

Levy Oversight Committee

Tuesday, January 16, 2007

4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

City Hall 7th Floor

Norman B. Rice Conference Room

Meeting Purpose:

- Review and adopt Families and Education Levy (FEL) Annual Report for 2005-2006 School Year

4:00 pm	Welcome and Introductions	Tim Ceis, Deputy Mayor
4:05	Review of Agenda and Approval of Minutes from November 21, 2006	Tim Ceis, Deputy Mayor
4:10	Briefing on 2005-2006 Families and Education Levy Annual Report	Holly Miller Jessica de Barros
4:45	Discussion	All
5:30	Adjourn	

Next Meeting

February 13, 2007

Handouts

Minutes of 11/21/06
Annual Report Presentation
2005-2006 FEL Annual Report



DRAFT



City of Seattle

**FAMILIES AND EDUCATION LEVY
LEVY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**
Tuesday, November 21, 2006 • 4:00–5:30 p.m.
City Hall, Room 370

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cheryl Chow, David Della, Kris Hildebrandt, Antonio Hopson, John Pehrson, Debra Sullivan

OTHERS PRESENT: Lori Chisholm (Seattle Parks), Jessica de Barros (Office for Education), Jerry DeGriek (Human Services Department), Marc Frazer (Washington Learns), Donnie Grabowski (OFE), Patricia Lee (Council Central Staff), Patricia McInturff (HSD), Janet Preston (Seattle Public Schools), Linda Rose Slater (SPS), Sue Rust (OFE), Sid Sidorowicz (OFE), Joe Willhoft (OSPI), Billie Young (HSD)

David Della called the meeting to order and asked for introductions. The minutes from the October 17, 2006 meeting were approved.

Briefing on WASL Test

Dr. Joe Willhoft, OSPI Assistant Superintendent for Assessment and Research, reviewed a handout entitled “A Summary Report on WASL,” which showed statewide WASL score results and percentages of Washington students meeting the standard from the 2005-2006 School Year for reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The report highlighted how the achievement gap is closing in reading and writing but not in mathematics and showed the relationship between poverty and achievement among different student ethnic groups.

David Della noted that it appeared that the Middle School scores were declining in 7th grade. Dr. Willhoft mentioned that it was consistent that MS scores were lower than the 4th & 10th grades and that it was partly a function of how test pass/fail cut-offs were established – for example, two consecutive years may have been clustered on either side of the test cutoffs. Dr. Willhoft mentioned that a WASL standards panel is reviewing the drop in MS scores over time.

Patricia Lee asked whether OSPI reports on private students. No private students are counted.

John Pehrson noted that the WASL had caused a change in behaviors that showed improved results.

Jerry DeGriek asked what percentage of non-passing students did not take the test. Dr. Willhoft noted that in 10th grade, it was about 5% and in lower grades it was about 2%, noting that it was easier to do test make-ups in the lower grades.

David Della asked whether there was a more specific breakout by ethnicity and gender for science results. On the OSPI web site (www.k12.wa.us), principals can select similar schools or district characteristics and compare results.

Antonio Hopson asked whether OSPI could track which schools had science programs lower than the 5th grade. At certain schools, there are no science programs. The WASL science assessment is designed to measure scientific inquiry concepts as students mature. Antonio asked whether OSPI could tell whether students taking the science assessment were in science programs. There is nothing that tells OSPI what programs students are engaged in. School districts are more adept at tracking this.

Cheryl Chow asked whether there was an Asian/Pacific Islander breakout by subcategory for poverty/ achievement. Dr. Willhoft replied that the State does not track this but that school districts would.

Sid Sidorowicz asked if OSPI used the reduced lunch program as a proxy for low income. Dr. Willhoft mentioned that OSPI receives Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) information provided by the State. If on welfare, students would be identified as low income regardless of whether they were enrolled in the free/reduced lunch program. In addition, the National Association of Educational Progress (NAEP) has a tool provided by the census to link addresses with census information that allows access to poverty, parent educational levels, and social indicators.

Debra Sullivan mentioned that it was helpful to see statewide information, noting that it would be useful to have similar slides for the Seattle Public Schools for the entire district, and a comparison high vs. low performing schools to see if there is a difference. It would also be useful to compare SPS to statewide schools. Dr. Willhoft replied that he would mention this to SPS staff person Nancy Steers to see if she could provide the same information for SPS.

Janet Preston asked how many high school dropouts account for the increase in passage results from middle school to high school. Dr. Willhoft replied that the Washington Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) is currently doing an analysis on this.

Patricia Lee asked if anyone was looking at the success stories of students who beat the odds. Dr. Willhoft replied that OSPI was looking at successful schools and that the UW Sociology Department was also doing a longitudinal analysis to determine the effect of I-200 on minority students attending college, and the effect that supportive adults have in determining a student's likelihood of attending college.

John Pehrson mentioned that the data are encouraging in reading/writing but that he hasn't seen strong LOC emphasis on math/science and that the LOC should spend time to see if the FEL could help in this area.

Cheryl Chow handed out an SPS 2006 WASL Results document showing 2006 results compared to 2005 results. She noted that SPS was generally at or above the state levels.

Kris Hildebrandt asked when we would expect to achieve equality on the minority achievement gap. Cheryl Chow mentioned that additional funding would be required. Dr. Willhoft mentioned that he expected to see minority youth close the gap more quickly in reading/writing as more white students were now meeting the standard. In math/science, both white and minority students are improving and so a gap continues to exist. As more students meet the standard in a particular subject, resources can be redirected to addressing other needs.

Jerry DeGriek asked what changes the State/OSPI had been thinking about making in math. Dr. Willhoft mentioned that 1) the National Council of Teacher in Math issued Focal Points to help understand critical math issues; 2) the Presidential National Council was expected to issue a report on 12/15/06 regarding math instruction, 3) that OSPI wanted to seek approval from the Legislature to fund and develop 2-3 math curricula that would align with school curricula and 4) that OSPI would redesign the WASL with a new testing contract in 2008.

Washington Learns Presentation

Marc Frazer from the Washington Roundtable gave an update on Washington Learns from a handout entitled "Washington Learns" and noted that a final report had been issued on November 13. The presentation focused on an overview of Washington Learns, Washington's changing economic landscape, the percentage of the population earning higher degrees, and recommendations for succeeding in a global economy.

Kris Hildebrandt asked how other states more successful than Washington (in preschool enrollment, expenditures per K-12 student, student-teacher ratios, teacher salaries, and percentage of students taking AP exams in high school) managed to fund education. Funding differs by state and provides different opportunities.

Debra Sullivan asked for an electronic copy of the Washington Learns PowerPoint slides. (These were subsequently e-mailed to the LOC on 11/22/06.)

John Pehrson asked whether the FEL Step Ahead was part of the State's Thrive by Five effort. Marc Frazer mentioned that there was a Business Partnership for Early Learning in Seattle. Antonio Hopson asked if Washington Learns had revenue streams with SPS so there would be more flexibility to implement the things that work. Marc Frazer noted that streams of revenue have been decentralized. Antonio noted that he would not like to see funding spent twice for the same purpose.

Following this discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

**City of Seattle Families & Education Levy
Annual Report on 2005-06 School Year
January 2007**

Executive Summary

This report describes the first-year outcomes for the 2004 City of Seattle Families and Education Levy. As part of the Levy passed by Seattle voters in 2004, the City established three overarching outcomes for the Levy, directly tied to success in school: school readiness; academic achievement; and dropout prevention. The City made a strong commitment in the new Levy to set rigorous targets, report annually on outcomes and continuously use data to make course-corrections when necessary. This document marks the first Annual Report, showing what the Levy achieved compared to what the City intended for it to achieve.

In its first year, the Levy helped 1,555 Seattle children and youth meet the outcomes of kindergarten readiness, academic achievement or not dropping out of school. Through the Levy's investments in early learning, 77 children entered kindergarten ready to succeed. Through Family Involvement, Family Support, Community Learning Centers, Middle School Support, Support for High-Risk Youth, and Student Health, 1,159 students achieved academically. As a result of the Levy's high-risk youth dropout prevention program, 319 students who would have dropped out, stayed in school.

In addition to the academic outcomes, more than 4,900 middle and high school students accessed the Levy's School Based Health Centers, 2,360 of whom received assistance managing chronic health conditions such as asthma or depression. An additional 4,918 children were immunized against disease.

This program management report identifies lessons the City has learned from the first year of implementation of the new, outcomes-based 2004 Levy, and recommends areas for improvement. Although the report shows data from only the first year of implementation of the new Levy, the data reveal concerns concerning program performance in some areas. The Office for Education believes the City must address these concerns immediately in order for the Levy to maximize its impact on student academic outcomes. In addition, the report concludes the performance targets set in the first year of the Levy were far too low and should be increased dramatically. The report also notes some students served in the first year were not those in the most need of academic help, and recommends more specifically identifying and serving students who need academic help.

In order to track the Levy's impact on the achievement gap, outcomes in this report are disaggregated by race, income level and English language ability. This allows the City to determine whether its investments are reducing achievement gaps between groups of students by race, income level and language ability. Unfortunately, the first year of Levy data show no demonstrable impact on the achievement gap – the gap persists by students' race, income level and English language proficiency.

Another lesson learned from the data in this report is the need for Levy programs to determine up-front how often and for how long students should participate in programs, and how participation impacts academic outcomes.

Finally, based on the data, this report strongly recommends the City examine whether the Levy is investing in the most effective programs to achieve the desired results for students.

The Office for Education will present the 2005-06 Annual Report to the Levy Oversight Committee (LOC) in January 2007. The report will guide the City and LOC in determining the areas in which to make course-corrections in 2007-08. In spring 2007, the Office for Education will write a Mid-Year Report on first semester indicators from the 2006-07 school year. The Mid-Year Report will recommend specific course-corrections based on the Annual Report and Mid-Year Report data.

Introduction & Background on FEL

This is the first Annual Report for the 2004 City of Seattle Families and Education Levy (FEL). In 2004, Seattle voters overwhelmingly approved a \$117 million, seven-year property tax levy to improve academic achievement and reduce the achievement gap for all Seattle students. In order to measure the Levy's impact on achievement, the City committed to tracking indicators of student progress and educational outcomes.

Levy Investments

The FEL invests in Seattle students, pre-kindergarten through high school. Levy programs help students outside of the classroom, yet are designed to impact academic achievement. Investments are in seven areas: Early Learning; Family Support and Family & Community Involvement; Out-of-School Time for Elementary Students; Middle School Programs; Support for High-Risk Youth; Student Health; and School Crossing Guards. The FEL is in effect from September 2005 through August 2012.

Levy Budget

FEL 2005 actual expenditures and 2006 budget levels by program are noted below. Expenditures in all programs were less than budgeted, primarily due to program startup delays and unspent funds for school-year contracts with agencies that cross calendar years. The 2006 level is higher than 2005 since the new FEL began in September 2005 (i.e., 2005 represents only four months of funding). Levy funds are appropriated based on the City’s calendar fiscal year although the School District’s fiscal year runs from September through August; the 2006 year shown in this report represents funding for the 2006 portions of both the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years.

Families & Education Levy 2005 Expenditures (\$000s) as of Year-end 2005 and 2006 Adopted Budget			
Program	2005 Revised Budget	2005 Expenditures as of 12/31/05	2006 Adopted
Early Learning	\$ 1,240,983	\$752,870	\$ 2,587,603
Family Support & Family Involvement	\$ 929,491	\$834,083	\$ 2,853,765
Support for High Risk Youth	\$ 400,108	\$389,319	\$ 1,226,297
Out of School Time & Middle School Support*	\$ 1,076,371	\$762,561	\$ 3,092,810
Student Health	\$ 1,230,891	\$1,006,118	\$ 3,779,137
Crossing Guards	\$ 513,397	\$430,348	\$ 520,165
Admin & Eval	\$ 230,774	\$147,444	\$ 705,541
Total	\$ 5,622,015	\$ 4,322,743	\$ 14,765,318
*Out of School Time & Middle School Support includes Elementary Community Learning Centers			

Changed Direction: Accountability for Academic Achievement

The City, School District and community-based organizations began implementing FEL programs in September 2005. The FEL represents a change in direction for City investments in children and youth toward academic achievement. The Levy invests in students who are the most academically challenged, with the goal of directly improving their achievement in school.

The City has implemented new accountability measures to track the Levy’s impact on Seattle students. Part of the new accountability system is a commitment to analyze program data, seek to understand the reasons students are succeeding or failing, and make course corrections if students are not achieving.

In order to remain accountable to helping students achieve academically, the City implemented a new, performance-based pay structure with agencies implementing FEL programs. When the City contracts with agencies to administer FEL programs, it is agreed that a certain percentage of the contract will be contingent on the agency meeting specific academic targets for students. These targets are described in the next section.

Levy Outcomes & Targets

In developing the policy framework for the 2004 FEL, the Levy Oversight Committee (LOC) identified three overarching outcomes:

- **School Readiness** (measured by the DIAL-3 kindergarten readiness assessment and the Developmental Reading Assessment [DRA]);
- **Academic Achievement** (measured by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning [WASL] and the DRA); and
- **Reduced Dropout Rate/Increased Graduation Rate** (measured by the annual dropout rate and the cohort graduation rate)

All FEL programs contribute to at least one of the above outcomes.¹ For the first time, in 2005-06 the City set numeric targets for each investment related to the outcomes listed above. Targets represent a goal for the number of students in each program who will be ready for kindergarten, achieve academically, stay in school or graduate.

The FEL uses the Seattle Public Schools and State of Washington's measure for academic achievement, the WASL. In 2005-06, meeting WASL targets for the FEL meant that students would need to meet the standard in **reading and math**. Beginning in the 2006-07 school year, meeting WASL targets for the FEL will mean students need to meet the standard in **reading, math and writing** for the grade levels where these assessments are administered. Since this Annual Report addresses the 2005-06 school year, it will analyze reading and math scores.

The 2005 FEL Implementation Plan set targets for all seven years of the Levy, with targets increasing each year. In the spring of 2006, the LOC specified that all targets shall represent additional students meeting academic standards, adding to the base of students who already achieved before participating in the Levy. The additional students who achieve academically after participating in the Levy are the "value added." In the 2005-06 school year, the Levy did not specify that targets were value-added. While this report estimates the value added at the elementary and middle school levels, programs were not required to meet "value-added" outcomes in 2005-06.

Levy Indicators of Progress

In addition to the targets for school readiness, academic achievement and dropout prevention, each program set indicators of progress toward targets. Examples of indicators include:

- Students improving attendance
- Reductions in student disciplinary actions
- Three- and four-year-olds who meet curriculum-embedded developmental standards
- Families attending parent/teacher conferences and other school events

¹ Crossing Guards do not have an academic target.

This report will show outcome and some indicator data for students who participated in Levy programs in 2005-06. First-semester indicator data was included in the 2005-06 Mid-Year Report issued in July 2006. The LOC used the indicator data to recommend and approve course corrections and program changes for Levy investments, and to set targets for the 2006-07 school year. The 2006-07 targets set by the LOC represented modest increases from the first year; the City expects to set much higher targets in future years after analyzing FEL outcome data included in this report and first-semester indicators in 2006-07.

City-Schools Partnership

The City and Seattle Public Schools mutually believe it is not possible to achieve the outcomes above, or to reduce the achievement gap with respect to the Levy outcomes, without a strong partnership. In 2005, the City and School District created a formal Partnership Agreement outlining the ways in which each partner will contribute to the best outcomes for children and youth in Seattle. The Partnership Agreement is available on the OFE web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/education/edlevy.htm>. The City and Seattle Public Schools have also created a data sharing agreement to allow the City to track Levy outcomes. Levy programs benefit from the District's Community Alignment Initiative, which provides free rent in school buildings for Levy programs.

How the City Will Use This Report

The City of Seattle Office for Education (OFE) will present this report to the LOC in January 2007. The LOC will use this information to begin discussions about course-corrections and program changes for the 2007-08 school year. Course-corrections will be finalized in spring 2007 after presentation of the 2006-07 Mid-Year Report showing first-semester indicator data.

The next section of this report will describe the overall impacts of the FEL. In other words, what did the Levy achieve for children in preschool, elementary, middle and high school? After describing the aggregate outcomes, this report will describe the first-year outcomes and key indicators of progress for each investment area. Data for all indicators of progress are included in Appendix A.

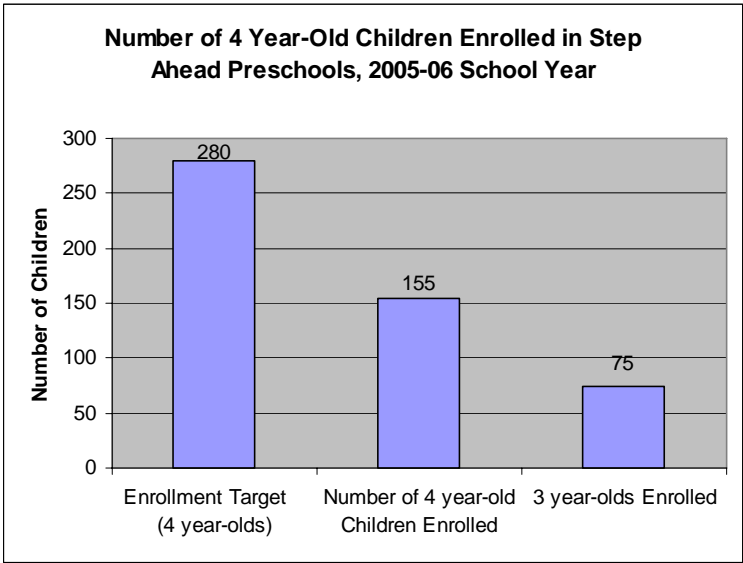
Aggregate Outcomes

School Readiness

What Progress Did the Levy Make In Early Learning?

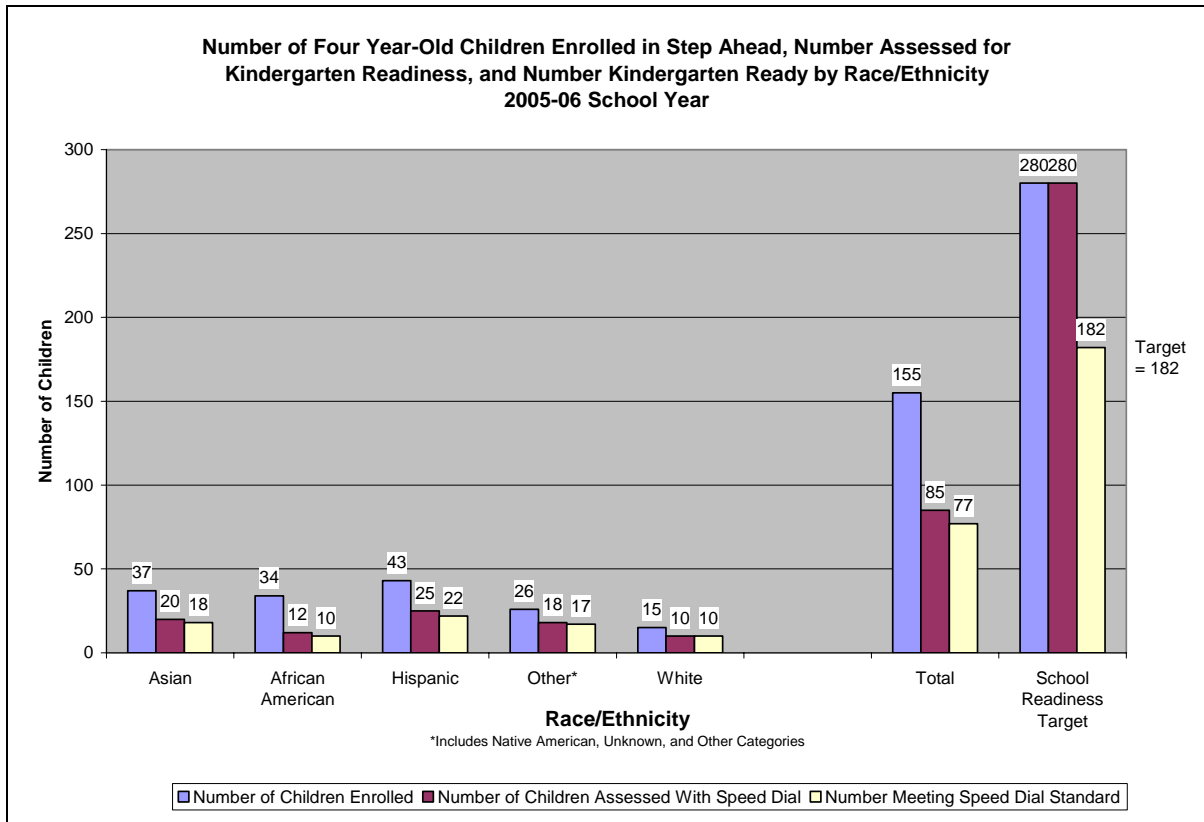
The City established five components of a school readiness system that serve as the foundation for achieving Levy outcomes over the next six years: Step Ahead preschools, a professional development teacher training system, services to transition children from preschool to kindergarten, a compensation program for early learning teachers and the Parent-Child Home Program to provide home visits to families with two and three year-old children.

The Levy set a goal of enrolling 280 four year-olds in preschool and helping 182 (65 percent) of those children be ready for kindergarten as measured by the DIAL-3 assessment.² Here is what the Levy accomplished in early learning:



The Levy’s 15 new classrooms were unable to fully recruit 280 four year-old children. A decision was made mid-year to allow 75 three year-old children to be enrolled on a one-time basis. The 75 three year-old children were enrolled in addition to the 155 four year-old children shown in the chart above.

² The Levy used the Speed DIAL kindergarten readiness assessment in 2005-06 due to logistical challenges administering the DIAL-3 in Seattle Public Schools kindergarten classrooms. The Speed DIAL is a shorter version of the DIAL-3 kindergarten readiness assessment.



As the chart above shows, the Levy enrolled 155 four year-olds in preschool³, fewer than the target of 280. There were 23 children identified as “unknown.”⁴ Out of the 155 enrolled, 85 were assessed for kindergarten readiness, and 77 children (50 percent of those enrolled, and 91 percent of those assessed) were kindergarten-ready at the end of the preschool year. This is lower than the target of 182 (65 percent of children enrolled).

Since only 85 out of 155 Step Ahead children (54 percent) were assessed for kindergarten readiness, the City is limited in drawing major conclusions about kindergarten readiness based on the Speed DIAL data. The children who were assessed do not comprise a representative sample of all Step Ahead children enrolled. That said, the data available show a gap between the percentages of white children and children of color who met the standard. While 67 percent of white children enrolled (or 100 percent of those assessed), met the standard, only 29 percent of African American children enrolled (or 83 percent of those assessed) met the standard. Again, these results should be considered with caution due to the low numbers of children assessed for kindergarten readiness.

³ In addition to the 155 4 year-olds enrolled in preschool, the Levy enrolled 75 additional children who were 4 years old by August 31, 2006.

⁴ At enrollment, a parent has the option of choosing to declare the ethnicity of their child or not. The unknown category reflects this choice. Additionally, many people who are multi-ethnic do not identify with only one category and choose not to declare it.

Professional Development

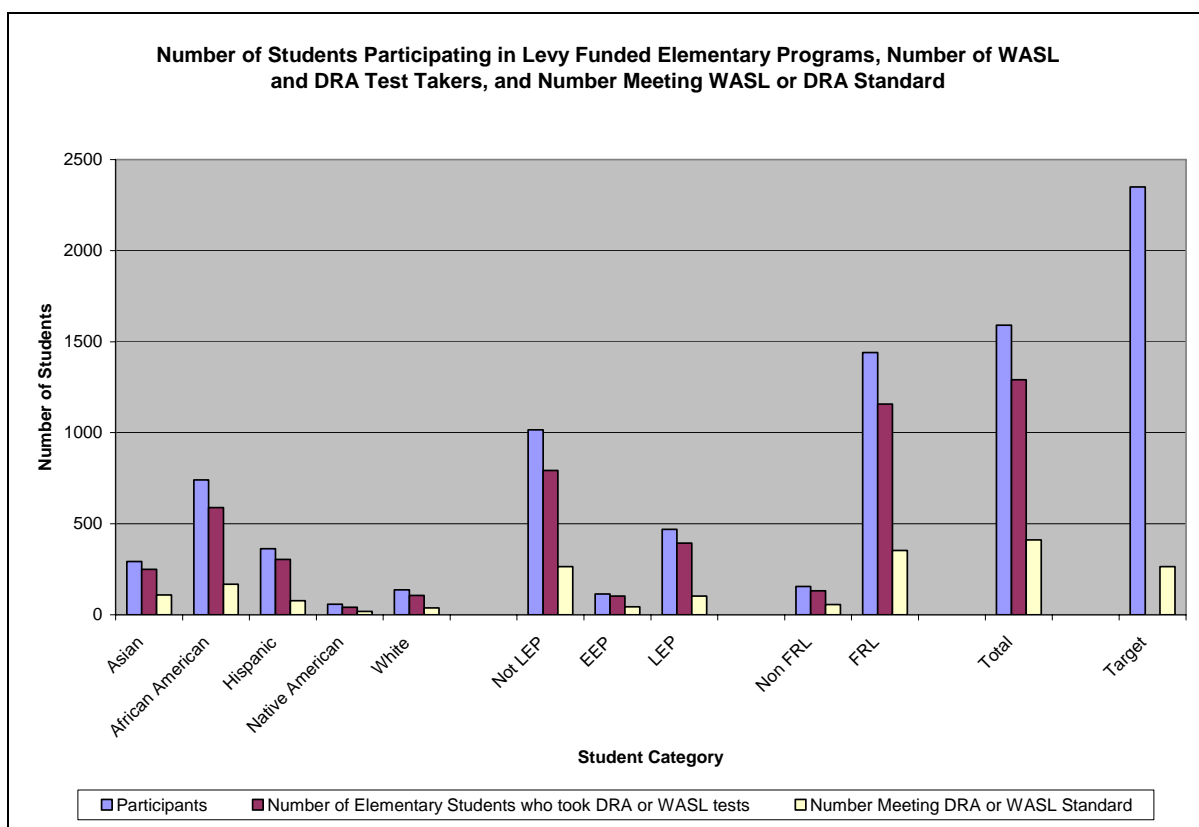
Teachers in the 15 Step Ahead preschool classrooms received two days of culturally-relevant instruction in early childhood education, including child development and curriculum training. They also received nine and one-half days of on-site coaching. Teachers in the 15 birth-to-three classrooms received seven credits in early childhood education and seven hours of on-site coaching. The City Human Services Department is unable to provide outcome data at this time for two and three year-old children who benefited from teacher professional development because the assessment tool was not finalized by Teaching Strategies Inc. in time to assess the children. The assessment tool for two and three year-old children is under development; the Human Services Department has a plan to administer a different assessment if the original assessment is still not finalized.

What Value Did the Levy Add to Kindergarten Readiness?

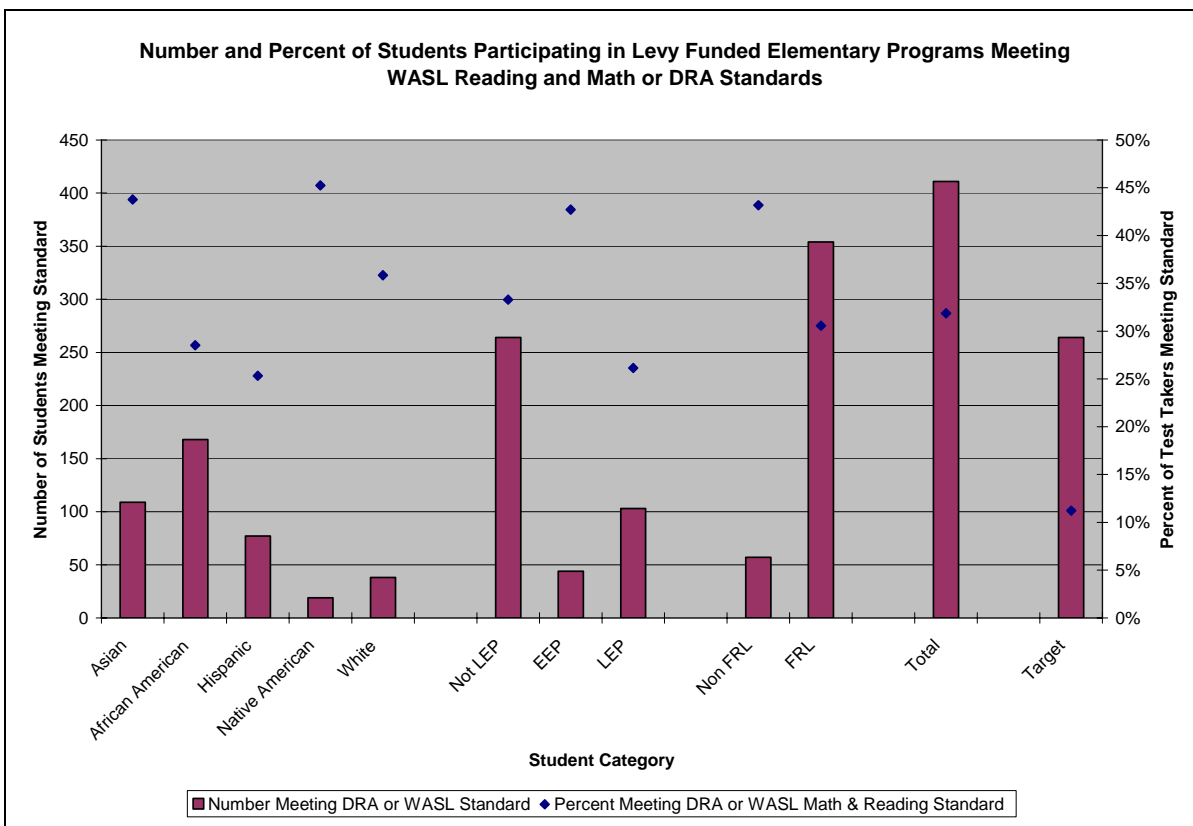
There is no baseline for kindergarten readiness in Seattle Public Schools. Since the Levy enrolled four year-old children representing populations that are more challenged in school, the Levy assumes none of the children served by Early Learning Networks would have been ready for kindergarten without the preschool program. Therefore, the Levy helped 77 additional children in Seattle enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

Academic Achievement & Reduction of the Achievement Gap – Elementary School
What Progress Did the Levy Make in Academic Achievement and Reduction of the Achievement Gap for Elementary School Students?

The Levy set a goal of helping elementary students achieve academically by meeting the reading and math WASL or DRA standards for their grade level. The Levy invested in three elementary school programs to help children achieve: Elementary School Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in four schools; Family Support Workers (FSWs) in elementary and K-8 schools; and Family & Community Partnerships (FCP) in ten elementary schools. The Levy set a goal to enroll a total of 2,350 elementary school students in these three programs combined⁵, and to help 264 (11 percent) of those students achieve academically. Here is what the Levy accomplished for elementary school students:



⁵ This combined target includes only Family Support Worker focus families. The total number of students served by Family Support Workers in 2005-06 was 4,382.

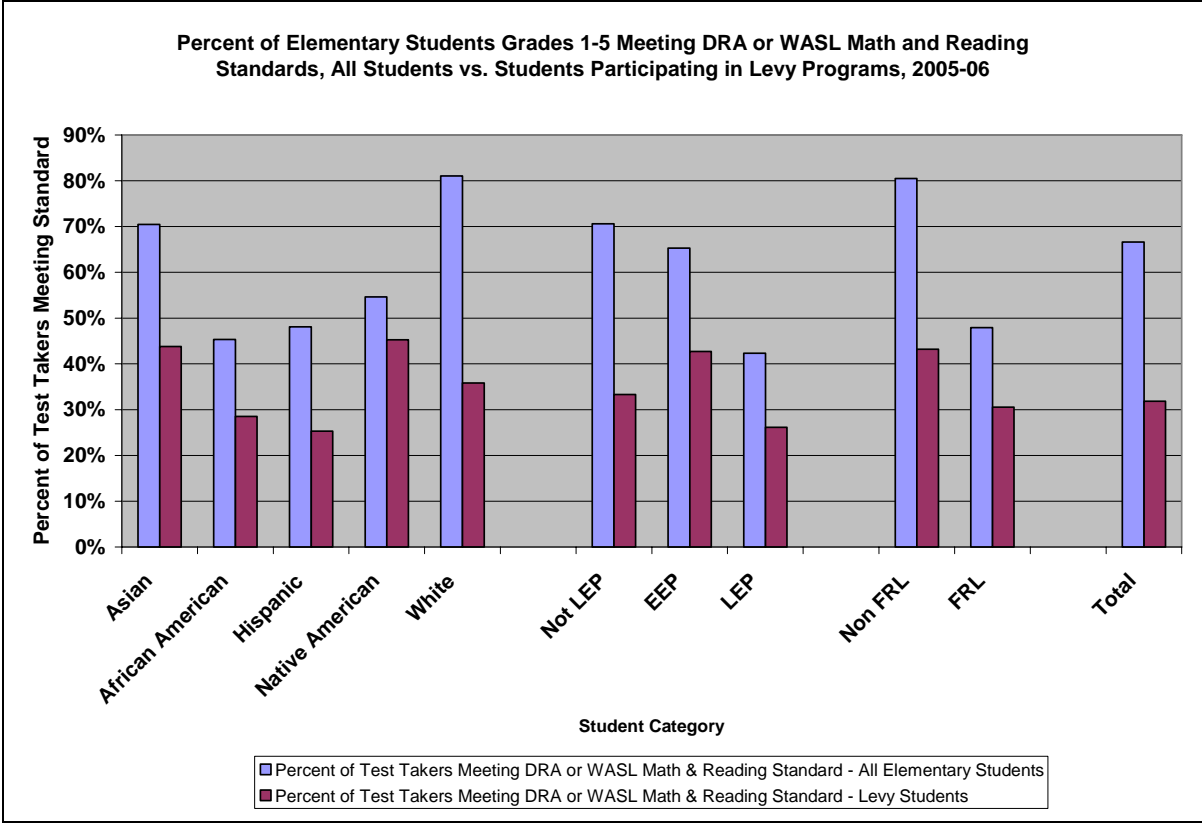


The Levy enrolled 1,591 students in elementary school programs in 2005-06. This is lower than the Levy’s enrollment goal, yet the number of students who achieved academically (411, or 26 percent of students assessed) far exceeded the target of 264 (11 percent). Out of the 1,591 elementary school students who participated in Levy programs, 1,290 took the reading and math WASL, and 411 achieved academically by meeting the standards.

As the first chart shows, not all elementary school students who participated in Levy programs took the DRA or WASL. Some students took only one WASL subject test (e.g., reading but not math or writing) or were absent the day of the test. The percentages of students who met the standards shown in the second chart reflect percentages of all students who participated in elementary Levy programs.

The second chart shows the number and percentage of students who achieved academically by student category. The achievement gap appears here, with the percentage of white, Asian and Native American students meeting standards far exceeding the percentages of African American and Hispanic students meeting standards. There is also an achievement gap based on English language proficiency and income, as measured by enrollment in Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL).

The following chart compares the percentage of all SPS elementary school students who met either the DRA or WASL math and reading standards to the percentage of all Levy elementary school students who met the standards. As the chart shows, the percentages are greater for SPS students than Levy students. This suggests the Levy is serving students who are further behind academically and that the Levy has more work to do to bring these students up to the same achievement levels as their peers.



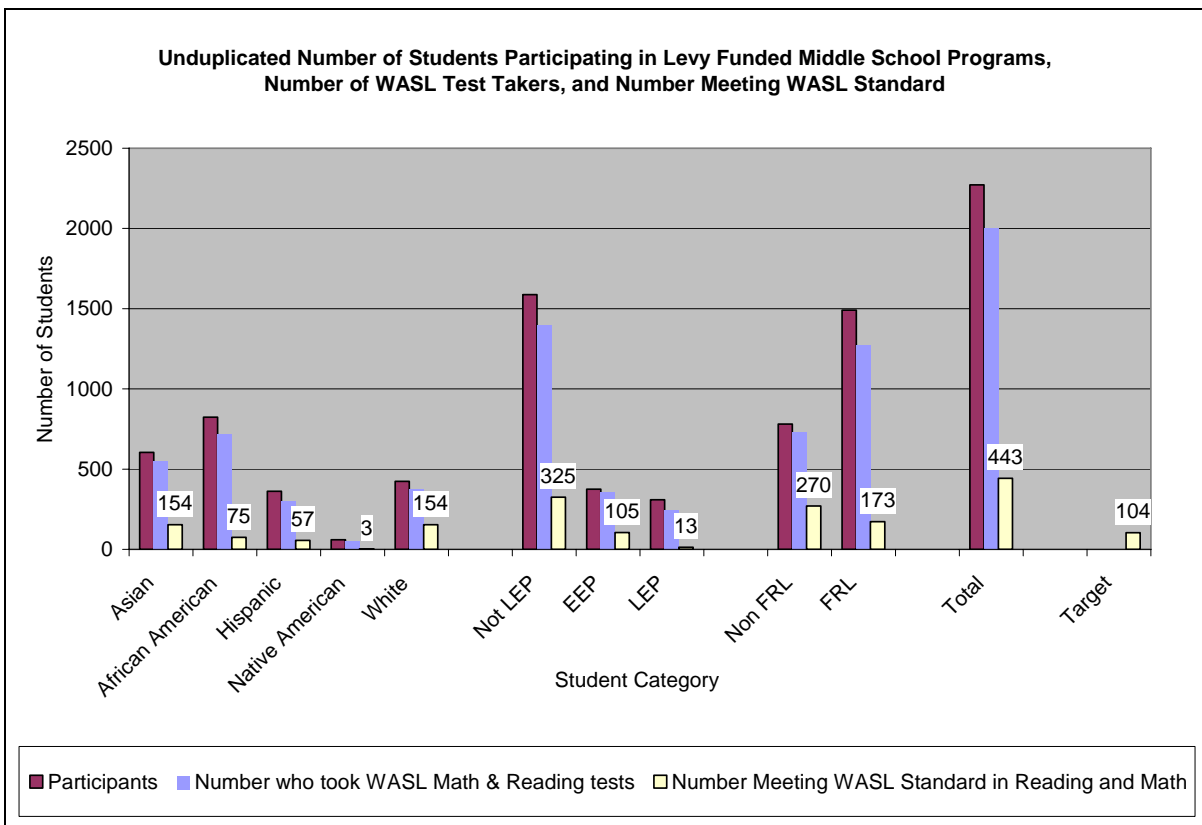
What Value Did the Levy Add to Academic Achievement and Reduction of the Achievement Gap for Elementary School Students?

There is scant baseline data for elementary school students in all grades, since the School District and state did not fully implement assessments in all grades until the 2005-06 school year. Since the Levy does not have individual student assessment data for all students in 2004-05, it is difficult to determine how many students achieved academically for the first time in 2005-06. However, the data available show approximately seven percent of all elementary Levy students who met the reading and math WASL standards in 2005-06, did not meet the standards the previous year. Therefore, the City can extrapolate from that sample that the Levy helped an additional seven percent of Levy-served elementary school students achieve academically.

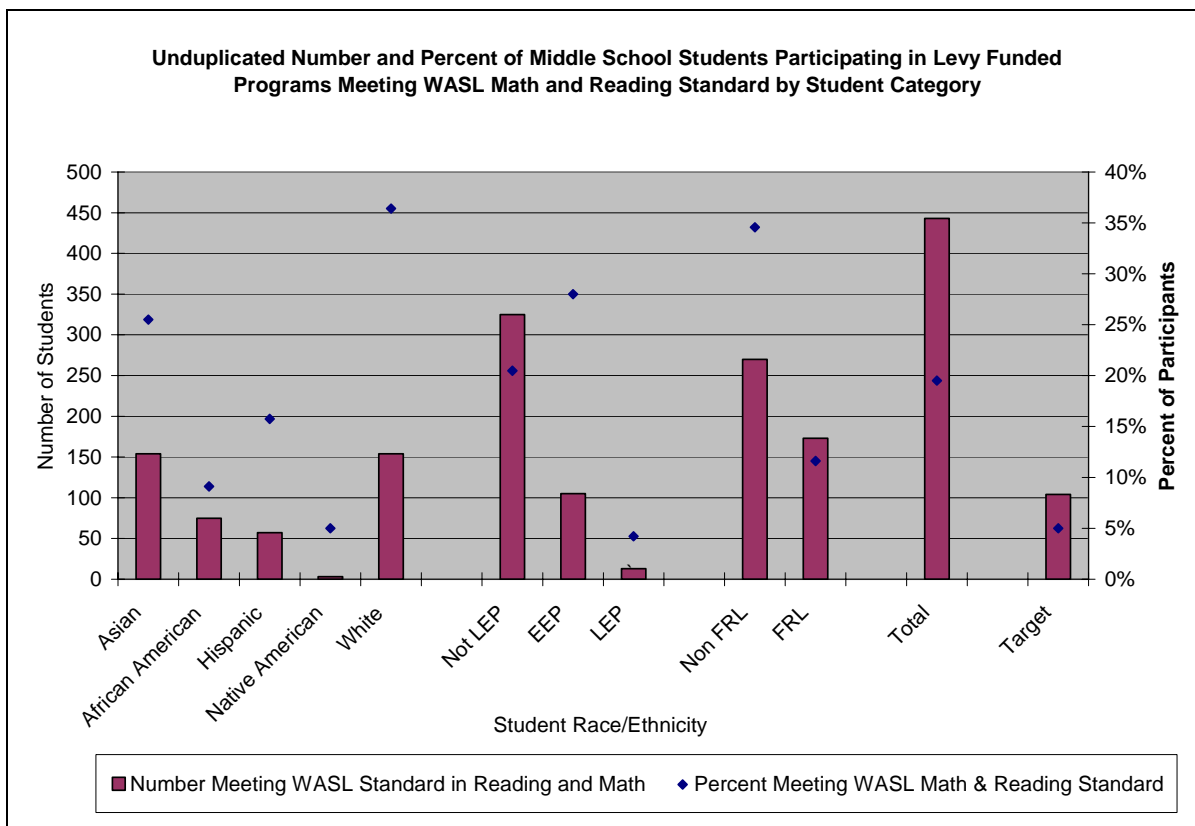
Academic Achievement & Reduction of the Achievement Gap – Middle School

What Progress Did the Levy Make in Academic Achievement and Reduction of the Achievement Gap for Middle School Students?

The Levy set a goal of helping middle school students achieve academically by meeting the reading and math WASL standards for their grade level. The Levy invested in four programs to help students achieve: Middle School Support Program in all middle schools, CLCs in eight middle schools, School Based Health Centers in four middle schools and Support for High-Risk Youth in all middle schools.⁶ The Levy set different enrollment and academic achievement targets for each program (described later in this report), assuming some students would participate in more than one program. The aggregate target for all Levy middle school programs was to help 104 students (5 percent of those who participated) to achieve academically. Here is what the Levy accomplished for middle school students:



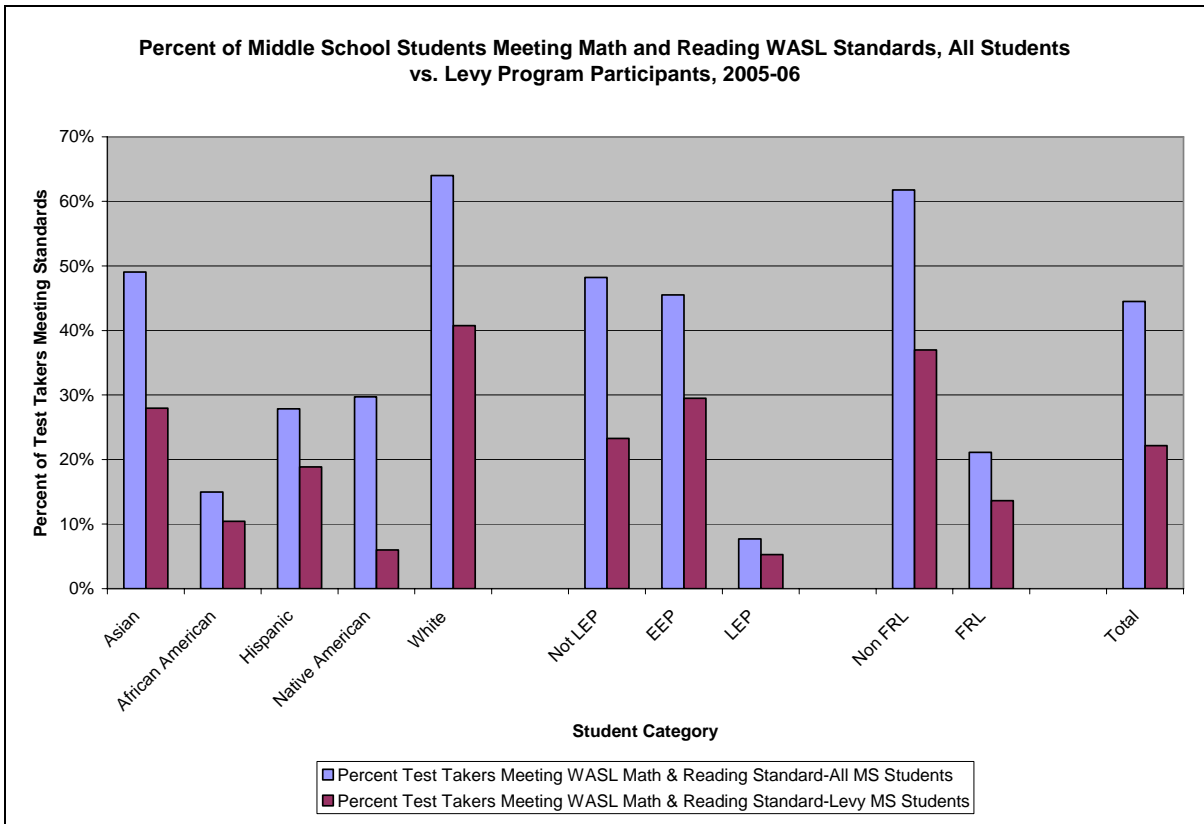
⁶ The Levy also invests in the After-School Activities Program and Middle School Athletics, but the City did not set academic targets for these programs.



As the first chart shows, 2,272 middle school students participated in Levy programs. It is clear Levy programs enrolled middle school students who were low-income, as well as high numbers of African American and Asian students. Like the elementary school chart showed, not all FEL middle school students took the reading and math WASL, for a variety of reasons. Out of all 2,272 FEL middle school students, 2,000 took the reading and math WASL, and 443 met both WASL standards.

The second chart shows the number and percent of students in each category who met the WASL reading and math standards. This chart makes clear two points. First, achievement rates were low across the board, with 36 percent being the highest achievement rate out of any student group. Second, the outcomes differ widely by race, income and English language ability. While 36 percent of white students achieved academically, only five percent of Native American students, nine percent of African American students, 16 percent of Hispanic students and 25 percent of Asian students met the standards. The gap was evident by language, as well – while 28 percent of EEP students met the standards, only four percent of LEP students achieved. Finally, 35 percent of students who were not low-income achieved, while only 12 percent of low-income students achieved.

The following chart compares the percentage of all SPS middle school students who met the WASL math and reading standards with the percentage of all Levy middle school students who met the standards. The percentages were lower for Levy students, suggesting the Levy is serving students who are further behind in school, but that the Levy has more work to do to bring students up to the same achievement level as their peers.



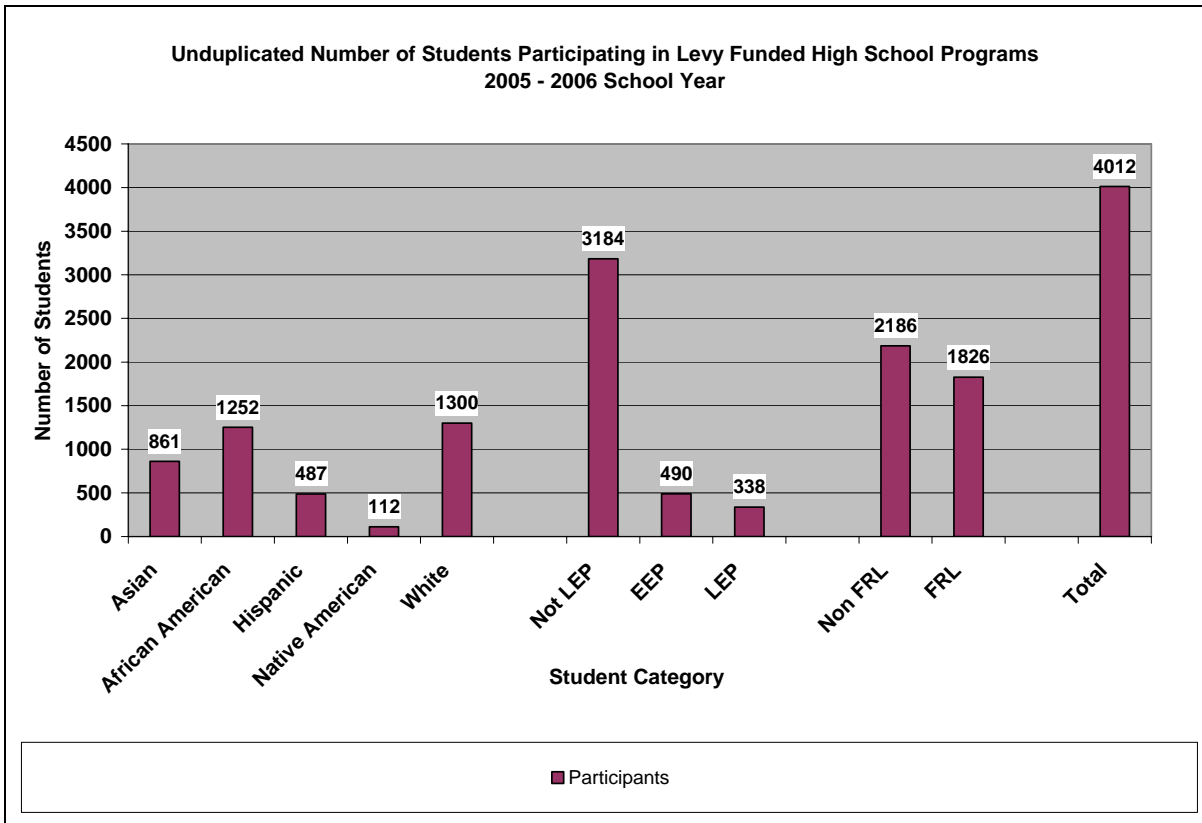
What Value Did the Levy Add to Academic Achievement and Reduction of the Achievement Gap for Middle School Students?

There is scant baseline data for middle school students, since the School District and state did not fully implement assessments in all grades until 2005-06. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how many students achieved academically for the first time in 2005-06. However, the data available show approximately five percent of middle school students served by the Levy who met the reading and math WASL standards in 2005-06 did not meet the standards in 2004-05. Therefore, the City can extrapolate that the Levy helped an additional five percent of Levy-served middle school students to achieve academically.

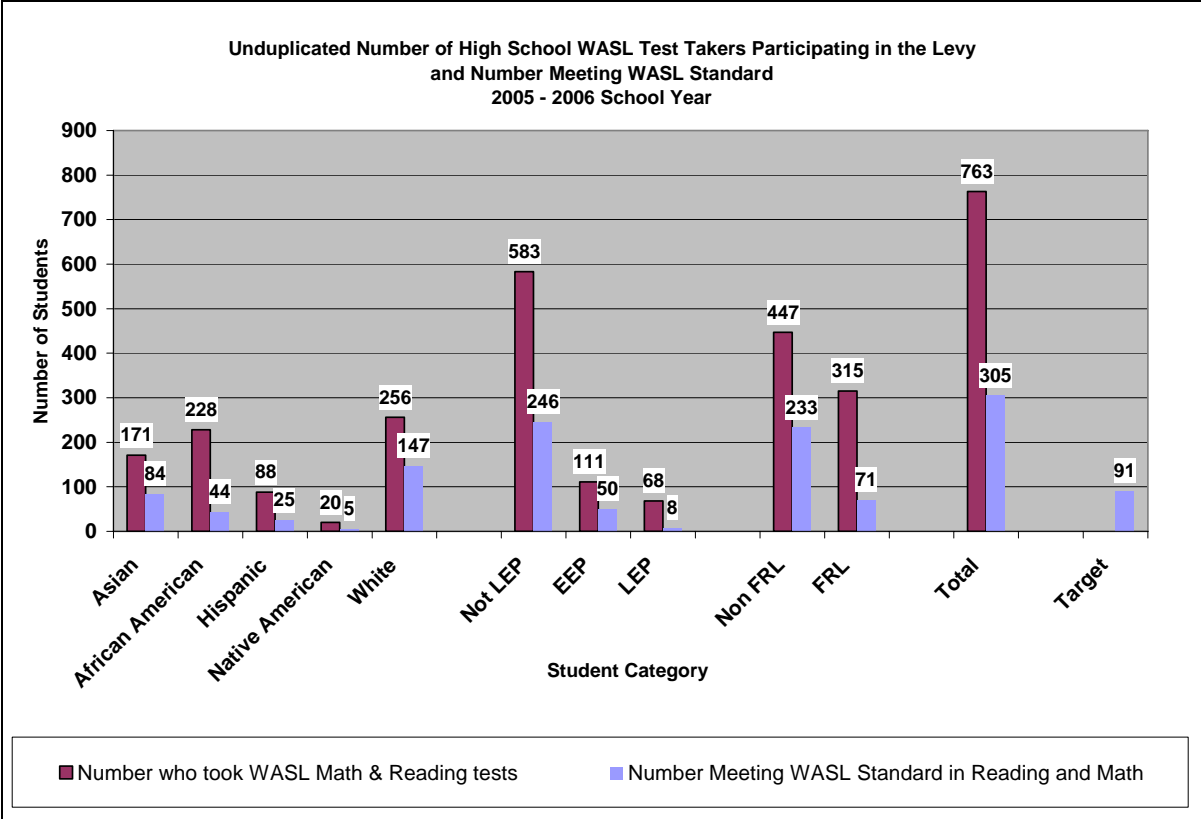
Academic Achievement & Reduction of the Achievement Gap – High School

What Progress Did the Levy Make in Academic Achievement and Reduction of the Achievement Gap for High School Students?

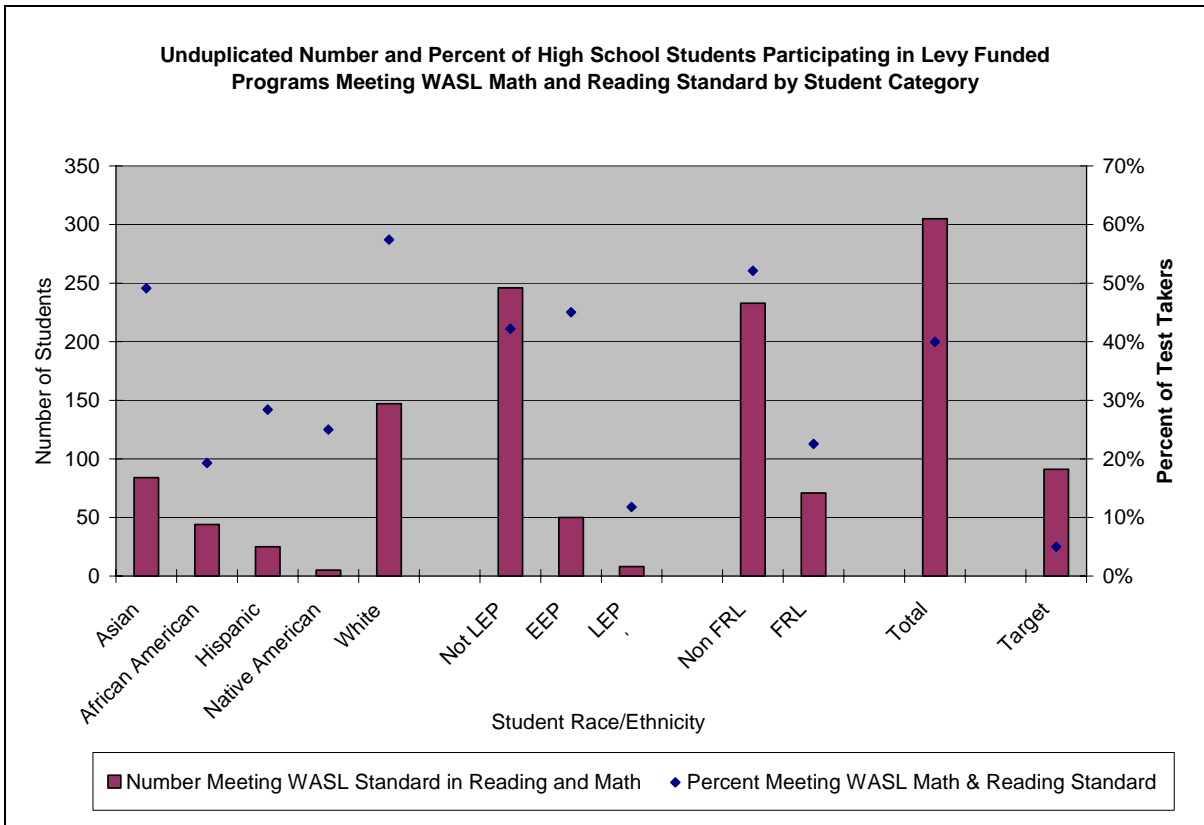
The Levy enrolled 4,012 students in high school programs, including Support for High-Risk Youth and Student Health. The Levy enrolled greater numbers of white and African American high school students than high school students representing other groups, and greater numbers of English proficient students than LEP students. There were also slightly more students participating who were not low-income than who were low-income.⁷



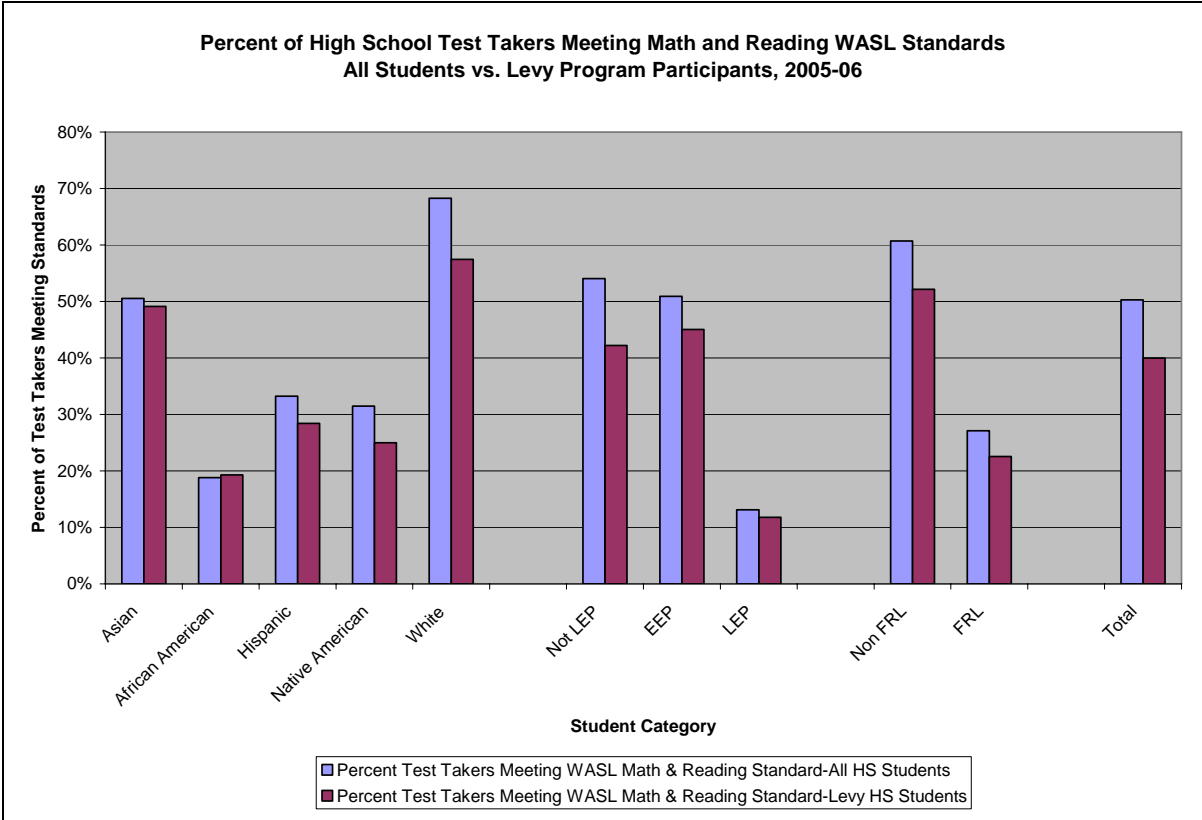
⁷ Typically, a smaller percentage of older eligible students enroll in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program than younger students. Therefore, these results may not reflect the actual participation of low-income students.



Since the WASL is only offered in 10th grade at the high school level, there was a large difference between the number of high school Levy participants and high school Levy test-takers. Out of all 4,012 high school students participating in Levy programs, 763 took the reading and math WASL, and 305 met the target. As the chart below shows, this means 40 percent of all test-takers achieved academically. This is higher than the combined target of five percent of participants achieving academically. The rates of achievement were higher for white students (57 percent), students who were not low-income (52 percent), Asian students (45 percent) and non-LEP (42 percent). Achievement rates were lowest for LEP (12 percent) and African American (19 percent) students, although all student groups surpassed the combined high school target.



The following chart compares the percentage of all SPS high school test takers who met the WASL math and reading standards to the percentage of all Levy high school test takers who met the standards. As the chart shows, for most student categories, greater percentages of SPS students than Levy students met the standards. The exception was for African American students. A slightly greater percentage of African American Levy students than SPS students met the standards, although both percentages (approximately 19 percent) were lower than for any other student race group. The gaps between the percentages of high school SPS and Levy students were smaller than the respective gaps for middle school students shown on page 14.



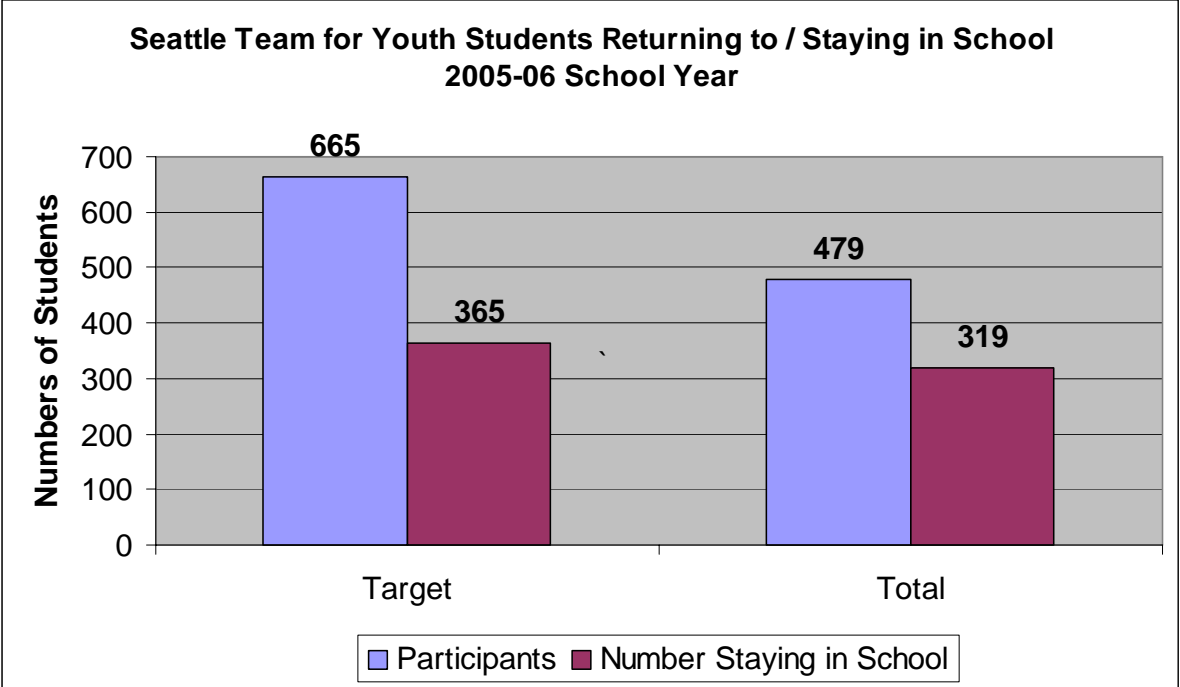
What Value Did the Levy Add to Academic Achievement and Reduction of the Achievement Gap for High School Students?

There is scant baseline data for high school students, since the WASL is only required for most high school students in 10th grade. As the City collects data from year-to-year going forward, it will provide analyses of students’ scores from 8th to 9th or 10th grade.

Dropout Prevention

What Progress Did the Levy Make in Dropout Prevention?

The Levy set a goal to help 365 high-risk youth stay in school who were likely to drop out. The Levy helped 319 students stay in school in 2005-06.



Accomplishments of Each Levy Investment

Early Learning

Program Description

The early learning investment consists of two Early Learning Networks in the southeast and southwest neighborhoods of Seattle, funded from both Levy and non-Levy sources. The goal of the Networks is to prepare all children in the neighborhoods for kindergarten by investing in a comprehensive set of early learning services in those areas. This approach raises the quality of early learning for all children in a geographic area. In addition, the Networks blend funds from multiple sources to maximize early learning investments for students in southeast and southwest Seattle. The Networks invest in the following five areas in order to prepare children for kindergarten:

- 1) **Step Ahead Preschool Programs** serving low-income four year-old children whose families earn between 110 percent and 300 percent of the federal poverty level. The program focuses on serving children of color including children who are African-American, East African, Latino, Native American, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian and/or Samoan.
- 2) **Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP)** for low-income families with young children ages two and three who live in Early Learning Network neighborhoods. The program, based on a successful national model, helps parents learn literacy skills to practice with their children.
- 3) **Teacher Training** (e.g., early childhood education, professional development, on-site mentoring and education on curriculum) for early learning teachers serving children ages birth to three in Network neighborhoods.
- 4) **Kindergarten Transition** to ensure successful enrollment in kindergarten for children in home and community preschool programs.
- 5) Increased **compensation** for teachers in early learning programs serving the highest numbers of low-income children in Network neighborhoods. This is a strategy to reduce teacher turnover and reward teacher training and skill building.

The budget for the Early Learning investments for 2005 and 2006 and actuals for 2005 are shown below.

Early Learning Budget	2005	2005	2006
	Revised	Actuals	Adopted
Pre-Kindergarten	\$ 838,410	\$602,783	\$ 1,648,520
Professional Development	\$ 74,477	\$21,066	\$ 160,985
Pre-Kindergarten Subsidies	\$ 89,600	\$12,505	\$ 270,000
Kindergarten Transition	\$ 35,000	\$0	\$ 74,000
Home Visitors	\$ 43,542	\$21,900	\$ 93,750
Compensation Program	\$ 65,951	\$618	\$ 137,159
Administration	\$ 94,003	\$93,998	\$ 203,189
Total:	\$ 1,240,983	\$752,870	\$ 2,587,603

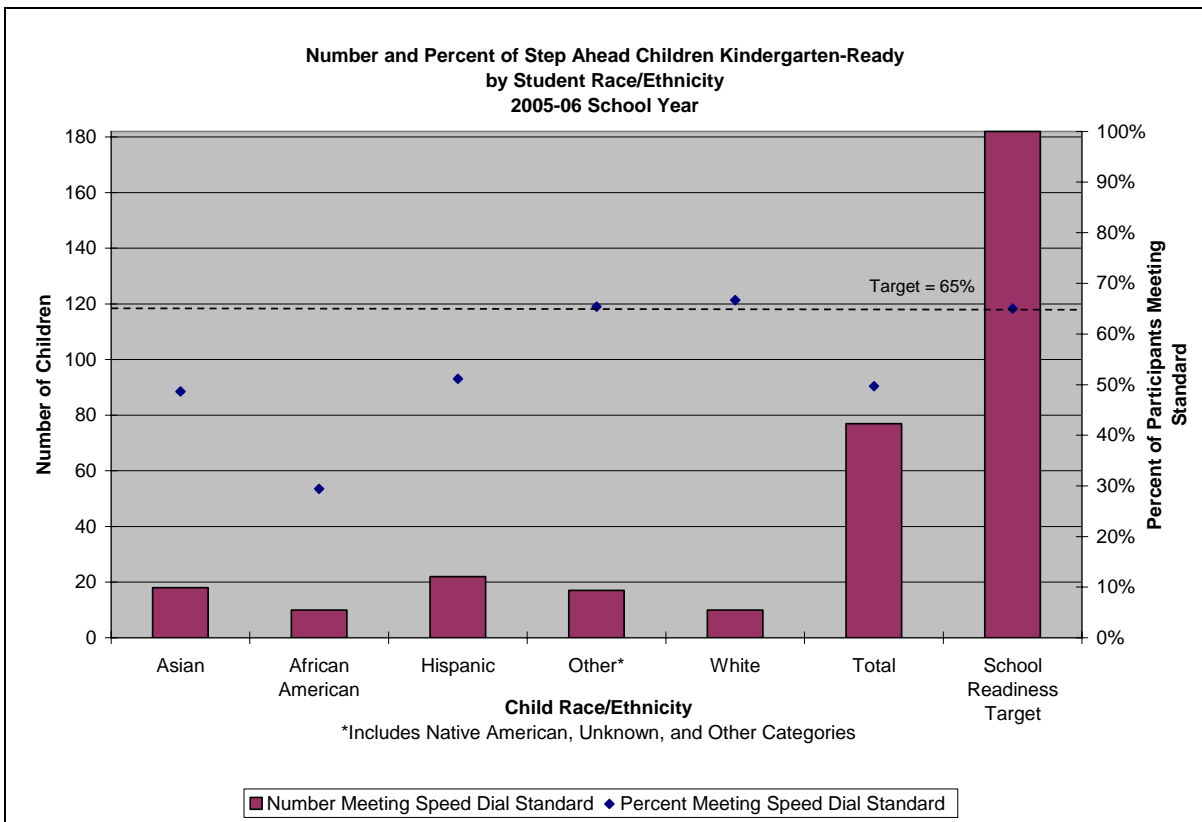
Overall Observations of Early Learning Investments in 2005-06

Levy early learning investments faced many start-up challenges. Due to these challenges, outcomes for early learning investments were unclear. Specifically:

- Preschool classrooms opened late in the year, resulting in wide variation in the number of days each child attended preschool;
- Recruiting and retaining preschool children was a major challenge;
- Enrollment was low;
- The average number of days of preschool attended by children was low, compared to the number of available days;
- Low numbers of children were assessed for kindergarten readiness at the end of the preschool year;
- Since there were inconsistencies in attendance, quality and assessment practices across preschool classrooms, there was not a clear correlation between participation and kindergarten readiness outcomes as measured by the Speed DIAL;
- The City and Step Ahead providers faced difficulties opening preschool classrooms in Seattle Public Schools elementary schools; and,
- The School District has yet to implement a district-wide kindergarten readiness assessment to all incoming kindergarten children.

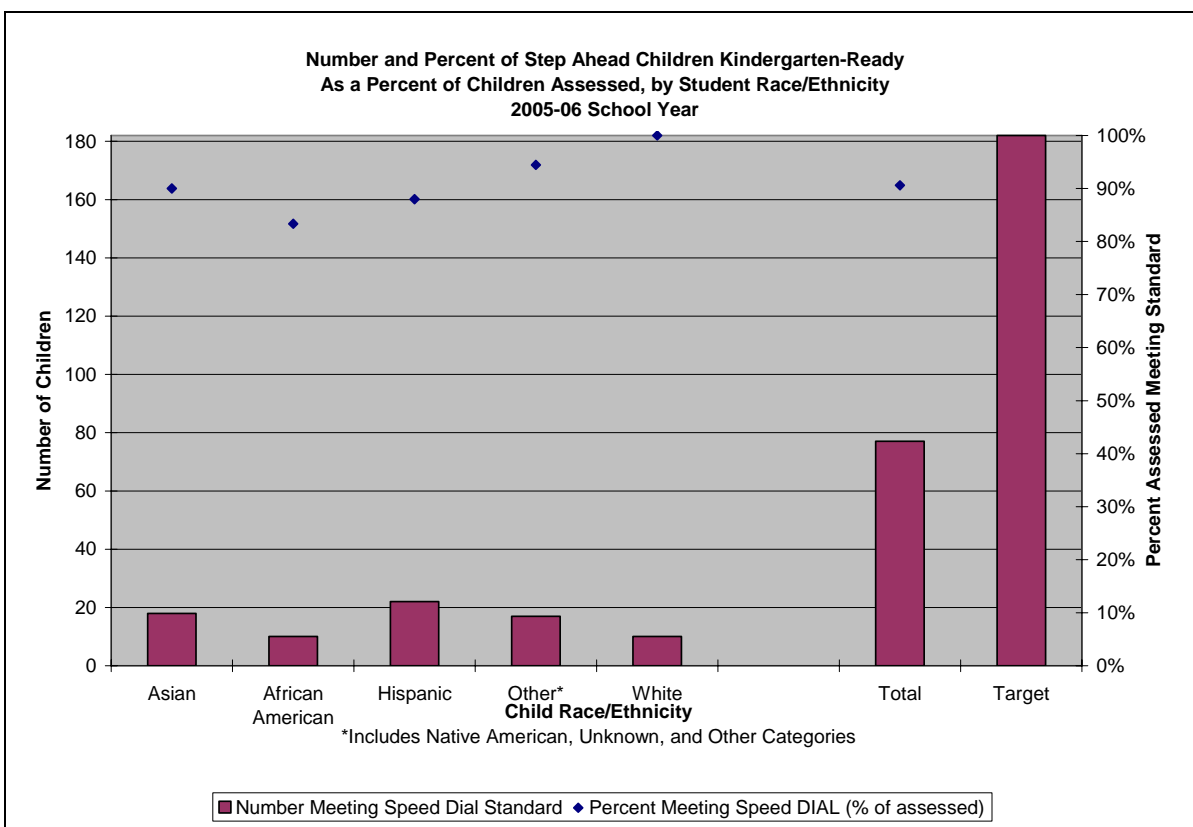
Outcomes:

As shown earlier in this report, 77 Step Ahead children (50 percent of all children enrolled) met the Speed DIAL kindergarten readiness standard at the end of the preschool year. The chart below shows this data.



As described earlier in this report, due to challenges assessing children, only 54 percent of Step Ahead preschool students were assessed for kindergarten readiness using the Speed DIAL assessment. The students who were assessed were not a representative sample of all preschool children enrolled. Therefore, the kindergarten readiness results above should be interpreted with caution.

The following chart shows kindergarten readiness rates as a percentage of the 85 children who were assessed. For example, the chart shows that 77 out of 85 of all Step Ahead children assessed, or 91 percent of children assessed, met the Speed DIAL standard. The percentages of children who were kindergarten ready in each category in the chart below are higher than those in the previous chart because they do not take into account the 70 children who were enrolled but not assessed. These results should also be interpreted with caution since they are not a representative sample of all Step Ahead children.

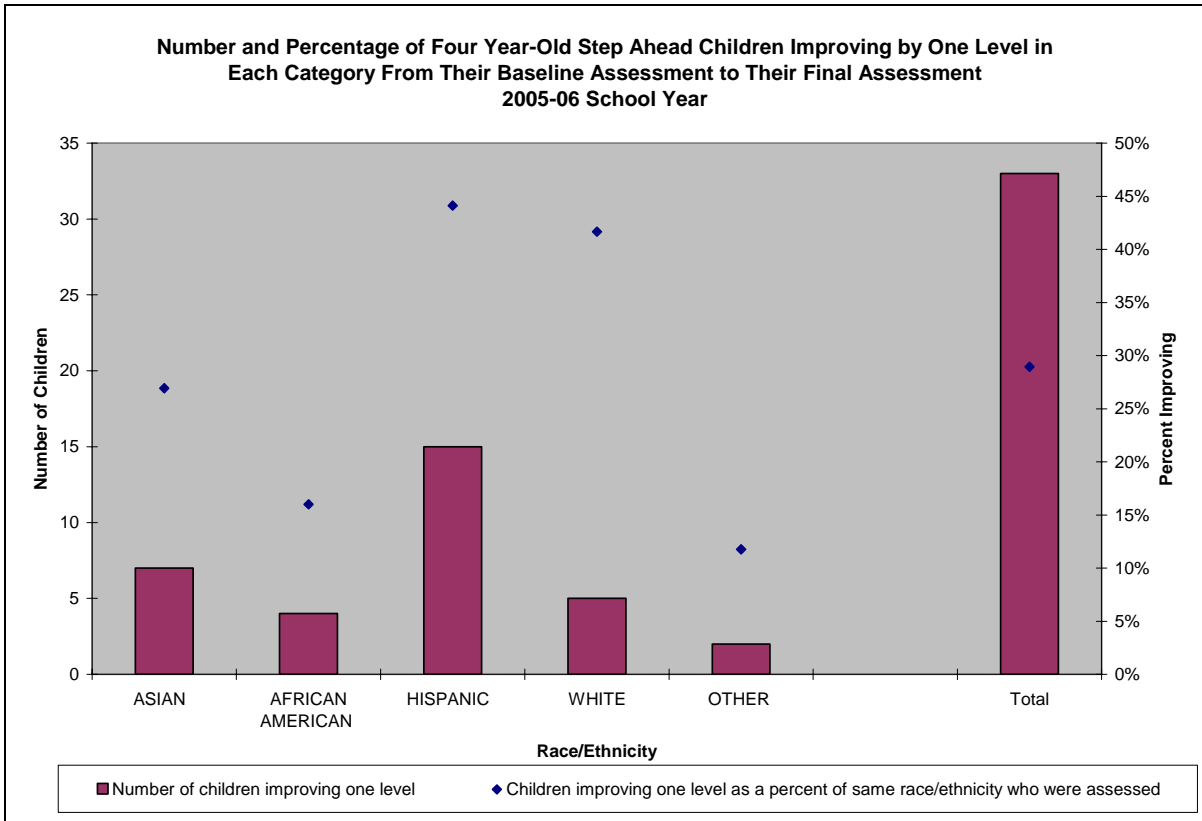


Indicators:

As an indicator of kindergarten readiness, the Levy tracked children’s developmental progress throughout the preschool year. The Levy assumed if children made progress during the year by improving at least one level in each category of the developmental assessment, they would be more likely to be kindergarten-ready by the end of the preschool year. Since low numbers of children were assessed by the Speed DIAL, OFE considers developmental assessment progress a more reliable indicator of kindergarten readiness than the Speed DIAL for 2005-06. While Step Ahead programs administered the Speed DIAL to only 85 out of

155 children enrolled, they administered the developmental assessment at least two times during the year to 114 out of 155 children enrolled.⁸

As the chart below shows, 33 children, or 29 percent of all children enrolled in preschool, improved by one level during the year. The achievement gap appears here, too – while 44 percent of Hispanic children and 42 percent of white children improved by one level, 16 percent of African American students improved.

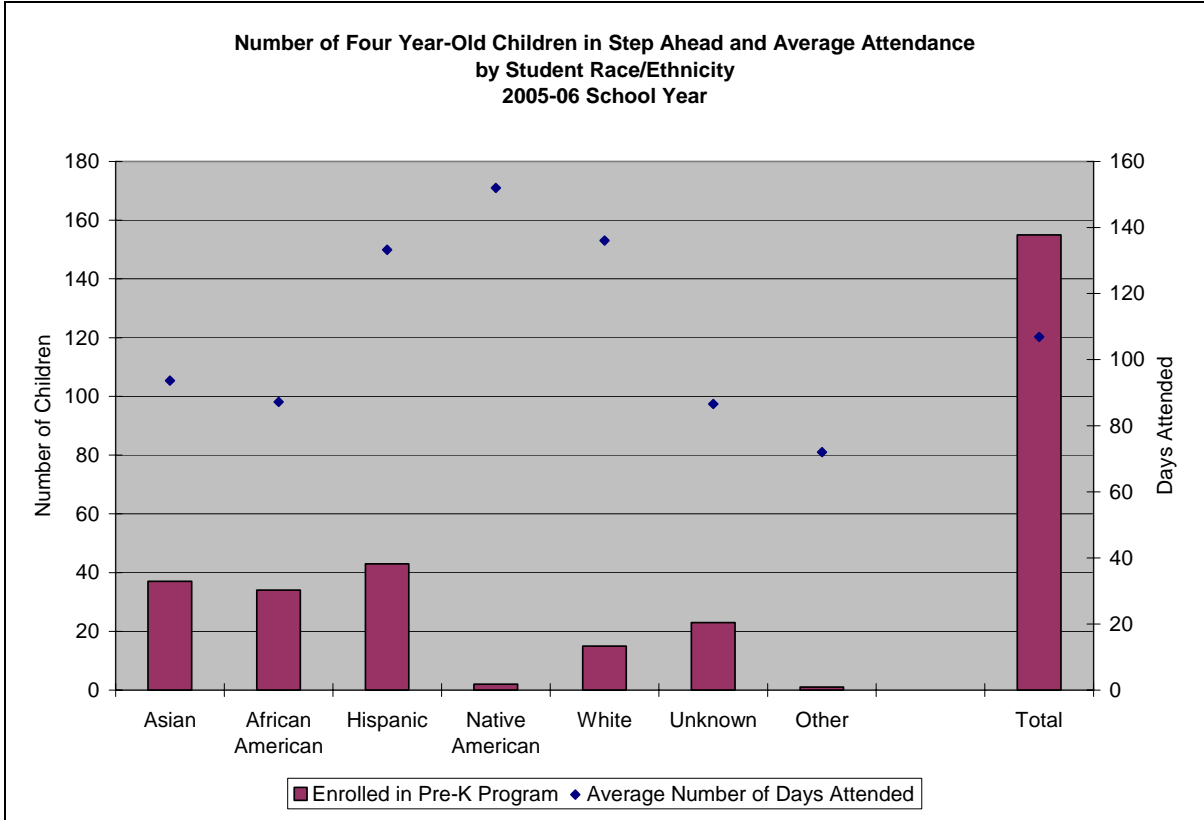


As another indicator of progress toward kindergarten readiness, the Levy measured the number of days each four year-old attended preschool. Out of the 155 children enrolled in preschool, children attended 107 days on average throughout the year out of a possible average of 128 days for programs that opened in fall 2005 and average of 88 days for programs that opened in the winter of 2006.

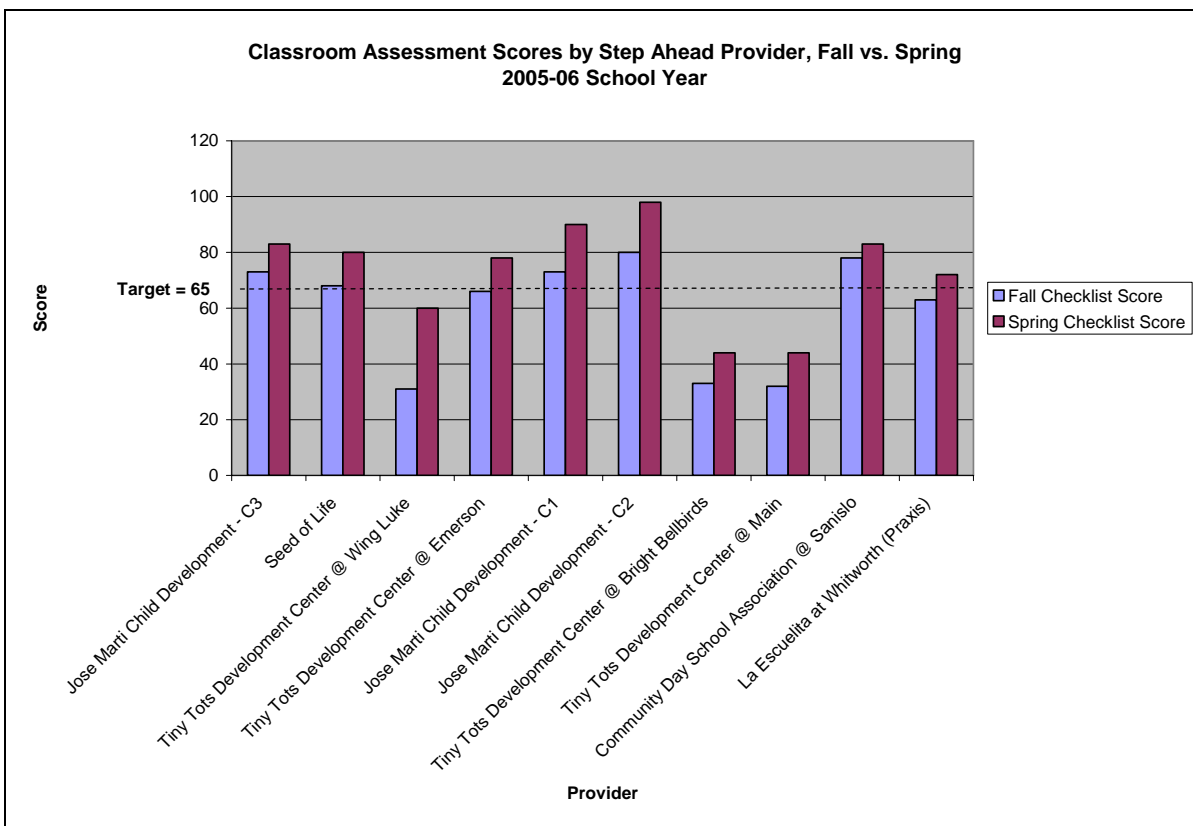
The Levy assumed attending more days of preschool would result in higher kindergarten readiness scores. Indeed, there was a correlation between the average number of days children attended preschool and their developmental improvement throughout the year. Higher attendance rates for Hispanic and white children correlated with higher percentages of children gaining one level, and a lower attendance rate for African American children correlated with a lower percentage of children gaining one level. However, it should be

⁸ 93 children had a complete first and third assessment. 21 children who did not have a first assessment had complete second and third assessments.

noted that there was not a clear correlation between attendance and kindergarten readiness as measured by the Speed DIAL. As stated earlier in this report, the City is unable to draw major conclusions from the Speed DIAL data since low numbers of children were assessed, and those who were assessed were not a representative sample.

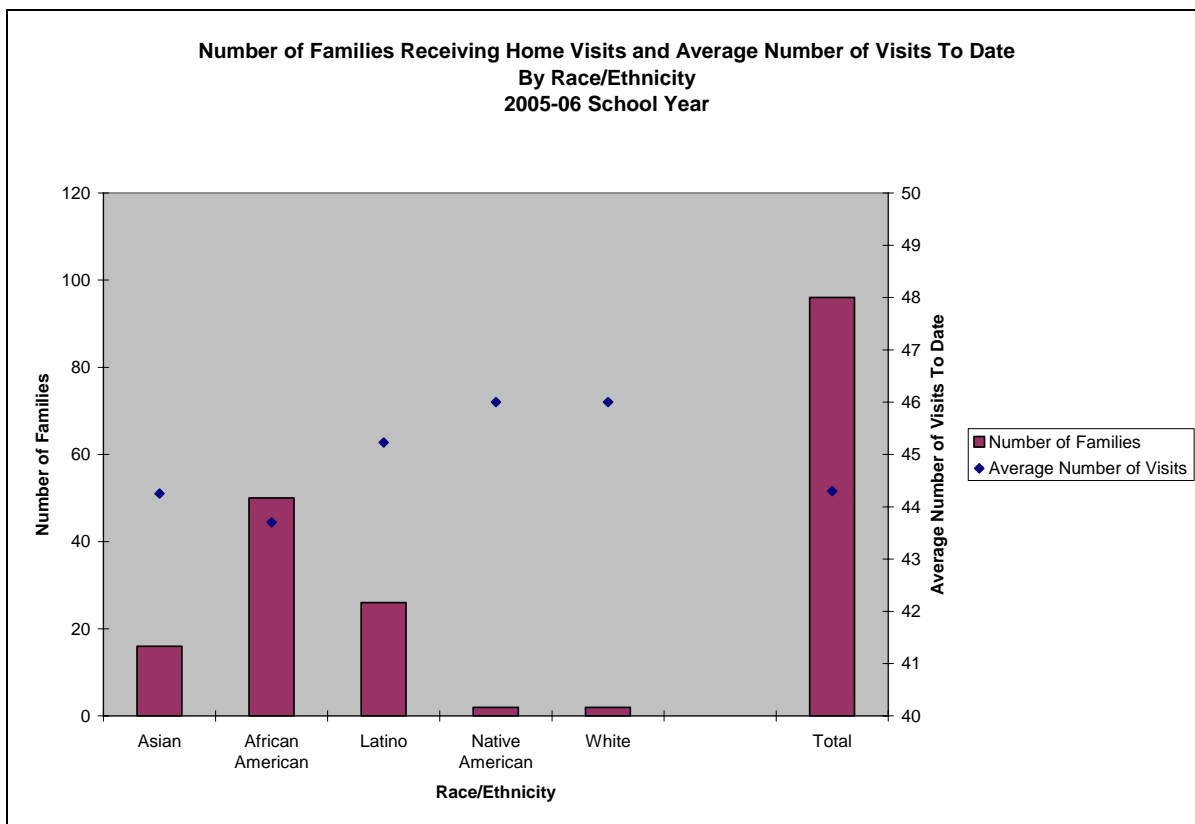


Another indicator of progress the Levy used to measure progress was the quality of classrooms and teachers serving preschool children. The Levy administered a classroom quality “checklist” in the fall and spring in each classroom. The target was for teachers to meet at least 65 percent of the items on the checklist. If teachers did not meet items, the Levy provided help to improve during the year.



The chart above shows the percentage of checklist items each classroom attained in the fall and spring. All classrooms improved the number of checklist items met. In the fall, 10 classrooms exceeded the target of 65 percent and five fell short. All classrooms improved their scores from fall to spring, with three of the five classrooms falling short in the fall exceeding the target in the spring. Some classrooms improved much more than others, and the classroom with the lowest score in the fall (Tiny Tots Development Center at Wing Luke) improved by the greatest amount.

In addition to preschool, the FEL measures indicators of progress for the Parent Child Home Program. The main indicator used is the number of visits to each family. PCHP suggests each family receive 37 to 46 visits per year. The chart below shows the number of families visited by race and the average number of visits per family in each category. Families in every category received an average of between 44 and 46 visits in 2006. PCHP is a two-year-long program; outcomes are measured at the end of 2007.



Actions Taken So Far Based on Data

The City has already taken action based on the data shown here. Specific actions include:

- Levy preschool classrooms enrolled 75 three year-old children (on a one-time basis) to fill empty slots that were not filled by four year-olds in 2005-06;
- All preschool classrooms opened on time in fall 2006; and
- The City Human Services Department has developed a plan to administer the DIAL-3 kindergarten readiness assessment to all Levy preschool children at the end of the 2006-07 school year.

Additional Actions Recommended Based on Data

- The City is developing a Memorandum of Understanding with Seattle Public Schools to address locating preschool classrooms in elementary schools, administering a kindergarten readiness assessment, and other issues.
- The City will examine improvements to: provider reimbursement based on preschool outcomes; collaboration between preschool providers, Head Start and SPS; and strengthening teacher quality to improve kindergarten readiness.
- There should be a relationship between participation, teacher quality, classroom quality and kindergarten readiness. The City should examine its current professional development approach, and the relationship between Step Ahead participation and effect, to ensure they support improved kindergarten readiness.

Performance-Based Pay for Early Learning Programs

Agencies have earned the following amounts of performance pay based on student outcomes contracted for in 2005-06.

Early Learning Total Performance Commitment Earned, 2005-06			
Pre-K Agency	Contract Total ('05-'06 SY)	Performance Commitment Portion	Performance Commitment Earned as a Percentage of Contract Total
Community Day School Association	\$131,396	\$32,849 (25%)	\$20,749 (16%)
El Centro De La Raza	\$123,265	\$30,816 (25%)	\$30,254 (25%)
Praxis Institute for Early Childhood Education	\$88,960	\$16,990 (25%)	\$0 (0%)
Refugee Women Alliance's	\$199,298	\$47,324 (25%)	\$32,639 (16%)
Seed of Life for Early Learning and Preschool, LLC	\$51,160	\$13,250 (25%)	\$13,250 (25%)
Tiny Tots Development Center	\$78,400	\$19,600 (25%)	\$12,971 (17%)
Subtotal, Pre-K	\$672,479	\$160,829 (25%)	\$109,863 (16%)
Professional Development Agency	Contract Total (09/05-06/07)	Performance Commitment Portion	Performance Commitment Earned as a Percentage of Contract Total*
Child Care Resources	\$1,116,125	\$182,672 (25%)	\$66,488 (6%)
<i>*amount earned as of 11/06</i>			
Home Visitors Agency	Contract Total (01/06-12/07)	Performance Commitment Portion	Performance Commitment Earned vs. Contract Total*
Southwest Youth & Family Services	\$192,000	\$48,000 (25%)	\$16,045 (8%)
<i>*amount earned as of 11/06</i>			
Compensation Program Agency	Contract Total (period: 1/06-12/06)	Performance Commitment Portion	Performance Commitment Earned vs. Contract Total*
El Centro de la Raza	\$18,640	\$1,000 (5%)	\$0 (0%)
Refugee Women's Alliance	\$15,700	\$1,000 (6%)	\$0 (0%)
Seed of Life for Early Learning and Preschool, LLC	\$30,400	\$1,000 (3%)	\$0 (0%)
Tiny Tots Development Center	\$30,400	\$1,000 (3%)	\$0 (0%)
Zion Preparatory Academy	\$36,280	\$1,000 (3%)	\$0 (0%)
Subtotal, Compensation Program	\$131,420	\$5,000	\$0 (0%)

**amount earned as of 11/06*

Family Support & Involvement

Program Description

The Families and Education Levy invests in two programs to support families: Family Support, which helps individual students to achieve academically and their families to be involved in the education process; and Family Involvement, which creates partnerships between schools, families and community-based organizations on a systemic level.

The Family Support program helps elementary school children succeed academically by providing resources to help families overcome barriers to their social, emotional and physical well-being. The program invests in Family Support Workers (FSWs) who work directly in elementary and K-8 schools to link students and their families with resources needed to achieve academically. FSWs team up with parents and other professionals – including educators, social service workers, businesses and community members – so that students can succeed in school. During the 2005-06 school year, the program transitioned to an intensive student selection process in order to focus on students and families who are most academically at-risk.

The Family Involvement investment, called Family & Community Partnership (FCP), is a research-based program that aims to strengthen the capacity of schools to partner with families and communities to improve academic achievement and reduce the achievement gap. The program grants FEL funds to elementary schools and community-based organizations to work together in supporting family involvement to increase academic achievement. Ten Seattle elementary schools and five community-based organizations (CBOs) have received FCP grants to reach out to diverse families and involve them in the education of their children.

The budget for Family Support and Family & Community Involvement for 2005 and 2006 is shown below.

Family Involvement/Family Support	2005	2005	2006
	Revised	Actuals	Adopted
Family Support	\$ 768,229	\$747,029	\$ 2,359,513
Family Involvement	\$ 161,262	\$87,054	\$ 494,252
Total:	\$ 929,491	\$834,083	\$ 2,853,765

Overall Observations of Family Support & Family Involvement Investments in 2005-06

- The Family Support and Family Involvement programs exceeded their academic targets in 2005-06.
- The target of seven percent of all students achieving academically was far too low and should be increased in future years.
- FSWs did not focus as much as the Levy had intended on students who needed the most academic help.
- 2005-06 was the first year the Family Support and Family Involvement programs worked together strategically to help the same students. This collaboration is important, and improving.
- As the Levy moves forward, it is critical these programs strategically select families who need academic help and improve the process for continuously setting and

monitoring measurable goals and milestones for the families served throughout the year.

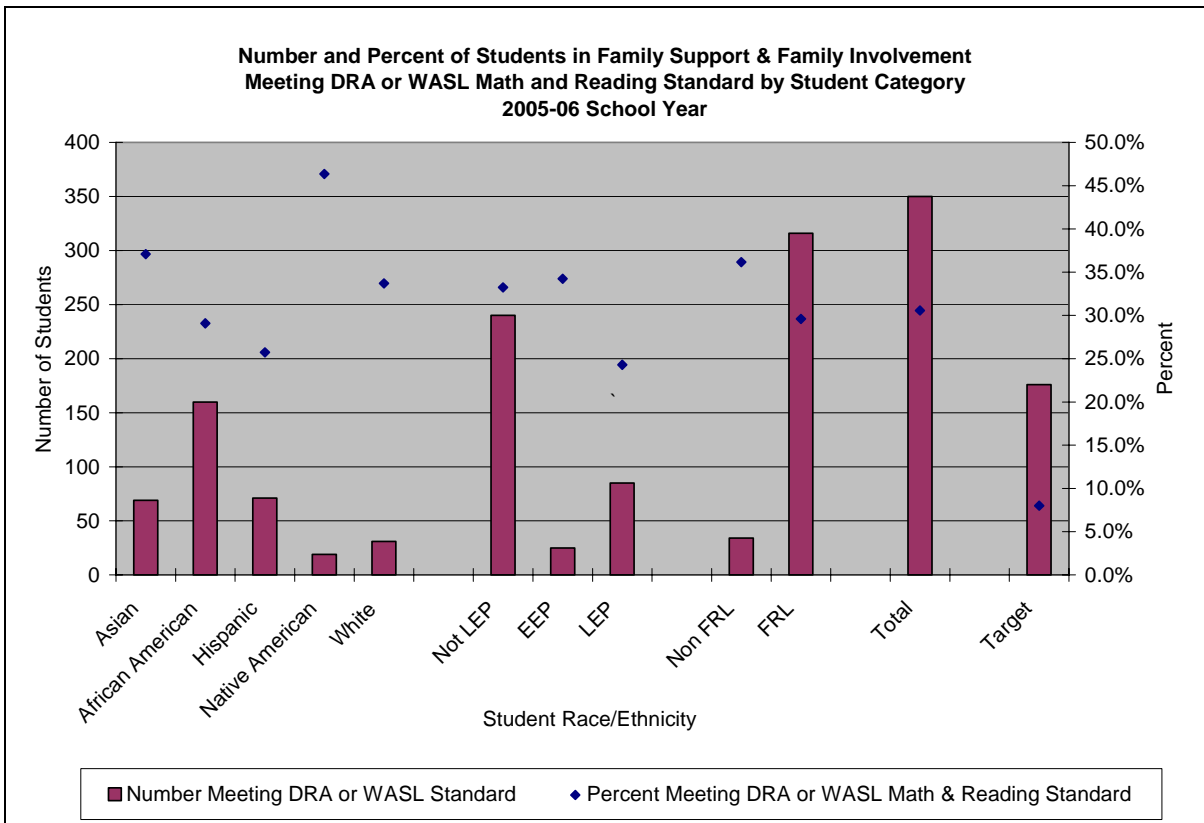
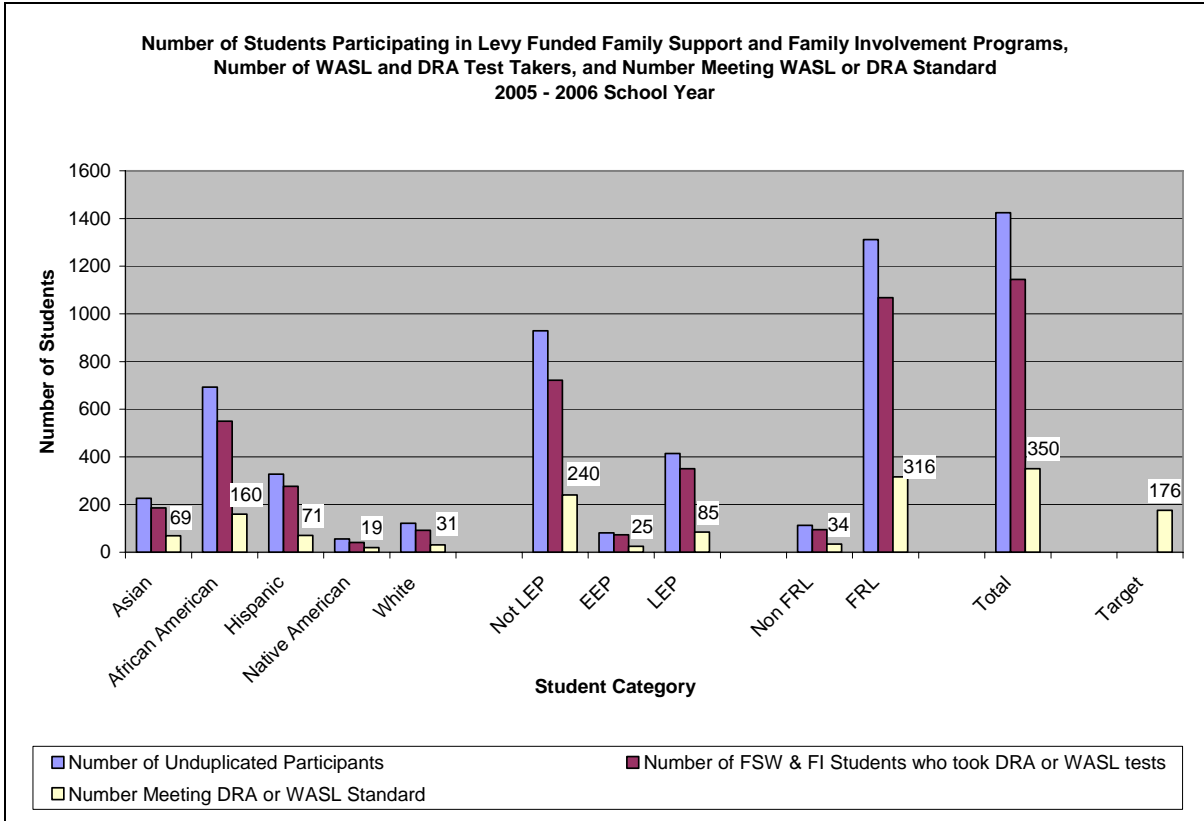
Outcomes

The Levy set a goal to serve 2,000 elementary and K-8 students in the Family Support program, and to serve 150 students in the Family Involvement program, for a total of 2,150 students. The following table shows the number of students enrolled in each program.

Number of Students Enrolled in Family Support & Family Involvement 2005-06 School Year			
	Family Support	Family Involvement	Total
Enrollment Target	2,000	150	2,150
Number of Students Enrolled	1,331 ⁹	293	1,624

The target was for 176 students (8 percent) from the combined programs to achieve academically by meeting either the DRA or WASL standards for their grade level. As the charts below show, the programs served 1,453 unduplicated students, 350 (31 percent) of whom achieved academically. The Levy exceeded its target for academic achievement in the FSW and FCP programs. However, there were achievement gaps among groups of students. Greater percentages of Asian and white students met standards than did African American and Hispanic students, and greater percentages of non-LEP students met standards than did LEP students. Finally, there was an achievement gap based on income, with greater numbers of non-FRL students meeting standards than students who receive FRL.

⁹ The Family Support Worker program served a total of 4,382 students, of which 1,331 were focus families with academic targets.



Performance-Based Pay

Agencies have earned the following amounts of performance pay based on 2005-06 student outcomes.

Family Support & Family Involvement Total Performance Pay Earned, 2005-06			
	Contract Total (‘05-06 SY)	Performance Commitment Portion	Performance Commitment Earned as a Percentage of Total Contract
Family Support (Seattle Public Schools)	\$2,282,735	\$342,410 (15%)	\$342,410 (15%)
Family & Community Partnerships (Seattle Public Schools)	\$490,763	\$122,691 (25%)	\$122,691 (25%)

Actions Taken So Far Based on Data

- The Levy set “value-added” targets for Family Support and Family Involvement investments for 2006-07. This means all of the students who count toward the target will be students who have not achieved academically in the past.
- FSWs were assigned to schools based on schools’ academic performance (targeting the lowest-performing schools) in 2006-07.
- FSWs are implementing a new case management approach to help children of focus families improve academically.
- The District changed the management structure of Family Support and Family Involvement to be managed jointly by one person.

**Elementary CLCs
Program Description**

The FEL invested in four elementary school Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in the 2005-06 school year. They include Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club at Brighton, YMCA at Cooper, YMCA at Concord and Tiny Tots at Van Asselt.

Using schools as a hub, CLCs provide a comprehensive set of services, activities and learning experiences that are culturally relevant and tailored to the needs of students and families. Services include homework and tutoring support focused on math and literacy, English as a Second Language instruction, project-based learning, technology activities and numerous other developmentally appropriate learning opportunities. CLC staff coordinate out-of school time activities at the selected sites with school staff to maximize learning by connecting after-school activities to the material students are learning during the school day. CLC programs engage families and provide community resource and referral information as well as parent and family activities during out-of-school time that promote academic achievement.

Each elementary school CLC provides at least 12 hours of after-school programming per week and is involved in up to two family involvement activities per month, in coordination with the school.

The budget for Elementary CLCs for 2005 and 2006 and actuals for 2005 are shown below.

Elementary Community Learning Centers Budget 2005-06		
2005 Revised	2005 Actuals	2006 Adopted
\$116,244	\$80,931	\$326,083

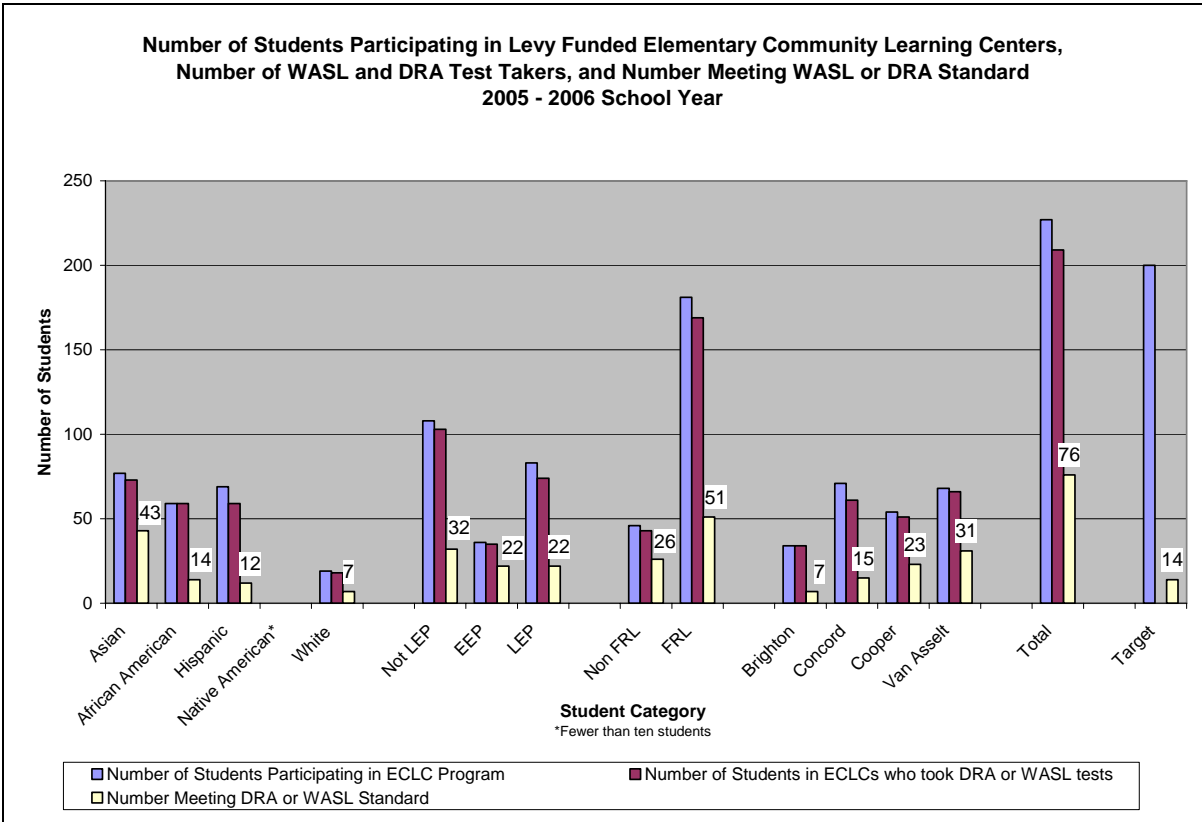
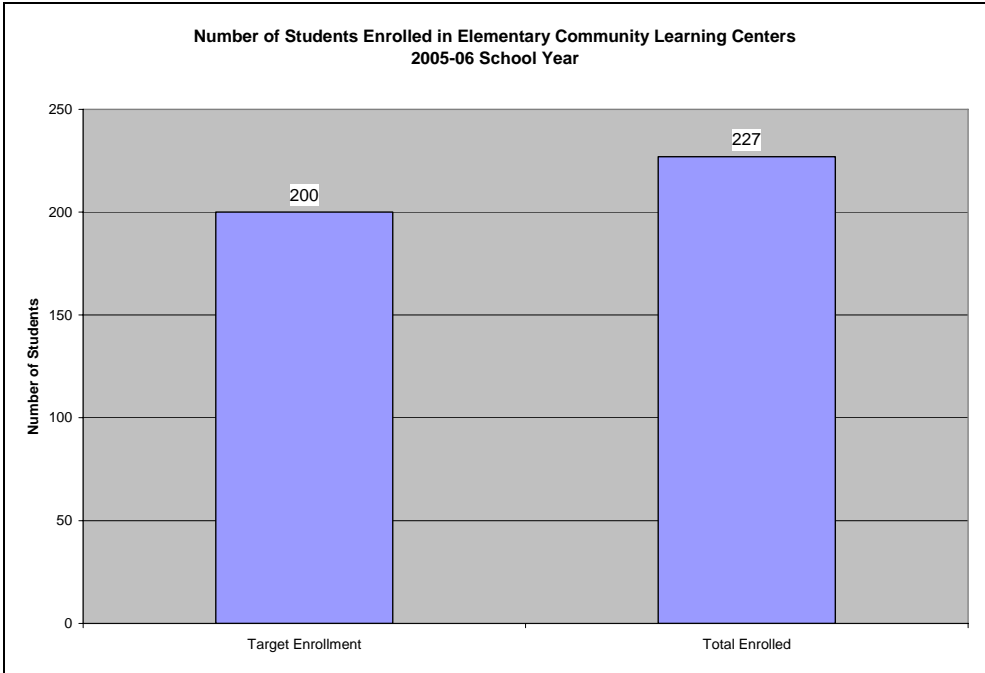
Overall Observations of Elementary Community Learning Centers in 2005-06

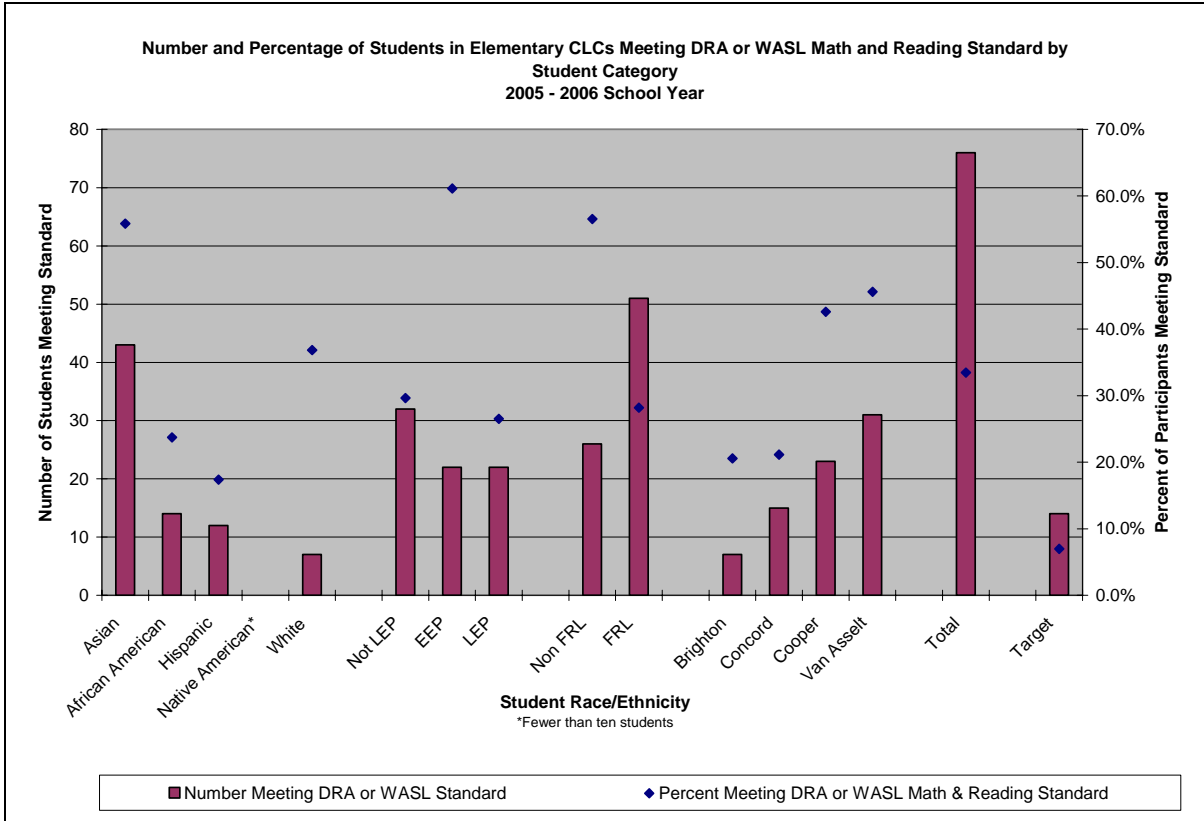
- o Elementary CLCs exceeded the target of helping at least seven percent of students achieve academically for 2005-06.
- o There was an achievement gap based on race, income and English language ability.
- o The data showed the quality of programs was not consistent across all four CLC sites.
- o It was unclear how much and how often students needed to participate in CLCs in order to benefit academically.

Outcomes

Academic Achievement & Reduction of the Gap

The Levy set a goal was to enroll 200 elementary students in Community Learning Centers in 2005-06, and for at least 14 (7 percent) of those students to achieve academically as measured by meeting the reading and math WASL standards. Here is what the Levy achieved:

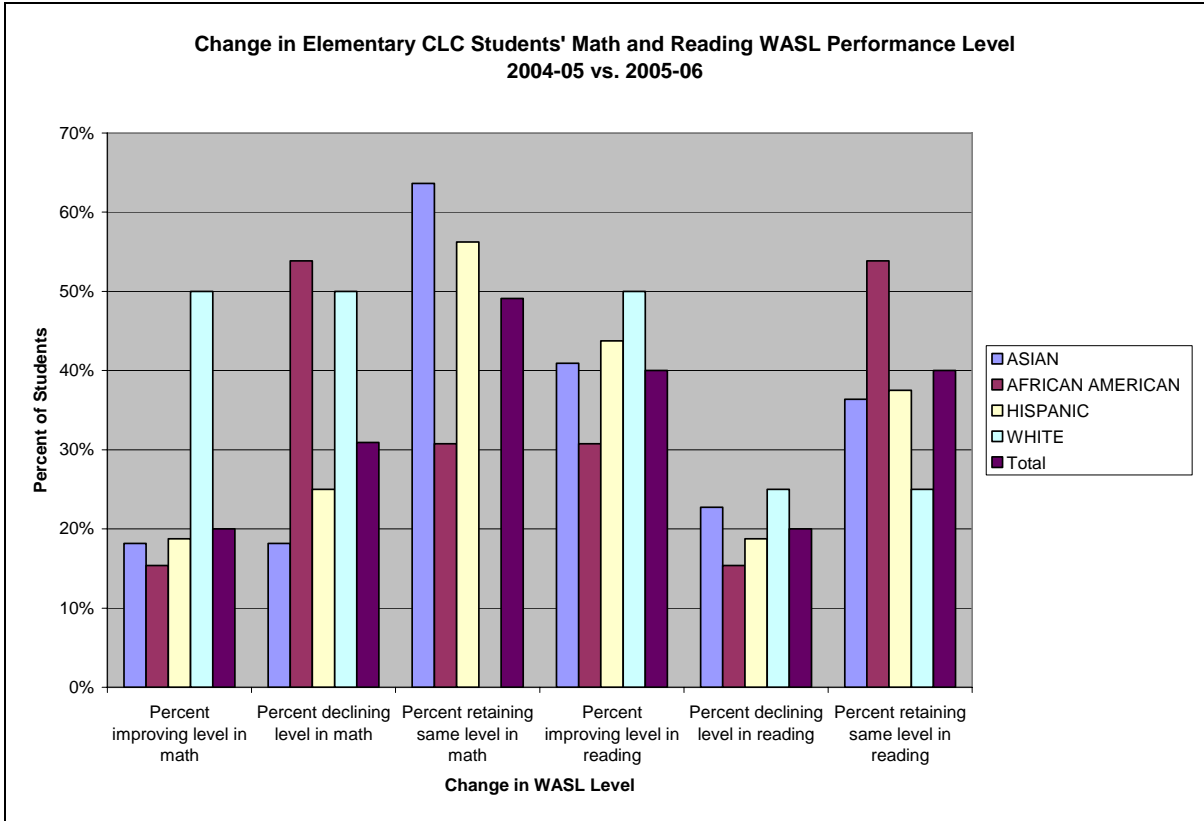




As the charts above show, the Levy enrolled 227 elementary school students in CLCs in 2005-06. Out of the 227 students, 190 took the WASL and 23 took the DRA. Seventy-six (36 percent) of all students achieved academically by meeting the standards for the assessment they took. The Levy far exceeded its target for Elementary CLCs, however, there were pronounced achievement gaps. For example, the percentage of Asian students who achieved academically was approximately 35 percentage points higher than the percentage of African American students who achieved academically, and 39 points higher than the percentage of Hispanic students who achieved. There were also large gaps between groups of students based on English proficiency and income.

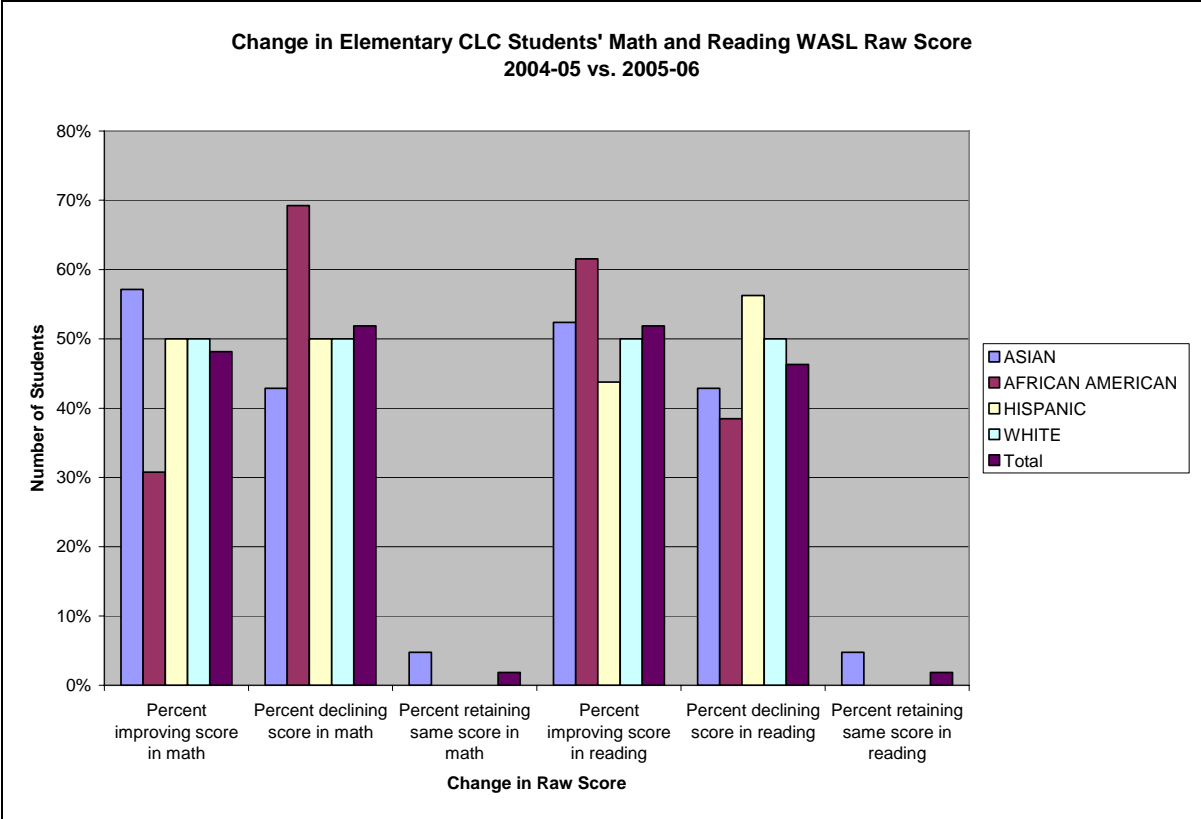
Indicators

As an indicator of progress, the Levy analyzed how much students’ academic achievement changed from the 2004-05 school year to the 2005-06 school year. The next chart shows the percentage of students in each student category whose math and reading WASL scores improved, declined or stayed the same year-to-year.

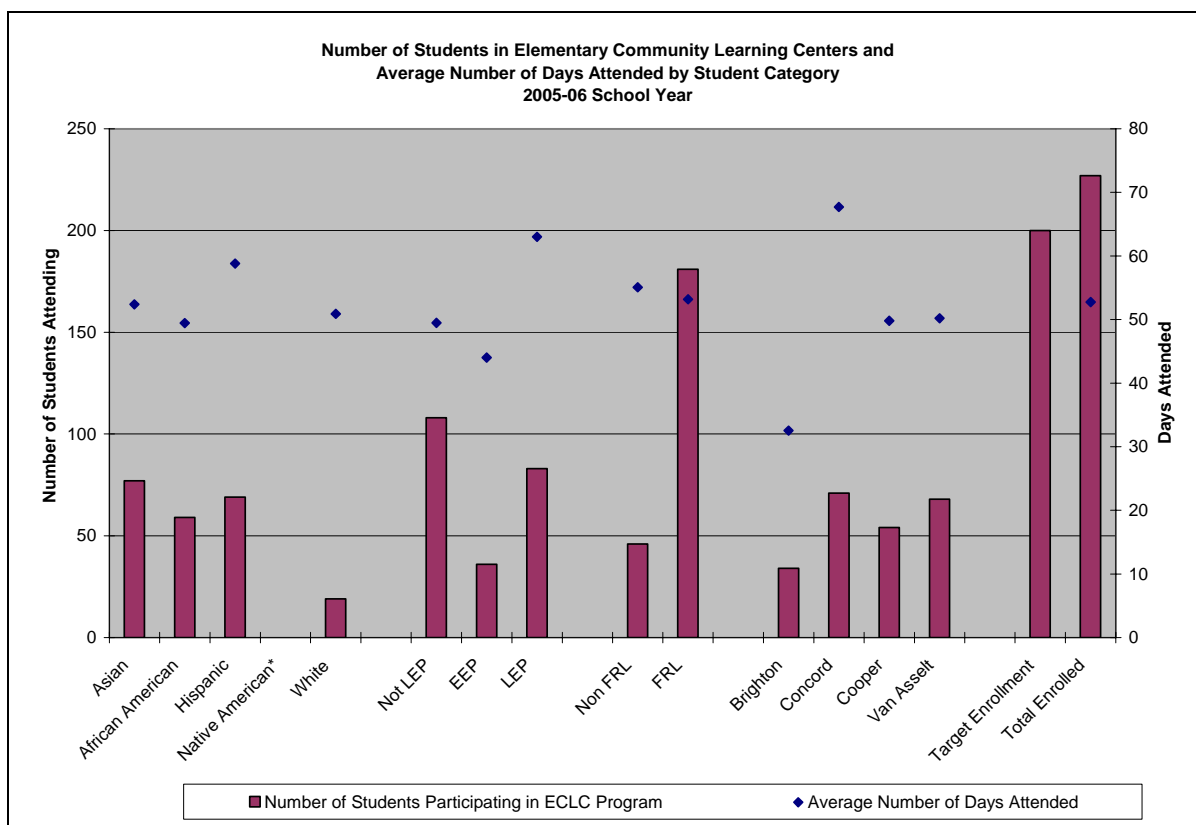


In math, a greater percentage of all students' WASL levels declined (31 percent) or stayed the same (49 percent) than improved (20 percent). In reading, equal percentages of students' WASL levels improved and stayed the same (40 percent), and 20 percent of students' WASL levels declined. It is concerning to note that the majority of African American students' WASL levels declined in math (54 percent of all African American students), versus improved (15 percent) or stayed the same (31 percent).

The next chart shows the change in students' raw WASL scores (as opposed to changes in the level, shown above). Although the same pattern is seen here, where a greater percentage of students' raw scores declined than improved in math, the difference is not as large between the percentages of students whose scores declined and improved as in the previous example.



Another indicator the Levy tracked to measure progress in Elementary CLCs is attendance. The Levy assumed if students attended CLCs more often, they would have greater chances of achieving academically. Out of all 227 students enrolled in Elementary CLCs, the average number of days attended throughout the school year was 54 out of 120 total possible days.¹⁰ The average number of days attended was slightly lower for EEP students (44 days) and African American students (49 days). In general, there does not appear to be a correlation between the number of days students attended Elementary CLCs and their academic achievement, by student category.



Actions Taken So Far Based on Data

In response to the data here, the City has already taken the following actions:

- Closed one CLC site due to low quality. Funds are being used to improve quality at the remaining three sites;
- Initiated a professional development contract to align professional development of CLC staff more closely with academic goals by providing appropriate training; and,
- Elementary CLC staff are collaborating with staff from the Levy Family Support and Family Involvement programs to select students to enroll in CLCs and to help them achieve academically.

¹⁰ The average number of days possible across all four Elementary CLC sites was 120. The exact number of days possible varied by site.

Actions Recommended For Future Based on Data

Beginning in 2007-08, OFE recommends examining the goal for the frequency and duration of participation in CLCs.

Performance-Based Pay

Agencies have earned the following amounts of performance pay based on 2005-06 student outcomes.

Elementary Community Learning Centers Total Performance Pay Earned, 2005-06			
ELEMENTARY CLCS	Contract Total (05-06 SY)	Performance Commitment Portion	Performance Commitment as a Percentage of Total Contract
Tiny Tots at Van Asselt	\$76,736	\$19,184 (25%)	\$19,184 (25%)
King County Boys and Girls Club, Rainier Vista at Brighton Elementary	\$76,736	\$19,184 (25%)	\$2,877 (4%)
YMCA at Cooper & Concord	\$155,472	\$38,368 (25%)	\$38,368 (25%)
YMCA/Schools Out Washington (professional development)	\$67,720	\$12,036 (18%)	TBD (contract expires 12/31/06)

Middle School Programs

Program Description

The FEL makes four investments in middle school students:

- **Middle School Support Program (MSSP)** (including Innovation Schools and Linkage Schools)
- **Community Learning Centers (CLCs)** in eight middle schools;
- Academically-focused **After-School Activities Programs (ASAP)** in non-CLC middle schools and K-8 schools; and
- **Middle School Athletics.**

Using the Middle School Support approach, each middle school creates a multidisciplinary staff team which identifies students who are not succeeding academically. The teams then:

- a) Coordinate existing school, family and community resources to support those struggling students; and
- b) Identify and develop individualized interventions for target students, such as extended learning opportunities, mental health services, family outreach or focused skill development.

School teams engage students and families to develop Student Learning Plans (SLPs) that outline steps to helping students meet academic standards. SLP interventions address barriers to learning, such as specific skill deficits, mental health needs, the need for more time to learn, attendance problems or disciplinary issues. A “key player” is assigned in each school to be responsible for monitoring each student’s progress on their SLP and recommending course-corrections in student interventions as needed. Many MSSP students also participate in Community Learning Centers or ASAP, depending on which program is offered at the school.

The MSSP invests in four “Innovation” schools (Mercer, Denny, Aki Kurose and Madison middle schools), “Linkage” middle schools (including all other middle schools) and “Linkage” K-8 schools. The Linkage Schools use the same individualized approach and provide services similar to Innovation Sites; however, they do so on a smaller scale.

The Levy invests in eight middle school CLCs, which provide out-of-school time learning that is aligned with material students are learning in school. The MSSP program in each middle school coordinates with the middle school CLCs in their schools to maximize student learning time and focus intensively on student needs.

The Middle School Programs budget for 2005 and 2006 and actuals for 2005 are shown below.

Middle School Programs	2005	2005	2006
After School Activities Program (Parks ASAP)	\$200,052	\$162,226	\$528,709
Middle School CLCs (Parks, YMCA)	\$226,895	\$190,642	\$577,533
Support (transportation, security, special needs) Parks	\$144,655	\$133,293	\$468,153
Middle School support (Innovation & Linkage) - OFE	\$329,677	\$168,840	\$1,014,321

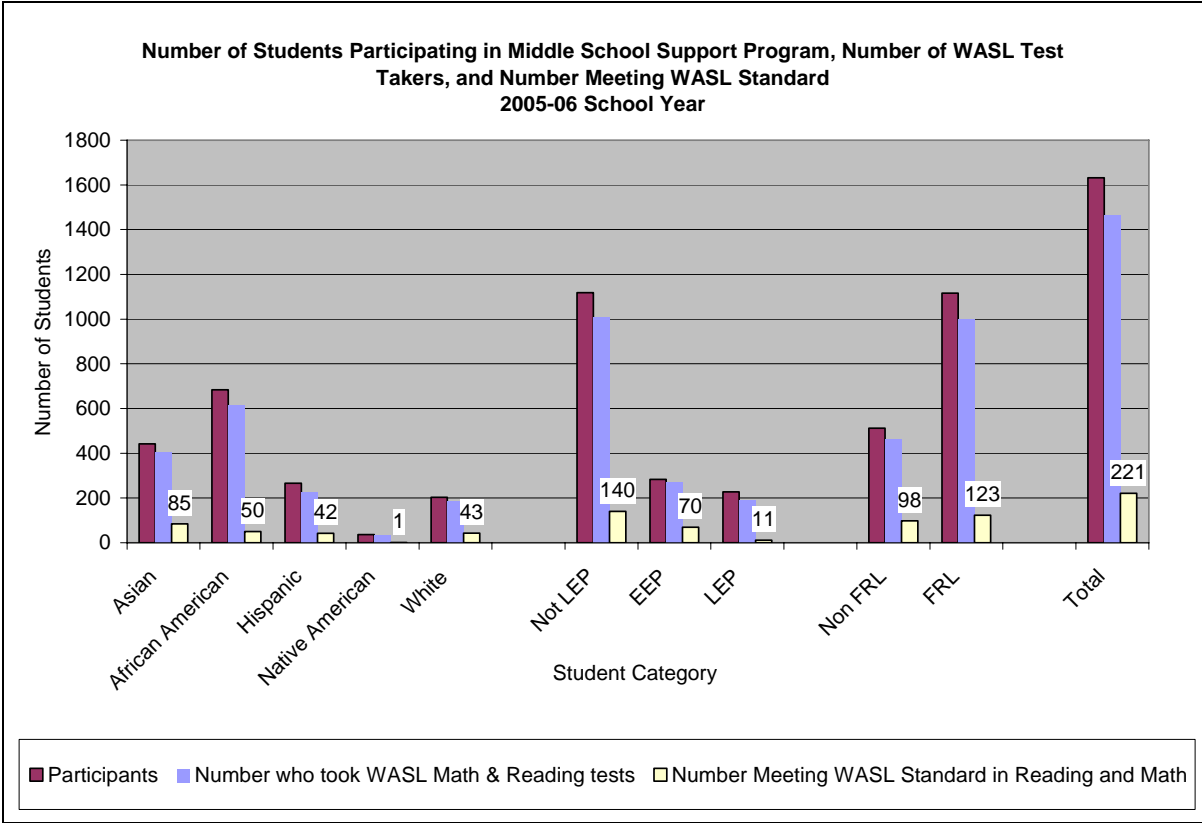
Middle School Athletics (Parks)	\$58,849	\$26,630	\$178,011
Total	\$960,128	\$681,630	\$2,766,727

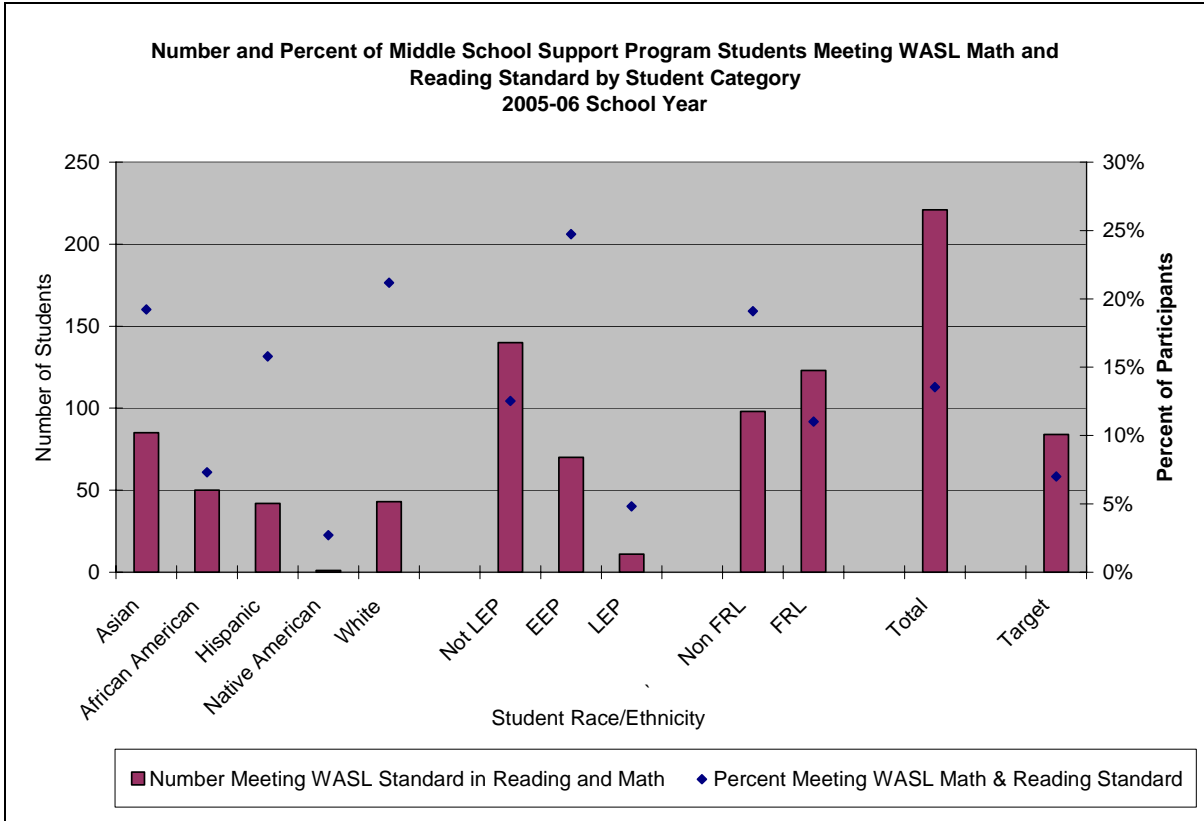
Overall Observations of Middle School Programs in 2005-06

- The number of students meeting the target is low; the City should examine other ways to significantly improve outcomes.
- The achievement gap is wide among Levy-served middle school students. This is especially evident in math outcomes.
- More than 50 percent of students served improved their raw WASL scores in reading and math.
- There is a need for more direct approaches to impact students' math skills.
- Participation in middle school CLCs is inconsistent in duration and frequency. The program should set goals for participation.

Outcomes

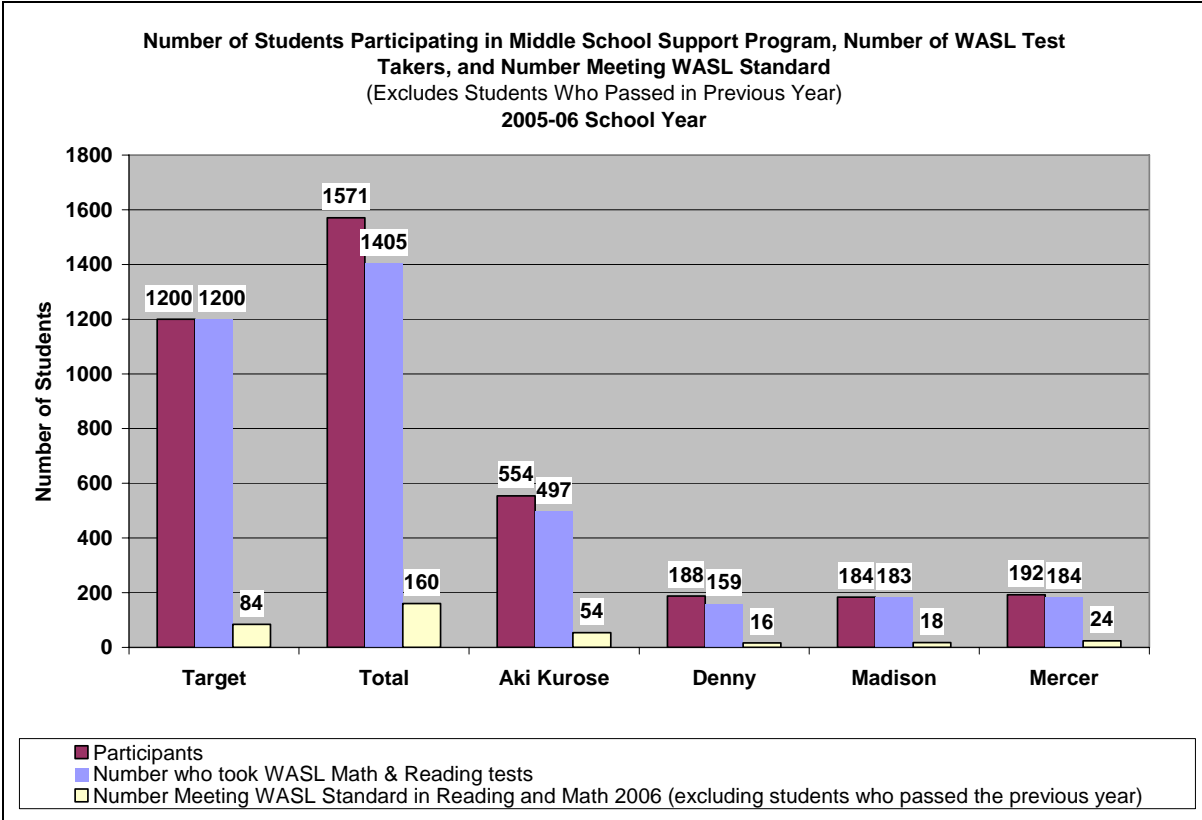
The MSSP exceeded its target for academic achievement. The target, shown in the chart below, was for 84 students (seven percent of all participants) to achieve academically. Here is what MSSP accomplished:





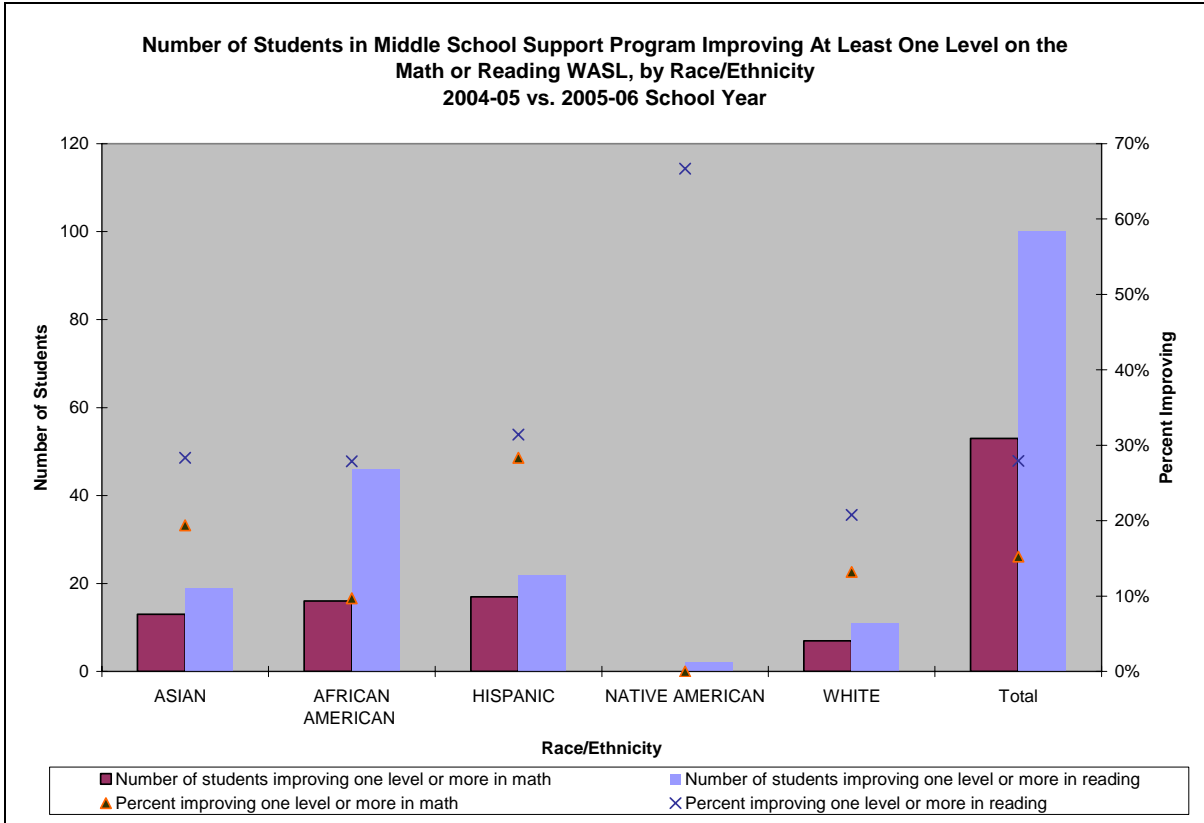
As the charts above show, in 2005-06, 221 students (14 percent) met the target. However, there was an achievement gap by race, income and language proficiency. All groups met or exceeded the seven-percent target except for Native American students (three percent) and LEP students (five percent). In addition, lower percentages of African American students (seven percent), low-income students (11 percent) and non-LEP students (13 percent) achieved academically than students in other groups.

The MSSP was designed for students who had not previously met the WASL standards. However, in the first year some students were enrolled who had met the standards. The chart below shows the results for MSSP, and for the four Innovation schools, not including students who had previously met the standards.

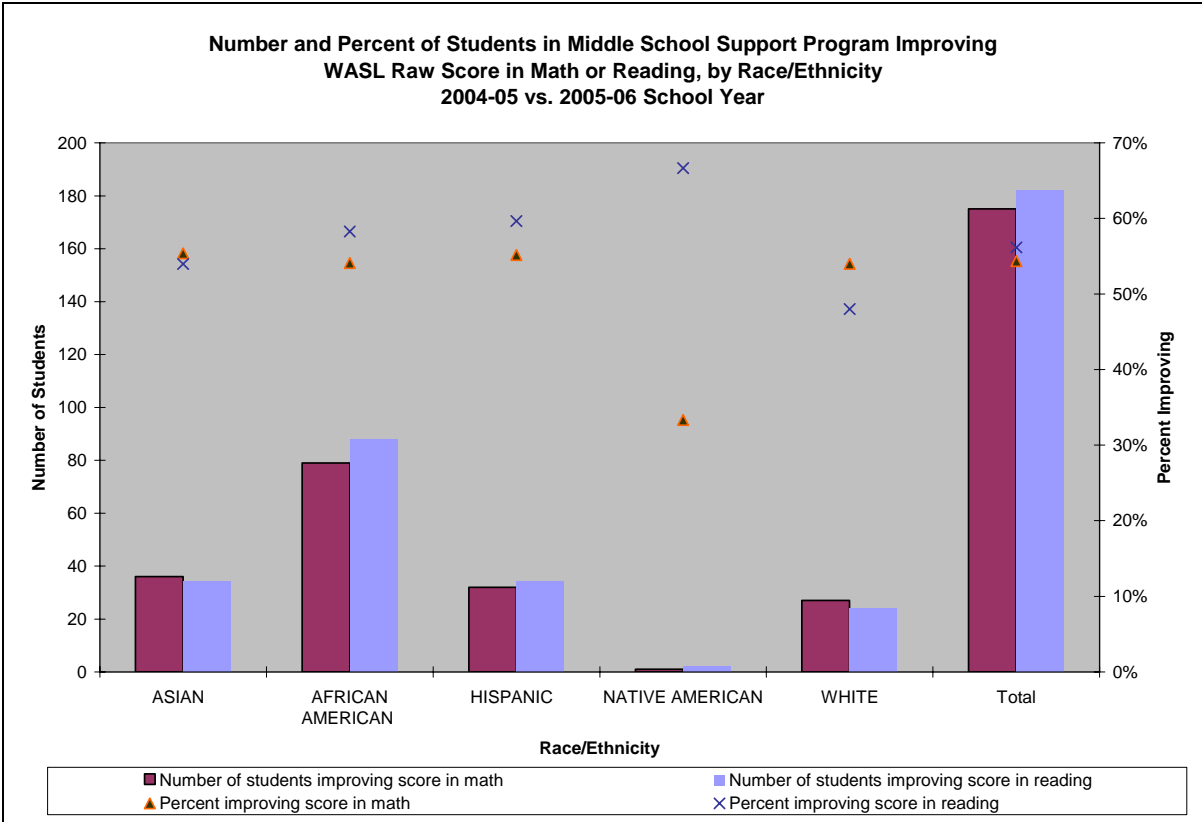


Indicators

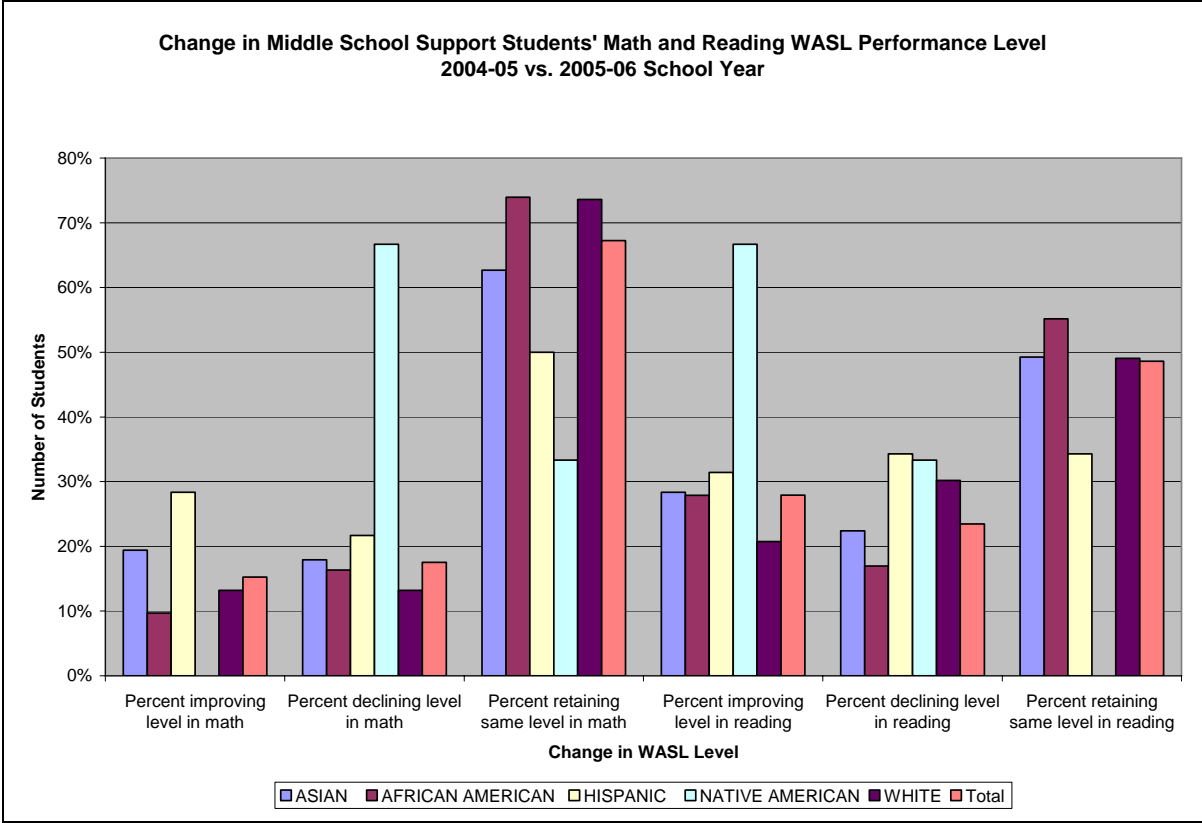
In addition to measuring how many students achieved academically by meeting the WASL standards, the Levy measured how much students improved on the WASL. Overall, more students in MSSP improved in reading than in math. This was especially apparent in indicators for African American students served, as shown in the chart below of the numbers and percentages of students who improved their WASL scores by at least one level.



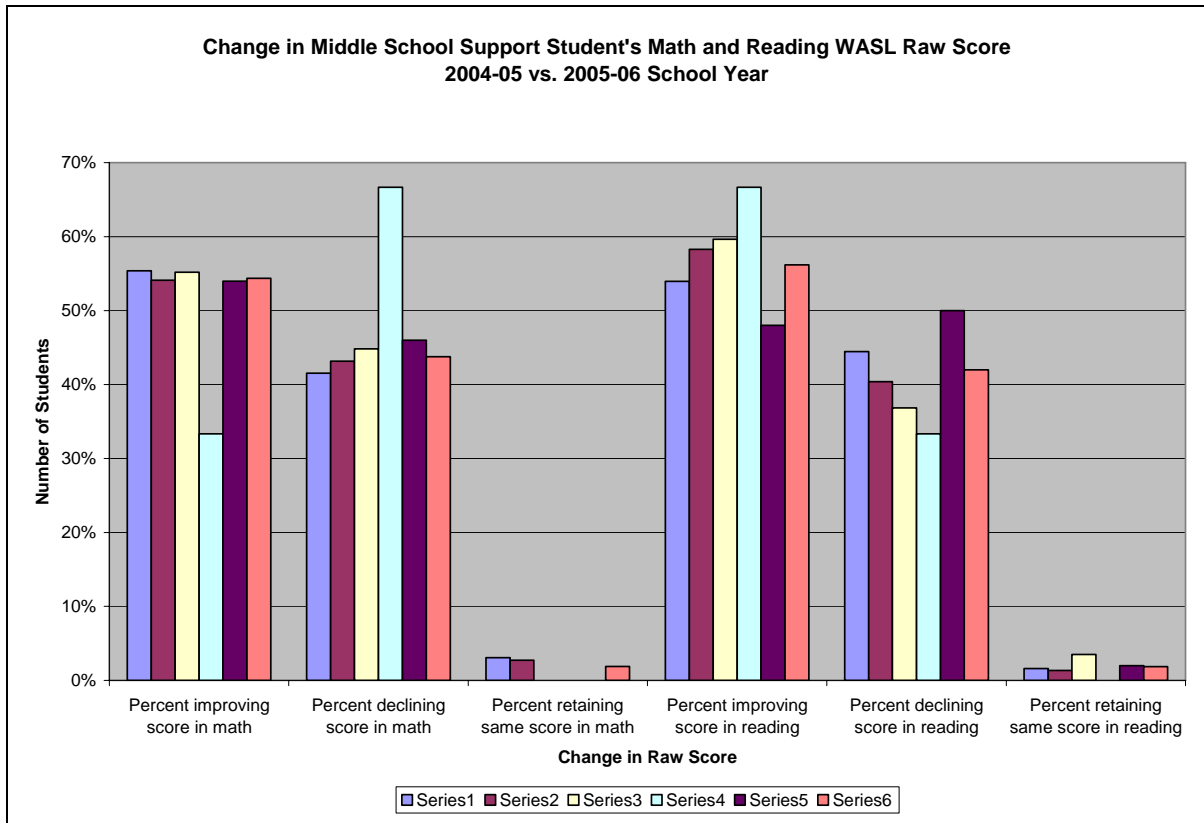
The next chart shows the amount of improvement in students' raw WASL scores. Greater numbers and percentages of students improved their raw scores than levels, and the disparity was not as great between improvement in math and reading.



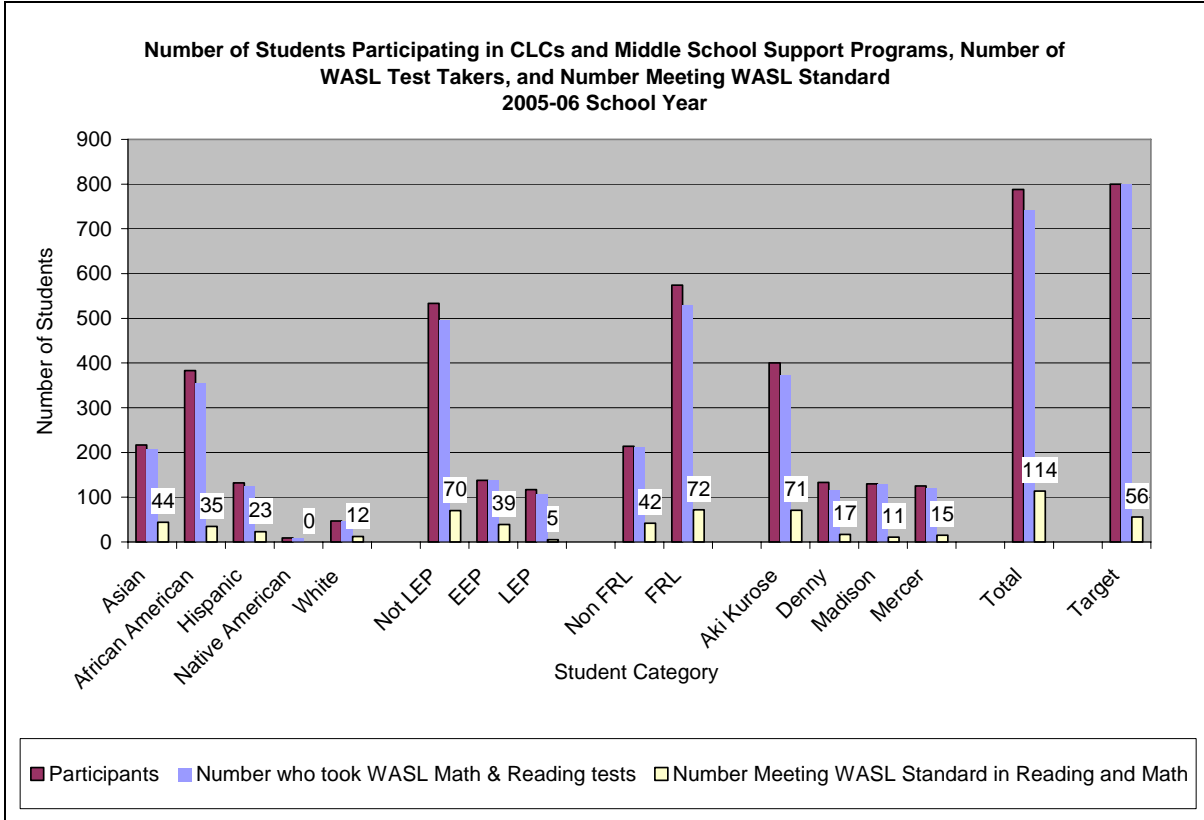
The Levy also tracked whether participating MSSP students' achievement levels declined or stayed the same over the school year. Overall, a greater percentage of students declined their achievement levels in math (18 percent) than improved (15 percent). This was not true for Asian, Hispanic or white students. In reading, a greater percentage of students improved their achievement levels (28 percent) than declined (23 percent). This was true for all student groups except for Native American students.



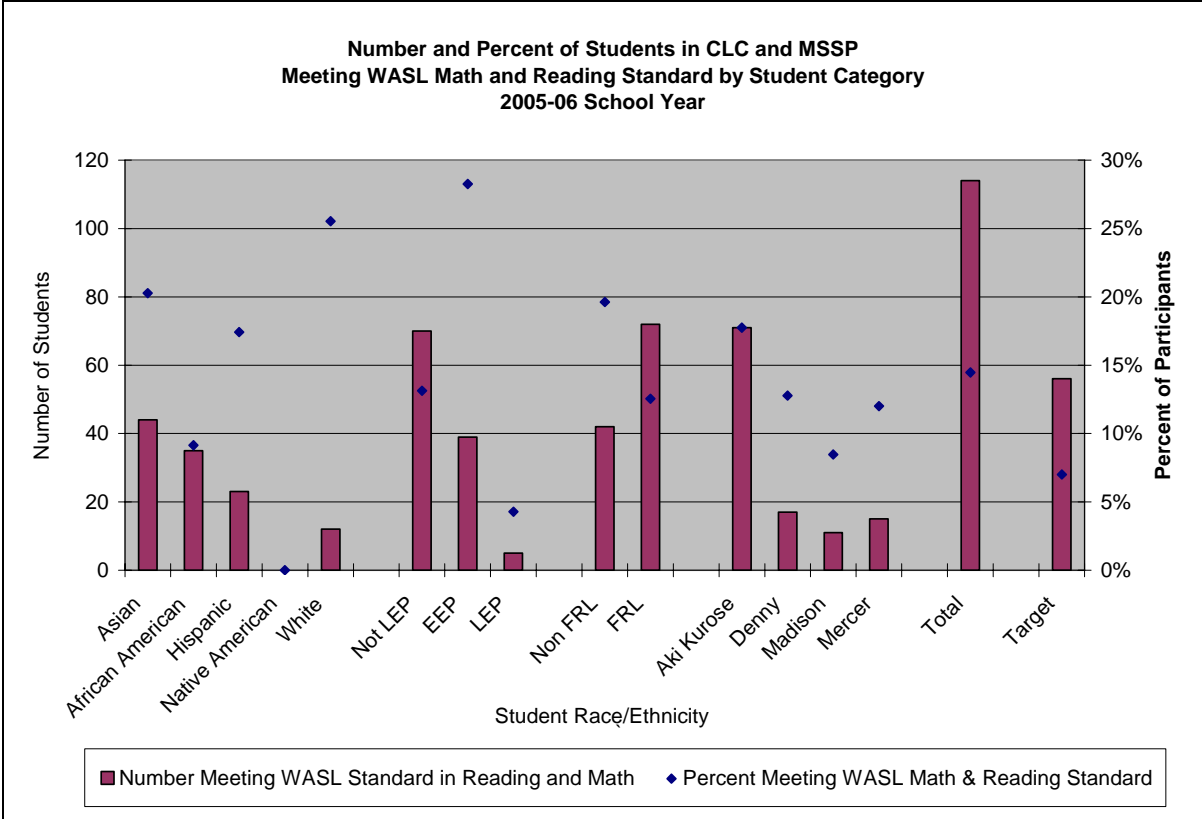
The data show a different picture when analyzed by raw score than by level of improvement. Nearly all student groups in MSSP improved their raw WASL score in both reading and math, as shown in the chart below.



The Levy set academic targets for students who participated in both middle school CLCs and MSSP. These students are a subset of all MSSP students. The target was to serve 800 students in both CLCs and MSSP, and for 56 (seven percent) of those students to achieve academically. Here is what the Levy accomplished:



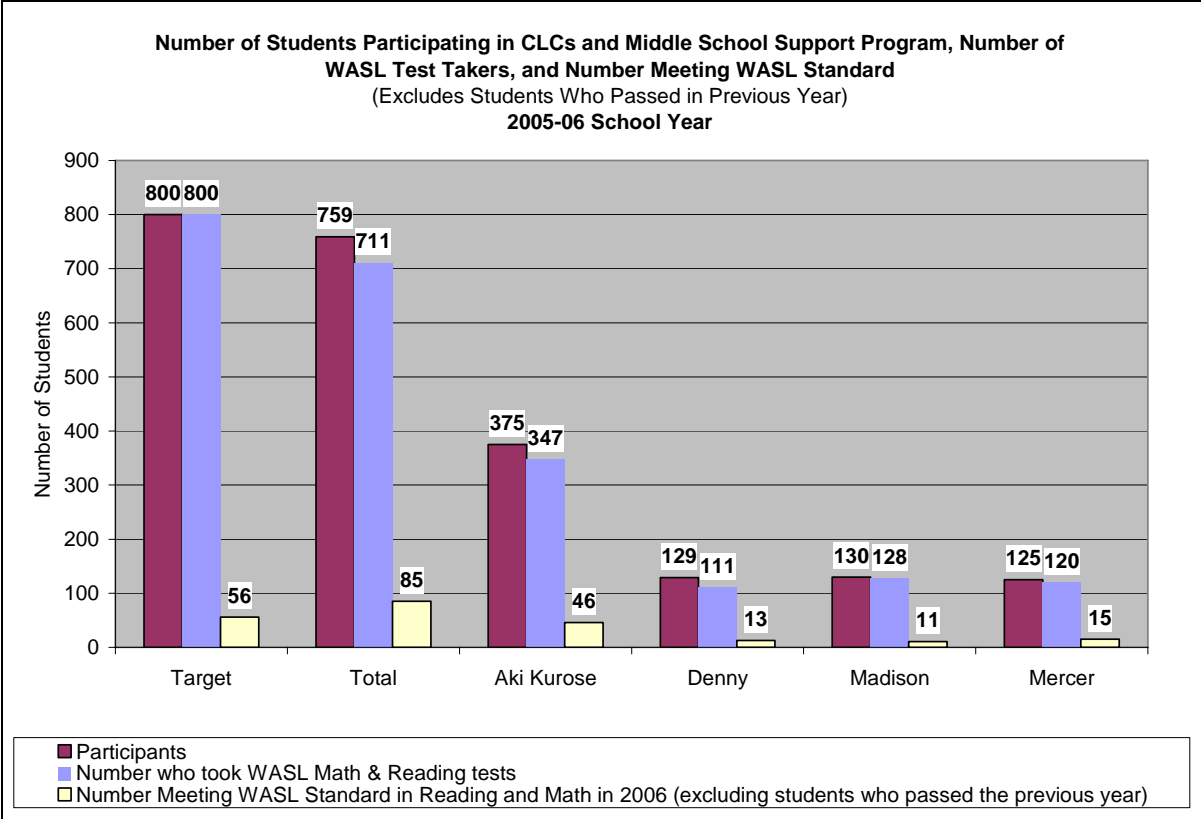
A total of 788 students participated in middle school CLCs. Out of the 788 students participating, 740 took the reading and math WASL, and 114 (14 percent of all participants) met both standards. Middle school CLCs exceeded the Levy target.



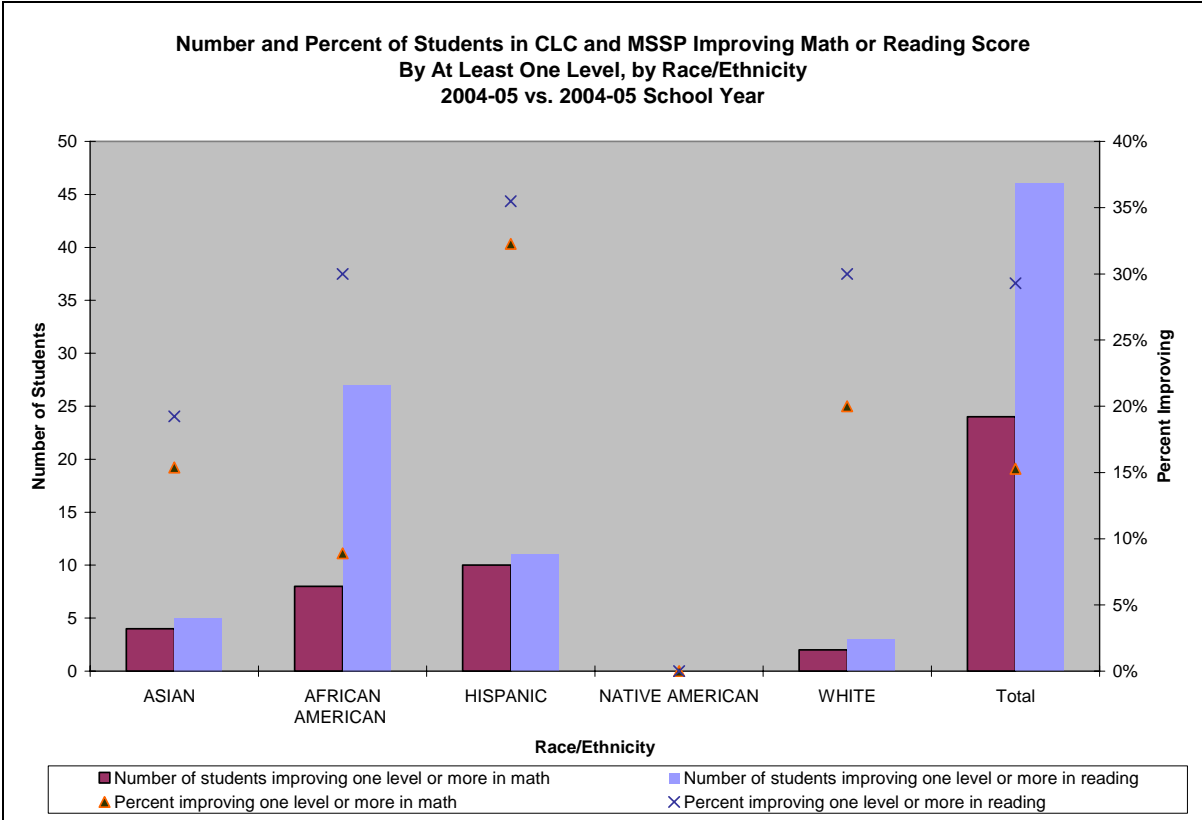
The chart above shows academic outcomes by student category and for the four middle school Innovation Sites (Aki Kurose, Denny, Madison and Mercer Middle Schools). Some student groups out-performed the overall average achievement rate of 14 percent (e.g., 28 percent of EEP students, 26 percent of white students, 20 percent of non-FRL students, and 17 percent of Hispanic students met the target). Some groups performed at lower rates than the overall average (e.g., four percent of LEP students, nine percent of African American students, and 13 percent of FRL students met the target). In addition, academic achievement varied by Innovation school.¹¹

The next chart shows results only for Middle School CLC students who had not previously met the standards. The chart shows a lower number of students (85) meeting the standard.

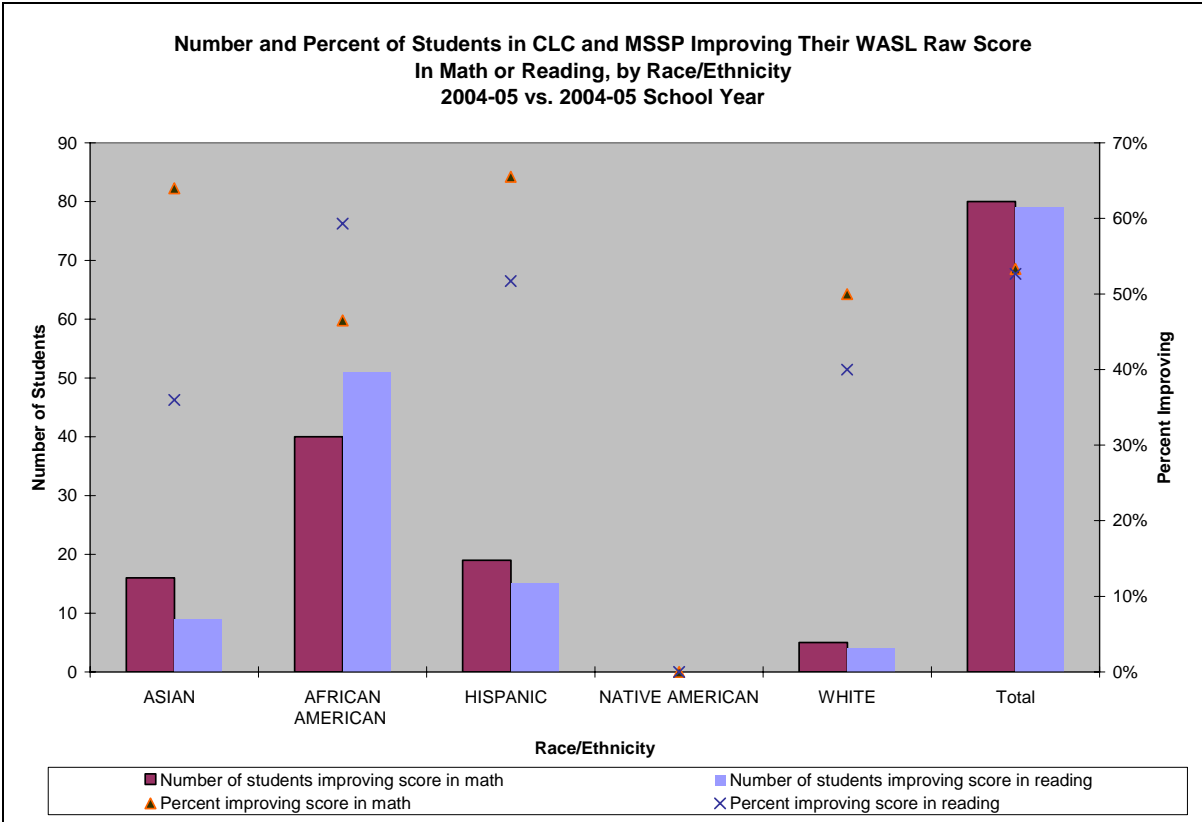
¹¹ In 2005-06, some students who were selected for participation in MSSP at Aki Kurose had previously met both the reading and math WASL standards. This should be noted when comparing student performance across Innovation Sites.



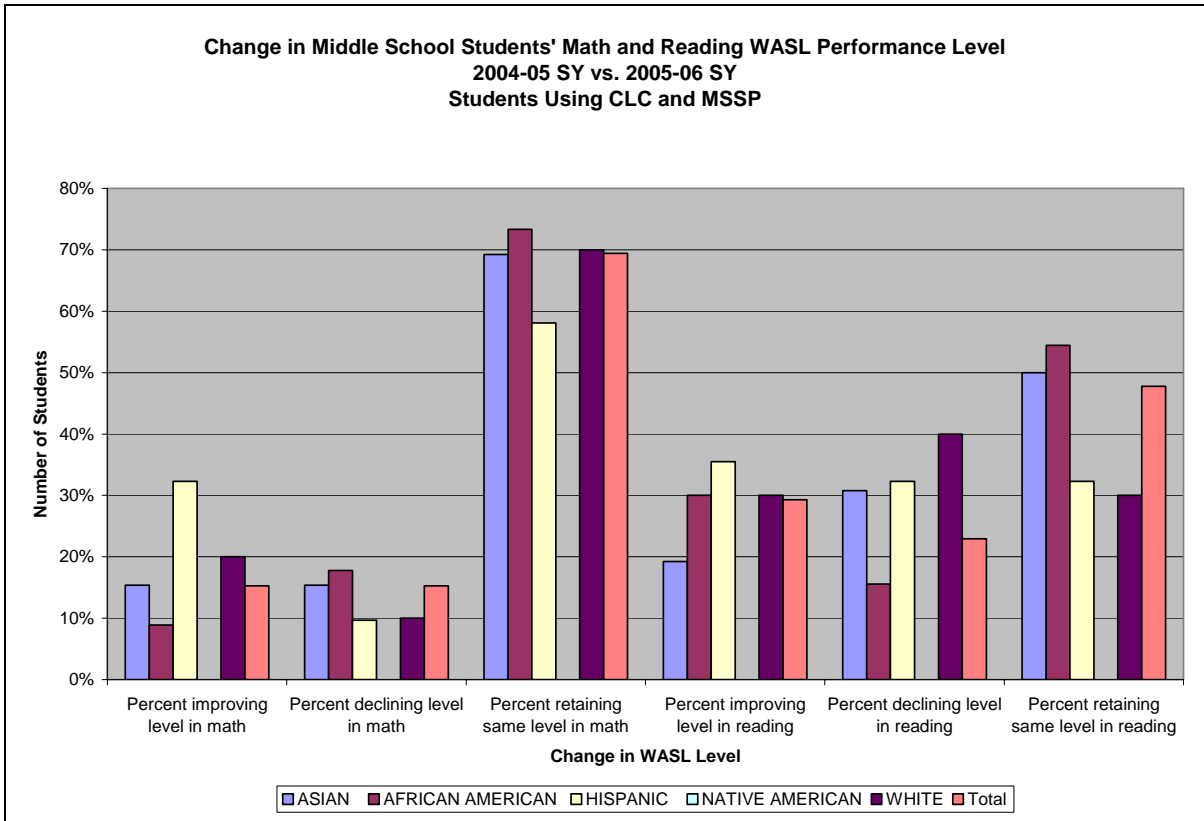
As an indicator of progress, the Levy measured how much student WASL scores improved from the 2004-05 school year to the 2005-06 school year. As the chart below shows, 24 students (15 percent of test-takers) in both CLCs and MSSP improved at least one level on the math WASL, and 46 students (29 percent of test-takers) improved at least one level on the reading WASL. Greater numbers and percentages of students improved at least one level on the reading WASL than math WASL. This was true for all student categories except for Asian and Hispanic students.



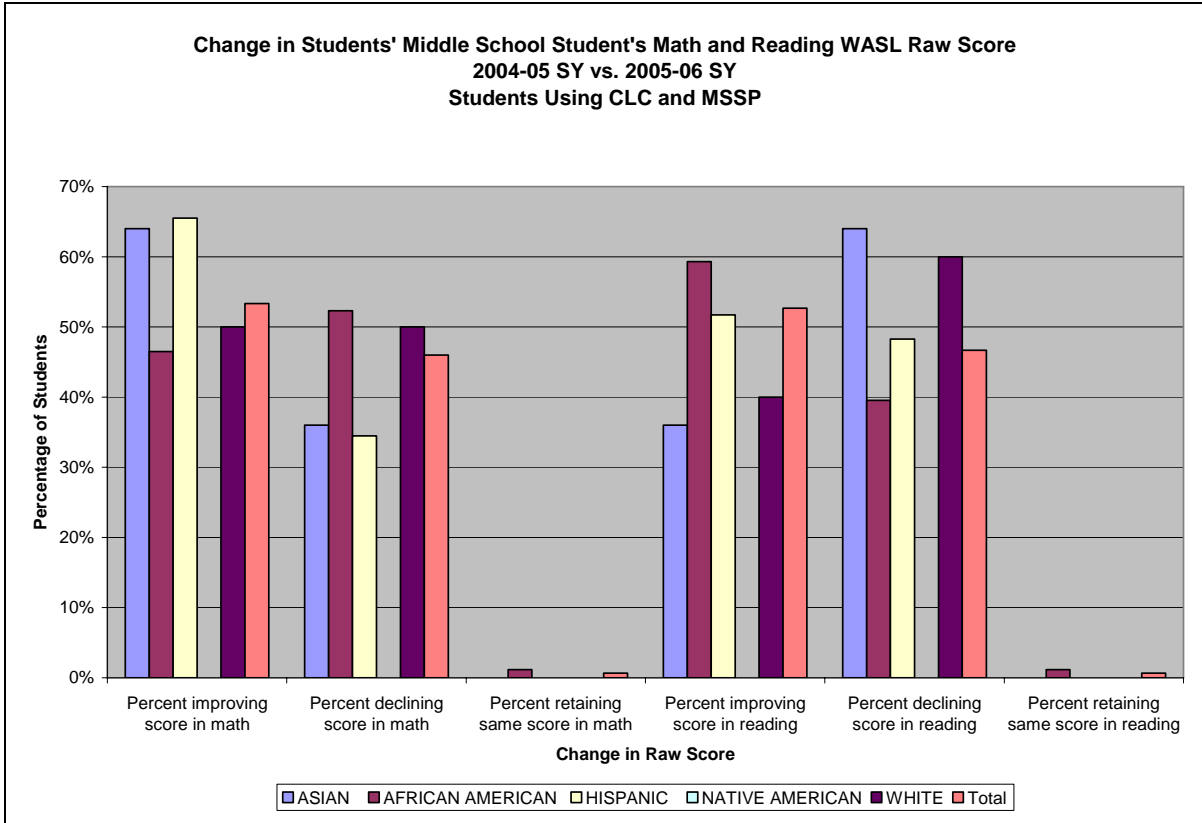
The next chart shows the number and percentage of students who improved their raw WASL scores. The gaps in improvement between reading and math were smaller here; the total number and percentage of students improving in each subject were nearly equal.



The Levy also tracked the percentage of students in middle school CLCs and MSSP who improved, declined or retained the same WASL score from 2004-05 to 2005-06. Overall, greater percentages of students retained the same scores in math and reading than improved or declined their raw scores. However, a greater percentage of Hispanic students improved their reading levels (35 percent) than declined (32 percent) or retained the same level (32 percent). Additionally, a greater percentage of white students declined their reading levels (40 percent) than improved (30 percent) or retained the same level (30 percent).



The change in students' raw WASL scores shows a different picture. While greater percentages of students' scores improved than declined overall, the results were different by student group. Greater percentages of African American students declined than improved their math scores, and equal percentages of white students improved and declined their math scores. Finally, greater percentages of Asian and white students declined than improved their reading scores.



Actions Taken So Far Based on Data

Based on the data here, the City has already taken action to improve middle school programs.

Actions so far include:

- Students identified in 2006-07 need help academically.
- CLCs operated by the City Parks Department adopted an “enrollment” model requiring students to commit to specific, high levels of participation; and,
- The MSSP Innovation Site model has leveraged more than \$1 million from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Nesholm Family Foundation, which will enhance the Levy’s ability to improve academic outcomes.
- Training for CLC staff is aligned with school goals.
- CLC staff are developing a plan to frequently assess and respond to students’ academic skill levels.

Actions Recommended for the Future

In addition to the actions already taken, the City recommends taking the following actions in the future:

- o Middle school programs should continue and enhance their strong focus on helping students who are academically struggling.
- o Improve on current strategies or use new strategies to impact middle school students' math outcomes.
- o Continue to collaborate with schools in order to align middle school CLC curricula with student learning in school.

Performance-Based Pay

Agencies have earned the following amounts of performance pay based on 2005-06 student outcomes.

Middle School Programs Total Performance Commitment Earned, 2005-06 School Year			
MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS	Contract Total	Performance Commitment Portion	Performance Commitment Earned as a Percentage of Total Contract
Middle School CLCs (Parks)*	\$1,735,985	\$70,315 (4%)	\$39,247
Middle School CLCs (YMCA)	\$451,863	\$53,054 (12%)	\$53,054 (12%)
Middle School Support Program (SPS)	\$903,200	\$225,800 (25%)	\$225,800 (25%)

*Amounts based on 2005 and 2006 calendar years, not school years.

**High-Risk Youth
Program Description**

The FEL invests in intensive case management services to return high-risk middle and high school youth to school, keep them in school and graduate. The program, called Seattle Team for Youth (STFY), aims to provide these youth with an opportunity for educational success.

Key aspects of the program include:

- 18 case managers who link youth to culturally-appropriate services to ensure academic achievement. Community-based case managers access ethnic and linguistic resources unavailable in most mainstream schools. Case management services help youth navigate the school and court systems and access tutoring, mentoring, health, mental health, employment, and drug and alcohol services. Regular contact between case managers, clients, their families, and schools provide a stable, consistent, and positive adult relationship that is often lacking in a young person’s life.
- Case management services focused on southwest and south Seattle. These neighborhoods show the highest poverty rates, lowest attendance rates, and largest numbers of youth with low grade point averages. STFY case managers work with high schools with the highest dropout rates and the highest percent of youth failing academically. These schools include Cleveland, Franklin, Rainier Beach, Chief Sealth, West Seattle, South Lake, Marshall, and Interagency.
- The program brings together CBOs with the Seattle Police Department, Seattle Public Schools, and Levy School-Based Health Centers to work collaboratively toward reducing the dropout rate and improving educational outcomes.

The STFY budget for 2005 and 2006 and actuals for 2005 are shown below.

Support for High-Risk Youth Budget		
2005 Revised	2005 Actuals	2006 Adopted
\$400,108	\$389,320	\$1,226,297

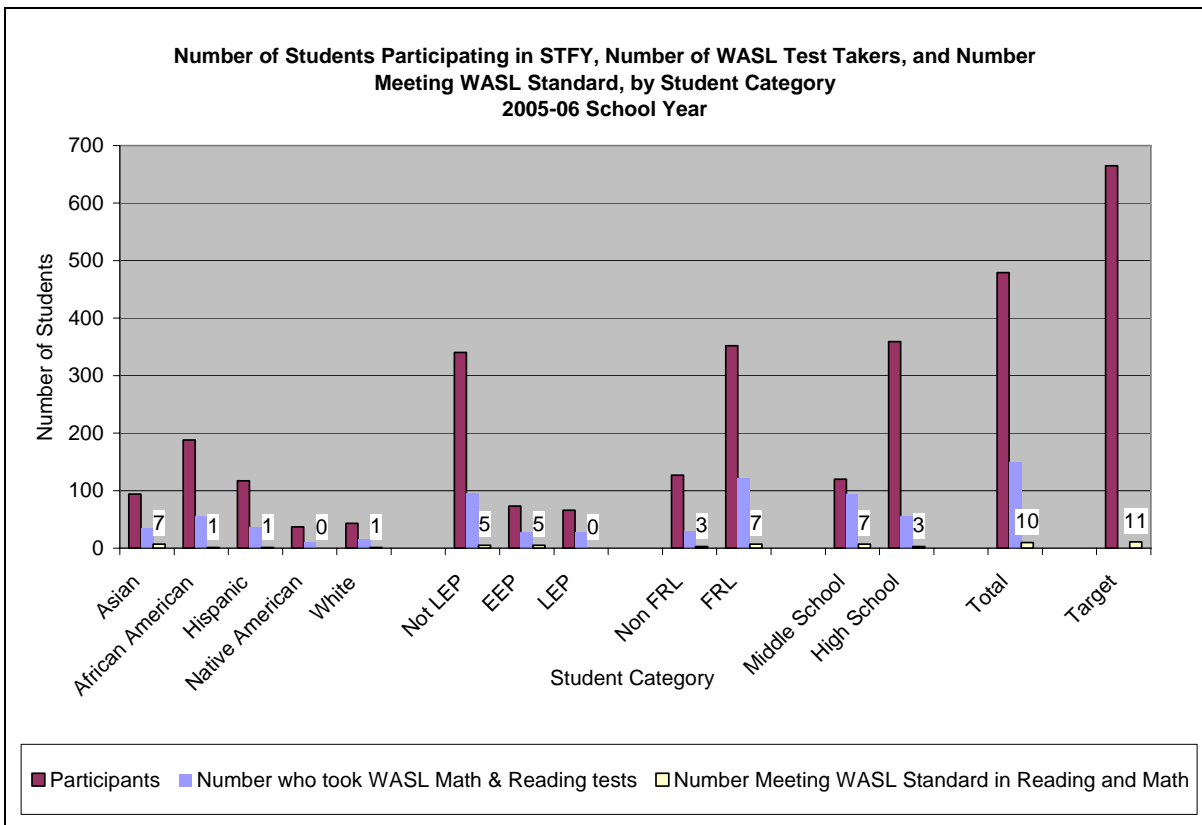
Overall Observations on Seattle Team for Youth Investments in 2005-06

- STFY came very close to meeting its targets for helping high-risk students stay in school and achieve academically. STFY appears to have some impact on students staying in school/returning to school.
- This investment does not appear to be effective at helping students achieve academically.
- Most of the students who met the academic target were Asian. This indicates that in order to help close the achievement gap, the program needs to help additional populations of students achieve academically.

Outcomes

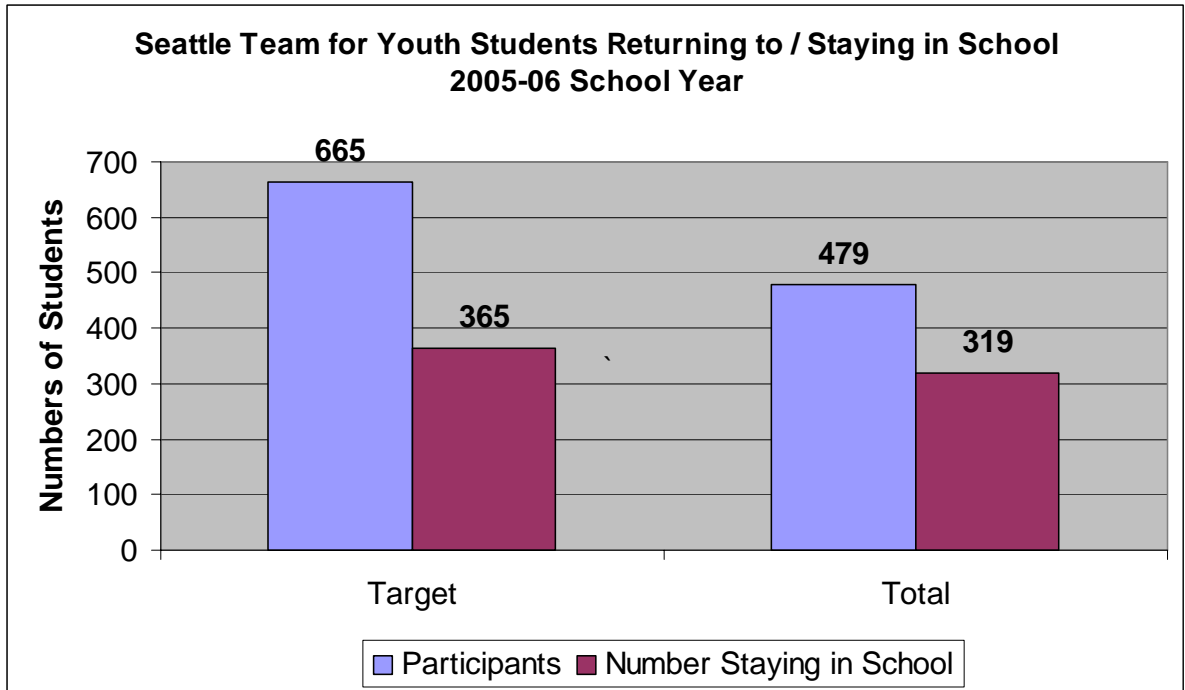
Seattle Team for Youth enrolled 479 middle and high school students who provided a valid student ID number in case management in 2005-06.¹² This is a lower number than the target enrollment of 665, yet the program came close to meeting its academic achievement target. Out of all 479 students participating, 150 students took the reading and math WASL, and 10 students achieved academically by meeting both standards. The academic achievement target was 11.

The program enrolled higher numbers of African American, Hispanic, non-LEP and low-income students than students in other categories. It is interesting to note that seven out of 10 students who achieved academically were Asian, yet Asian students comprised only 23 percent of all test takers.

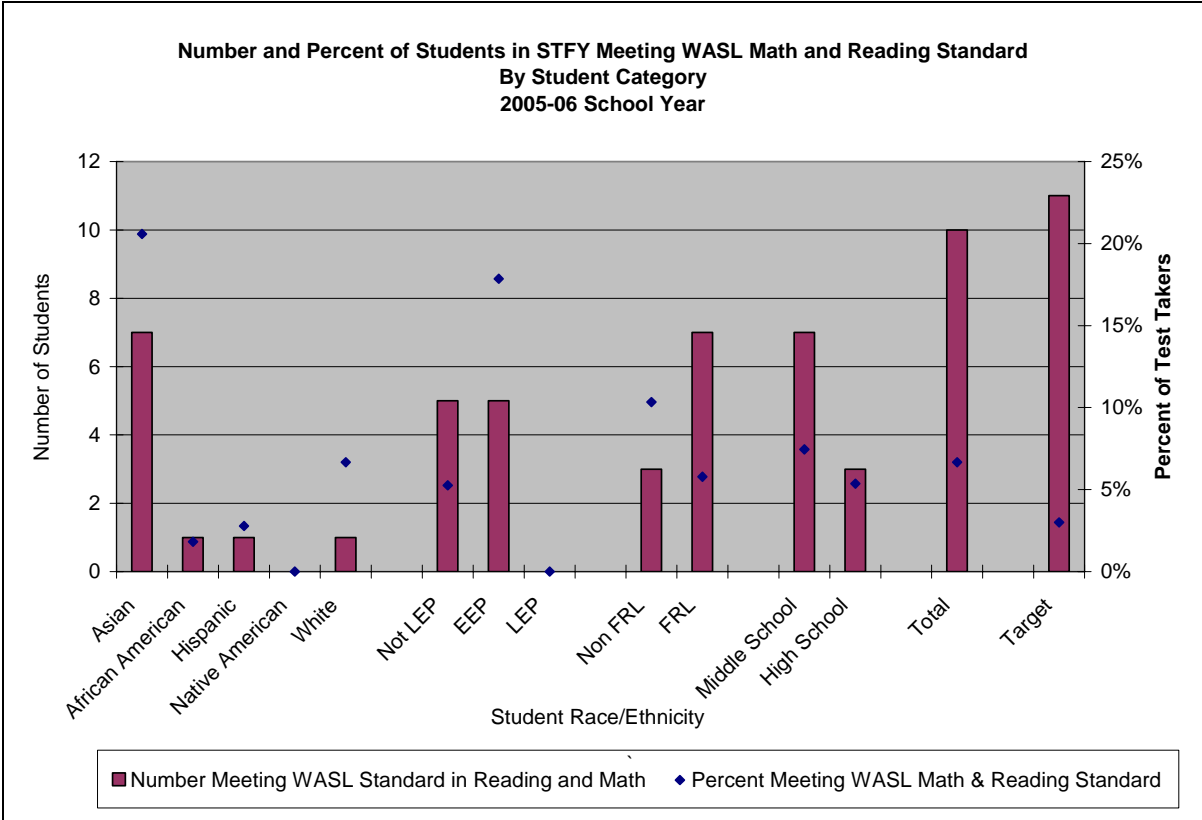


¹² In addition to the 479 students STFY served who had valid student ID numbers, the program served 111 students who did not have valid ID numbers.

Seattle Team for Youth also set a target of helping at least 365 students who were at high risk of dropping out, or who had already dropped out, to stay in or return to school. As the chart below shows, the program helped 319 students stay in school.



As the next chart shows, seven percent of all test takers in STFY achieved academically. This is two percent of all participants, which is slightly lower than the target of helping three percent of all participants achieve. The percentages of academic achievement were lower than the overall average for all student categories except for non-FRL, EEP, Asian and white students. Greater numbers and percentages of middle school students than high school students in STFY achieved academically. It should be noted that the numbers are very small in this case.



Actions Taken So Far Based on Data

- o The Levy has collaborated with Neighborhood House, a local non-profit organization, to implement the CASA-Start case management program in middle schools. This collaboration provides an opportunity to reallocate STFY resources to high schools.
- o The City has shifted STFY funds to hire a case manager to serve East African youth, based on demand.
- o The City has hired a graduate student to study the most effective dropout prevention and academic achievement strategies.

Performance-Based Pay

Agencies have earned the following amounts of performance pay based on 2005-06 student outcomes.

Seattle Team for Youth High-Risk Case Management			
Total Performance Pay Earned			
2005-06 School Year			
Agency	Contract Total (05-06 SY)	Performance Commitment Portion	Performance Commitment Earned as a Percentage of Total Contract
Atlantic Street Center	\$180,000	\$71,817 (40%)	\$66,453 (37%)
Center for Career Alternatives	\$122,000	\$50,370 (41%)	\$48,631 (40%)
CONSEJO Counseling & Referral Service	\$60,000	\$22,628 (38%)	\$20,339 (34%)
El Centro de la Raza	\$164,000	\$62,158 (30%)	\$62,158 (38%)
Powerful Voices	\$45,000	\$13,500 (30%)	\$9,517 (21%)
SafeFutures	\$120,000	\$49,275 (41%)	\$47,106 (39%)
SW Youth & Family Services	\$149,000	\$48,740 (33%)	\$38,730 (26%)
United Indian of All Tribes Foundation	\$120,000	\$48,118 (40%)	\$31,417 (26%)
YMCA	\$60,000	\$19,147 (32%)	\$19,146 (32%)
Total	\$1,020,000	\$385,753 (38%)	\$343,497 (34%)

Student Health

Program Description

The FEL invests in student health services for middle and high school students. The Levy makes two investments: School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) in all ten comprehensive high schools and four middle schools; and school nurses in the schools with SBHCs.¹³ The health centers are sponsored by five local healthcare organizations: Group Health Cooperative; Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic; Public Health Seattle & King County; Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers; and Swedish Medical Center.

SBHCs provide comprehensive primary health care, including both medical and mental health care, to adolescent students. SBHCs also provide screenings, health assessments, and interventions that focus on students who are at risk of academic problems or dropping out of school. SBHCs address the high-risk behaviors most common among adolescents, including drug use, violence, high-risk sex, teenage pregnancy and chronic conditions such as asthma or depression. SBHCs integrate risk prevention strategies into primary health care, with an emphasis on providing culturally appropriate mental and behavioral health interventions. SBHCs continue to provide primary care to proportionally more African American, Latino, and low-income students, which are the same student populations who are academically challenged. School nursing services focus on improving childhood immunization rates and managing chronic health conditions. In addition, school nurses screen struggling students for behavior risk factors and provide appropriate follow-up with parents, educators, and service providers.

The budget for Student Health for 2005 and 2006 and actuals for 2005 are shown below.

Student Health	2005	2005	2006
	Revised	Actuals	Adopted
Clinics	\$ 883,029	\$ 883,029	\$2,712,313
Nurses*	\$ 224,773	\$ -	\$688,910
Administration	\$ 123,089	\$ 123,089	\$377,914
Total:	\$ 1,230,891	\$ 1,006,118	\$ 3,779,137

*Expenditures for 2005 nurses occurred in 2006.

Overall Observations on Student Health Investments in 2005-06

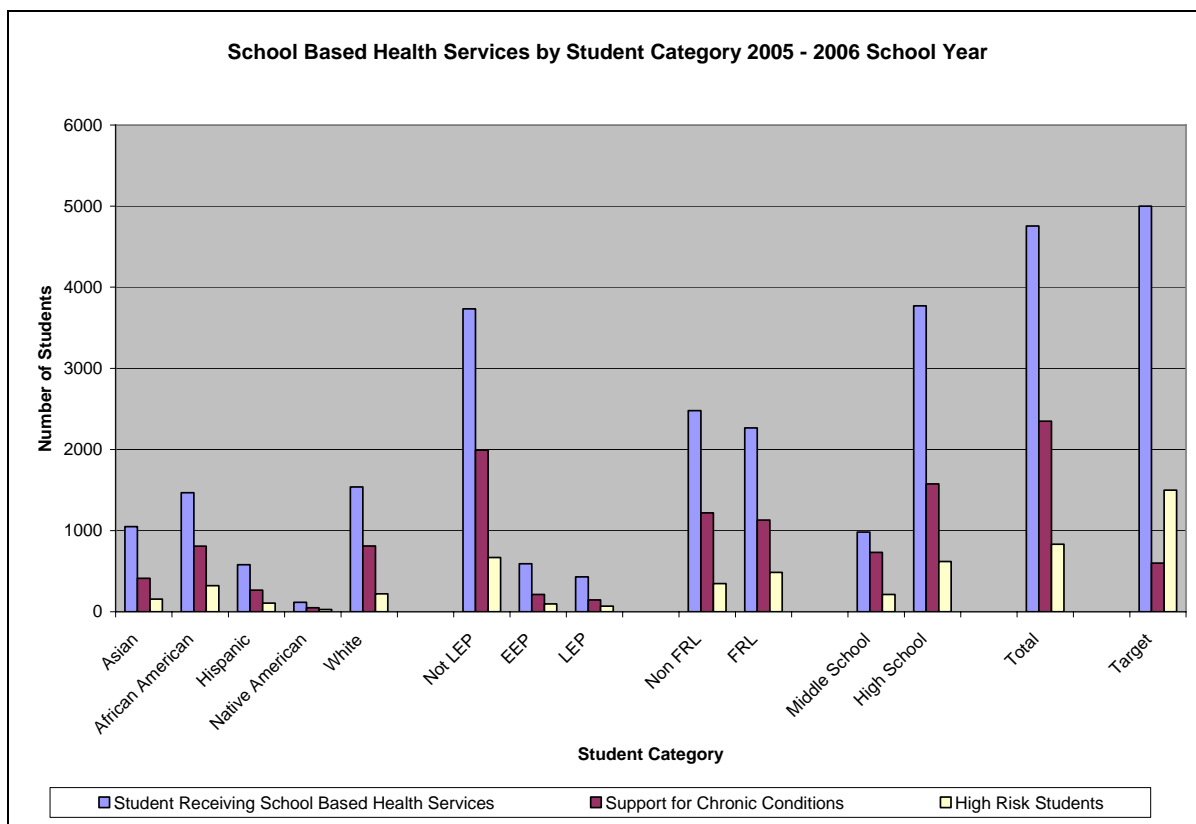
- Student health investments are more effective so far at helping students with chronic health conditions than helping students academically.
- Middle schools helped proportionally more students manage chronic health conditions.
- The academic target for 2005-06 was very low and should be increased.
- Programs served proportionally more African American, Hispanic, and low-income students, which are groups of students who tend to make up the achievement gap.

¹³ The FEL invests in a portion of school nurses’ time in schools with SBHCs.

Outcomes

The City set two types of targets for Student Health investments: targets for providing primary health care to students, and targets for helping those students achieve academically. Targets for health care include providing primary care in SBHCs, helping students cope with chronic conditions, identifying students who are at high academic risk, and immunizing students. The academic target is for students to meet the math and reading WASL standards.

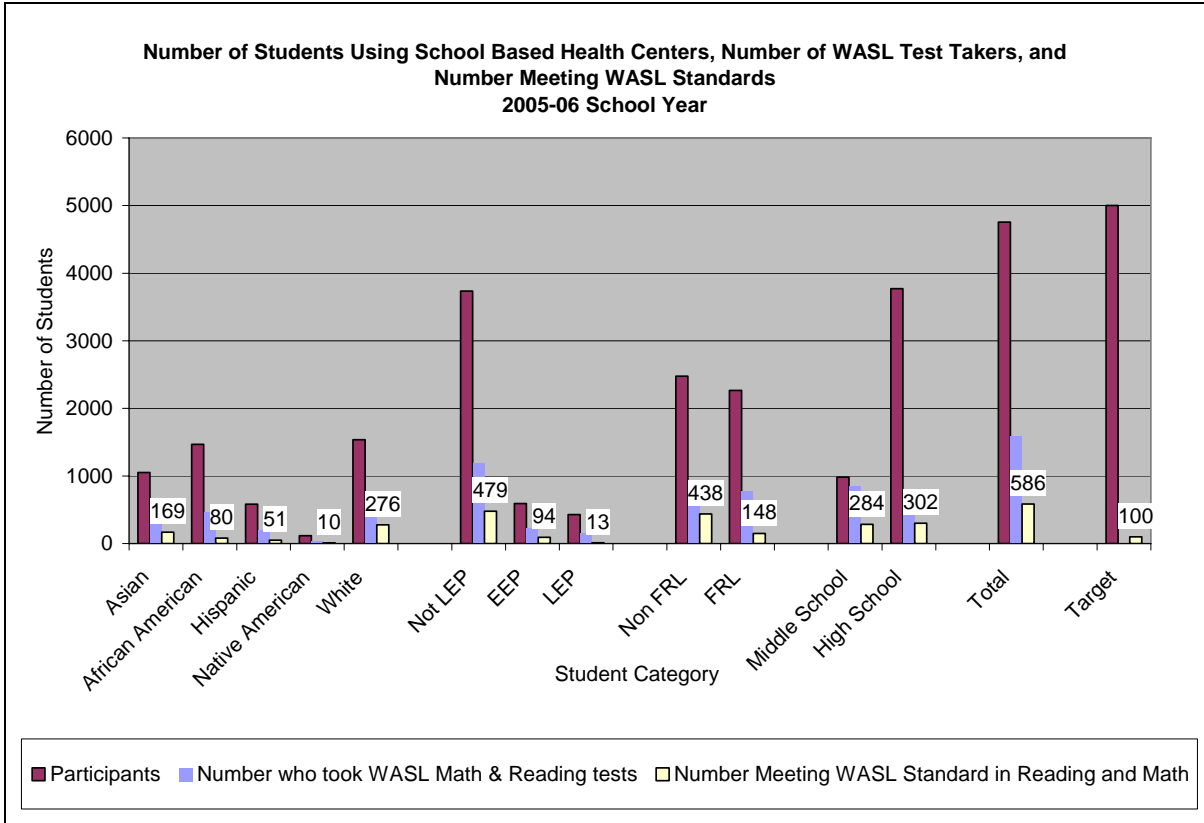
Student Health programs came close to meeting the target for primary health care, and far exceeded the academic target. The Levy set a goal of providing 5,000 middle and high school students with primary health care in School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) in 2005-06, and of helping 100 (two percent) of those students to achieve academically by meeting the math and reading WASL standards. In addition, the Levy set goals to help 600 students with chronic health conditions and to identify 1,500 students at high academic risk. Here is what the Levy accomplished in Student Health:



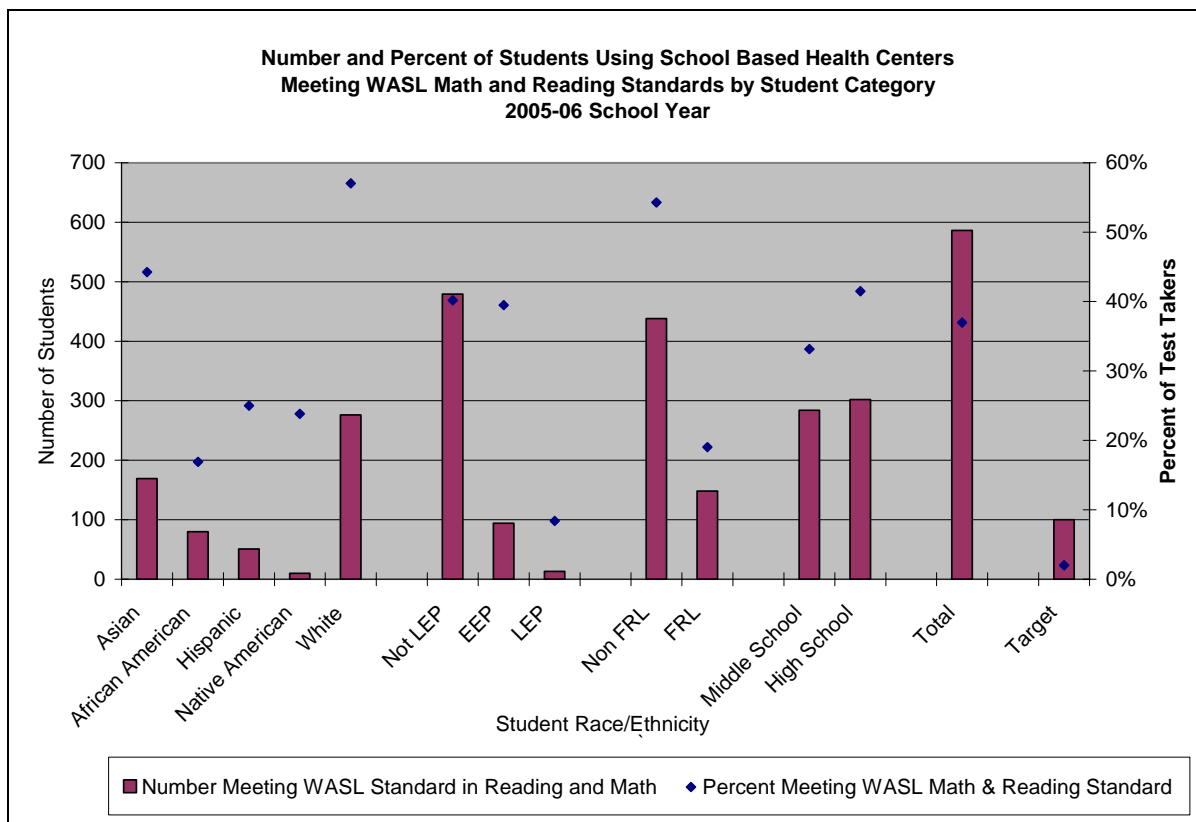
As the chart above shows, the Levy served 4,755 students in SBHCs. This is close to the target of serving 5,000 students. Student Health programs served higher numbers of non-LEP, white and African American students than students in other categories. In addition, more high school than middle school students participated, since there are 10 SBHCs in high schools and only four SBHCs in middle schools. The Levy assisted 2,350 students with chronic conditions, which far exceeded the target of 600. It is interesting to note that a greater proportion of middle school students than high school students were assisted with

chronic conditions. Finally, the Levy identified 833 students who were at high academic risk, which fell short of the target of identifying 1,500 students.

The next chart shows the number of students served in SBHCs, the number who took the WASL in reading and math, and the number who met the standards. Of the 4,755 students served in SBHCs, 1,585 took the math and reading WASL, and 586 met both standards.



As the next chart shows, this means 37 percent of all SBHC test takers, and 12 percent of all participants, met the target. This is far higher than the target of 100 (two percent). However, the achievement gap is very apparent in the differences between the percentages of each student group who met the target. While the percentages of white and Asian students are far above the average of 37 percent of all SBHC students who met the target, the percentages for all other student groups are far below 37 percent. The percentage of LEP students who met the target was only eight percent. There was also a sharp difference in the percentage of FRL and non-FRL students who met the target. Finally, a greater percentage of high school students (41%) than middle school students (33%) met the target.



Indicators

While school-based primary care is available to all enrolled students, SBHCs provide services to proportionally more students that tend to populate the achievement gap. In 2005-2006, SBHCs served proportionally more African American and Hispanic students than white and Asian students. Students from low income families represent almost half of all SBHC users. Those eligible for the FRL represented just under 48 percent of all those served by SBHCs, as compared to 39 percent of all students enrolled in schools served by SBHCs. However, SBHCs have not been as successful in their outreach to LEP students. SBHCs are developing more partnerships with community organizations that can provide a range of linguistically and culturally appropriate services to diverse students with limited English proficiency. For example, Puget Sound Neighborhood Health Centers recently collaborated with appropriate community organizations in fund-raising to establish mental health support for immigrant and refugee students.

Actions Taken So Far Based on Data

- Public Health is providing grant-writing assistance and technical support to a consortium of agencies and educators in order to establish school-based mental health services at the Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center. Consortium membership includes Atlantic Street Center, El Centro de la Raza, and Refugee Women's Alliance.

Performance-Based Pay

Agencies have earned the following amounts of performance pay based on 2005-06 student outcomes.

Student Health			
Total Performance Pay Earned, 2005-06 School Year			
	Total Contract Amount	Total Performance Pay Possible	Total Performance Pay Earned as a Percentage of Contract
Public Health-Seattle & King County	\$2,489,548	\$373,432 (15% of contract)	\$373,432 (15%)

Conclusion and Next Steps

This Annual Report completes the first year of the new, outcomes-based Families & Education Levy. The purposes of this report were to show first-year outcomes of the Levy for the first year, identify lessons the City has learned from the first year of implementation, and to suggest areas for improvement.

Throughout the first year of implementation, the City has rigorously tracked student indicators and outcomes based on academic performance. As a result of setting outcomes and tracking student progress, the City has more information about how well Levy investments are impacting academic success, and is better equipped to make investment decisions based on data. Although the data in this report represent only the first year of Levy implementation, the City is now in a better position to examine, improve or change investments if necessary, in order to maximize Levy funds for student outcomes.

The City has learned many lessons from the data in this report. First, the data show concerning performance in some areas, and the City must examine whether the Levy is investing in the most effective programs in order to achieve the outcomes the Levy intended to achieve for Seattle's students. In addition, most Levy targets set in the first year were far too low and should be increased dramatically. Also, the achievement gap – based on race, income level and English language ability – remains persistent.

Another important lesson made clear by the data is the Levy needs to more selectively identify and serve students who need academic help – many of the students served in the first year had already achieved academically. Finally, there is a need to set specific participation levels for how much and how often students should participate in programs in order to achieve academically. The Office for Education has already begun to address these areas for improvement and will use these lessons to guide course-corrections for the 2007-08 school year.

The Office for Education will present this Annual Report to the LOC in mid-January 2007. Next, OFE will write a Mid-Year Report on the first-semester indicators of the 2006-07 school year in March 2007. The Mid-Year Report and this Annual Report will serve as the basis for OFE's recommended course-correction to the LOC.

Overview of the Middle School Support Program

The Families and Education Levy investment in the Middle School Support Program (MSSP) furthers students' academic achievement by supporting innovative strategies in building leadership and classroom practice.

The Levy invests directly in all Seattle Public Schools (SPS) middle schools and also supports a team of three consultants who work with principals and school-based teams to make changes in building structures and schedules, student assessments, professional development and classroom practice that improve academic results for middle school kids. The work of the MSSP, broadly stated, occurs on two levels:

- Supporting building leaders to be flexible and innovative
- Improving classroom instruction

Partnerships with other middle school stakeholders are integral to the MSSP and are key in achieving results. Afterschool programs, community-based organizations, counselors, case managers and families are part of the day-to-day work of the MSSP at every SPS middle school.

The assessed needs of individual students drive the work of the MSSP. The consultant team works with the principals and the school-based teams to set academic achievement targets by student and by school, track indicators that show progress toward the targets and develop milestones that identify key achievements.

The work of the MSSP is grounded in best practices and research. One of the benefits of the consultant team is their ability to infuse the on-the-ground work of principals, teachers and school-based teams with middle school reform research and best practices in leadership and classroom instruction. For example, the work of Richard Elmore is serving as one learning tool for bringing together middle school principals and teams into professional learning communities. In Elmore's book, *School Reform from the Inside Out*, he discusses principles for building a new structure for school leadership. Several of his principles help illustrate how the work of the MSSP is moving forward:

- ***Maintain a tight instructional focus sustained over time*** – applying the instructional focus to everyone and applying it to a limited number of instructional areas and practices, becoming progressively more ambitious over time
- ***Routinize accountability for practice and performance in face-to-face relationships*** – designing everyone's work primarily in terms of improving the capacity and performance of someone else, including principals of teachers, and teachers of students
- ***Reduce isolation and open practice up to direct observation, analysis and criticism*** – making direct observation and feedback a routine feature, centering group discussion on the instruction work of the school, and modeling desired classroom practice in collegial interactions
- ***Exercise differential treatment based on performance and capacity, not on volunteerism*** - acknowledging differences among communities, schools and classrooms within a common framework of improvement¹

Similarly, the Levy investment is furthering work already underway in the Seattle Public Schools to reform middle school instruction and improve the academic achievement of Seattle's middle school students. MSSP efforts are tightly aligned with the work of Seattle Public Schools' middle school director and the district's academic leadership, and are building on the investments of other key partners in middle school reform, including the six-year investment by the Nesholm Family Foundation.

MSSP Structure

The structure of the Levy investment distinguishes between Innovation Sites and Linkage Schools. Four SPS middle schools are designated as Innovation Sites:

- Denny
- Aki Kurose
- Madison
- Mercer

Principals and school-based teams at Innovation Sites meet monthly with the consultant team. The purpose of the monthly meetings is to work within and across the four sites to delve deeply into the work of innovative leadership and improved classroom practice that will lead to increased academic achievement. Approximately \$150,000 was invested in each Innovation site in 2005-2006.

Fifteen additional middle schools and K-8s are Innovation Linkages:

- African American Academy
- Eckstein
- McClure
- Salmon Bay
- TOPS
- Alternative School #1
- Hamilton
- Meany
- Seahawks Academy
- Washington
- Blaine
- Madrona
- Pathfinder
- Summit
- Whitman

Innovation Linkage schools work collaboratively to share resources and purchase services identified as most critical for target groups of students. Principals and school-based teams meet quarterly with the consultant team. Investments in Linkage schools vary based on school size, and ranged from \$3,185 to \$47,775 in 2005-2006.

At the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year, each Innovation Site and Linkage School selected a group of students as the primary focus of the MSSP strategies within their buildings. The sizes of the target groups ranged from as few as four students to as many as 200 and were based on differing criteria including the amount of Levy investment, the most pressing needs within the schools and the planned interventions. School-based teams, which include building leadership, teachers, counselors, afterschool programs and community-based organizations, meet weekly or bi-weekly to review students' progress and drive the services and supports that will lead to improved academic achievement.

Tools for the Work

In order for innovations in leadership and instruction to occur, middle schools must have the tools they need, which include assessments that provide sufficient and frequent student achievement data, and student learning plans (SLPs).

The Levy investment drove an increase in the use of assessment tools over the course of the 2005-2006 school year. Data derived from these assessments is critical in shaping responses to individual student needs and managing progress toward academic targets. The Developmental

Reading Assessment (DRA) is now administered two times each year to middle school students and middle school students also complete the EduSoft math assessment five times yearly. Moving forward, the MSSP will pilot a computer-based assessment, highly correlated to WASL, that can be administered by afterschool programs.

Student learning plans assure that the school-based teams at each middle school know where students are starting and where they are headed, and can articulate the academic achievement target of each student in the school's MSSP target group. The SLPs are a tool for every stakeholder—including each student and his/her family—who are involved in improving that student's academic success. Every MSSP student—whether attending an Innovation Site or a Linkage School—has a student learning plan. SLPs are the concrete tool that furthers a key underlying principle of the Middle School Support Program, which is that the school-based teams know their students well. They know their names, they understand their challenges, and they share—with the student and their fellow team members—in the responsibility for their achievement.

Innovation Highlights of the 2005-2006 Middle School Support Program

The story behind the data for the MSSP lies in the exciting innovations that are inspiring teachers and principals and leading to results for middle school students. Two such innovations are:

- The Writing Project
- Walk Throughs

The Writing Project

One of the many strengths of the MSSP, and an added benefit of the Levy's investment in middle schools, is the ability to build upon existing resources and further the impact and influence of work already underway to improve academic achievement for middle school students.

Through the Nesholm Family Foundation, four middle schools, including three of the Levy's Innovation Schools, are participating in a strong reading-focused literacy program. The MSSP has taken the focus on literacy another step forward by investing Levy funds in professional development for middle school teachers through the Reading and Writing Project, based at Teachers College at Columbia University. The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project is a research and staff development organization. The teacher-educators who staff the project are involved in long-lasting collaborations with teachers across the United States through customized professional development programs.

In 2005-2006, MSSP Levy funds were invested to support approximately 20 teachers from eight SPS middle schools to participate in the Writing Project. This professional development opportunity is complementing the reading focus currently supported by the Nesholm Foundation and prioritized by the district.

The goal of the Teachers College project is to support expert literacy instruction within schools through research, writing and professional development of teachers and school leaders. Literacy teaching becomes the entry point for helping teachers make and sustain fundamental changes in classroom practice and for helping school principals and teacher-leaders create and nurture professional learning communities within their schools.

For the MSSP teachers, the Writers' Workshops function as a foundation out of which they can build new images of what is possible in their classrooms and schools. The training helps teachers make and sustain fundamental changes in all their classroom practices. The training prepares teachers to provide writing workshops in their classrooms and to teach students to observe their lives and the world around them, and to collect, draft, revise, and publish well-crafted narrative and expository texts. ²

Walk Throughs

Walk throughs are a powerful professional development tool that support Richard Elmore's principle of opening up classroom practice for use as a learning tool for teachers and principals.

In a walk through, teachers, principals and other stakeholders walk through classrooms to observe students' work. The practice of walk throughs in the MSSP began with the Nesholm Foundation literacy project and provided an opportunity to observe strategies for creating print-rich classrooms. The best walk throughs are those that focus very little on what the teacher is doing, but rather on what students are doing, on evidence of students' learning, and on the classroom environment that supports student achievement. Walk throughs are a strategy for making the work of teaching and learning transparent, and although they can be unsettling for some, walk throughs are becoming an important tool in the MSSP not only for improving direct instruction but also for building a culture of trust and sharing among educators that encourages support and reduces isolation.

¹ Elmore, Richard. School Reform from the Inside Out, Presidential Fellows of Harvard College. 2004

² <http://rwproject.tc.columbia.edu/>