



**12th REPORT CARD ON
MINORITY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

June 1, 2006

Advisory Committee to the Fairfax County School Board
Alan Leis Center
7423 Camp Alger Ave., Falls Church, VA 22042

TABLE OF CONTENTS
2005-06 School Year

OPENING LETTER 3

2005-06 MSA OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEMBERS..... 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY..... 5

REPORT CARD AT-A-GLANCE 7

PART I INTRODUCTION 8

PART II SUMMARY OF 2005-06 ACTIVITIES AND STATUS OF
2004-05 RECOMMENDATIONS..... 9

PART III KEY INDICATORS OF MINORITY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT 10

 I. Instructional Program 10

 II. Program Participation..... 14

 III. Parent Involvement 18

PART IV RECOMMENDATIONS 19

APPENDICES 22

 A. Conceptual Foundation

 B. Attendance 2005-06

 C. Letter to School Board on FY 2006 Budget

June 1, 2006

Ilryong Moon, Chairman
Fairfax County School Board
8115 Gatehouse Road
Falls Church, VA 22042

Dear Mr. Moon:

The Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee (MSAOC) is pleased to present the 12th Report Card on Minority Student Achievement. The report represents the independent and objective findings and our observations and recommendations. It was approved by a consensus vote of the members. We extend our appreciation to Kathy Smith, School Board liaison to the MSAOC, for her advice and counsel.

The MSAOC has been working for the past 13 years to enhance the academic achievement of minority students in Fairfax County. During this period, minority student and ESOL enrollments have increased significantly. Previous School Boards have adopted policies and programs recommended by the MSAOC leading to gains for minority and the whole student population. For example, more minority students are participating in the school-based and center-based gifted and talented (GT) programs and the admissions process at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) has been changed. However, the achievement gap between Black and Hispanic students and their Asian and White classmates still persist.

MSAOC believes we need clear direction and advice from the School Board on our recommendations. Many of our recommendations from the past go unresolved while others are implemented during the subsequent school year. Perhaps a new role for the Board's liaisons could be devised to follow up on our recommendations and provide direction for the coming year.

We sincerely hope that the School Board and FCPS staff will pay careful attention to our findings and adopt our recommendations, so that we can fulfill the vision of providing "a gifted-quality education to every child in an instructional setting appropriate for his or her need."

Sincerely,

John Johnson
Co-chair

Pat Murphy, Ed.D.
Co-chair

JJ/PM/lb
Enclosure

**2005-2006
MINORITY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Members

Bush, Aaron
Bussey, Larry
Charin, Marcia
Clayton-Jeter, Helene D.
Cooper, Bernadette
Cooper, Ralph
Dickerson, Lavinia
Diroll, Ray
Fierro, Luis
Clarisse Glassman
Hanbury, Joy
Harrison, Deborah
Howard, Judy
Howard, Tish
Huang, Lynn
Johnson, John
Johnson, Rick
Kadlic, Melanie
Kirton, Elsie
Lopez, Arthur
Merenda, Joseph
Murphy, Pat
Moorer, Tyrone
Pasteur, Donna
Phipps, Sam
Pilson, Lennis
Rodriquez, Marvin
Samaneigo, Nelly
Scarboro, Burnette
Shin, Richard
Stewart, Victoria
Tafur, Mariana
Washington, Sylvia
Wical, Tina
Young, Milton

Appointed By

Steve Hunt
Accountability
Hispanic Leadership Alliance
Cluster I
Cluster II
Catherine Belter
Instructional Services
Accountability
Cluster III
Parent Representative
Cluster VII
Dan Storck
Jane Strauss
Elementary School Principals Association
Student Representative
NAACP
Parent Representative
Phil Niedzielski-Eichner
Student Services
Tessie Wilson
Stu Gibson
Accountability
Urban League
Middle School Principals Association
Brad Center
High School Principals Association
Cluster V
Kaye Kory
Instructional Services
Ilryong Moon
Janet Oleszek
Cluster VIII
Human Relations
College Partnership
Kathy Smith

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MSAOC set out to answer the following questions:

- Why are Black and Hispanic students not performing as well as their Asian and White classmates?
- Why are other school districts in the state and country closing the achievement gap at a faster rate than FCPS?
- Why is the level of participation of Black and Hispanic students in advanced programs (GT, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and TJHSST) so low?

In response to these three questions, we have concluded the following:

Why is there a persistent achievement gap for Black and Hispanic students?

- The academic gap exists before Black and Hispanic children enter kindergarten. Not enough low-income Black and Hispanic children have access to affordable quality preschool programs and childcare. Based on the Developmental Reading Assessments (DRA), Black and Hispanic children are already behind their White classmates by 13.7 and 30 percentage points respectively at grade one. At grade one the Black-White gap is smaller than the large gap between Hispanic-White children.
- The achievement gap increases for Black children as they progress in grade but closes for Hispanic children. For example, by grade two the gap increases to 17 and 33.7 percentage points for Black and Hispanic students. At grade three, the Black-White reading gap increases to 28.6 but the Hispanic-White gap decreases to 19.3 percentage points. At grades five and eight, the Black-White gap closes to 20.8 and then increases to 25.1 for grade eight. The Hispanic-White gap for grades five and eight reading closes to 13.4 and increases to 23.4 percentage points at grade eight.
- There is a substantial increase in the dropout rate for Hispanic and Black students after 2002-03 in both the alternative and regular high school programs. The dropout rate for Hispanic students increased from 4.9 percent in 2001-02 to 9.4 percent in 2004-05. As a comparison, the dropout rates for Asian, and White students have remained the same during the same period.
- FCPS has made modest increases in Black and Hispanic student participation in GT, IB, and AP programs, but participation has not kept pace with increases for their Asian and White classmates. We have concluded in previous reports that there is not enough “push” from schools to encourage fair representation of Black and Hispanic students in these challenging programs nor enough outreach to their parents and communities.

- To be sure, there are socio-economic, child rearing, and poverty factors that explain the gaps, but Black students lose ground as they progress through the eighth grade. They are losing ground not only relative to Whites, but even more relative to their Hispanic classmates.

Why are other school divisions closing the gap faster than FCPS?

- Other school divisions have implemented unified strategies to raise the SOL scores for Black students as in Richmond City and Norfolk schools. We need to make closing the gap for Black and Hispanic students our single highest priority.
- Except for the recent Washington Post article on the low achievement of Black students, not enough community attention has been focused on this issue. We have observed that in these school divisions public awareness has brought a clear focus on improving minority student achievement.
- Other school divisions have a clear and multiyear strategy for closing their achievement gap, and as a consequence, they have made progress faster than FCPS.

Why is participation in GT, IB, AP, and TJHSST for Black and Hispanic students so low?

- The targets for increasing Black and Hispanic student participation in GT, IB, and AP are set at the division level and not individual schools. Individual schools must be more accountable for meeting targets.
- There has been a 9.4 percent participation increase for Black and Hispanic children in center- and school-based GT programs. However, this increase has not kept pace with the increase for Asian and other students.
- Low expectations of students, parents, and teachers can play a crucial role in changing Black and Hispanic student participation in these programs, particularly AP and TJHSST.

In summary, much of the achievement gap problems facing FCPS have roots in early disadvantage. Early intervention programs targeted on children from low income families have higher returns on investments than later efforts. The achievement gap widens early for Black children and persists through high school. The gap narrows for Hispanic children, particularly as they gain English language proficiency. However, Hispanic students have the highest dropout rate of any racial/ethnic group. Many school divisions in the State have narrowed the achievement gap faster than FCPS. To be “world class” we should find ways to focus resources toward addressing our unique student diversity in closing the gap. Finally, there continues to be disparities in the participation of Black and Hispanic students in rigorous and challenging courses and programs. Much of this can be attributable to low expectations of teachers, students and parents.

REPORT CARD-AT-A-GLANCE

	INDICATORS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Standards of Learning	2004-05 English %Point Gap: Black-White: 21% points Hispanic-White: 18% points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor strategies to unique needs of the subgroups. • Close Black-White and Hispanic-White gap by 25 percent and increase English pass rate by 5 percentage points annually.
Early Childhood Intervention Programs	FECEP/Head Start/Early Head Start serves 1072 children with a waiting list of 290 children. About 8 percent of 12,500 low-income children five-and-under participate in preschool and childcare programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish funding priorities to allow all eligible children to participate and double enrollment to 2200 children. • Partner with Fairfax County Office for Children and Fairfax Futures to promote training for and certification of all day care providers. • Assist parents identify quality preschool and childcare programs.
High School Graduation and Dropouts	1050 Hispanic students dropped out of school in 2004-05 representing a 129 percent increase since 2001-02.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the low graduation and high dropout rates for Hispanic students. • Develop dropout prevention program for at-risk 9th and 11th graders. • Expand and support adult high school completion programs. • Expand the High School (HS) Academies program.
GT Programs	Percentage point increase in Black and Hispanic students since 2000: Blacks-1.0 percentage point. Hispanic-1.3 percentage points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double the enrollment of Hispanic students in school-based GT. • Expand the Young Scholars Initiative (YSI) to additional schools. • Increase the number of Black and Hispanic children screened for G/T
TJHSST	In 1998, 49 Black and Hispanic students were admitted to TJHSST but only 28 in 2005-06.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand outreach to elementary school Black and Hispanic students and parents to consider TJHSST. • Encourage more Black and Hispanic students to apply and take Algebra 1 by 7th grade
HS Academies	Participants fairly represent FCPS racial/ethnic diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand program and align sending school and Academy class schedules. • Counsel early and expand outreach to minority parents
AP and IB	About one in ten Black and Hispanic students participate in AP/IB compared to one in three for Asian and White students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the AP/IB summer institutes but collect data by subgroups. • Support program to increase scores 3 and over • Target Black and Hispanic students and their parents to inform them of the benefits of AP and IB programs.
Parent Involvement	Lacks coordinated and comprehensive plan for minority parent engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the ESOL Summit in 2006-07. • Support funding of the <i>Advocacy Handbook for Parents</i>. • Implement Parent Compacts in all Title I schools.

PART I INTRODUCTION

This is the “12th Annual Report Card on Minority Student Achievement” prepared by the MSAOC. Part II is a summary of 2005-06 activities and status of 2004-05 recommendations. This part also provides an update on the *Advocacy Handbook for Parents*. Part III contains the key indicators and progress of minority student achievement, including instructional programs, program participation, and parent outreach and involvement. Finally, Part IV is a summary of our recommendations.

To understand the context and challenges facing the schools, it is important to understand the changes in the county.

- Fairfax County is the economic engine for the Washington metropolitan area because it accounts for 21 percent of the area’s population but 25 percent of its jobs and 27 percent of its Gross Regional Product.¹
- The county’s population growth grew from 596,900 in 1980 to 1,041,200 in 2005 and is expected to grow by 20 percent by 2025.²
- The economic strength of Fairfax County is largely due to its college-educated residents with about 58 percent attaining a bachelor’s degree and higher, but it varies by race/ethnicity. According to 2000 Census, county residents with college degrees were 59.9 percent for Whites, 51.6 percent for Asians, 37.5 percent for Blacks, and 23.3 percent for Hispanics.
- Hispanic families are increasing at an extraordinary pace. They have more school-age children than their White, Black, and Asian neighbors and, therefore, will have a greater impact on school enrollment. US Census data show that the birth rates for White women of 15- to 50-years-of-age were 16 per thousand, for Blacks 10, for Asian 8.3, but for Hispanic women it was 20.3.³
- Having affordable and accessible high quality childcare for infants and toddlers before they are of school-age are major challenges. Childcare is not affordable for about 37,500 families in the county according to the report. An average two-parent family with an income of \$30,000 would spend about 11 percent of their income on childcare with the average annual cost at about \$3,300. There are more than 85,000 children in childcare.⁴

¹ Source: Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services

² Source: Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services

³ US Census, 2004 American Community Survey

⁴ Community Assessment Report, 2004-05, Office for Children, Fairfax County

PART II
SUMMARY OF 2005-06 ACTIVITIES AND
STATUS OF 2004-05 RECOMMENDATIONS

MSAOC activities for 2005-06 included the following:

- Reviewing and revising the *Call to Action* report issued in 1992 and considering changes in the last decade and possible directions for the future.
- Revamping the process to give subcommittees a unified structure, theme, and format. Allow for continuing review and collaborating among the subcommittees to make the Report Card more focused.
- Providing written and oral (public hearings) information to the School Board on proposed budget and meeting and collaborating with the School Board periodically to follow-up on previous and proposed recommendations.
- Holding orientation sessions with parent groups on the *Advocacy Handbook for Parents* and revising the Handbook to produce the second edition.

The Committee met with Mr. Niedzielski-Eichner on October 19, 2005, to hear the Board's new roles for MSAOC and follow up to our recommendations. For the recommendations that were not addressed, we sent a letter to Mr. Moon on January 17, 2006, reiterating our recommendations:

- Fully fund FECEP/Head Start "waiting list" at \$3.9 million and look for non-school space for classrooms.
- Fund full-day kindergarten for the 12 elementary schools with high poverty levels at \$2.74 million.
- Fund the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Summit to extend outreach to language minority parents for 2006-07.
- Fund \$75,000 for teachers' hourly pay to assist academically at-risk students' after-school programs at all 24 high schools serving approximately 1,600 students.

PART III

KEY INDICATORS OF MINORITY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The 1992 MSAOC *Call to Action* report identified three key indicators for minority student achievement: instructional programs, program participation and parent involvement. Each of these key indicators has subordinate guiding principles.

I. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

a. Early Childhood Intervention Programs

Guiding Principle: Early interventions should be provided to students experiencing achievement difficulty.

Status:

- FCPS early childhood intervention program's waiting list has increased substantially from about 202 children in March to 290 in April 2006. This program includes the Virginia Preschool Initiative, FECEP, Head Start and Early Head Start. The program serves 1072 children in the current year of 2005-06. Sixty-five percent of the participants are Black and Hispanic children.⁵
- Nationally, Head Start has a proven track record of helping children and families succeed, but the program can serve about half of all eligible preschool-age children while Early Head Start can serve less than 3 percent of eligible infants and toddlers, according to the Children's Defense Fund in March 2005.
- Low-income and minority children perform better in reading in the earlier grades when they have participated in school readiness programs like FECEP/Head Start, according to data from the Office of Early Childhood and Family Services. Eighty-four percent of former FECEP/Head Start children (excluding LEP and special needs) were at or above benchmark on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) test.⁶
- The achievement gap is apparent as early as the first and second grades. National studies show that at least half the achievement gap between Black and Hispanic and their White classmates already exists at kindergarten level. Children from low-income families are more likely to start school with limited language development skills, health problems, and social problems that interfere with learning.
- Research on cognitive development asserts that high quality early childhood programs is essential for improving the achievement of children in low-income families and closing the achievement gap.⁷

⁵ FECEP/Head Start email from Camille Brooks, April 26, 2006 and verification by Mary Peterson on 5/11/06

⁶ FECEP/Head Start 2001-02 Grade one performance on DRA. Report of the Office of Early Childhood and Family Services.

⁷ Meaningful Differences, B. Hart and T. Risely.

- Investment in preschool programs yields economic benefits as well as addresses equity issues according to a 2006 report of the Committee for Economic Development, The Pew Charitable Trust.⁸

b. Developmental Reading Assessment

The achievement gap is apparent when children are tested with the Developmental Reading Assessment, a tool for judging reading ability for first and second graders.

Table I. Percent At or Above Grade--DRA Grade One and Two 2004-05

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	LEP	FRMS	SPED
Grade 1	80.7	73.4	56.8	87.1	55.3	59.3	49.0
Grade 2	83.5	73.0	56.3	90.0	57.5	60.2	51.1

Table I above shows a 13.7 Black-White and a 30.3 Hispanic-White gap respectively in grade one. By grade two, the gap increases to 17 percentage points for Black-White and 33.7 for Hispanic-White.

c. Standards of Learning (SOL)

Guiding Principle: Students' success rates should be comparable across all groups.

Status: The SOL performance gap between Black and Hispanic and White and Asian students has decreased over the last seven years. However, FCPS gaps were wider than for similar pairings for the state.

- Between 1998 and 2005, the Black-White SOL reading gap has closed by 9.3 percentage points for grade three, by 16.2 for grade five and 3.9 for grade eight.
- For the same period, Hispanic-White reading gap for grade three has closed by 10.2 percentage points, grade five by 15.8 and grade eight by 5.7.
- The Black-White and Hispanic-White gap for English was larger in FCPS than for the same pairings for the state. In 2004-05, Black and Hispanic students' SOL pass rate for combined grades exceeded the Virginia AYP goals for both English and math.
- In 2004-05, the proportion of Black students passing English was 71 percent and 74 percent for Hispanic students but this exceeded the state level by only one percentage point.
- On average, the SOL pass rates for Black students lagged 20 to 30 points behind their White classmates in grades 3-8 for English and math in 2004-05.
- Compared to the 14 Washington area school divisions, FCPS is ranked sixth in the SOL pass rate for English for Black students and tied for first place (with three other divisions) for English for Hispanic students. Compared to Hampton City, Henrico County, Richmond City, and Virginia Beach, FCPS is ranked last for English and math for both Black and Hispanic students.
- Tables II and III show the Black-White and Hispanic-White achievement gaps from 1998-2005.

⁸ Investing in Disadvantaged Young Children is an Economically Efficient Policy, James J. Heckman at Conference: "Building the Economic Case for Investments in Preschool," January 10, 2006

Table II. Black-White Percentage Point Gap on SOL Pass Rate 1998-2005

Level	Subject	1998	2003	2004	2005
3	Reading	37.9	30.1	34.7	28.6
3	Math	38.0	24.3	21.9	20.6
5	Reading	37.0	24.3	22.7	20.8
5	Math	40.0	32.4	30.2	28.2
8	Reading	29.0	35.5	34.9	26.8
8	Math	37.0	29.7	33.3	28.6
EOC	English	19.6	8.3	11.3	14.9
EOC	Algebra 1	33.5	24.5	25.0	18.7

Table III. Hispanic-White Percentage Point Gap on SOL Pass Rate 1998-2005

Level	Subject	1998	2003	2004	2005
3	Reading	29.5	25.6	22.5	19.3
3	Math	26.4	16.3	13.5	17.7
5	Reading	29.2	23.0	14.3	13.4
5	Math	30.2	27.4	27.8	26.6
8	Reading	29.1	40.7	28.2	25.0
8	Math	32.5	26.7	27.0	26.1
EOC	English	25.4	6.6	8.7	10.6
EOC	Algebra 1	32.5	20.4	20.6	12.9

d. Graduation Rate

Four out of every ten Hispanic students who started ninth grade in September 2001 did not graduate from high school in June 2005.⁹

- Graduation rates for Hispanic students have fallen to 60 percent as their enrollment increased from 3.5 percent in 1985-86 growing to 16.0 percent in 2005-06.
- The four-year graduation rate for Hispanic students fell to 60.9 percent in 2005 from 70.3 percent in 2002.
- FCPS has not conducted a detailed study on the declining graduation rate, but several researchers¹⁰ point out that one critical difference between these two periods was the adoption of the SOL graduation requirement.

⁹ For African-American students, the graduation rate was 74.1percent in 2005, FCPS Statistical Report

¹⁰ See, for example, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A61386-2005Apr17.html>.

Table IV. Graduation Rate for FCPS by Race/Ethnicity

	White	Black	Hispanic
2000-01	90.3	78.4	69.4
2001-02	90.3	77.3	67.0
2002-03	91.0	75.2	67.2
2003-04	90.0	72.6	59.4

Separate statistics for Asian students not reported under NCLB.
Source: Virginia State Report Card, April 2005.

- Some researchers say exit exams discourage students and they tend to drop out. Walt Heinecke of the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education said "...studies have found that exit exams encourage students to drop out. Heinecke studied drafts of the VCU report and faulted it for not examining whether students who drop out leave school because of the SOL tests." (*The Washington Post*, Monday, April 18, 2005, p. B01).
- As shown in Table V below, students tend to drop out between grades 9 and 10 or 11 and 12. For example, there were 1,424 African-American students in the 9th grade in 2001 but their numbers dropped to only 1,348 in 2002 or by 76 students. The number of 10th grade Hispanic students dropped from 1,968 in 9th grade to 1,720 students or by 248 students.
- Similarly, there were 1,397 Black students enrolled in 11th grade in 2003, but only 1,056 of them earned diplomas in June 2005. Meanwhile, Hispanics dropped from 1,984 students in 11th grade in 2003 to 1,200 who graduated in June 2005. The decline between grades for Black and Hispanic students may be also affected by students who repeat a grade or who arrive or leave FCPS.

Table V Enrollment and Graduation by Race/Ethnicity 2001-2004

	White	Asian	Black	Hispanic
2001/02	7473	2129	1424	1968
2002/03	7232	2191	1348	1720
2003/04	7167	2435	1397	1984
2004/05	6868	2154	1256	1425
Graduated June 2005	6523	1989	1056	1200
Graduation rate	89.8%	97.6%	85.1%	65.9%

Compared to their peers in the state, the Hispanic graduation rate in FCPS was below the Hispanic average for the Commonwealth of Virginia which had a Hispanic graduation rate of 66.5 percent in 2004¹¹. Additionally, VDOE states that, "Graduation rates for White students have remained relatively constant; rates for Blacks and Hispanics dropped significantly from 2003 to 2004 (4.9 percent and 11.6 percent, respectively)" (p. 2). The report adds that "The percent of Hispanic students earning modified standard diplomas has increased at rates consistent with those at the state level and for White and Black student populations.

¹¹ [VDOE](#) (2005)

As shown in Table VI below, the dropout rate nearly doubled for Hispanic students from 4.9 percent in 2002 to 9.4 percent in 2005. For Black students, the dropout rate increased slightly from 3.2 percent in 2002 to 3.8 percent in 2005 as shown in the Table VI below.

Table VI. Dropout Rate 2001-02 to 2004-05

Race/Ethnicity	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Asian	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.9
Black	3.2	3.7	4.0	3.8
Hispanic	4.9	7.8	9.3	9.4
White	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.9

Based on FCPS 2005 dropout statistics, we estimate that the Hispanic dropout rate is substantially higher than expected from their enrollment. Although not as large, the dropout rate for Black students is also higher than expected.¹² Finally, some have argued that Hispanic students are more likely to dropout in alternative education schools than regular middle and high schools. However, Hispanic students were 13 percent of the middle and high school membership in 2004-05 but 36 percent of dropouts. They were 47 percent of alternative school membership but 59 percent of their dropouts. Hispanic students were twice as likely to drop out in the regular middle and high schools compared to the alternative school programs.

II. PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Guiding Principle: All ethnic and racial groups will be fairly represented in all school programs and activities.

Status: As shown in Table VII, Black and Hispanic student participation in center and school-based GT programs increased by 9.4 percent. However, this increase has not kept pace with the increase for Asian and other students. For example, between 2000-01 and 2005-06, the proportion of Black children in GT programs increased by a mere one percentage point and 1.3 percentage points for Hispanics classmates. By contrast, Asian and other children increased by 7.3 and 3.4 percentage points as shown in Table VII.

¹² Hispanic: 50.9% dropouts/14% membership= 363%. Black: 15.7% dropouts/10.8% membership=145%

a. Gifted and Talented (GT) Programs

TABLE VII. Percentage of Students in Grades 3-8 GT Programs 2000-2005

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Other	Disadvantaged
2000-01	74.8	2.3	2.0	17.0	3.6	1.2
2001-02	72.1	2.7	1.9	18.2	4.8	1.4
2002-03	68.4	3.3	2.1	19.8	6.1	2.1
2003-04	66.4	3.3	2.6	20.9	6.6	2.4
2004-05	64.4	3.5	3.2	22.2	6.5	2.8
2005-06	61.9	3.3	3.3	24.3	7.0	3.2

*Total includes American Indian, undesignated, and multiracial students.

Based on GT program's annual report, we have observed that Hispanic students are underrepresented in school-based programs.

b. Academies

The FCPS High School Academies provide about 3,155 students with opportunities and experiences in the following fields: communication and the arts, engineering and scientific technology, health and human services and international studies and business. Table VIII shows that minority student participation in the Academy program nearly matches their enrollment.

Table VIII. Percentage Participation in HS Academies by Race/Ethnicity 2004-05

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Other	Total Number
Percent	52.1	11.7	14.7	19.6	1.7	3,155

The Academies are part of a continuum of high quality programs that represent viable options for students who want to enter the workforce after high school. The program provides incentives for students who might be at-risk of not graduating to stay in school and earn their diploma. However, the MSAOC believes there are logistical and informational barriers that prohibit participation in the Academies program.

- First, because of the location and class schedules, students desiring to participate in the program often miss 2-3 class periods to attend academy courses away from their school.
- Second, seniors must first fulfill the six verified credits requirement in order to graduate so counseling should start as early as the ninth grade.
- Finally, the MSAOC has found that too many minority parents are not aware of the Academies program. The program will be featured in the revised *Advocacy Handbook for Parents*, but we believe additional outreach efforts are needed. Guidance counselors and parent liaisons could play pivotal roles in this effort.

c. AP/IB Program Participation and Achievement

FCPS schools are ranked among the top 5 percent of high schools on the *The Washington Post's* Challenge 2005 Index for AP and IB enrollments. All FCPS high schools have made the top 1,000 list for the past three years. As shown in Figure 1, there has been a steady increase of Black and Hispanic students in both AP and IB

courses since 2001. Black students have nearly tripled their participation since 2001. Although Hispanic enrollment has increased in recent years, their position remains the same as in 2001. When you compare the AP and IB programs separately, the IB program has been the driver for increasing Black and Hispanic participation although there are substantially fewer schools. As a percentage of each group's membership, the IB program shows substantially less disparity between Black and Hispanic students and their Asian and White classmates. As shown in Table IX, the participation gap for IB is less than two to three percentage points while the gap is substantially wider for AP schools range from 19 to 22 percentage points.

Figure 1 Enrollment in at Least One AP/IB Course

AP/IB Student Enrollment for 11/12 Grade

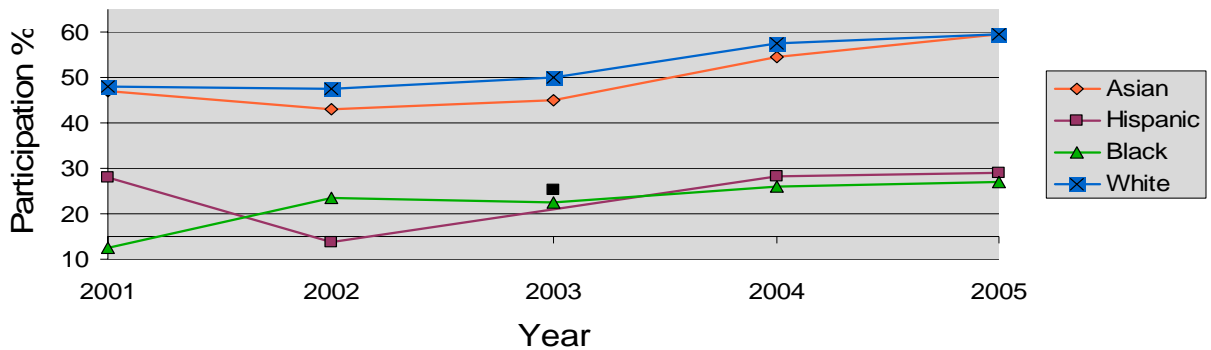


Table IX. Enrollment in At Least One AP and IB Course by Race/Ethnicity 2004-05 for Grades 11 and 12

	AP				IB			
	2004		2005		2004		2005	
Asian	2653	29.4%	2944	32.0%	814	9.0%	837	9.1%
Black	480	9.1%	574	10.6%	351	6.7%	348	6.4%
Hispanic	640	9.8%	748	11.0%	435	6.7%	473	7.0%
White	8017	28.8%	8385	30.5%	2288	8.2%	2272	8.3%
Other	342	22.3%	441	23.1%	141	9.2%	165	8.6%

We believe Black and Hispanic students are reluctant to enroll in AP courses because they don't see many others students or teachers like themselves in the program. If the curriculum is not culturally relevant, schools have not made a concerted outreach effort to encourage participation and if they don't know what support systems are available if they need help. To determine the success of the AP/IB program, we must review the achievement and participation rates of all ethnic groups. Achievement and participation are interrelated because each is a driver for the other. When students see others being successful in taking AP/IB courses they are more likely to enroll, which improves participation. If the achievement rate is below a certain perceived threshold where the student's peers do not achieve, the student may shy away.

The first step is to identify home and school factors that may have a negative impact on their participation and achievement, including teacher and parent expectations and collaboration, publicizing the AP and IB programs at minority parent meetings, recruiting and training more minority teachers for the programs, and training parent liaisons to help in the outreach efforts. Fairfax County Public Schools actively needs to address this issue head on.

d. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology

In 2005-06, 28 Black and Hispanic students were admitted to TJHSST, three less than in 2004-05. Black and Hispanic students admitted will represent 5.5 percent of the Class of 2010. For the Class of 1998, 49 Black and Hispanic students were admitted and nearly all went on to graduate and pursue higher education.

There are several barriers that must be removed before there can be any significant equity in admission for Black and Hispanic students. First, all of the students admitted had taken at least Algebra 1 and Geometry by the eighth grade. Increasing the number of Black and Hispanic students taking Algebra 1 by the eighth grade expands the eligible pool of applicants but also improves minority student achievement. Second, fewer Black and Hispanic students apply for TJHSST than Asian and White students. For example, White students were 48 percent of applicants in 2005-06 and Asian students were 34 percent while Hispanics were six percent and Blacks five percent. Third, there are perceptions among Black and Hispanic students that TJHSST is not a place that they would feel welcome.

In the "Report on Supply and Demand at TJHSST – Responses to the Blue Ribbon Commission Recommendation," the 332 Black and Hispanic students that responded to the survey about their decision not to apply to TJHSST show some very disturbing issues. A majority of Black and Hispanic students didn't know about TJHSST until the 7th grade and/or they had a concern about the admission process. This is in stark contrast to other groups within the community that start preparing their students for TJHSST in elementary school. One hundred and twenty-two (37 percent) of 332 eligible Black and Hispanic students didn't apply to TJHSST because they were concerned about there being enough people of similar racial/ethnicity according to the report.

Finally, FCPS has largely defined diversity in terms of race/ethnicity and not included other dimensions of diversity such as culture, life experiences, educational opportunities or socio-economic status.

III. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Guiding Principle: Strong parent, community, and school partnership will be developed and nurtured, and parents and community will be recognized as significant and critical partners in education.

Status: Some individual schools have undertaken aggressive activities to engage and involve parents who traditionally have not participated in any meaningful way. Under NCLB, schools are to provide information about student performance, supplemental education services, and school choice and teacher quality as well as parent involvement.

As we recommended in the MSAOC 11th Report Card, the most important strategy for increasing minority parent involvement is developing a warm and welcoming school climate. The school climate is the educational and social atmosphere of a school. In schools with a welcoming school climate, educators treat parents with respect and encourage their participation in all types of involvement. This is particularly important for minority parents to feel accepted, respected, and needed, and they are more likely to become involved in the school.

A basic foundation of a welcoming school climate is the school's family involvement policy. This policy is a written statement that establishes a school's commitment to partner with parents to become involved in the school at whatever level they are able to participate. Although this policy is for all parents, it is particularly important for minority parents. It emphasizes that the school should accommodate parent work schedules when creating parent-involvement activities and should also provide opportunities for parents to voice their comments in their home language, if needed.

All Title I schools should develop a family-school learning compact, not unlike *Student Responsibilities and Rights*. Such a compact defines the goals, expectations, and responsibilities of schools and families in educating children and parents would have to acknowledge and sign.

PART IV RECOMMENDATIONS

Instructional Programs

School Readiness

- Extend partnership with the County's Office for Children and Fairfax Futures to develop a comprehensive strategy for childcare providers, daycare centers and schools to address school readiness issues among this population.
- Establish spending priorities to allow all eligible children to participate in FECEP/Head Start/ Early Head Start to double the number of children served to 2200.
- Find additional non-school-based sites for preschool programs. A good source of facilities could be older schools and office buildings that may be scheduled for closing. Such facilities could serve as preschool centers for the entire school system and as training sites for neighborhood daycare providers.
- Assign full-time professionals to all Title I schools and other centers to set up, organize, implement, and administer each preschool center, including working with neighborhood daycare providers. Other responsibilities would include conducting training, working with parents for parent literacy, and demonstrating to parents how to work with their children at home for language skills, reading, and math skills.
- Develop and implement culturally relevant outreach strategies for language minority parent and encourage parents to select quality preschool programs and childcare providers.

Standards of Learning

- Target exceeding state English pass rates for all subgroups.
- Close the Black-White and Hispanic-White gap by at least 25 percent within the next two years and increase the English pass rate by five percentage points for Black and Hispanic students.
- Conduct a special study to examine why the dropout disparity rate is so high for Hispanics and Blacks in both regular and alternative schools. This study should be conducted in the 2006-07 school year.
- Examine the various options for separate strategies for closing the achievement gaps for Black and Hispanic students, including students with disabilities.

Program Participation

Graduation and Dropout Rates

- Conduct a thorough assessment of the low graduation rate, particularly among Hispanic and Black students and examine factors such as immigration status (whether or not native-born), socio-economic status, at-risk behaviors (i.e., teen pregnancy, gang activity or incarceration), and participation in prevention programs.
- Develop at-risk student and dropout prevention programs, geared particularly towards 9th and 11th grade minority and low-income students. Provide additional funding to assist academically at-risk students who are in jeopardy of not earning sufficient verified credits to graduate.
- Examine why the dropout rate is high at alternative schools.
- Provide more information and outreach to minority and low-income students regarding the academies, alternative high schools, transitional high schools, and career and technical education programs.
- Provide additional funding for the Academies program, AVID, and College Partnership.

Gifted and Talented

- Target doubling GT center enrollment for Black and Hispanic children in 2006-07 above 2005-06 levels since participation levels only changed 0.7 percentage points for Black and 1.4 for Hispanic children since 2001-02.
- Double the enrollment of Hispanic children in school-based GT since they are substantially underrepresented.
- Expand Young Scholars Initiative to additional schools. Provide additional funding for the QUEST program to eliminate the waiting list.

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology

- Train more teachers and offer compacted math in heavily minority elementary schools.
- Increase the number of Black and Hispanic students taking Algebra 1 by the eighth grade.
- Expand outreach to Black and Hispanic sixth grade students and parents so that they would consider TJHSST in enough time to take the needed classes, such as compacted math.
- Provide more outreach to and resources for the Black and Hispanic community and to elementary schools, so that they are more comfortable with the admission process and are aware of courses needed to achieve admission.
- Ensure that the TJHSST test preparation program targets underrepresented schools.
- Provide orientation to teachers in underrepresented schools on how to write effective recommendations.
- Provide additional funding for the QUEST program to eliminate the waiting list.

HS Academies

- Examine how to align high school schedules so that Academy students don't waste a class period waiting for the bus.
- Market the program in Spanish as well as during special parent outreach sessions involving the Hispanic community. For newly arrived immigrant students and their other high school classmates who may not be fully proficient in English, career planning and the Academies should be the focus of their orientation.
- Increase the budget for the Academies; include increased marketing of the program, more course offerings in more high schools (or all high schools), and more guidance toward seeking these course offerings.

AP/IB

- Extend outreach to parents, particularly Black and Hispanic, to inform and encourage them to think about AP/IB for their student. Train parent liaisons to help in this effort.
- Continue support for the AP/IB Summer Institute but collect participation data by subgroups.
- Expand the number of after-school AP/IB tutoring and mentoring programs and encourage minority teachers to participate.
- Recruit and train more minority AP/IB teachers to serve as role models and mentors.
- Examine and revise the curriculum material to make it more relevant to minority students.
- Study why certain Black/Hispanic students were successful while others were unsuccessful with respect to pass the AP/IB exams.

Parent Involvement

- FCPS should implement the second ESOL Summit in the 2006-07 school year and examine ways in which to conduct the session so all sections of the county can participate. This might involve implementing mini-summits in several locations.
- Support additional funding of the second edition of the *Advocacy Handbook for Parents*.
- Develop culturally relevant outreach strategies with a focus on our diverse parents about NCLB requirements, including information on supplemental education services, school choice, and parent compacts in all division schools. In addition, these strategies should focus on high school graduation requirements, GT, Young Scholars, AP and IB programs, as well as needed courses to apply for TJHSST.
- Establish a more coordinated and comprehensive effort to engage minority parents at home and school in the education of their children is essential for closing the achievement gap.

APPENDIX A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To remind the reader of the original purpose of this report card, the conceptual foundation of the MSAOC is restated below.

1. Given the appropriate tools and stable learning environment, all students can learn at higher academic levels than those at which they currently achieve. Therefore, all students in FCPS must be provided equal access to all instructional programs and equitable opportunities for learning.
2. Human diversity must be recognized and valued. Therefore, School Board members, the Division Superintendent, and the Leadership Team must lead by example in mandating and monitoring diversity in all functions of the school system. The committee firmly recommends equity in enrollment and participation of all students in courses and programs, in hiring and promotional practices, and on advisory and decision-making boards. Every member of the school system (including administrators at all levels, teachers, administrative assistants, guidance counselors, bus drivers, and all other support personnel) must participate in continuing multicultural education training.
3. Supportive behavior, higher expectations, and non-prejudicial attitudes by all members of the school staff and community are critical to student academic success. Therefore, attitudes and behaviors that are counterproductive to teaching and learning will not be tolerated in any Fairfax County school. FCPS must demand civility from everyone, including staff members, students, parents, and community members. Discriminatory treatment based on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability, language, religion, or economic status must not be allowed in the classroom organization, instruction, activities, or interpersonal interactions.
4. Teachers and other instructional staff members must be given opportunities for renewal in order to rebuild their enthusiasm and to become active participants in the learning process. Therefore, a continual process for professional growth and development must exist in order to revitalize staff members so that they can more effectively provide a productive and dynamic learning environment for our diverse student population.
5. Parents must be treated as equal partners in the schooling process. Therefore, the School Board must put mechanisms in place to empower parents of every ethnic, educational, language, racial, religious, or socioeconomic background to become constructive and productive partners in the learning process. The home-school partnership in which all parties are equally responsible for ensuring student success is valued, and this relationship is viewed as supportive, not adversarial. Schools must actively involve parents at all levels of the decision-making continuum, and a culture in which the contributions of all parents are valued must be created.
6. The School Board, the Division Superintendent, and the Leadership Team must ensure the fair application of all policies, regulations, and procedures so that all students are treated in an equitable manner. Therefore, practices detrimental to student academic progress will be eliminated. Every member of the school system, including administrators at all levels, teachers, administrative assistants, guidance counselors, bus drivers, and all other support personnel, are individually and collectively responsible for supporting student achievement.

APPENDIX B
MSAOC Attendance List 2005-06

Last Name	First Name	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Ampeh	Karen	X	X							
Bush	Aaron	X	X		X	X			X	
Bussey	Larry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Charin	Marcia		X	X		X		X	X	
Clayton-Jeter	Helene		X		X	X	X	X		
Cooper	Bernadette		X				x			
Cooper	Ralph		X			X				
Dickerson	Lavinia T.	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Diroll	Ray	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Fierro	Luis	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Glassman	Clarisse			X				X		
Hanbury	Joy		X	X	X					
Harrison	Deborah	X		X	X	X				
Howard	Judy Hall	X	X	X		X				
Howard	Tish		X							
Howlette	Mary		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Huang	Lynn	X								
Johnson	John	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Johnson	Rick			X	X		X		X	
Johnson	Rosie	X			See M. Howlette					
Kadlic	Melanie	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Kirton	Elsie	X		X		X		X		
Lopez	Arthur	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Merenda	Joseph	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Moore	Tyrone					X	X		X	
Murphy	Pat	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Pasteur	Donna	X			X	X		X		
Pilson	Lennis	X	X	X	X		X			
Rodriguez	Marvin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Samaniego	Nelly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Scarboro	Burnette		X	X	X	X				
Shin	Richard				X	X				
Tafur	Mariana	X		X				X	X	
Washington	Sylvia		X		X	X	X		X	
Wical	Ernestine	X	X		X	X	X	X		
Young	Milton		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

APPENDIX C

January 27, 2006

Ilryong Moon
Chairman
Fairfax County School Board
Burkholder Administrative Center
10700 Page Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Mr. Moon:

The Committee extends its appreciation to Mr. Niedzielski-Eichner for meeting with us on October 19 and for the Board's recognition of the importance of the Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee (MSAOC) in advising them on issues of minority student achievement. We recognize that the School Board acted on many of the recommendations made by the MSAOC in the FY 2006 budget. In particular, we note the funding of the instructional (K-8) and high school assessment coaches, expansion of full-day kindergarten in five schools, middle school class size reduction, and continuing funding for FECEP/Head Start, AVID, Young Scholars, and QUEST programs.

The MSAOC would like to take this opportunity to provide the School Board with input as new budget priorities are being considered. These recommendations are based on priorities that were included as part of the 11th MSAOC Report Card but not funded in FY 2006:

- Fully fund FECEP/Head Start "waiting list" at \$3.9 million and look for non-school space for classrooms. We join the FECEP/Head Start Policy Committee's recommendation to provide dedicated classroom space for FECEP/Head Start as elementary schools are built or renovated." To address the immediate issue of space, we believe that the existing space in community centers and places of worship should be utilized. In addition we believe that programs involving parents at the preschool and early primary levels, i.e., Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters(HIPPY), Partners in Print, and family literacy, should be expanded to meet the needs of our low income and language minority parents.
- Fund full-day kindergarten for the remaining 68 elementary schools at \$21.2 million. The impact off full-day kindergarten is academically significant at elementary schools with a high percentage of students who are limited English proficient and qualify for free and

reduced-price meals. If funding cannot be budgeted for the remaining schools to implement a full-day program, funding must be allotted for the next 12 elementary schools identified on the Full-day Kindergarten Index at \$2.74million.

- Fund the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Summit to extend outreach to language minority parents. The proposed cost for this summit in the 2006 budget was estimated at \$50,000-75000. We believe the summit could be funded at about \$40,000. This could be launched in school year 2006-07.
- Fund “extra learning opportunities” at a cost of \$75,000 for teachers’ hourly pay to assist academically at risk students who are in jeopardy of not earning sufficient verified credits to graduate. Funding is recommended for after-school programs at all 24 high schools as supported by high school principals. These after-school programs will serve approximately 1,600 students of which a high percentage is Black and Hispanic.

We look forward to continuing our dialogue with the School Board about the FY 2007 budget priorities. Your feedback and the opportunity for us to work together in supporting our recommendations during the next several months is a priority for all of our students. Again, thank you for your consideration, and please let us know at your earliest convenience when we could discuss our recommendations in greater depth.

Sincerely,

Luis Fierro
Cochair (past)

John Johnson
Cochair