

Literacy for the 21st Century

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MONITORING AND EVALUATION SERVICES

INFORMATION
FOR



DECISION-MAKING

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Overview

This brief document provides a snapshot of objective data depicting the literacy levels of students in the Alexandria City Public Schools. Its purpose is to offer a cursory context for the School Board's discussion of literacy. The report contains information from the 2006 spring Standards of Learning (SOL) administration, the fall 2006 Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT) administration, and results from the 2005-06 administrations of the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) administrations.

The SOL section of the document begins by showing the "cut" scores or the percentage correct needed to pass the various SOL tests given throughout Virginia. Table 1 offers a historical summary of the passing percentages of various ACPS student subgroups on the SOL reading tests. These data were extracted from the Virginia School Report Card available online at

<https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/reportcard/report.do?division=101&schoolName=All>

For example, at third grade in 2006, the unadjusted passing percentage was 79% for all students. This score was up from 68% in 2005. Within third grade, passing percentages ranged from a low of 45% for students with disabilities to a high of 92% for white students. Four line graphs display passing and passing advanced percentages for the major No Child Left Behind (NCLB) subgroups across all of the tested grade levels. Table 2 (data extracted from Harcourt provided hardcopy) summarizes the mean scale scores and passing percentages for each grade level, while also indicating the reporting category scale scores. Lastly, for NCLB reference, a table of the ever increasing annual measurable objectives for reading is shown.

The SDRT section of the document begins with Table 3 which shows the national percentile and grade equivalent scores for each grade level that was tested in fall 2006. Quartile displays for the elementary, middle, and high school impart distributional information about the SDRT at each grade level. In a completely random distribution, approximately 25% of students would fall into each of the quartiles.

Finally, PALS data were extracted from the recently released report. Figures 8 and 9 show spring and fall historical passing percentages for the past four years. Table 4 presents the 2005-06 fall and spring PALS passing percentages for various subgroups. Tables 5 and 6 offer insight into ACPS remediation success in 2005-06 for students who were identified in the fall as needing remediation, as well as ACPS historical remediation success for the past four years.

Standards of Learning

**Virginia Assessments
Cut Scores Established by the Board of Education***

Standards of Learning Tests

SOL Test	Fail/Basic	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
Grade 3			
English: Reading	13 out of 35 items	23 out of 35 items	31 out of 35 items
Mathematics	21 out of 50 items	35 out of 50 items	45 out of 50 items
History & Social Science	NA	27 out of 40 items	35 out of 40 items
Science	NA	27 out of 40 items	36 out of 40 items
Grade 4			
English: Reading	14 out of 35 items	23 out of 35 items	31 out of 35 items
Mathematics	16 out of 50 items	31 out of 50 items	43 out of 50 items
Grade 5			
English: Reading	17 out of 40 items	27 out of 40 items	37 out of 40 items
English: Writing	NA	32 out of 44 items	41 out of 44 items
Mathematics	23 out of 50 items	35 out of 50 items	44 out of 50 items
Virginia Studies	NA	25 out of 40 items	35 out of 40 items
Science	NA	26 out of 40 items	37 out of 40 items
Grade 6			
English: Reading	17 out of 45 items	28 out of 45 items	39 out of 45 items
Mathematics	22 out of 50 items	34 out of 50 items	44 out of 50 items
Grade 7			
English: Reading	17 out of 45 items	28 out of 45 items	39 out of 45 items
Mathematics	19 out of 50 items	31 out of 50 items	42 out of 50 items
Grade 8			
English: Reading	17 out of 45 items	29 out of 45 items	40 out of 45 items
English: Writing	NA	30 out of 48 items	46 out of 48 items
Mathematics	19 out of 50 items	32 out of 50 items	42 out of 50 items
History & Social Science	NA	26 out of 50 items	43 out of 50 items
Science	NA	29 out of 50 items	45 out of 50 items
Content Specific History			
Virginia Studies	NA	25 out of 40 items	35 out of 40 items
U.S. History to 1877	NA	25 out of 40 items	36 out of 40 items
U.S. History from 1877 to present	NA	23 out of 40 items	34 out of 40 items
Civics and Economics	NA	21 out of 40 items	34 out of 40 items
High School			
English: Reading (1995)	NA	24 out of 42 items	37 out of 42 items
English: Reading (2002)	NA	28 out of 50 items	42 out of 50 items
English: Writing (2002)	NA	37 out of 54 items	49 out of 54 items
Algebra I	NA	27 out of 50 items	45 out of 50 items
Algebra II (2001)	NA	31 out of 50 items	45 out of 50 items
Algebra II (2001 Revised)	NA	30 out of 50 items	45 out of 50 items
Geometry	NA	27 out of 45 items	41 out of 45 items
Earth Science	NA	30 out of 50 items	45 out of 50 items
Biology	NA	26 out of 50 items	45 out of 50 items
Chemistry	NA	27 out of 50 items	45 out of 50 items
World History (I) to 1500 A.D. (1995 Standards)	NA	33 out of 61 items	55 out of 61 items
World History (I) to 1500 A.D. (2001 Standards)	NA	30 out of 60 items	50 out of 60 items
World History (II) from 1500 A.D. to the present (1995 Standards)	NA	32 out of 63 items	57 out of 63 items
World History (II) from 1500 A.D. to the present (2001 Standards)	NA	30 out of 60 items	50 out of 60 items
Virginia & U.S. History (1995 Standards)	NA	34 out of 61 items	55 out of 61 items
Virginia & U.S. History (2001 Standards)	NA	30 out of 60 items	51 out of 60 items
World Geography (1995 Standards)	NA	28 out of 60 items	49 out of 60 items
World Geography (2001 Standards)	NA	33 out of 60 items	50 out of 60 items

*The cut scores shown in the chart were set by the Virginia Board of Education. Subsequent cut scores may vary slightly. Please see <http://www.pea.k12.va.us/VDOE/Assessment/Solss3.pdf> for more information.

NOTE: Cut scores adopted by the Virginia Board of Education on May 24, 2006, are in bold print.

TABLE 1
Alexandria City Public Schools
2003-2006 Unadjusted SOL Passing Percentages
by No Child Left Behind Subgroups - Reading

Students Subgroup	Grade 3				Grade 4				Grade 5				Grade 6				Grade 7				Grade 8				Grade 11			
	03 %	04 %	05 %	06 %	03 %	04 %	05 %	06 %	03 %	04 %	05 %	06 %	03 %	04 %	05 %	06 %	03 %	04 %	05 %	06 %	03 %	04 %	05 %	06 %	03 %	04 %	05 %	06 %
All Students	61 ^b	60	68	79	-	-	-	81	76 ^b	80	79	85	-	-	-	80	-	-	-	75	59 ^c	67	68	69	92 ^b	88	79	77
American Indian ^a	NS	NS	NS	NS	-	-	-	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	-	-	-	NS	-	-	-	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Asian/Pacific Islander	80	75	74	81	-	-	-	95	80	83	87	92	-	-	-	89	-	-	-	75	51	76	68	68	96	93	77	70
Black	49	48	61	75	-	-	-	74	70	74	74	78	-	-	-	75	-	-	-	70	52	59	62	62	90	83	67	72
Hispanic	58	57	63	70	-	-	-	78	71	79	74	86	-	-	-	76	-	-	-	68	51	60	65	63	86	84	78	72
White	85	84	86	92	-	-	-	94	93	94	93	96	-	-	-	94	-	-	-	91	88	90	93	89	98	97	95	93
Unspecified Race	NS	NS	NS	85	-	-	-	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	-	-	-	NS	-	-	-	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	36	NS	NS	NS
Female	65	65	76	84	-	-	-	86	77	86	84	87	-	-	-	84	-	-	-	78	64	71	71	74	92	90	78	78
Male	57	56	62	73	-	-	-	77	75	76	75	83	-	-	-	76	-	-	-	71	54	64	66	64	92	86	79	77
Students with Disabilities	42	31	39	45	-	-	-	59	48	50	62	64	-	-	-	59	-	-	-	48	24	33	33	40	71	65	56	55
LEP	47	55	64	72	-	-	-	81	55	73	68	82	-	-	-	61	-	-	-	55	9	47	49	48	87	85	57	60
Economically Disadvantaged	47	48	60	70	-	-	-	74	68	75	72	80	-	-	-	77	-	-	-	64	47	58	60	60		84	68	69

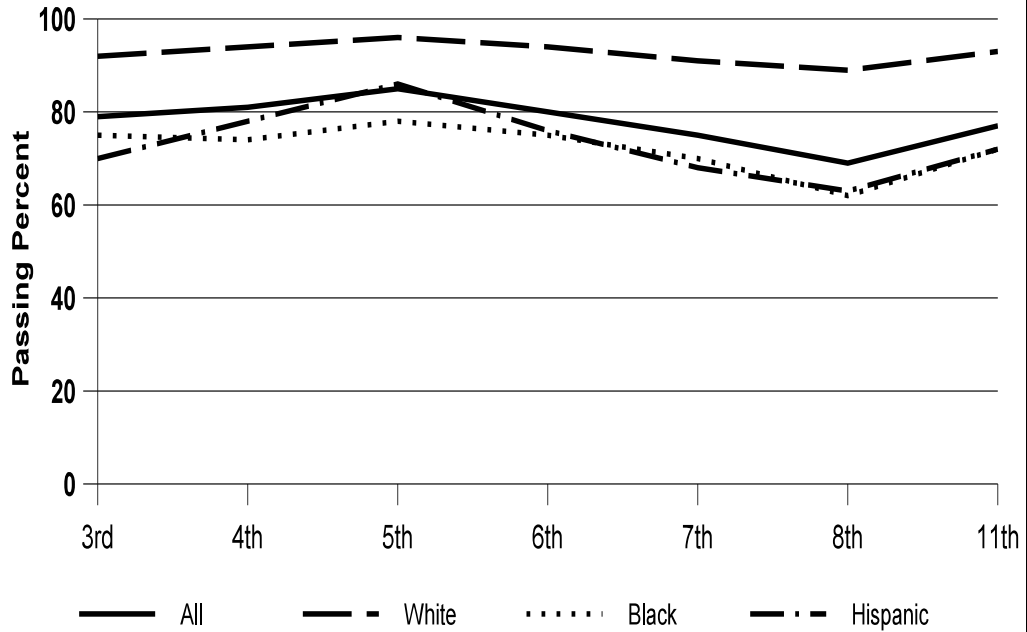
^aLess than 5 students tested in each subtest.

^bIncludes students in special situations.

NS= No Students

ACPS 2006 Unadjusted SOL Reading Scores

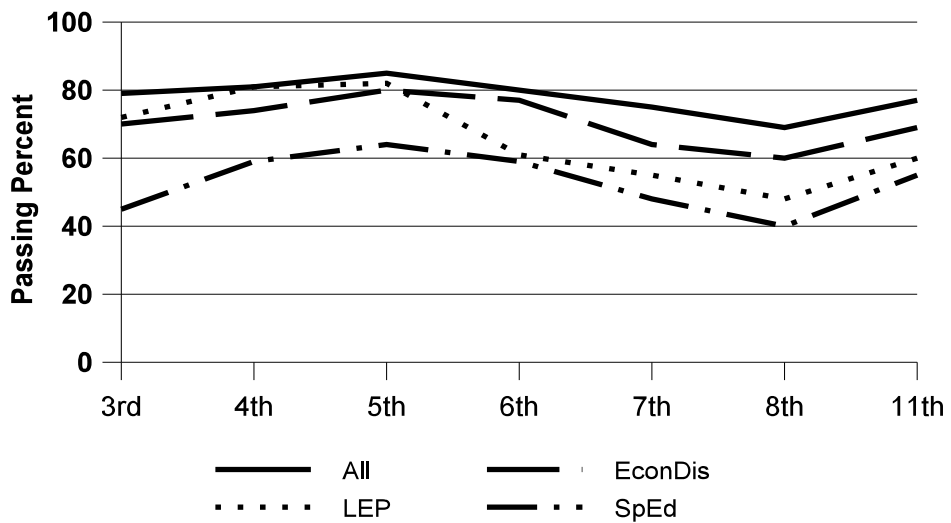
Passing % by Grade & Ethnicity



All	79	81	85	80	75	69	77
White	92	94	96	94	91	89	93
Black	75	74	78	75	70	62	72
Hispanic	70	78	86	76	68	63	72

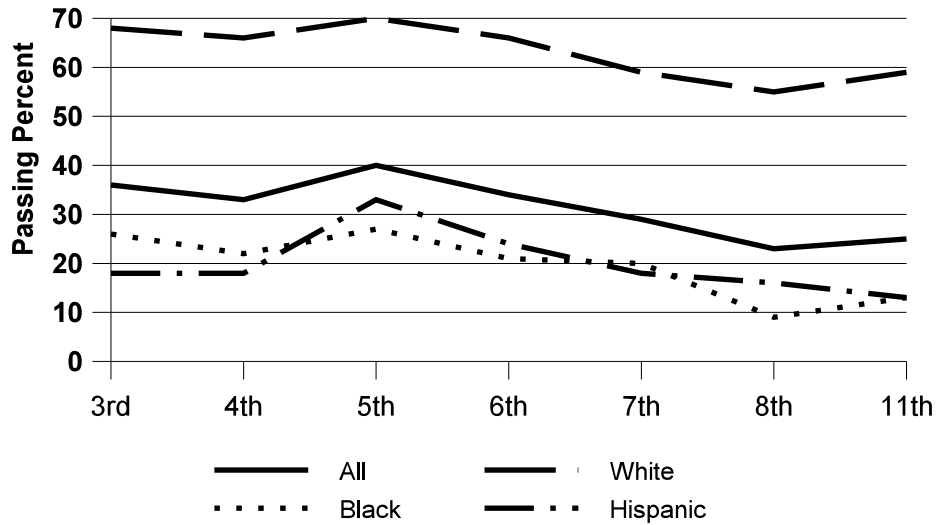
ACPS 2006 Unadjusted SOL Reading Scores

Passing % by Grade & Status



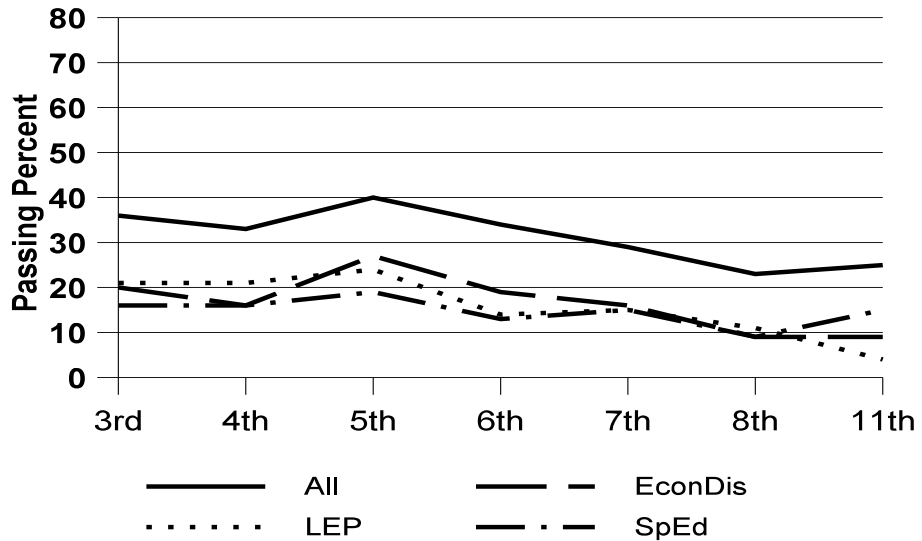
All	79	81	85	80	75	69	77
EconDis	70	74	80	77	64	60	69
LEP	72	81	82	61	55	48	60
SpEd	45	59	64	59	48	40	55

**ACPS 2006 Unadjusted SOL Reading Scores
Advanced Passing % by Grade & Ethnicity**



All	36	33	40	34	29	23	25
White	68	66	70	66	59	55	59
Black	26	22	27	21	20	9	13
Hispanic	18	18	33	24	18	16	13

**ACPS 2006 Unadjusted SOL Reading Scores
Advanced Passing % by Grade & Status**



All	36	33	40	34	29	23	25
EconDis	20	16	27	19	16	9	9
LEP	21	21	24	14	15	11	4
SpEd	16	16	19	13	15	9	15

TABLE 2
2006 SOL Divisional Summary for Reading

GRADES	MEAN SCALED SCORE	PERCENT PASSING	PASS ADVANCE
Grade 3 (n=731)			
Reading	461.6	79%	36%
Subtest: Use word analysis strategies	36.4		
Demonstrate a comprehension Of printed materials	35.7		
Grade 4 (n=739)			
Reading	460.8	81%	33%
Subtest: Use word analysis strategies	36.2		
and information resources			
Demonstrate a comprehension Of printed materials	36.0		
Grade 5 (n=702)			
Reading	475.1	85%	40%
Subtest: Use word analysis strategies	36.2		
and information resources			
Demonstrate a comprehension Of printed materials	38.5		
Grade 6 (n=659)			
Reading	464.6	80%	34%
Subtest: Use word analysis strategies	35.9		
and information resources			
Demonstrate a comprehension Of printed materials	36.4		

^aSOL test scale scores range from 0-600 with 400 or greater required to pass and 500 or higher required for the advanced proficiency designation. Reporting category scores range from 0.50 with a score of 30 or greater representing a pass.

TABLE 2 continues
2006 SOL Divisional Summary for Reading

GRADES	MEAN SCALED SCORE	PERCENT PASSING	PASS ADVANCE
Grade 7 (n=691)			
Reading	449.2	75%	29%
Subtest: Use word analysis strategies and information resources	35.0		
Demonstrate a comprehension Of printed materials	34.6		
Grade 8 (n=643)			
Reading	436.1	69%	23%
Subtest: Use word analysis strategies and information resources	33.2		
Demonstrate a comprehension of printed materials	34.0		
Grade 11 (1995) (n=14)			
Reading	364.4	14%	0%
Subtest: Understand a variety of printed materials	27.2		
Understand elements of literature.	26.1		
Locate and use information from a variety of Resource materials	25.1		
Grade 11 (2002) (n=552)			
Reading	462.8	77%	25%
Subtest: Use word analysis strategies and information resources	35.4		
Demonstrate a comprehension of printed materials	36.5		

AYP: Annual Measurable Objectives for Reading and Language Arts

2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Starting Point 60.7	61.0	61.0	Int. Goal 65.0	69.0	73.0	Int. Goal 77.0	81.0	85.0	Int. Goal 89.0	93.0	97.0	Goal 100%

AYP: Annual Measurable Objectives for Mathematics

2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Starting Point 58.4	59.0	59.0	Int. Goal 63.0	67.0	71.0	Int. Goal 75.0	79.0	83.0	Int. Goal 87.0	91.0	95.0	Goal 100%

Note: AYP ratings for the 2006-2007 school year are based on achievement on tests administered during 2005-2006 or on average achievement during the three most recent school years. Achievement must equal or exceed the Annual Measurable Objective shaded above.

The AMO for mathematics also is higher than last year. For a school or school division to have made AYP during 2005-2006 at least 67 percent of students overall and students in each subgroup must have demonstrated proficiency on SOL tests and other approved assessments in mathematics.

Keep in Mind

- ★ A school that does not achieve AYP is not necessarily a “failing” school. A more balanced and accurate assessment of a school’s overall performance can be determined by comparing the number of annual measurable objectives (AMOs) that a school met with the total number of AMOs.
- ★ Virginia is a national leader in implementing high academic standards and measures to hold schools accountable for achievement through objective testing.

What’s New in 2006

New Tests

Virginia introduced Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments in reading and mathematics during 2005-06 in grades 4, 6, and 7 to comply with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which requires annual testing in these subjects in grades 3-8 and at least once during high school.

The results of these new tests will be used to calculate 2005-2006 pass rates, but in keeping with a July 28, 2006, directive from the United States Department of Education, an average of achievement on tests administered in grades 3, 5, and 8, and end-of-course tests during the three most recent years (2005-2006, 2004-2005, and 2003-2004) may be used as the basis for determining whether a student subgroup made AYP.

Retakes of End-of-Course Tests

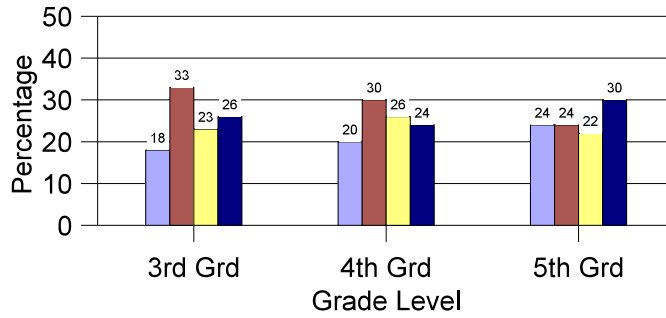
The achievement of students on all retakes of end-of-course assessments in reading and mathematics will be included in the calculation of AYP ratings.

*Stanford Diagnostic
Reading Test*

TABLE 3
 Fall 2006 Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test Scores
 Mean Percentile and Grade Equivalent Scores by Grade

Grade	SUBTESTS				Total SDRT
	Phonetic Analysis	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Scanning	
3	56	49	55		53
GE	3.1	2.9	3.2		3.1
4	53	46	56		51
GE	4.2	3.9	5.1		4.0
5		53	56	53	54
GE		4.8	5.4	5.1	5.2
6		44	52	45	46
GE		5.5	6.6	5.4	5.6
7		43	51	43	45
GE		5.5	7.2	5.4	5.6
8		43	46	41	43
GE		6.2	7.5	7.2	7.2
9		42	43	43	42
GE		7.7	8.2	7.3	7.8
10		39	52	50	48
GE		8.1	10.7	9.6	9.5
11		33	49	45	45
GE		8.7	12.1	9.6	10.6

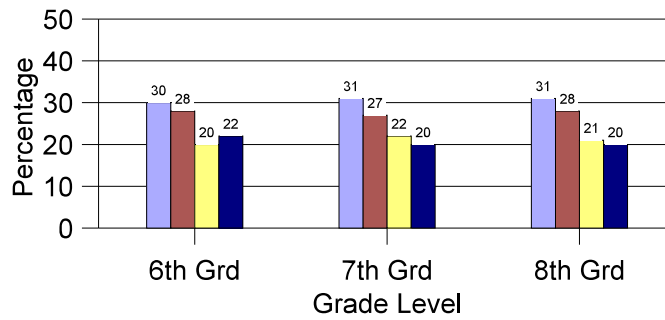
SDRT Elem. Quartiles



Quartiles



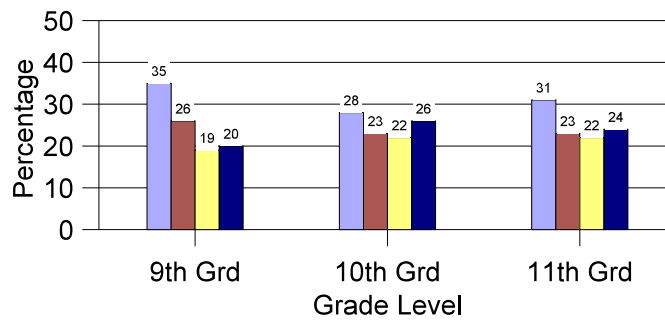
SDRT Mid Schl Quartiles



Quartiles



SDRT High Schl Quartiles



Quartiles



Using PALS Data to Guide Instruction

The following questions may help a school principal guide teachers in their use of PALS data.

1. Who was identified in spring?

Students who were identified by PALS in the spring administration should have intervention services started right away. There is no need to wait until the fall administration to determine if the student who did not meet benchmarks in the spring still is not meeting benchmarks in the fall.

2. Who was identified in fall?

Time-lines for initiating intervention services for students identified in the fall administration should be revisited. Since all testing is completed by the end of October, supplementary literacy services would be best commenced by the end of the same month, or very shortly thereafter.

3. What are the quality and quantity of the intervention?

An identified student is to be given an extra 2.5 hours of literacy intervention per week. Is that what the child is getting? What does the child do during this time? How much of the time is actually spent on literacy activities? Is the intervention selected the best choice for the student given his/her test results?

4. What is the intervention plan for the student who barely makes benchmark?

A student who has a sum score that just barely allows him or her to pass is at risk of failing when the next administration occurs. What is the instruction plan to ensure that this student will keep up with grade-level expectations?

5. How do subtest results and assessed instruction level guide instruction?

Is the classroom teacher graphing the results to see which literacy aspects need to be targeted and at what grade-level the majority of the class is functioning? A graph showing the number or percentage of students functioning in each literacy level would help the teacher determine instructional level. The PALS Class Report, for example, accounts “Phonics/Spelling Feature Chart” and “Instructional Reading Level” by grouping students according test results. This allows the teacher to see how many students fall into each category of preprimer, primer, first grade, second grade, third grade, and levels in between each of these.

6. How are transfer students managed?

Transfer students need to be assessed and determined if they need supplemental services.

7. How are ELL students managed?

All students, including ELL, need to be assessed. Teachers may find the PALS data complementary to those of the SELP test given in the spring.

The following tables and figures are from *Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS K-3) 2005-2006*. (December 2006)

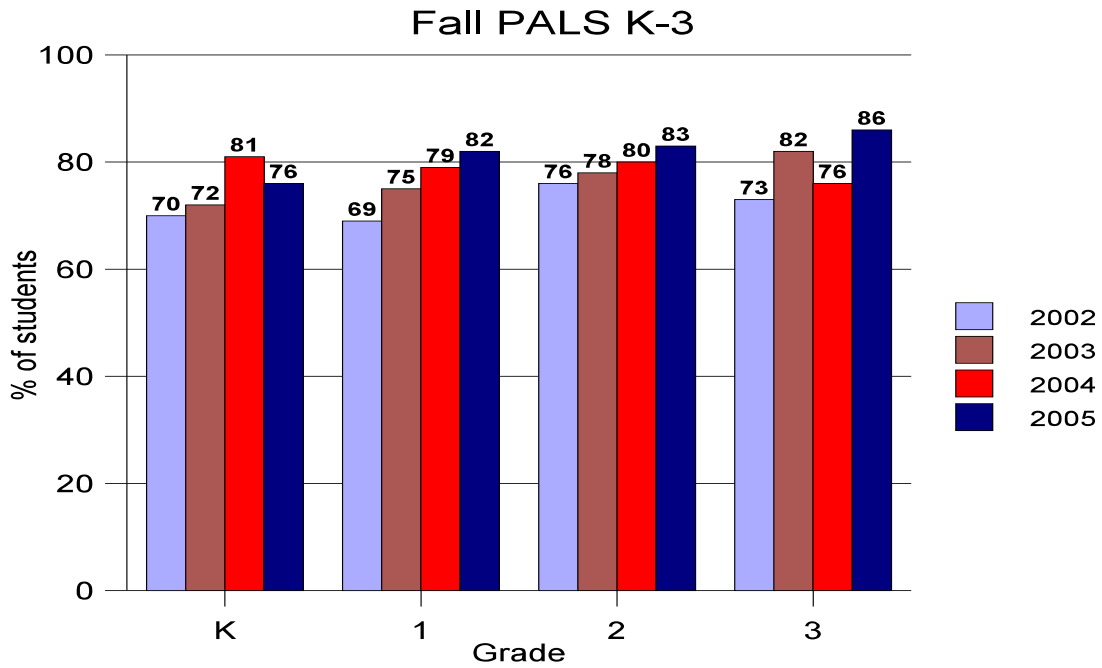


Figure 11 – PALS Grades K-3 – ACPS Fall passing percentages by grade, 2002-2005

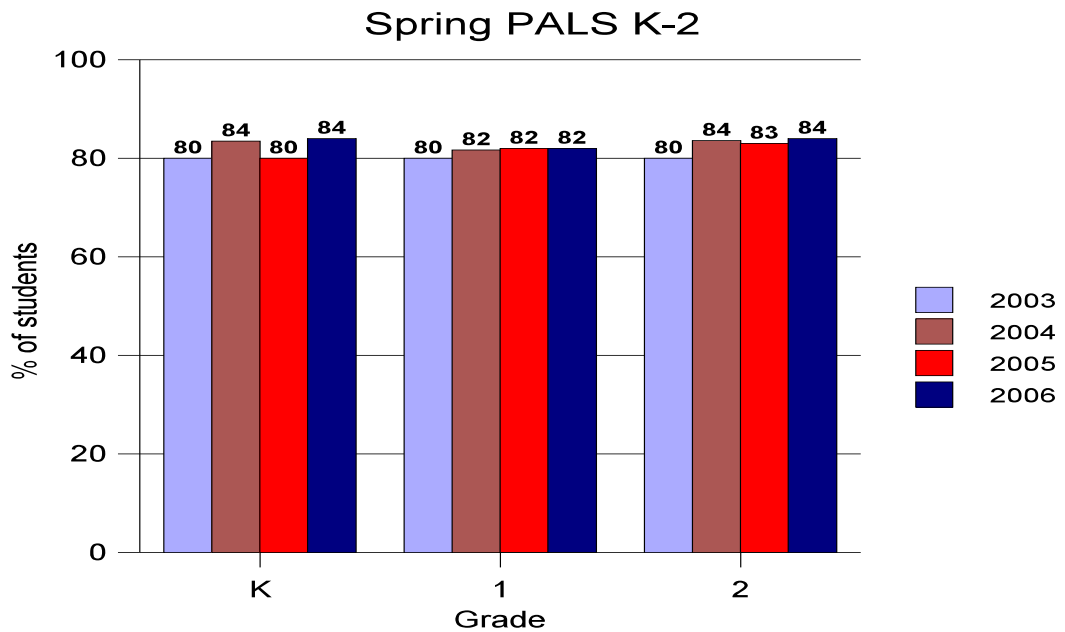


Figure 12 – PALS Grades K-2 – ACPS Spring passing percentages by grade, 2003-2006

**Table 4 – PALS Grades K-3 –
Percentage of Students Meeting 2005-2006 Benchmarks**

Subgroup	K		1		2		3
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall
American Indian ^a	–	–	NA	NA	NA	–	86
Asian/Pacific	96	88	88	88	79	82	88
Black	81	86	82	82	84	85	88
Hispanic	48	69	66	66	71	74	74
Other ^{a,b}	86	86	89	93	93	94	100
Minority	68	79	77	77	79	81	83
White/Non-Minority	95	96	94	96	92	93	93
Special Education	67	67	66	58	53	59	51
Regular Education	77	86	85	86	88	89	92
ESL/LEP	54	70	65	68	70	75	76
Non-ESL/LEP	88	91	88	88	88	88	91
Economic. Disadvan.	64	75	71	74	78	79	79
Non-econ. Disadvan.	89	94	94	91	88	90	92
Females	78	89	87	86	88	88	87
Males	75	79	77	79	78	81	84
ACPS	76	84	82	82	83	84	86
Virginia	82	86	83	86	79	86	79

^a Data for groups smaller than 5 are not shown.

^b “Other” includes students whose families did not designate ethnicity plus Native Hawai’ians, a minority.

Table 5 – PALS Grades K-3 –
Number (#) and Percent (%) of Students Identified Fall to Spring, 2005-2006

Grade	Fall Identification		Spring Identification			
			Yes		No	
	Identified?	Count	#	Row %	#	Row %
K	Yes	208	92	44%	116	56%
	No	698	33	5%	665	95%
	Column Total	906	125	14%	781	86%
1	Yes	148	83	56%	65	44%
	No	662	40	6%	622	94%
	Column Total	810	123	15%	687	85%
2	Yes	132	84	64%	48	36%
	No	669	24	4%	645	96%
	Column Total	801	108	13%	693	87%
3 ^a	Yes	104	75	72%	29	28%
	Column Total	104	75	72%	29	28%

^a Third grade students are not routinely tested in Spring, so there is no row for “No”.

Table 6 – PALS Grades K-3 – Percent of Fall-identified Students Who Were Identified in Spring, School
Years 2001-2002 through 2005-2006^a

Grade	% of Fall-identified Students Identified in Spring			
	2003 ^b	2004	2005	2006
K	48	40	56	44
1	49	51	54	56
2	60	57	63	64
3	55	71	61	72
Total	52	52	58	56

^a Data are from the reports for the respective years.

^b Extrapolated.