra | Soc |
|---------------|------------|-----|-----|----|----|-----|-----|------|----|----|----|-----|------|------|------|-----|-----|
| High School   | 6973       | 424 | 82  | 77 | 56 | 47  | 55  | 73   | 71 | 65 | 17 | 0   | 0    | 306  | 99   | 190 | 152 |
| Middle School | 5410       | 361 | 127 | 0  | 0  | 0   | 0   | 0    | 0  | 0  | 0  | 24  | 59   | 396  | 0    | 242 | 160 |



**Fall Sports:**

Ftb = Football  
 Vol = Volleyball  
 CC = Cross Country  
 CS = Cross Swimming  
 Gol = Golf  
 Ten = Tennis

Sofb = Softball  
 CL = Cheerleaders  
 DT = Drill Team  
 FL = Flagline  
 Pep = Pep Club  
 PepC = Pep Club Cheer

**Spring Sports:**

Bask = Basketball  
 Basb = Baseball  
 Tra = Track  
 Soc = Soccer

**Guiding Principle 2: Effective Management**

We effectively manage resources in order to achieve the district's mission.

**Goal 2A**

***District resources will be allocated in an equitable manner.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

One of the conclusions reached under Goal 1A of this report is that LRSD students belonging to the economically disadvantaged subgroup, with little exception, performed far worse on Arkansas Benchmark literacy and math tests than did their counterparts around the state. The Benchmark results indicate that better classroom strategies and instructional practices are warranted if the achievement levels of the economically disadvantaged students are going to improve. Likewise, the district must be certain that it is equitably funding the schools with higher enrollments of economically disadvantaged students.

The LRSD annually conducts an equitable allocation study to determine whether district resources are being provided according to the Little Rock School District Covenant for the Future, approved by the Board in January 2001:

“...provide equitable educational resources, programs and opportunity in a nondiscriminatory environment for all students attending LRSD schools.”

The LRSD study examines a series of factors over which the district exercises control. These factors include:

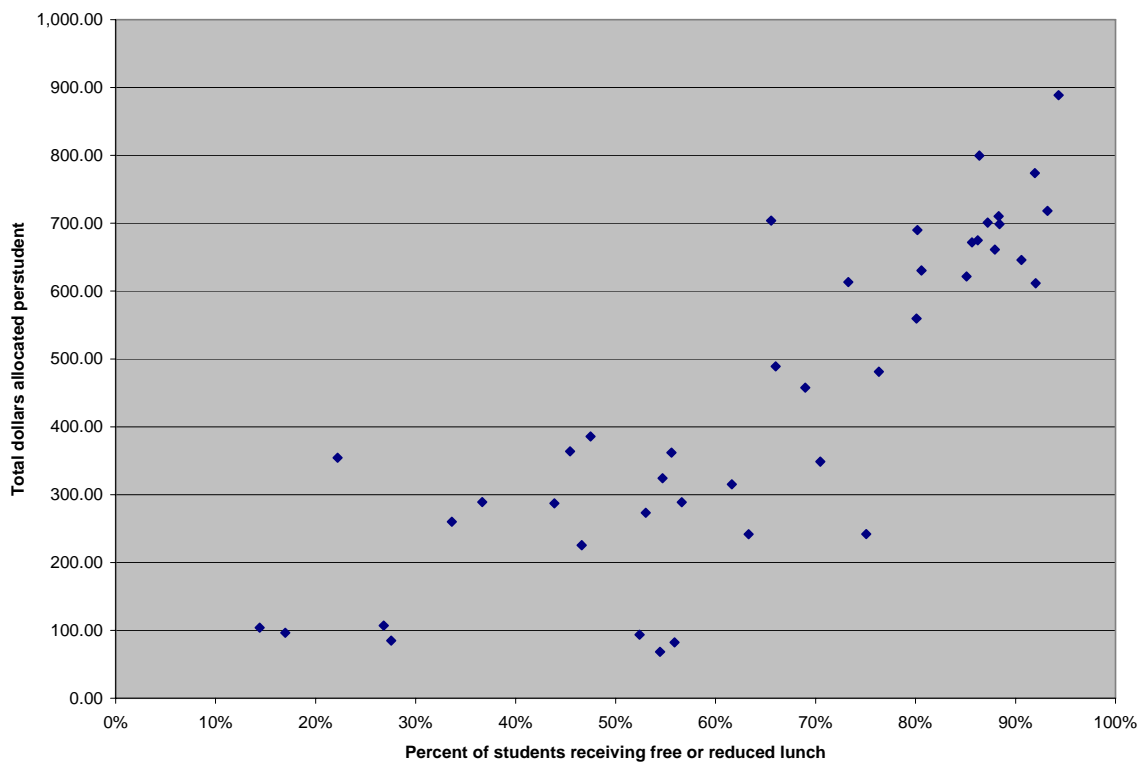
- Enrollment
- Number and percentage of students participating in the free or reduced lunch program
- Number and percentage of students in the limited English proficiency subgroup
- Number and percentage of special education students
- Amount of non-salary funds allocated by the district
- Ratio of non-salary district dollars per student
- Amount of Title I dollars
- Ratio of Title I dollars per student
- Ratio of total district non-salary and Title I dollars per student

A statistical analysis is performed to reveal whether schools with high poverty student enrollments are receiving an equitable allocation of funding based on demonstrated need. The conclusion is that LRSD resources are being allocated equitably in a nondiscriminatory manner according to the LRSD Covenant for the Future.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

Graph **2A.1** shows the relationship of district and Title I funding to schools with high enrollments of economically disadvantaged students. The bottom axis represents the enrolled percentage of students who are participating in the free and reduced lunch program, which is a widely accepted socioeconomic indicator. The axis on the left represents the amount of district non-salary allocation and Title I money per enrolled student at each school. The blue stars represent individual schools. The plot on the graph shows a clear pattern among LRSD schools that the higher the percent of poverty, the greater the amount of per pupil financial allocation.

**Graph 2A.1**  
**Equitable School Funding**



**Guiding Principle 2: Effective Management**

We effectively manage resources in order to achieve the district's mission.

**Goal 2B**

***A positive fund balance will be maintained to ensure the fiscal solvency of the district.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The LRSD maintains a fund balance in the district's annual Operating Fund budget. The practice serves two critical purposes. First, the fund balance acts as a district savings account where cash can be kept on hand to be used in the event of an emergency not covered under another contingency. Second, the district must set aside money to cover its operating expenses for the entire 12 months of the fiscal year. Since, the state of Arkansas forwards foundation funding to districts only 11 times a year, the fund balance reduces the likelihood of short-term borrowing.

In the wake of the Lake View decision by the Arkansas Supreme Court, the amount of money contained in fund balances by school districts around the state came under close scrutiny by the Arkansas Legislature. Lawmakers, aware that the Supreme Court found educational funding inadequate and was looking to the Legislature to increase education funding, were wary that districts might be redirecting money into fund balances from operating funds that should be spent to educate children. During the Special Session in April 2006, the Legislature attempted to regulate the amount of money districts can hold in a fund balance. However, in the limited time of the Special Session, lawmakers could not come to a consensus on what would be an adequate fund balance amount.

The amount of school district fund balances remains an issue for the Legislature. Before adjourning the Special Session, lawmakers passed legislation requiring school districts to provide the state with new and more uniform details of the amount and type of funds that are maintained in fund balances. It is expected that the Legislature will use this information during the 2007 General Assembly to draft legislation that will put new restrictions on school district fund balances, perhaps restricting the size of a district's fund balance to a set percentage of its Operating Budget.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

The amount of the LRSD fund balance is shown in Table **2B.1**. The FY 2004-2005 data forms the base line. Since FY 2001-2002, the district has maintained a fund balance that has ranged between 3.6 percent and 5.2 percent of the total operating budget, which is well below the state school district average of 18.5 percent in FY 2004-2005. During the 2006 Special Session, the Legislature had discussed, but not acted upon, limiting district fund balances to a range of somewhere between eight and 10 percent of a district's operating fund. The current LRSD percentage falls below even that threshold.

**Table 2B.1 LRSD Fund Balance Data**

| <b>Fiscal Year</b> | <b>Ending Fund Balance</b> | <b>Total Operating Budget</b> | <b>% of Operating Budget</b> |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2004-2005          | \$10,753,692               | \$205,966,393                 | 5.22                         |

**Guiding Principle 2: Effective Management**

We effectively manage resources in order to achieve the district's mission.

**Goal 2C**

***District facilities will be operated in an efficient and effective manner.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The LRSD owns and manages 4.3 million square feet of building space spread among 63 administrative, educational and support buildings. By way of comparison, the amount of building space managed by the district is more than double the amount of building space in New York City's Empire State Building.

In 2004-2005, the district spent more than \$18.6 million to operate and maintain its schools, administrative and support buildings. When compared to a national average, the district's costs are in line with the amount of money spent by other school districts.

In addition, the district's Maintenance and Operations Department has created the ability to quickly respond to and correct maintenance problems at district buildings.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

Table **2C.1** shows how LRSD building maintenance and operations costs compare to costs incurred by other school districts nationally. The comparison data is provided by *American School and University* magazine's 34<sup>th</sup> Annual M&O Cost Study. The table shows that LRSD devotes slightly more than the national average to maintenance and operation costs. However, the LRSD's expenditure per pupil is slightly lower than the national average, and the district's expenditure per square foot is slightly higher during FY 2004-2005. The cost is defined as the amount of money expended to adequately maintain the building, including labor costs, combined with the amount paid for building utilities.

| Table 2C.1                       |  |  |  |  |           |           |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|-----------|-----------|
| Maintenance & Operations Costs   |  |  |  |  |           |           |
|                                  |  |  |  |  |           |           |
|                                  |  |  |  |  | LRSD      | National  |
| % of Total District Expenditures |  |  |  |  | 8.12%     | 7.70%     |
| Cost per Pupil                   |  |  |  |  | \$ 720.31 | \$ 722.91 |
| Cost per Square Foot             |  |  |  |  | \$ 4.37   | \$ 4.29   |

Table **2C.2** shows that the district's Maintenance and Operations Department received more than 13,000 requests for service during FY 2004-2005 and was able to complete more than 97 percent of those work orders.

| Table 2C.2                            |           |  |       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|-------|
| Maintenance and Operations Department |           |  |       |
| Work Order Efficiency                 |           |  |       |
| 2004-2005                             |           |  |       |
|                                       |           |  |       |
| Initiated                             | Completed |  | %     |
| 13,131                                | 12,821    |  | 97.64 |
|                                       |           |  |       |

All LRSD school principals were surveyed during the 2005-2006 school year. Principals were asked to grade the following statements about the Maintenance and Operations Department:

***Response to maintenance work orders is prompt.***

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Completely Agree    | 48 % |
| Somewhat Agree      | 40 % |
| Somewhat Disagree   | 6 %  |
| Completely Disagree | 4 %  |
| Don't Know          | 2 %  |

***Maintenance work is done right the first time.***

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Completely Agree    | 54 % |
| Somewhat Agree      | 36 % |
| Somewhat Disagree   | 8 %  |
| Completely Disagree | 0 %  |
| Don't Know          | 2 %  |

**Guiding Principle 3: Parents as Team Members**

We encourage parents to be knowledgeable about and participate in their child's educational program.

**Goal 3A**

***The district will support outreach programs that engage parents in their child's education.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Parents are an integral part of their child's education. The LRSD believes that the more familiar parents become with the process of education, the more likely they will become actively involved in their child's education. A parent, however, may not know how best to become involved in learning more about education. The LRSD believes that schools and the district must make a conscious effort to reach out to parents on many different levels. This is the first of three components designed to involve more fully parents as team members in the child's education.

It turns out that the efforts made by the district and the schools are noticed and appreciated by parents. The district's 2005-2006 survey of parents shows that well over three-fourths of the parents responding agreed or strongly agreed that opportunities are available for them to become engaged in their child's education.

The engagement occurs in a variety of methods, and one of the most successful has been parent workshops hosted by the district and schools. The workshops address such topics as mathematics, literacy, homework support, academic improvement plans, technology, safety, violence and drug prevention and the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

In addition, the District offered two parent institutes during the 2005-2006 school year which offered workshops on the following topics:

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Math Literacy                            | Testing                     |
| Discipline                               | Stress/Anger management     |
| Finance                                  | Substance abuse             |
| Violence prevention                      | ACT prep                    |
| Early childhood                          | Parent-Teacher conferences  |
| Hurricane Katrina parent/student support | Children with special needs |

## PERFORMANCE DATA

The district and schools made a major effort during the 2005-2006 school year to familiarize parents with the issues and requirements of their child's education.

- The district and the schools hosted 307 workshop sessions – 276 hosted by schools and 31 by the district – attended by 16,490 parents and guardians.
- The parent institute held in the fall of 2005 attracted 438 parents and guardians while 345 attended the session in the spring of 2006.

A survey was conducted of a random sample of 559 parents of fifth-, seventh- and 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students to gauge whether parents find the district's outreach effort useful. Parents were asked how they felt about the following statement:

***The district and/or school provide opportunities for me to engage in my child's education.***

Parents Say:

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Strongly Agree    | 36.4 % |
| Agree             | 42.0 % |
| No Opinion        | 12.7 % |
| Disagree          | 5.8 %  |
| Strongly Disagree | 3.1 %  |

**Guiding Principle 3: Parents as Team Members**

We encourage parents to be knowledgeable about and participate in their child's educational program.

**Goal 3B**

***Parents will feel welcome at school.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

More than 80 percent of LRSD parents report that they feel welcome in their child's school. In fact, more than half of the parents surveyed reported they strongly agreed they feel welcome. While a large number of parents visit their child's school on a regular basis, some parents may visit a school solely for negative reasons, such as a student discipline conference.

Making parents feel welcome is the second of three components designed to more closely involve parents as team members in their child's education. That is why schools are directed to make every effort to build parent goodwill from the date of Check-In during the summer through the last day of school. Strong positive relationships with parents pay off in many ways, and the importance of making every parent or guardian feel that he or she is an important member of the school family and should play an active role at the school campus cannot be overstated.

Schools at all levels held student performances, family math/literacy/technology/science nights, parent appreciation events such as Muffins for Moms or Dogs for Dads, and grandparent day luncheons. These activities are important in drawing parents to the school campus to interact with the faculty, meet other parents and to become familiar with the school and its operations. These activities serve to help link home and school and to build positive relationships between families and staff.

The superintendent has emphasized customer service among secretarial personnel and acknowledged their important role in creating a positive school climate by hosting an appreciation luncheon for secretaries. It is critical that every school employee—from the custodian to counselor to nurse to teacher to office staff—build a customer-friendly environment for parents and students, as well as prospective families who may visit on recruitment tours.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

A survey was conducted of a random sample of 559 parents of fifth-, seventh- and 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students to help determine if parents felt welcome at school. Parents were asked how they felt about the following statement:

***I feel welcome at my child's school.***

Parents Say:

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Strongly Agree    | 43.8 % |
| Agree             | 39.8 % |
| No Opinion        | 10.0 % |
| Disagree          | 3.1 %  |
| Strongly Disagree | 3.3 %  |

Schools offered a number of opportunities during the year to encourage parents to attend activities. Among these were:

| <b>Elementary</b>  | <b>Middle</b>   | <b>High</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| Playground helpers<br>Teacher appreciation<br>Accelerated reading programs<br>Arts programs<br>Tutoring<br>Physical fitness<br>Book fairs<br>Carnivals<br>Car pools<br>Student directory<br>5th grade celebrations<br>Parent recruitment<br>Fundraising<br>Red ribbon week<br>ViPS | Teacher appreciation<br>Carnivals<br>Honor roll incentives<br>Behavior incentives<br>Reading programs<br>8th grade celebration<br>Parent recruitment<br>Fundraising<br>Tutoring<br>ViPS | Teacher appreciation<br>Carnival<br>Honor roll incentives<br>Behavior incentives<br>Graduation<br>Parent recruitment<br>Fundraising<br>ViPS tutoring |

**Guiding Principle 3: Parents as Team Members**

We encourage parents to be knowledgeable about and participate in their child's educational program.

**Goal 3C**

***Staff will assist parents in accessing those school resources necessary to support their child's education.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The third component designed to more closely involve parents as part of the team that educates their child is ensuring that parents have what they need to help their child learn. A survey of parents revealed that nearly two-thirds agree or strongly agree that they have access to the materials and resources needed to support their child's education.

The LRSD is working to improve that access. The district is implementing Edline, a computer-based system of student records to which teachers add data directly and which students and their parents access through the Internet. As of the end of March 2006, 29 percent of all secondary school parents activated accounts to use Edline. Among the high schools, where training occurred during spring of 2005, 36 percent of parents signed up. Training of middle school parents took place from October 2005 to March 2006, and 21 percent of parents joined by the end of March.

Parents must have a computer and access to the Internet in order to use Edline. While the district is not able to provide Internet access, the district revised its surplus computer program toward the end of the 2005-2006 school year. The program enables parents who qualify to acquire at low cost LRSD-owned computers that are no longer usable in the classroom.

In order to participate in the computer loan program, parents must complete an agreement form at the participating school, indicating a clear understanding of their personal responsibility for maintaining the equipment and returning it at the end of the agreement period. In addition to the loan program, these surplus computers may be purchased at the fair market value through this program. The fair market value is determined by the District, and parents are provided certification of purchase.

To date, five schools have been involved in the distribution of surplus computer equipment; 93 students have received a computer for use at home. In addition, 111 computers have been cleaned and tested and are ready for distribution at the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year. The district's internal auditor has been given the responsibility of working with the Procurement Department to maintain an ongoing and accurate record of the computer loan program.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

A survey was conducted of a random sample of 559 parents of fifth-, seventh- and 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students to gauge whether parents feel they have access to the things they need to help their child learn. Parents were asked how they felt about the following statement:

***I have access to school materials and resources that support my child's education.***

Parents Say:

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Strongly Agree    | 25.9 % |
| Agree             | 38.7 % |
| No Opinion        | 22.6 % |
| Disagree          | 7.7 %  |
| Strongly Disagree | 5.1 %  |

Table **3C.1** shows that 93 surplus LRSD computers have been distributed to qualifying families and that another 111 will be ready for distribution at the start of the 2006-2007 school year.

**Table 3C.1  
Computer Loan Program**

| SCHOOL        | DISTRIBUTED TO DATE | READY FOR DISTRIBUTION | TOTAL      |
|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Geyer Springs | 19                  | 12                     | 31         |
| Terry         | 24                  | 5                      | 29         |
| Southwest     | 11                  | 4                      | 15         |
| Metropolitan  | 2                   | 2                      | 4          |
| Stephens      | 37                  | 88                     | 125        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>93</b>           | <b>111</b>             | <b>204</b> |

**Guiding Principle 4: Safe and Orderly Environment**

We are committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment.

**Goal 4A**

***Schools will promote a safe learning environment.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The personal safety of students, teachers, staff and visitors is the number one priority for any school district. Good teaching and good learning will not take place and extracurricular activities are far less attractive for participants and spectators in an environment where personal safety is a concern.

Safe schools continue to be a top priority for the LRSD. Judging from the results of a survey of teachers, students and parents, there is general agreement that the district's efforts to ensure a safe learning environment are paying off.

Alongside school administrators, teachers and staff, the LRSD Safety and Security Department is an integral part of the educational experience for students, staff and parents. Safety and Security employs 87 officers who are assigned to 36 schools or departments. School-based security officers patrol hallways and campuses, conduct drug and weapon scans and monitor crowds at school athletic events.

There are five security officers who comprise the department's mobile unit. Their primary function is to monitor student safety on the district's 300 buses and at the district's 1,500 bus stops.

The Safety and Security Department has other duties related to providing a safe school environment. The department:

- investigates allegations of abuse of staff or students and employee misconduct;
- ensures that district schools and buildings meet all state safety codes;
- develops an emergency/crisis plan for each school and updates them annually;
- installs and maintains closed circuit camera security systems in the district; and
- monitors and responds to intrusion alarm alerts at district buildings 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The city of Little Rock has assigned 10 of its police officers, known as Student Resource Officers (SROs), and one police supervisor to selected LRSD middle and high schools. The salary costs of the SROs are shared equally by the city and the district.

For more than 15,500 LRSD students every day, safety extends to the ride to and from school on a bus either owned by or operated under the authority of the LRSD and its Transportation Department. During the 2003-2004 school year, which is forming the district's baseline data,

LRSD students were transported in 273 buses along 243 routes, making the LRSD's bus fleet the nation's 79<sup>th</sup> largest.

In 2003-2004, district buses traveled approximately 5 million miles. In subsequent years, the number of miles traveled has increased. Yet as the mileage increases, the safety record of the Transportation Department is improving and the accident rate per million miles traveled is declining. This reduction is due primarily to the dedicated employees of the Transportation Department, their continuous training and their conscientious attitude toward safety.

LRSD school bus drivers are required to possess a Commercial Drivers License (CDL). They must pass criminal background and motor vehicle record checks. Before the department's drivers are allowed to drive a school bus, they must pass pre-employment and annual physical examinations and drug tests in accordance with the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Regulations. Throughout the year all LRSD drivers are also subject to random, post-accident and reasonable suspicion drug and alcohol testing.

Drivers also undergo extensive state and district training which includes CDL training, driver behind the wheel testing, Arkansas State driver certification class, defensive driving, student management, policies and procedures, first aid, CPR and crisis intervention. Drivers transporting special needs students and the aides who travel on their buses must take classes on requirements of special needs students, chair lift operations and restraint procedures. LRSD school bus drivers receive up to 60 hours of training before and during their first few weeks behind the wheel and are required to receive an additional 30 hours of training per year.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

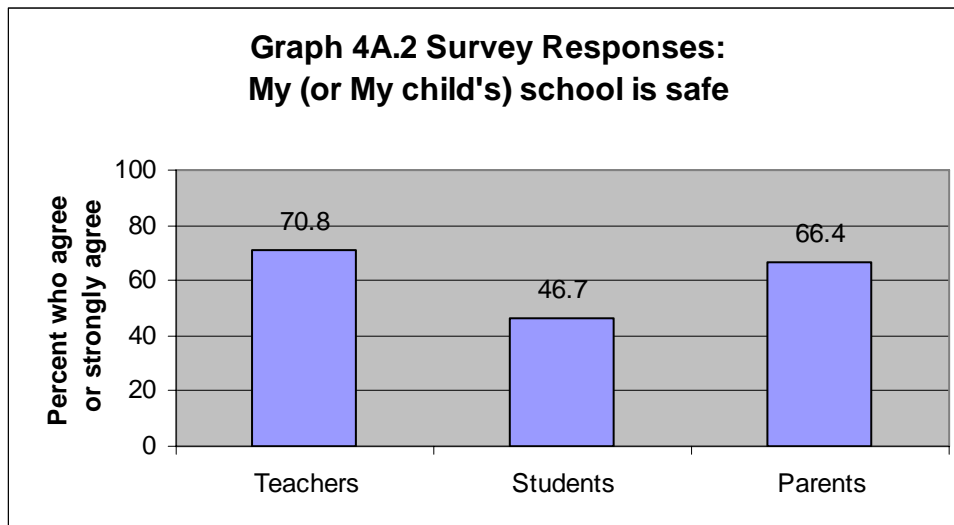
During the 2005-2006 school year, the LRSD Safety and Security Department:

- filed 2,590 incident reports;
- investigated 54 bus accidents;
- filed 1,841 reports citing student misbehavior on school buses; and
- provided 3,000 hours of training for security officers.

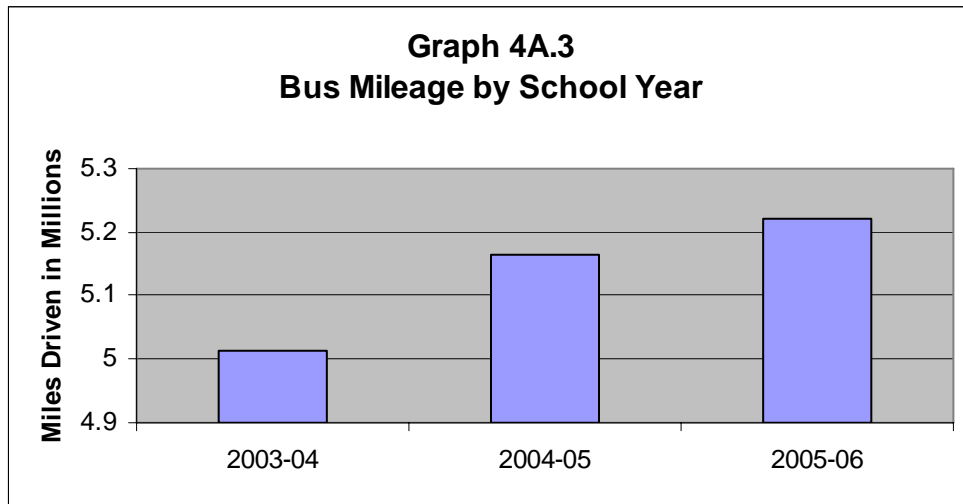
During the 2004-2005 school year, the SROs:

- made 455 arrests
- filed 829 incident reports.

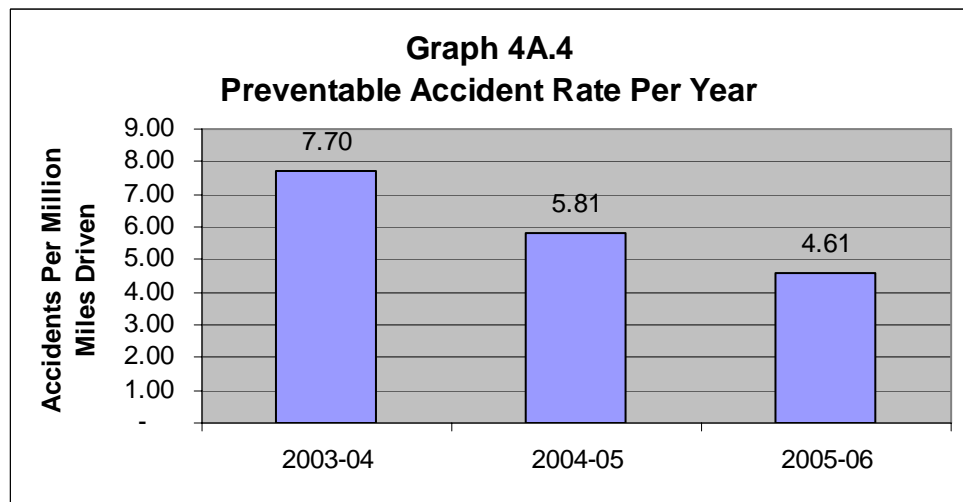
It appears that safety is a relative term, defined by differing perspectives. The survey of 137 teachers and more than 2,312 students and 559 parents reveals striking differences, as illustrated in Graph 4A.2



Graph 4A.3 illustrates that the total number of miles traveled annual by LRSD school buses has been increasing.



Despite an increase in the number of miles traveled each year by LRSD school buses, the accident rate is steadily declining. The number of bus accidents per million miles traveled, as illustrated in Graph 4A.4, has dropped for the past three years.



**Guiding Principle 4: Safe and Orderly Environment**

We are committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment.

**Goal 4B**

***School facilities will be clean, secure, and well maintained.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In July 2005, the LRSD administrative reorganization placed school custodians under the direct supervision of school principals. School custodians are responsible for the appearance of their buildings, including cleanliness, minor maintenance and safety items.

The LRSD Maintenance and Operations Department inspects each school building every month, noting the building's general appearance, cleanliness and safety. For example, the inspectors examine conditions inside each school, including restrooms and locker rooms, and the appearance of the grounds. The inspectors even check to make sure school custodians are using the proper cleaning solutions. The results of the inspections, including any problem areas, are reported to the school principal and to the Associate Superintendent who supervises that school.

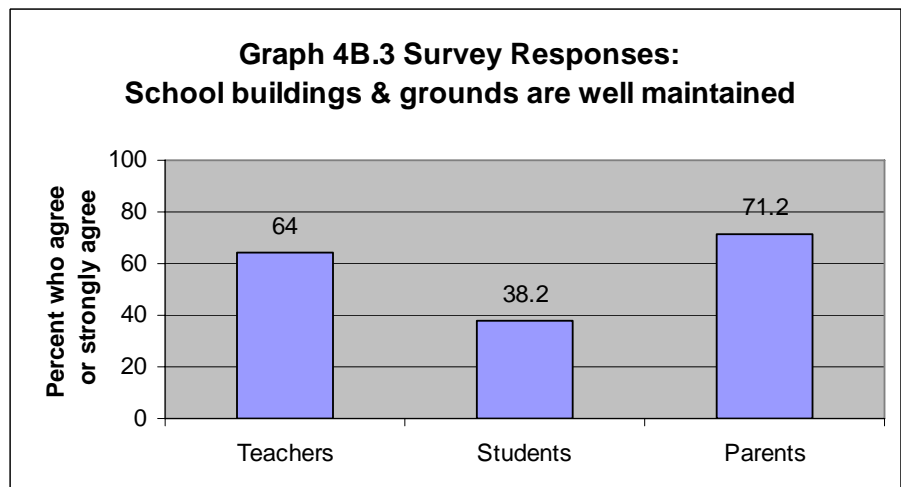
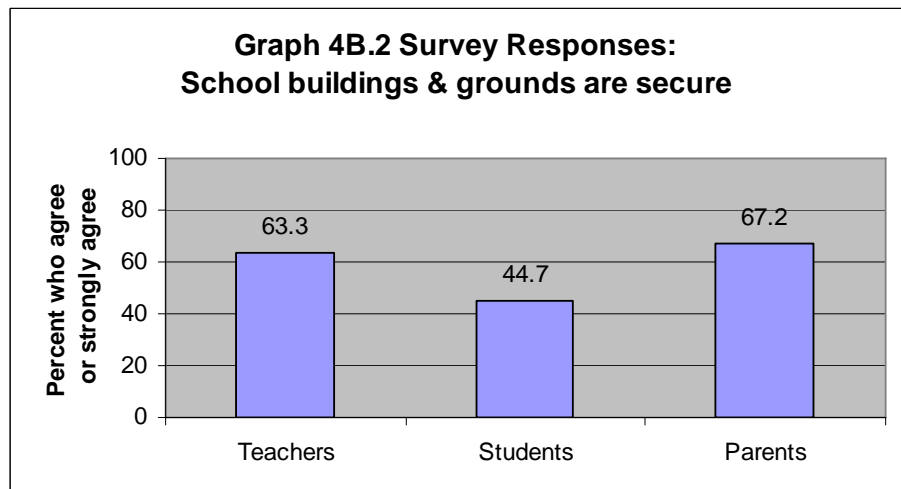
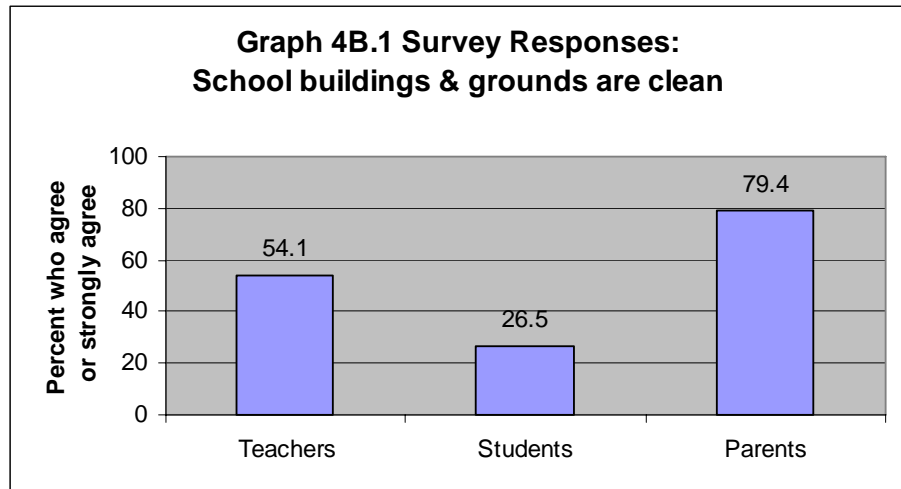
In general, the inspections performed since July 2005 rated the schools in either fair or good condition. Pest control was effective at every building and no building code violations were discovered.

Providing a school environment that promotes excellence in education is a shared responsibility between school custodians and the district's Maintenance and Operations Department. While custodians monitor the day-to-day conditions of schools, Maintenance and Operations oversees major repairs, preventive/planned maintenance, identification of deferred maintenance projects, assessment of unsafe/hazardous conditions, energy management and the upkeep of HVAC equipment.

In general, while improvements are still needed in some areas, the Maintenance and Operations Department has been successful in completing most of the goals it has set to accomplish and has reached many of its performance targets. Site inspections, response to hazardous conditions and processing and completing work orders in a timely manner have been consistent and thorough.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

The perception of whether a school is clean, secure and well maintained varies considerably among the 137 teachers, 2,312 students and 559 parents who responded to a district survey. In general, it appears that in all three categories, students are the worst critics, parents give the highest marks and teachers fall somewhere in between. The results are illustrated in Graphs 4B.1, 4B.2 and 4B.3.



**Guiding Principle 4: Safe and Orderly Environment**

We are committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment.

**Goal 4C**

***Students will treat each other with respect and demonstrate socially acceptable behavior.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Individual schools have the most active role in governing student behavior. Schools offer the curriculum that helps a child form the parameters of respectful and socially acceptable behavior and are the first to respond to a student whose behavior falls outside those parameters. LRSD schools teach drug and tobacco education to all students in pre-kindergarten through 11<sup>th</sup> grade through a variety of programs. All of the curricula are designed to help a student build sound decision-making and relationship skills, build self-esteem and increase a student's understanding of the personal, social, health-related and legal risks associated with drug and tobacco use.

Violence prevention is also taught in LRSD schools through a variety of programs in pre-kindergarten through high school. Students are taught how to recognize the early warning signs of violent behavior, to respond nonviolently to conflict and to understand the consequences associated with violent behavior. Middle schools, which frequently experience the highest rate of student misbehavior, use a program designed to teach students to deal with bullying behavior in a healthy, assertive manner. At both elementary and high schools, peer mediation programs teach students new skills in managing anger and conflict. In high schools, peer mediation is offered as a credit-bearing elective course.

In order to appropriately address problems with student behavior, it is vital that the district collect detailed data on student behavior offenses and the punishments that were given to offenders. This strategy likely will lead to an upward spike in the number of student behavior offenses as more accurate data is reported. However, these data will enable the district to better diagnose the source of troublesome student behavior and take concerted action to correct it.

Socially acceptable behavior by students in school receives the lowest favorable ratings of any of the survey questions posed to teachers, students and parents. As we have seen with other questions of perspective, the answers vary widely. Generally, parents respond most positively, students the most negatively and teachers fall somewhere in between. It seems, however, that the comparatively lower ratings for socially acceptable behavior and respect are supported by the number of incidents for insubordination and disorderly conduct among students.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

Table **4C.1** is the district's discipline report for the 2004-2005 school year and provides the baseline data for subsequent data collection in subsequent years. The numbers represent the total number of suspensions and expulsions and not the number of individual students involved.

**Table 4C.1 Discipline Report**

|                                     | <b>2004-2005</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Short-Term Suspensions              | 6,023            |
| Long-term Suspensions/ALE Referrals | 498              |
| Expulsions                          | 2                |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>6,523</b>     |

Table **4C.2** shows the number of suspensions and expulsions by grade level.

**Table 4C.2 Suspensions/Expulsions by Grade Level**

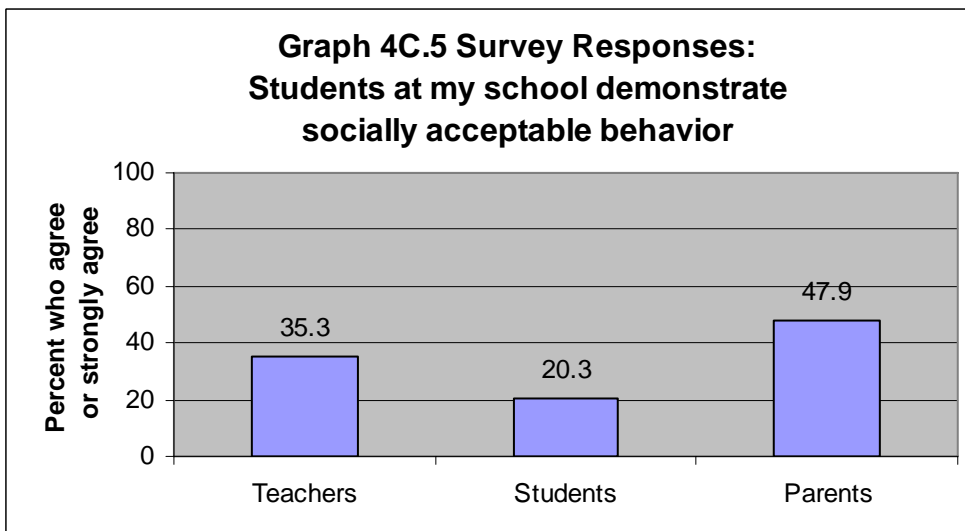
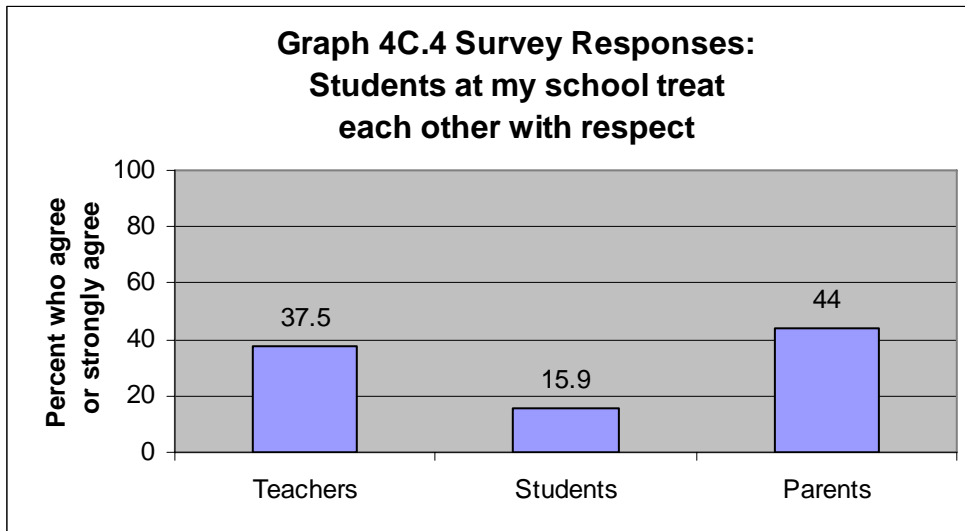
|                   | <b>2004-2005</b> |
|-------------------|------------------|
| High School       | 2,379            |
| Middle School     | 3,039            |
| Elementary School | 1,105            |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>6,523</b>     |

Table **4C.3** shows the number of individual students who were either suspended or expelled from LRSD schools in 2004-2005. The table indicates that 15 percent of the district's total student enrollment was either suspended or expelled from school at least once during the 2004-2005 school year.

**Table 4C.3 Suspensions/Expulsions by Student**

| <b>Suspensions/Expulsions</b> | <b>2004-2005</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Total                         | 6,523            |
| Number of Individual Students | 3,888            |
| % of LRSD Students            | 15               |

Graphs **4C.4** and **4C.5** show the relative disparities in perceptions about respect and socially acceptable behavior among teachers, students and parents. The pattern of response, parents being most positive, students being least positive and teachers being in between, remains consistent in both answers.



**Guiding Principle 5: Supportive Staff**

We expect all employees to be responsible for providing or supporting quality educational experiences for all students.

**Goal 5A**

***A qualified and well-trained staff will provide an effective and supportive environment for students.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The LRSD is committed to employing highly qualified and competent certified staff. The district's Human Resources Department recruits teachers by attending all the recruitment fairs in Arkansas offered by the colleges and universities and the Arkansas Department of Education. In addition, the Human Resources recruiters attend teacher job fairs in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. Teacher vacancies are posted on the LRSD website and the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators website and are advertised in various newspapers around the state.

Some teaching positions, such as those for art, math, science and special education, are difficult to fill because there are fewer qualified candidates compared to other teaching disciplines; thus, there are fewer applicants. The LRSD deals with this in several ways. First, the district maintains close communications with colleges and universities that graduate teachers in difficult-to-fill disciplines. Second, the district subscribes to the Arkansas Department of Education's Non-Traditional Licensure program where individuals with expertise and a college degree can be licensed to teach. The district fills many math and science vacancies through this program. Third, the district offers relocation assistance and a signing bonus to fully certified teachers in difficult-to-fill disciplines.

The district is equally committed to providing a continuing program of professional development to enable teachers to enhance their skills. The Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Professional Development state that a certified teacher must take 60 professional development hours. Six hours should include technology, two hours for parent involvement and two hours in Arkansas History if teachers provide instruction in that area. A three-hour graduate or undergraduate class from an accredited college or university may count as 15 hours of professional development. The LRSD provides additional days of quality training for teachers to select from during pre-school in-service training periods and on other designated dates throughout the year.

The net result of professional development training is to transfer the newly acquired skills to the classroom where improved instruction will increase student achievement. To ensure the transfer takes place, school principals must supervise teachers and monitor their classrooms. In addition, school principals must be certain their teachers are taking the appropriate training to bring about identified change needed in the classroom. School principals must make sure that each teacher's yearly Professional Growth Plan is aligned to the goals established in the Arkansas Consolidated School Improvement Plan (ACSIP).

The principals require professional development as well. They have been trained to use the Professional Teacher Appraisal System (PTAS) and to evaluate teachers in areas related to using data, following instructional best practices and employing effective leadership techniques. The PTAS evaluation system also holds the principal and teacher accountable for identifying areas of growth in professional development.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

The one clear abiding hallmark of student achievement is teacher quality. Teacher quality is the single most important school factor affecting student achievement. Well-prepared, highly qualified teachers are essential if we are to ensure that all students learn and achieve.

The most important issue in any school is ensuring that each student has a highly qualified, effective teacher who is enthusiastic about teaching and learning and can lead each student to succeed. There is a direct correlation between teacher quality and student achievement.

Effective teachers learn and grow as they expect their students to learn and grow. They serve as powerful examples of lifelong learners as they find ways to develop professionally. In 2004-2005, 99.6 percent of LRSD teachers were completely certified. Table 5A.1 shows that approximately three-quarters of the district's 2,059 teachers in 2004-2005 had attained a level of education beyond a Bachelor's degree.

| <b>Table 5A.1</b>  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| <b>Little Rock School District<br/>Teacher Credentials<br/>2004-2005</b> |                           |
| <b>Degree</b>  | <b>Number of Teachers</b> |
| BA   | 499                       |
| BA + 12  | 194                       |
| BA + 24  | 171                       |
| M/BA + 36  | 553                       |
| MA + 15  | 208                       |
| MA + 30  | 416                       |
| Doctorate  | 18                        |
|  |                           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>2059</b>               |

LRSD teachers participated in 4,268 workshops during 2004-2005 for a total 258,279 hours of professional development related to topics such as instructional strategies, assessment, content standards, technology, leadership and data analysis. That averages to 125.4 hours per teacher for the district's teachers, compared to the requirement for 60 hours by the Arkansas Department of Education. These hours were acquired during the school day, after school and during the summer months.

The district's effort to provide a quality teacher for every student has not gone unnoticed. A survey was conducted of a random sample of 559 parents of fifth-, seventh- and 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students to gauge how parents feel about the staff at their child's school. Parents were asked how they felt about the following statements:

***The staff at my child's school is qualified.***

Parents Say:

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Strongly Agree    | 26.6 % |
| Agree             | 46.5 % |
| No Opinion        | 19.1 % |
| Disagree          | 4.9 %  |
| Strongly Disagree | 2.9 %  |

***The staff at my child's school is well trained.***

Parents Say:

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Strongly Agree    | 23.9 % |
| Agree             | 43.9 % |
| No Opinion        | 23.4 % |
| Disagree          | 4.6 %  |
| Strongly Disagree | 4.2 %  |

In addition to the 559 parents, 2,312 students in the fifth, seventh and 10th grades were surveyed. The parents and students were asked the same question:

***The staff at my child's/my school fosters a positive and supportive learning environment.***

Parents Say:

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Strongly Agree    | 30.2 % |
| Agree             | 39.7 % |
| No Opinion        | 18.1 % |
| Disagree          | 7.8 %  |
| Strongly Disagree | 4.2 %  |

Students Say:

|                   |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| Strongly Agree    | 44.5 % |
| Agree             | 25.7 % |
| No Opinion        | 18.8 % |
| Disagree          | 6.0 %  |
| Strongly Disagree | 5.0 %  |

**Guiding Principle 6: Community Partnerships**

We are committed to building effective community partnerships.

**Goal 6A**

***Meaningful private and public relationships will be established and the community will feel valued and recognized for its contributions.***

**Goal 6B**

***Schools will establish partnerships to address local social and economic issues.***

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The district offers many volunteer opportunities for parents, members of the community and local businesses and organizations to become involved in the education of children. The first opportunity is provided by the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) at individual schools. The PTA provides a means for communication and volunteer support for the schools in the LRSD. The PTA Council, the district's organization of PTA school presidents and committee chairmen, supports the efforts of the schools and the district.

The Volunteers in Public Schools (ViPS) was founded in 1972 to provide assistance to LRSD teachers and other staff members by promoting school volunteerism. The organization serves as a link between the district and the community while providing patrons and citizens an opportunity to be significantly involved in the education of children. ViPS programs include tutoring, mentoring, Reading Buddies, Partners In Education, Project 67 Mentoring League and classroom speakers.

Partners in Education (PIE) brings businesses and schools together in support of education. All businesses, large and small, are invited to participate in this program. Business partners recruit employees as volunteers, make in-kind donations and contribute funds to help meet schools' needs.

## PERFORMANCE DATA

The Volunteers in Public Schools Office tracks volunteer hours and the total continues to increase.

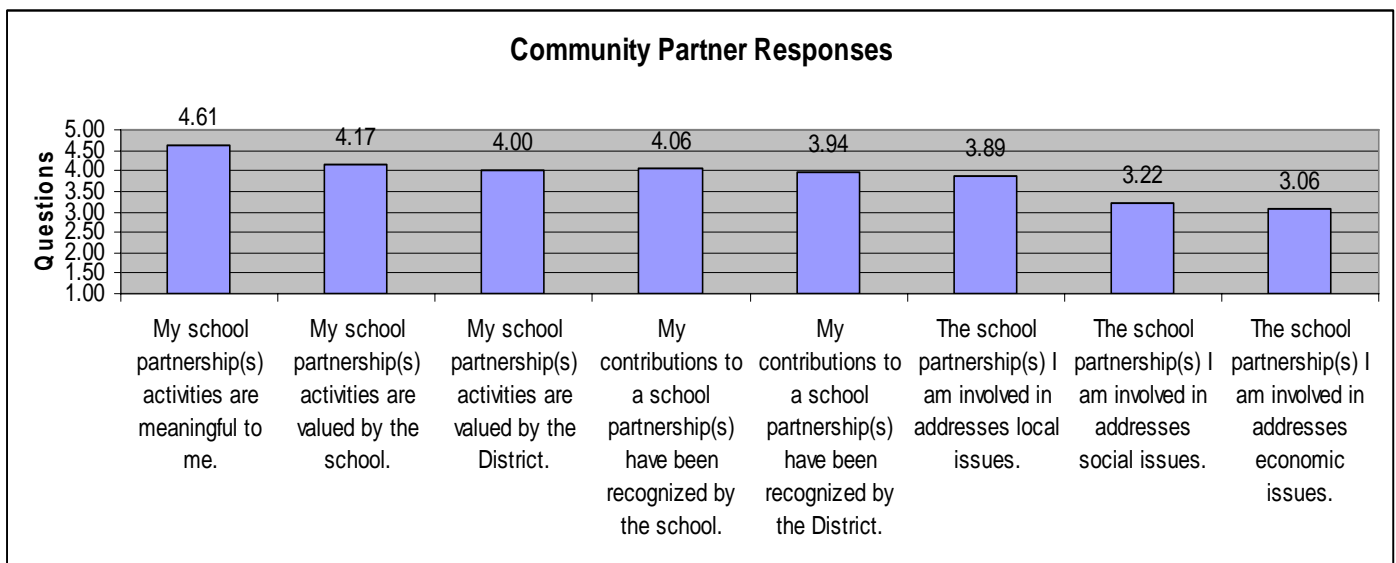
- During the 2005-2006 school year, more than 18,000 ViPS volunteers contributed 588,932 hours worth an estimated \$10,600,776.
- During the 2004-2005 school year, ViPS volunteers contributed 564,000 hours worth an estimated \$9,500,000.

PTA membership at individual schools generally varies depending on the PTA leadership and the time that parents have to invest in membership drives. PTA membership has been steady over the last two school years.

- During the 2005-2006 school year, the PTA reported 15,859 members.
- During the 2004-2005 school year, the PTA reported 15,850 members.

A total of 18 community partners, including PTA members, representatives of local charitable foundations and members of business organizations, were surveyed about their involvement with LRSD schools. Graph 6A.1 illustrates their responses: The higher the number, the more positive the response. The number at the top of each bar indicates the mean score for each statement.

**Graph 6A.1**



Volunteer assistance to schools and children comes in a variety of forms. The following vignettes are illustrative of the type of programs involving volunteers:

***Arkansas Association of Legal Assistants***

***Young Lawyers Section of the Arkansas Bar Association***

AR Association of Legal Assistants and the Young Lawyers Section of the AR Bar Association in partnership with Brady Elementary School: This partnership has fostered the involvement of approximately 40 volunteers who spend time tutoring students each week for the past seven years. During their time with the students, they listen to them read independently, reinforce reading activities at the suggestion of the teacher, engage in meaningful conversation with the students and serve as role models for the students. Through the tutoring program inroads are being made to overcome some of the reading deficiencies of many children.

***Fellowship Bible Church***

Fellowship Bible Church in partnership with Franklin Elementary: Volunteers from the church participate in STEP's Encourager Program. Approximately 75 volunteers tutor students each week. Fellowship also adopted Franklin during Sharefest and completely remodeled and decorated the teachers' lounge.

***Westwood Neighborhood Association***

Westwood Neighborhood Association in partnership with Western Hills Elementary: The neighborhood association holds its quarterly meetings in the school's cafeteria with refreshments provided by the school's PTA. At every meeting the principal is on the agenda to report on school news. The association donates money to support projects at the school, such as art supplies, metal picnic tables and a health room makeover. Association volunteers will do most of the work on the health room. Association members also come to the aid of the school anytime volunteers are needed for other projects, including a playground clean-up day, book fair and helping in the health room.

***Metropolitan National Bank***

Metropolitan National Bank in partnership with McClellan High School: Metropolitan employees worked with McClellan to open the McClellan Community Bank on March 24, 2005. Bank employees have held various in-services for students to provide training in all areas of banking – cashiers, auditors, managers and security. Students are able to access Metropolitan's cashier training program on-line, and the students are exposed to the most up-to-date technology and training. Additionally, Metropolitan provides guest speakers for banking and finance classes.