

The Next Chapter: Supporting Literacy Within ESEA



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Table of Contents

Why Readers Struggle 4

Ready for LEARN 6

Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Program 8

Conclusion 8

Endnotes 9

Appendix 11

Acknowledgments

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*The **Alliance for Excellent Education** is a Washington, DC–based national policy and advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all students, particularly those traditionally underserved, graduate from high school ready for success in college, work, and citizenship. www.all4ed.org*

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Young Americans who leave public school without the ability to read, write, speak, and think effectively will be ill-equipped to meet the demands of college, a career, and citizenship. Recent results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) show that more than 60 percent of fourth graders and 60 percent of eighth graders struggle with reading in some manner and therefore require targeted instructional support.¹ Even more disturbing, NAEP results reveal that almost half of students of color and students from low-income families enter fifth grade with skills below the basic level on NAEP.² These outcomes mean that millions of young people lack the rudimentary reading skills to locate relevant information, make simple inferences, or use details from text to support a conclusion.³ In urban areas, only an estimated 20 percent of students are reading at grade level and prepared to master high school level content.⁴ (See Appendix for state-by-state NAEP reading achievement results.)

This data suggests that the reading crisis is essentially an achievement gap issue. Large numbers of students living in poverty and from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds experience much poorer reading outcomes. Without essential literacy skills to master academic course work, students lose the motivation and confidence vital to maintaining their investment in learning. Furthermore, students who do not read well are more likely to be retained in school, drop out of high school, become teen parents, or enter the juvenile justice system.⁵

To ensure students can read, educators must provide high-quality literacy instruction, appropriate to specific grade levels, as well as effective support to meet the individual needs of all students. Moreover, enhancing teachers' abilities to use evidence-based approaches to improve students' reading and writing skills will yield better academic outcomes.⁶ Unfortunately, in the nation's elementary and secondary schools most literacy instruction is not grounded in the science of reading development and learning. As the National Research Council panel concluded on the state of education research in the United States, "One striking fact is that the complex world of education—unlike defense, health care, or industrial production—does not rest on a strong research base. In no other field are personal experience and ideology so frequently relied on to make policy choices."⁷

Ensuring that every student reads at grade level requires sustained federal investments to support state-led programs that address literacy development comprehensively from early childhood through grade twelve. Proposed federal legislation known as the "Literacy Education for All, Results for a Nation" (LEARN) Act does just that by encouraging schools and educators to use research-based strategies to teach reading and writing within subject areas and across grade levels.⁸ Under LEARN, schools would develop students' reading and writing proficiency by providing high-quality classroom literacy instruction as well as a continuum of interventions and support for students with or at risk for reading failure.⁹ LEARN Act sponsors Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative John Yarmuth (D-KY) first introduced the bill to their individual houses of the U.S. Congress in 2009 and 2010 respectively, and Representative Yarmuth re-introduced the bill earlier this year.¹⁰ Elements of the legislation are included in the Every Child Achieves Act (S. 1177), the Senate's bipartisan proposal to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Incorporating LEARN into the current reauthorization of ESEA offers the best means to implement a direct and sustained approach to improving literacy achievement nationwide.

Why Readers Struggle

Improving literacy achievement can prove daunting because individuals struggling to read and write experience a wide range of challenges that require an equally wide range of interventions.¹¹ Students may have difficulty with word recognition, vocabulary, or reading fluency. In addition, states' new English language arts standards increase expectations for reading and writing proficiency by emphasizing the critical thinking and analytical skills students need to succeed in college and a career. These standards foster the progressive development of literacy skills by exposing students to challenging texts within academic content areas. Many students, however, lack the strategies and stamina to understand informational texts, make connections among ideas, and draw conclusions based on evidence gathered from source material.

Only a small portion of the students struggling to read may be formally diagnosed with a disability, thus enabling them to receive reading-related special education services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).¹² Specific learning disabilities (SLD)—one of thirteen categories under IDEA—is by far the largest disability grouping, constituting 4.7 percent of the school-age population and 36 percent of the 6.4 million students with disabilities.¹³ About 80 percent of students identified as having SLD experience a specific reading disability.¹⁴ The conditions that lead to the SLD determination vary widely from person to person, and prevalence figures differ between states and within states, depending on the stringency of the method used to determine eligibility.¹⁵

IDEA is a powerful piece of federal legislation, providing essential protections for students with a wide range of disabilities, including those that impact reading achievement. However, IDEA was never intended to address the problem of inadequate instruction and intervention for the even larger group of students experiencing poor literacy achievement in the nation's schools.

After IDEA was first passed in 1974, the SLD incidence rate ballooned, increasing by more than 300 percent between 1976 and 2000.¹⁶ To address the systemic problem of inadequate early reading instruction, Congress enacted Reading First in 2001 as part of the ESEA reauthorization known as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The purpose of this early literacy program, the largest ever undertaken, was to ensure that every child reads at grade level or above by the end of third grade.¹⁷

IDEA's Definition of Specific Learning Disability

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a specific learning disability is “a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. Specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.”¹⁸ For more information on the IDEA federal law and regulations, visit idea.ed.gov.

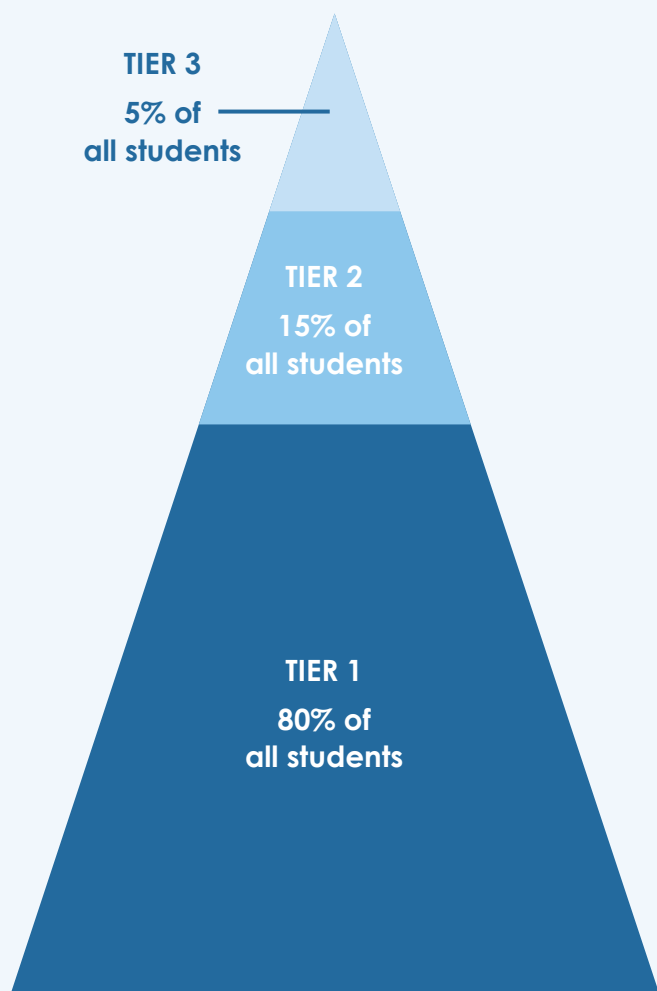
Three years later Congress reauthorized IDEA, enacting significant changes regarding the identification of SLD. To prevent large numbers of students from being identified as “disabled” for weaknesses in literacy education, the 2004 IDEA regulations prohibited school districts from designating students as SLD for reasons of inadequate instruction, economic disadvantage, or limited English proficiency.¹⁹ Any evaluation for considering an SLD designation now must include data demonstrating that the referred student received appropriate instruction in regular education settings delivered by qualified personnel.²⁰ IDEA also requires states to develop innovative ways to identify SLD rather than relying solely on a process that assesses the discrepancy between student aptitude and achievement, which since has been widely discredited.²¹ From 2004 to 2012, the percentage of students designated as SLD declined from 5.7 percent to 4.7 percent of total public school enrollment.²² As of 2014, the number of students identified as having an SLD decreased in almost every state, with decreases as high as 45 percent in some states.²³

A number of factors account for the decline. First, NCLB's focus on early reading increased educators' abilities to improve reading instruction within general education, making reading difficulties less prevalent among students.²⁴ Second, a number of states reshaped their education systems to focus on prevention and early intervention, providing students with instructional support in reading before determining their eligibility for special education. Through this data-based process of decisionmaking, known as Response to Intervention (RtI), students move through tiers of

increasingly intensive instructional interventions, progressing from general education to small group and intensive individual instruction as necessary.²⁵ (See the sidebar "Multitier System of Supports" for additional information.) Currently forty-seven states are implementing some form of RtI.²⁶ By ensuring all students receive timely, research-based literacy instruction and supports, states accrue enormous cost savings by significantly reducing the number of students referred for special education services.

Multitier System of Supports²⁷

To address the literacy needs of individual students, districts and schools use student-centered data to evaluate how each student responds to various methods of instruction and specialized interventions—a process known as Response to Intervention (RtI)—within a multitier system of supports. Tiered models of instruction create more fluid systems that integrate general and special education and focus on early identification of students' reading and writing challenges. In general, the system includes three tiers:



Tier 1—Regular classroom core instruction: High-quality core instruction is essential for a large proportion of students to attain acceptable levels of literacy proficiency. All students need to engage in authentic literacy, which refers to the intensive integration of purposeful reading, writing, and talking into core subject areas.²⁸ Meanwhile, the use of universally designed learning technologies can create flexible learning environments that accommodate individual learning differences and reduce learning barriers by providing students with greater access to content and alternate means by which they can express what they know.

Tier 2—Small group interventions for students not making adequate progress in the core curriculum: Teams of educators regularly monitor students' progress to assess their reading and writing skills and then work together to design supplemental, research-based interventions to enhance students' performance.

Tier 3—Individualized, intensive interventions: Students receive more specialized interventions customized for their individual needs. Students may or may not have a special education Individualized Education Program.

Despite some improvement in foundational literacy, few states have instituted coherent policies and funding to implement high-quality instruction in reading and writing from early childhood *through grade twelve*.²⁹ In addition, the attention to early literacy also floundered when Congress defunded Reading First in 2009.³⁰ Since then, fourth-grade reading achievement has not increased significantly nor have achievement gaps narrowed between racial and ethnic groups.³¹ Moreover, the problem of low levels of literacy among the nation's adolescents is enormous—and getting worse because the stakes are climbing higher. The majority of students continue to leave high school without the reading and writing skills needed to succeed in a technologically advanced, global economy. Over the past four decades, the literacy performance of seventeen-year-olds on NAEP has remained flat.³² Meanwhile, international measures of reading place American fifteen-year-olds seventeenth among developed nations, lagging behind countries such as Estonia, Liechtenstein, and Poland.³³



classroom.³⁵ The LEARN Act connects policy and practice more directly and powerfully by investing in the knowledge and skills of educators to teach reading and writing effectively. Finally, this legislation marks a major break from many reforms by providing the means to expand state and district capacity to accelerate reading and writing achievement in all schools, and in particular, for those students who struggle to master grade-level literacy skills.

Ready for LEARN

In 2009, to address the national literacy crisis, a coalition of organizations worked with members of Congress to write the LEARN Act, which would provide federal funding for comprehensive literacy programs across the continuum from early childhood through high school. This diverse coalition of groups included the Alliance for Excellent Education, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the International Reading Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, Knowledge Alliance, the Association for Middle Level Education, the National Forum for Middle Grades Reform, the National Writing Project, Washington Partners, LLC, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the National Center for Learning Disabilities, among others. Building upon the lessons learned from Reading First and the Early Reading First programs enacted in 2001, and the Striving Readers Act of 2007, which targeted adolescent literacy specifically, the coalition developed the LEARN Act for inclusion in ESEA when reauthorized.³⁴

The LEARN Act offers a comprehensive systemic approach to strengthening literacy education across grade spans without restricting supports to particular categories of students. Its tenets draw from the extensive research on identifying students at risk for reading failure, understanding of critical component skills that support proficient reading, better ways to diagnose skills gaps, and approaches to bring effective interventions into the

Central tenets of LEARN include

- building teachers' expertise in literacy instruction appropriate to specific grade levels, data analysis to improve student learning, and effective implementation of literacy instruction strategies;
- using a variety of assessments—screening, diagnostic, formative, and summative—to identify students' literacy needs and inform and improve literacy instruction at all age levels;
- supporting schoolwide literacy programs to address the specific learning needs of students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, students from low-income families, and other students at risk for reading failure;
- educating and engaging families and caregivers to support children's literacy development, instruction, and assessment;
- coordinating literacy improvements among schools, early learning programs, juvenile justice programs, public libraries, and outside-of-school programs; and
- establishing a state literacy leadership team with broad representation from constituency groups including families, early childhood providers, K–12 educators, higher education, and civil rights groups to assume the responsibility for developing and implementing a statewide, comprehensive literacy plan.³⁶

LEARN builds on previous efforts to improve early literacy and on the growing knowledge base on adolescent literacy.³⁷ Researchers acknowledge that the 2001 federal ESEA investment in large-scale professional learning for K–3 educators on evidence-based literacy instruction has paid off. Between 1999 and 2004, the fourth-grade gains in reading achievement on NAEP were the largest in the assessment’s history, as was the narrowing of racial achievement gaps.³⁸ At the same time, researchers assert that these improvements in early literacy, while essential, will not inoculate students against reading failure later on. Consequently, in the years leading up to the development of LEARN, national experts agreed that future legislation needed to build on these previous efforts to improve early literacy and also expand to focus on *grades four through twelve* as well.

Educators require specific expertise to help older students use their reading and writing skills to learn increasingly complex material embedded in course content. While many older students can decode words accurately, they struggle to comprehend what they read for a variety of reasons. Although “[w]e even know with a fair degree of certitude which tools work well for which type of struggling reader ... we do not possess an overall strategy for directing and coordinating remedial tools for the maximum benefit to students at risk of academic failure,” according to Gina Biancarosa, assistant professor of educational methodology, policy and leadership at the University of Oregon, and Catherine Snow, the Henry Lee Shattuck Professor of Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.³⁹

Consequently, from the outset, the coalition that developed the LEARN Act agreed that future programs had to ensure adequate federal investments in broad literacy improvements at each level of the system—early education, elementary, middle, and high school. Research by Dr. James Heckman of the University of Chicago and Dr. Flavio Cunha of Rice University shows that sustained investment in each stage of students’ development compounds the positive impacts seen at the stages individually, yielding far more optimal returns than early investments alone.⁴⁰ These researchers simulated the effects of different investment strategies in disadvantaged young people throughout preschool, middle childhood, and adolescent years. The analysis

finds dramatic improvements for high school graduation; increased college enrollment; and decreased conviction rates, probation, and welfare enrollment for young people who received balanced investments throughout childhood, as opposed to investments during early childhood alone.

In addition, the LEARN Act focuses on broad improvement by supporting all teachers in improving the quality and consistency of their literacy instruction. Researchers and educators are learning that the differences in student academic performance that they observe between schools often mask even greater variations in student performance *within* schools. The issue appears to be less about unequal schools and more about unequal classrooms—the classroom to which a student is assigned matters more than the school he or she attends.⁴¹ Too often, struggling learners experience educational “opportunity gaps,” meaning they have less access to effective teaching and rigorous course work and encounter lower expectations from adults.⁴² Achieving literacy improvements at scale requires building the collective capacity of all educators to understand and respond to the sources of variation in students’ reading and writing performance in every classroom.



The classroom to which a student is assigned matters more than the school he or she attends.

Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Program

The LEARN Act offers the best solution to the literacy crisis based on evidence from the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) program, a pilot program based on the tenets of LEARN. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2011, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) awarded six states—Georgia, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Texas—five-year discretionary grants to implement comprehensive birth-through-grade-twelve literacy plans that provide subgrants to local districts targeting English language learners, students with disabilities, students from low-income families, and other struggling readers. ED allocated SRCL funds as mandated by the appropriations law that established the program: 15 percent of funds are used to serve children birth through age five; 40 percent of funds are used to serve students in elementary school; and 40 percent of funds are used to serve students in middle and high school.

After three years of implementation, all SRCL states reported increases in literacy achievement for participating students. Texas SRCL districts achieved double-digit gains in the percentage of students passing the state's grade five and grade eight reading assessments.⁴³ In Nevada, literacy proficiency for participating tenth and eleventh graders climbed from 28 percent to 51 percent in two years and proficiency rates for disadvantaged students rose from 26 percent to 46 percent.⁴⁴ Pennsylvania's SRCL program produced substantial and statistically significant gains on norm-referenced reading tests, which measure individual student performance relative to that of other test takers. In School Year (SY) 2013–14, Pennsylvania's results showed greater percentages of students across grade levels scoring in the upper quartile and a reduction in the percentage of students scoring in the lowest quartile.⁴⁵ In Louisiana, during SY 2013–14, the proportion of sixth-grade students reading on grade level increased from 65 percent to 80 percent.⁴⁶



Conclusion

"[E]nough is already known about adolescent literacy—both the nature of the problems of struggling readers and the types of interventions and approaches to address these needs—in order to act immediately on a broad scale," write Biancarosa and Snow.⁴⁷ Policy leaders must act now to confront the enormity of the college- and career-readiness gap by improving literacy instruction and learning for all students. The Every Child Achieves Act (S. 1177)—Senator Lamar Alexander's (R-TN) and Senator Patty Murray's (D-WA) bill to reauthorize ESEA—incorporates key tenets of LEARN in order to provide comprehensive literacy support throughout schooling.⁴⁸ Including LEARN into the reauthorization of ESEA will strengthen the ability of educators to equip students with the reading and writing skills they need to learn rigorous content and graduate prepared for the modern world.

Endnotes

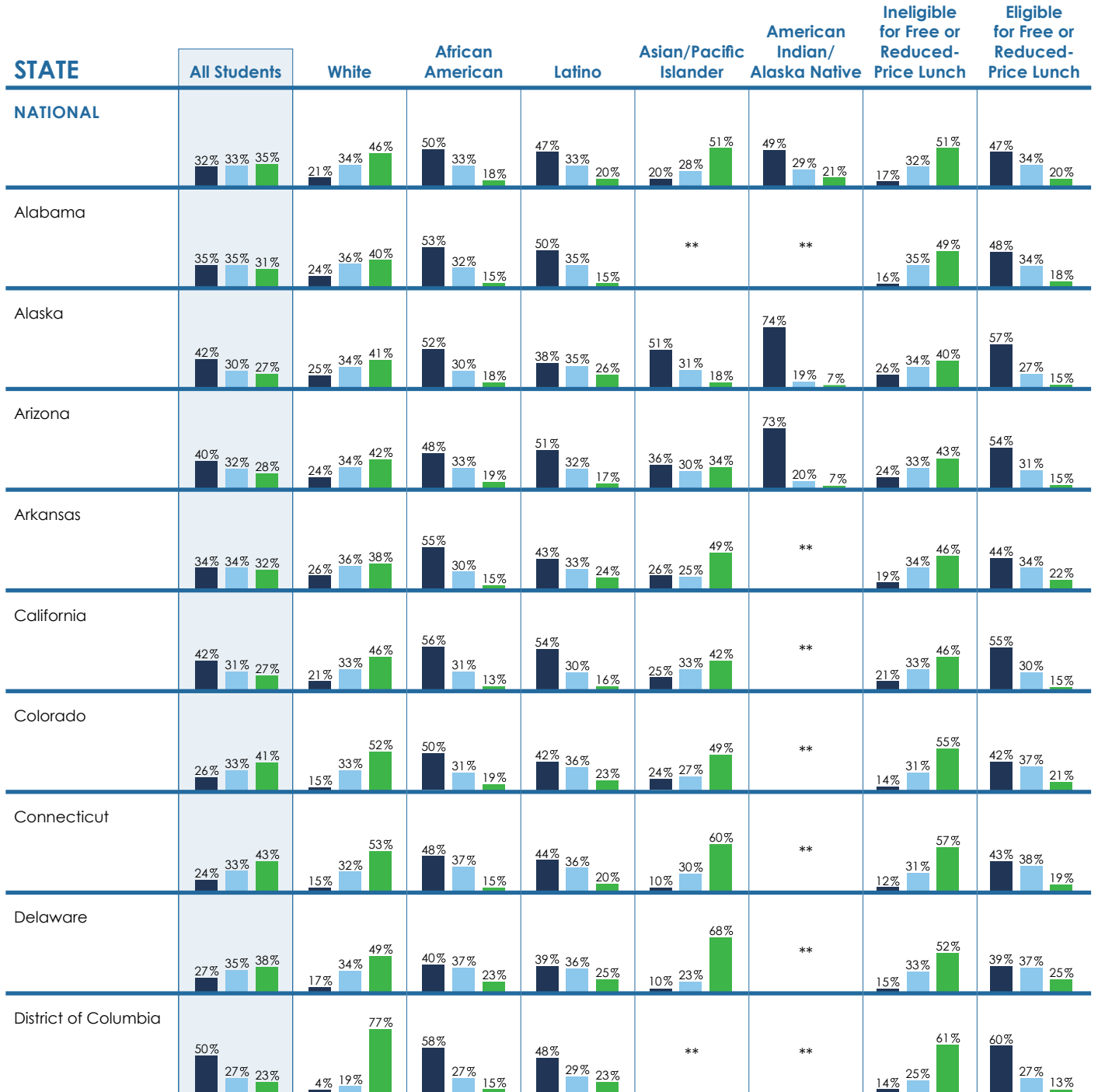
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Appendix

TABLE 1: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 4 Reading (2013)

Percentage below basic
 Percentage at basic
 Percentage proficient and above



continued

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

**TABLE 1: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP),
Grade 4 Reading (2013), Continued**

■ Percentage below basic ■ Percentage at basic ■ Percentage proficient and above

STATE	All Students	White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Ineligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
Florida	25% 36% 39%	15% 36% 49%	43% 37% 20%	27% 37% 36%	8% 24% 68%	**	11% 32% 58%	34% 39% 27%
Georgia	33% 33% 34%	21% 34% 45%	48% 32% 20%	42% 35% 24%	14% 25% 61%	**	16% 31% 53%	44% 34% 21%
Hawaii	38% 32% 30%	22% 32% 46%	31% 32% 37%	40% 34% 26%	43% 31% 26%	**	23% 34% 43%	53% 30% 17%
Idaho	32% 35% 33%	27% 35% 38%	**	55% 32% 13%	**	**	21% 35% 44%	44% 34% 22%
Illinois	36% 31% 34%	22% 32% 46%	58% 28% 14%	50% 32% 18%	14% 27% 59%	**	18% 30% 52%	52% 32% 16%
Indiana	27% 36% 38%	23% 35% 42%	47% 36% 17%	36% 40% 24%	24% 24% 52%	**	15% 33% 51%	37% 38% 25%
Iowa	28% 34% 38%	25% 34% 41%	56% 30% 15%	43% 35% 23%	35% 30% 35%	**	18% 35% 48%	44% 32% 23%
Kansas	29% 34% 38%	22% 34% 44%	53% 30% 17%	45% 34% 20%	24% 29% 47%	**	14% 32% 54%	43% 35% 22%
Kentucky	29% 35% 36%	26% 35% 39%	52% 32% 15%	32% 38% 29%	12% 29% 59%	**	16% 33% 51%	41% 36% 23%
Louisiana	44% 33% 23%	28% 38% 35%	60% 29% 11%	41% 39% 20%	**	**	21% 37% 42%	53% 32% 15%
Maine	29% 35% 37%	27% 35% 38%	60% 29% 11%	**	**	**	18% 34% 48%	40% 36% 24%

continued

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

TABLE 1: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 4 Reading (2013), Continued

■ Percentage below basic ■ Percentage at basic ■ Percentage proficient and above

STATE	All Students	White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Ineligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
Maryland	23% 32% 45%	10% 29% 60%	41% 37% 22%	30% 36% 35%	9% 18% 73%	**	14% 29% 58%	39% 37% 24%
Massachusetts	21% 31% 47%	13% 31% 57%	45% 35% 21%	44% 36% 20%	17% 26% 57%	**	10% 28% 62%	39% 36% 25%
Michigan	36% 33% 31%	28% 36% 37%	61% 27% 12%	47% 32% 21%	23% 32% 45%	**	21% 35% 44%	49% 32% 19%
Minnesota	26% 33% 41%	20% 33% 47%	45% 34% 21%	47% 30% 23%	32% 24% 44%	**	16% 33% 52%	44% 33% 23%
Mississippi	47% 32% 21%	30% 37% 33%	62% 28% 11%	49% 35% 15%	**	**	21% 37% 42%	55% 30% 15%
Missouri	30% 35% 35%	24% 36% 41%	56% 31% 13%	35% 35% 30%	18% 34% 48%	**	16% 35% 49%	43% 34% 23%
Montana	30% 35% 35%	24% 36% 39%	**	41% 37% 23%	**	60% 29% 11%	19% 36% 46%	43% 35% 22%
Nebraska	29% 34% 37%	23% 35% 43%	52% 33% 16%	46% 33% 22%	21% 28% 51%	**	17% 34% 49%	44% 34% 23%
Nevada	39% 34% 27%	25% 36% 39%	53% 33% 14%	51% 33% 16%	25% 37% 38%	**	21% 35% 44%	49% 34% 17%
New Hampshire	20% 36% 45%	18% 36% 46%	38% 35% 27%	46% 36% 18%	22% 28% 50%	**	13% 34% 53%	36% 40% 24%
New Jersey	25% 33% 42%	15% 33% 52%	43% 35% 22%	42% 37% 21%	8% 23% 69%	**	13% 31% 56%	42% 36% 22%

continued

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

TABLE 1: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 4 Reading (2013), Continued

■ Percentage below basic ■ Percentage at basic ■ Percentage proficient and above



continued

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

TABLE 1: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 4 Reading (2013), Continued

■ Percentage below basic ■ Percentage at basic ■ Percentage proficient and above

STATE	All Students	White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Ineligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
Tennessee	33% 33% 34%	25% 35% 40%	56% 29% 15%	49% 30% 21%	13% 27% 60%	**	15% 33% 52%	48% 34% 18%
Texas	37% 34% 28%	19% 34% 46%	45% 37% 18%	49% 34% 17%	9% 25% 66%	**	19% 34% 47%	49% 35% 17%
Utah	29% 34% 37%	22% 35% 43%	**	56% 29% 14%	29% 31% 40%	**	20% 35% 46%	43% 33% 24%
Vermont	25% 33% 42%	24% 33% 43%	**	**	**	**	16% 31% 54%	39% 35% 26%
Virginia	26% 31% 43%	18% 31% 51%	43% 34% 23%	44% 31% 25%	11% 24% 65%	**	15% 29% 56%	45% 35% 21%
Washington	28% 33% 40%	21% 33% 46%	41% 34% 25%	48% 34% 19%	18% 25% 57%	**	15% 31% 53%	43% 34% 23%
West Virginia	38% 35% 27%	37% 35% 28%	53% 32% 14%	**	**	**	28% 36% 37%	42% 34% 24%
Wisconsin	32% 33% 35%	24% 35% 41%	65% 24% 11%	55% 29% 17%	32% 24% 43%	40% 37% 23%	19% 34% 47%	49% 32% 20%
Wyoming	25% 38% 37%	21% 38% 41%	**	37% 39% 24%	**	59% 32% 9%	17% 37% 46%	37% 39% 24%

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

TABLE 2: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 8 Reading (2013)

Percentage below basic Percentage at basic Percentage proficient and above

STATE	All Students	White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Ineligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
NATIONAL	22% 42% 36%	14% 40% 46%	39% 44% 17%	32% 46% 22%	14% 34% 52%	38% 44% 19%	13% 39% 48%	34% 46% 20%
Alabama	32% 43% 25%	21% 45% 34%	49% 41% 9%	43% 38% 19%	**	**	16% 44% 40%	44% 43% 13%
Alaska	29% 40% 31%	16% 40% 44%	31% 53% 16%	27% 42% 31%	34% 43% 23%	53% 35% 12%	17% 40% 43%	42% 41% 17%
Arizona	28% 44% 28%	16% 42% 42%	41% 43% 15%	36% 47% 17%	14% 40% 47%	51% 40% 9%	16% 42% 42%	38% 46% 16%
Arkansas	27% 42% 30%	20% 42% 37%	47% 41% 12%	31% 48% 21%	**	**	15% 41% 44%	36% 44% 20%
California	28% 43% 29%	15% 41% 44%	44% 41% 15%	36% 46% 18%	15% 35% 50%	**	15% 39% 46%	37% 46% 17%
Colorado	19% 41% 40%	11% 40% 50%	41% 46% 13%	32% 45% 23%	16% 34% 50%	**	10% 38% 52%	32% 46% 22%
Connecticut	17% 38% 45%	11% 35% 54%	32% 46% 22%	33% 42% 24%	9% 32% 59%	**	9% 34% 57%	33% 44% 23%
Delaware	23% 43% 33%	16% 43% 42%	36% 45% 19%	28% 45% 27%	12% 27% 61%	**	15% 39% 45%	33% 47% 20%
District of Columbia	43% 40% 17%	4% 22% 73%	47% 42% 11%	43% 37% 20%	**	**	21% 37% 42%	50% 40% 10%
Florida	23% 43% 33%	16% 42% 42%	34% 47% 19%	27% 46% 27%	16% 32% 52%	**	14% 39% 47%	30% 47% 23%

continued

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

TABLE 2: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 8 Reading (2013), Continued

■ Percentage below basic ■ Percentage at basic ■ Percentage proficient and above

STATE	All Students	White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Ineligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
Georgia	25% 44% 32%	15% 42% 42%	36% 47% 17%	26% 48% 26%	15% 26% 60%	**	13% 39% 48%	33% 47% 20%
Hawaii	29% 43% 28%	17% 38% 45%	29% 44% 27%	30% 45% 25%	31% 43% 25%	**	19% 43% 38%	38% 43% 20%
Idaho	18% 43% 38%	15% 43% 42%	**	35% 46% 19%	**	**	12% 41% 47%	26% 47% 27%
Illinois	23% 41% 36%	13% 40% 47%	44% 42% 14%	31% 45% 24%	9% 32% 59%	**	11% 39% 50%	36% 44% 20%
Indiana	21% 45% 35%	17% 44% 39%	42% 47% 11%	28% 48% 23%	**	**	13% 42% 45%	30% 48% 22%
Iowa	19% 44% 37%	16% 44% 39%	40% 45% 15%	31% 48% 21%	19% 41% 40%	**	12% 42% 46%	30% 49% 21%
Kansas	22% 42% 36%	16% 42% 42%	46% 41% 13%	34% 46% 20%	20% 36% 44%	**	11% 41% 48%	34% 44% 22%
Kentucky	20% 42% 38%	17% 42% 41%	44% 41% 15%	27% 43% 30%	**	**	11% 39% 50%	31% 45% 25%
Louisiana	32% 44% 24%	19% 47% 35%	46% 41% 12%	31% 43% 26%	**	**	19% 42% 39%	40% 44% 16%
Maine	21% 41% 38%	21% 41% 39%	**	**	**	**	15% 39% 46%	29% 44% 28%
Maryland	18% 40% 42%	10% 36% 53%	30% 46% 25%	22% 48% 30%	5% 28% 67%	**	11% 35% 54%	28% 48% 24%

continued

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

TABLE 2: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 8 Reading (2013), Continued

Percentage below basic Percentage at basic Percentage proficient and above

STATE	All Students	White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Ineligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
Massachusetts	16% 36% 48%	9% 34% 57%	36% 40% 24%	36% 44% 20%	9% 35% 56%	**	7% 32% 61%	29% 43% 28%
Michigan	23% 45% 33%	17% 45% 37%	46% 42% 11%	31% 48% 22%	16% 31% 53%	**	13% 42% 45%	34% 47% 19%
Minnesota	18% 41% 41%	13% 40% 46%	39% 45% 16%	37% 43% 20%	22% 44% 33%	**	11% 40% 50%	34% 45% 22%
Mississippi	36% 44% 20%	20% 48% 31%	53% 39% 8%	35% 47% 18%	**	**	17% 48% 35%	44% 42% 14%
Missouri	22% 43% 36%	16% 42% 41%	44% 43% 13%	20% 48% 32%	**	**	13% 39% 47%	31% 46% 23%
Montana	16% 43% 40%	12% 43% 45%	**	26% 46% 28%	**	44% 43% 13%	11% 41% 49%	25% 48% 27%
Nebraska	19% 44% 37%	14% 44% 43%	39% 45% 16%	34% 47% 19%	**	**	11% 42% 48%	30% 47% 22%
Nevada	28% 42% 30%	17% 40% 43%	42% 40% 18%	36% 45% 19%	19% 39% 42%	**	18% 40% 41%	35% 44% 22%
New Hampshire	16% 40% 44%	15% 40% 45%	**	38% 44% 18%	11% 34% 55%	**	12% 38% 50%	29% 47% 25%
New Jersey	15% 39% 46%	9% 36% 55%	29% 46% 26%	23% 47% 31%	5% 29% 65%	**	8% 35% 57%	26% 47% 26%
New Mexico	33% 45% 22%	18% 42% 40%	43% 43% 14%	36% 47% 17%	**	48% 42% 10%	18% 45% 37%	39% 45% 16%

continued

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

TABLE 2: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 8 Reading (2013), Continued

■ Percentage below basic ■ Percentage at basic ■ Percentage proficient and above

STATE	All Students	White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Ineligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
New York	24% 41% 35%	14% 40% 46%	37% 46% 18%	36% 45% 19%	16% 33% 50%	**	14% 39% 47%	35% 44% 21%
North Carolina	24% 43% 33%	17% 40% 43%	37% 47% 16%	28% 49% 23%	17% 38% 45%	**	12% 39% 49%	34% 46% 19%
North Dakota	19% 47% 34%	16% 47% 37%	34% 43% 23%	**	**	40% 48% 12%	14% 45% 41%	32% 49% 18%
Ohio	21% 40% 39%	18% 40% 43%	42% 42% 16%	25% 40% 34%	9% 31% 60%	**	12% 37% 50%	34% 44% 22%
Oklahoma	25% 46% 29%	19% 46% 35%	44% 42% 14%	35% 47% 18%	**	28% 48% 25%	16% 45% 39%	33% 47% 20%
Oregon	21% 42% 37%	15% 41% 43%	**	36% 46% 18%	20% 36% 44%	26% 51% 23%	10% 37% 53%	30% 47% 23%
Pennsylvania	19% 39% 42%	12% 39% 49%	42% 41% 17%	41% 42% 17%	16% 35% 50%	**	10% 36% 53%	31% 44% 25%
Rhode Island	23% 41% 36%	15% 41% 44%	42% 40% 18%	40% 42% 18%	24% 40% 37%	**	12% 39% 49%	37% 43% 20%
South Carolina	27% 43% 29%	18% 44% 39%	42% 44% 13%	30% 46% 24%	19% 31% 50%	**	14% 42% 44%	38% 45% 17%
South Dakota	19% 45% 36%	15% 45% 40%	**	28% 50% 22%	**	36% 47% 17%	14% 44% 42%	28% 47% 24%
Tennessee	23% 44% 33%	19% 44% 38%	38% 45% 16%	27% 45% 28%	**	**	14% 41% 45%	32% 46% 22%

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**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.

TABLE 2: Proficiency Rates on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Grade 8 Reading (2013), Continued

■ Percentage below basic ■ Percentage at basic ■ Percentage proficient and above

STATE	All Students	White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/Alaska Native	Ineligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
Texas	24% 45% 31%	11% 40% 49%	33% 49% 17%	32% 48% 20%	8% 35% 58%	**	13% 40% 46%	33% 48% 19%
Utah	19% 42% 39%	16% 40% 44%	**	32% 46% 22%	24% 45% 31%	**	13% 40% 47%	29% 45% 26%
Vermont	16% 39% 45%	16% 39% 45%	30% 45% 25%	**	**	**	10% 35% 55%	27% 45% 28%
Virginia	22% 41% 36%	15% 40% 45%	40% 43% 17%	25% 49% 26%	15% 36% 49%	**	14% 39% 47%	37% 46% 18%
Washington	19% 39% 42%	13% 38% 50%	30% 48% 22%	35% 44% 21%	13% 37% 50%	**	10% 36% 54%	31% 44% 26%
West Virginia	30% 45% 25%	30% 45% 25%	32% 45% 23%	**	**	**	21% 45% 34%	37% 44% 18%
Wisconsin	22% 41% 36%	17% 41% 42%	55% 36% 9%	30% 47% 23%	18% 44% 38%	**	14% 40% 46%	35% 43% 22%
Wyoming	16% 47% 38%	13% 46% 40%	**	24% 51% 25%	**	41% 46% 12%	11% 45% 44%	23% 51% 26%

**National Center for Education Statistics reporting standards were not met for data in this category. For example, the sample size was insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment.



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