# Alternative Learning Programs Evaluation:

# 2000-2001

## August 2002

**Public Schools of North Carolina**
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# Summary Comments and Recommendations

In the sixth-year (2000-01) ALP evaluation, many trends continue from previous years. The 1998-99 Evaluation included three separate reports and a comprehensive set of recommendations. Those recommendations are still relevant, as are those detailed in the 1999-2000 report released in October of 2001. Several of those areas and/or issues are emphasized again here, based on continued data trends.

## Focus on Academic Success of Students

ALPs must increasingly find ways to address the academic success of at-risk students. State test results for ALP students are still far below those of regular education students. If students cannot progress academically, they will not be successful – either in the regular education program or subsequent to graduation; and many ALP students still are not graduating. Clearly, these students have failed in the regular program and present large challenges to educators. However, ALPs must continue to focus on academic interventions and instruction based on student's needs and to present challenging academic goals for students. Emphasis on mastering course content should be paramount.

Research in low-performing schools (including some alternative schools) has shown that low-performing students can rise to high standards in a short amount of time. Some of the instructional variables found effective were challenging, focused and clear learning targets; engaging assignments; emphasis on writing every day (in most subjects); immediate feedback and multiple opportunities to revise work to meet a pre-established standard.[1] Some ALP students likely need to focus on basic reading and mathematics skills. This may require special training for secondary teachers who are not accustomed to teaching core academic skills.

ALP educators may need assistance in developing instructional programs that are rigorous yet meet the needs of their students. The Alternative/Safe Schools Section is focusing on this need by holding Instructional Institutes for alternative educators. This emphasis needs to continue, with successful strategies, based on research to the extent available, disseminated among alternative programs and schools.

As part of this emphasis, feedback from alternative educators suggests that some ALPs have difficulty in offering all of the courses that students need to meet graduation requirements. LEAs must work with ALPs to develop flexible scheduling and course offering strategies so that students can work steadily toward grade-level and graduation requirements. Local educators also indicate the need for flexibility in working with exceptional children. Often teachers licensed to teach children with disabilities are not available in ALPs. Again, LEAs must help their ALPs find ways to provide the necessary instruction that is consistent with the legal requirements. The NCDPI may want to look for successful strategies currently being implemented by selected ALPs and share them with other ALPs. Some ALPs, for example,

[1] Ainsworth, L. (July 2001). Presentation of information from Douglas Reeves' evaluation of 90/90/90 schools [90 percent poverty, 90 percent minority, and 90 percent meeting state content standards], US Department of Education Annual Meeting on Improving Low Performing Schools.

made sure that a teacher licensed in an appropriate area of exceptionality offers some of their coursework.

## Comprehensive Services for ALP Students

As emphasized in previous evaluation reports, students assigned to ALPs typically have more than one type of problem. The complexity of needs requires the development of individualized plans for students based on a diagnostic assessment of strengths and needs, and the provision of complementary services as well as academic instruction. Many "outside-of-school" needs influence school success and often require counseling, social services, health services, work planning, and the like. Districts must help ALPs and other schools to provide these "wrap-around" services to better ensure success for at-risk students.

## Environment Conducive to Improved Learning and Behavior

Smaller is Better. Previous ALP evaluation reports have emphasized the need for a smaller teacher-student ratio (and smaller overall size) to have maximum academic and personal/social impact. The 2000-01 data show that the median size of schools and programs is continuing to drop, suggesting some movement in the direction of "smaller." While smaller size is associated with increased financial costs, it is likely one critical aspect of more successful ALPs. Both instructional and personal/social interventions can be more targeted to specific needs in smaller learning environments.

Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support. Studies of most improved low-performing schools in Chicago suggest that these schools combine high academic expectations with an environment that supports students socially and personally.[2] This support comes from staff, peers, and even the community. Many alternative educators often must act alone to provide this support. Similarly, a study using a large nationally representative database found that one of the characteristics of higher performing and improving high schools was the sense of responsibility for students and close relationships between staff and students.[3] The ability for ALPs to deliver this kind of support is linked to size, having adequate resources, and support of the home school community.

## Adequate Funding and Facilities Still Elusive

Alternative educators continue to note that they are short of adequate funding. Expenditure data show that ALPs are spending essentially all the monies allotted to them from the Alternative/At-Risk Student Fund. Inability to influence local funding decisions has led some alternative educators to suggest that a dedicated funding stream be created for ALPs. Others also have suggested that, given the poor facilities of some ALPs, minimum standards and/or guidelines should be developed at the state level for ALP facilities.

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[2]Lee, V. E., Smith, J. B., Perry, T. E., & Smylie, M. (October 1999). Social Support, Academic Press, and Student Achievement: A View from the Middle Grades. Consortium for Chicago School Research, Chicago, IL. (available at http://www.consortium-chicago.org)

[3]Lee, V. E., Smith, J. B., & Croninger, R. G. (Fall 1995). Another Look at High School Restructuring: More Evidence That It Improves Student Achievement, And More Insight Into Why. Issue Report No. 9, Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

## Continuum of Services and Early Invention

ALPs represent only one point on a needed continuum of services for students at risk of failure due to academic, behavioral, and/or personal reasons. Because of the need to evaluate the same type of program across LEAs, the definition of ALP used for this evaluation defines only a specific type of alternative for at-risk students. *There should exist in every LEA and school a range of interventions and services* for students who need help both within and beyond the regular instructional program. LEAs should examine their interventions in a systematic way to insure that they begin intervening for students as soon as they show evidence of difficulty, as well as at more intensive points along the way. It should be unusual for a student to go from perceived "normal" functioning in the regular program to placement in an ALP. While that may occasionally occur in crisis situations, other interventions should have typically occurred prior to removing a student from the regular program. On the other hand, many ALP students have indicated (in previous evaluations and staff visits to schools) that they prefer the alternative school or program because the features in regular schools that make success difficult for them are less evident (e.g., impersonal staff, limited individual assistance, and lack of social support).

Our data continue to point out that *these interventions must begin in the early grades*. While dropouts are highest in the ninth-grade for all students, this pattern is even stronger for students in ALPs. Middle grade students also evidence considerable difficulty. While we must continue to help students once they reach the middle and high school grades, clearly intervention before problems have this much time to develop is essential.

## Time in ALP and Transitions Between Home School and ALP

Several years of data collection point to more positive outcomes for students who remain in the ALP for a longer period of time. While we cannot be certain if there are different types of students who are placed for longer rather than shorter periods of time, it would seem logical to expect more seriously at-risk students to be assigned for longer periods of time - yet they tend to have more positive end-of-year outcomes. One hypothesis that district and ALP administrators need to consider carefully is whether this may constitute a more concentrated intervention. That is, students are in the intervention long enough for it to have an effect. "In-and-out" placements may not provide the length and depth of intervention necessary to have a significant impact.

Student progress, both academic and behavioral, should be stabilized before the student is required to return to the home school. In fact, students may make more progress if academic and behavioral benchmarks for progress are set in advance rather than intervention without specific targets or goals or simply having the student serving time is a pre-existing instructional program.

When a student transitions between the home school and ALP, careful attention needs to be paid to that student's success by both entities. The home school should document what has been done prior to assignment to an ALP and should have some on-going way to learn about that student's progress. If and when the student returns to the home school, careful transition and progress monitoring plans should be in place to better ensure the student's success in an environment where s/he was not successful in the first place. While schools are supposed to keep a record of students referred to alternative schools, it is recommended that careful attention

to such referral to all ALPs, including numbers and dates of entry and exit, be paid by both the home school and district. Data such as types and frequency of referrals by various schools may be used as a self-evaluation and may help develop better interventions in the home schools or establish more appropriate services. Specific data regarding referral and transition issues are being built into the evaluation plan for the 2002-03 school year to get better information on current practices in these areas.

## Continued (and Changing) Accountability for Alternative Schools and Programs

Intervention effects relate to accountability for students. The 2000-01 school year was the second year for a formal accountability plan for alternative *schools* (not programs). While 68 out of the 70 alternative schools in the ABCs model made either "expected" or "exemplary" growth/gain in 2000-01, they were more likely to meet locally adopted accountability options than testing-based components based on state assessments. Consistent with the recommendations for continued focus on the academic success of ALP students, these results suggest that considerable improvement can be made in the core academic areas of accountability. While alternative *programs* do not have official accountability plans, local districts should pursue more formal accountability measures for them as well as alternative *schools*. Success for students will be directly linked to overall program success.

A shift in focus toward core academic areas for accountability may in fact be mandated by the new federal reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act – now known as the No Child Left Behind Act. Accountability for alternative schools may have to focus more heavily on student achievement progress in reading, mathematics, and science in order to maintain compliance with the new law, depending upon the soon-to-be-released adequate yearly progress guidelines for that law. The extent to which local option accountability indicators can be preserved under that system remains to be seen.

## Alternative Learning Programs Evaluation: 2000-01

### Executive Summary

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| **Background** | G.S. 115C-12 (24) requires that the State Board of Education (SBE) conduct an annual evaluation of Alternative Learning Programs (ALPs). Previous reports have included studies of ALP teacher and administrator qualifications, best practices in alternative education, trend data on ALPs across the state (student enrollment demographics, academic performance, etc.), and the analysis of LEA expenditures for ALPs. These reports are available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Web Site at: http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/evaluation. |
| **Report Contents** | This report includes information about ALPs operating during the 2000-01 school year. Disaggregated data are provided for gender/ethnic groups in demographic and test data. State EOG and EOC test data are also disaggregated by Achievement Levels, and the results of the NC High School Comprehensive Test for ALP students are provided. |
| **Number of ALPs Based on SBE Policy HSP-C-013** | ALPs identified in 2000-01 included the following:<br>- 206 ALPs total, up from 186 the previous year and<br>- 62 out of the 69 officially classified alternative schools.<br>Of the 206 ALPs, 34 (17 percent) are new, 5 (2 percent) are newly merged from previous programs, and the remaining 167 (81 percent) were in existence in 1999-2000. |
| **Students Served in ALPs** | After a drop in 1999-2000, ALP student enrollments increased by 8% in 2000-01. ALPs may be working with smaller groups of students more intensively, however, as the median number of students per program decreased in 2000-01 for the second straight year. As in previous years, ninth graders made up the highest percentage (28 percent) of the ALP enrollment in 1999-2000. |

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|---|---|
| **Disaggregated Gender/Ethnic Data** | As in previous years, ALP enrollment for both middle and high students included more males than females. Relative to their proportion of the student population in the state, White females are under-represented and Black males are notably over-represented among ALP enrollees at both the middle and high school levels. As was true in previous years, the enrollment of Black males in ALPs at the middle school level is still more than twice their proportion statewide and just under that at the high school level.<br><br>ALP students are at high risk of school failure, both academically and behaviorally. Most male enrollees, regardless of ethnicity, were referred to ALPs for behavioral reasons in 2000-01. In addition, females were more likely than males to be referred for academic reasons regardless of ethnicity. |
| **Family Demographics** | Comparative data for family demographics are reported for ALP students this year with the addition of free/reduced price lunch (FRL) status for middle school students, the only level for which that data are available. These descriptors indicate that, as in 1999-2000, ALP students in 2000-01 were more economically disadvantaged, had parents with less education, and were more likely to live in single parent families than students statewide.<br><br>The percentage of ALP students whose parents have less than a high school education was twice that of the student population in the state. In middle school, which is the only level for which have FRL data, 62 percent of ALP students are eligible compared to 38 percent for middle school students statewide. About half the ALP students in middle and high school live in single parent families (51 and 49 percent, respectively) compared to a statewide figure of about 33 percent. |
| **Other Risk Factors that Impact Learning and Staying in School** | Similar to patterns seen in 1999-2000, ALP students were more likely to have been suspended or to have dropped out compared to students statewide in 2000-01. ALP students received suspensions in 2000-01 at a rate of approximately 1 per every 2 students, compared to a statewide rate of 1 per every 6 students. Although the dropout rate for ALP students decreased by 3 percent in 2000-01, it still remains almost four times higher than the statewide rate. These figures translate to a rate of about 1 out of 6 ALP students dropping out compared to 1 out of 23 students statewide. |

**ALP Funding**

Of the more than $164 million appropriated to the 2000-01 At-Risk Student Services/Alternative Programs and Schools Fund, just over 20 percent was spent on ALPs compared to almost 22 percent in 1999-00. This represents the first decrease in ALP expenditures from the fund since 1996-97 (when it became possible to track ALP expenditures). The majority these expenditures were for teacher salaries, benefits, teacher assistants, and instructional support.

**Key Findings**

1. **Lower State Test Scores.** As in previous years, while ALPs are keeping many students in school who might otherwise drop out, ALP students still lag far behind their peers academically. Performance of ALP students on state End-of-Grade (EOG) tests continues to be well below the state average. ALP students have not made notable gains in EOG proficiency. However, ALP students have made steady gains in or maintained proficiency each year of the evaluation on Algebra I, English I, and Biology End-of-Course (EOC) tests. This increase may reflect a change in the type of students placed in ALPs, an increased attention to their academic performance, or both. Despite this increase, about 60-70 percent of ALP students still fail to reach proficiency on these EOC tests, compared to only 20-30 percent of students statewide.

2. **EOG Subgroup Differences.** The general statewide pattern of White students scoring higher than Black students is also evident in ALPs. However, the proficiency gap between White students in ALPs and White students across the state is larger than the gap between Black students in ALPs and Black students across the state.

3. **EOC Subgroup Differences.** Similar patterns occur on the three high school EOCs, with White ALP students outperforming non-White students, but both groups falling well below (one-third to one-half the proficiency levels) of students statewide. In general across the six years of this study, the percentage of both White and non-White ALP students scoring at or above grade level on EOC tests has increased, with few exceptions. In 2000-01 all gender/ethnic subgroups achieved higher levels of proficiency on all three EOC tests examined except for White males in English I and White females in Algebra I. There are still substantial differences across gender and ethnic groups in performance on EOC tests, however, with White students scoring higher than Black students. These differences largely mirror the overall statewide picture.

**Key Findings (cont.)**

4. **Length of Enrollment May Help**. In previous years of this study, students who were enrolled in ALPs for more than three grading periods have typically demonstrated more positive outcomes (lower absenteeism, lower likelihood of non-promotion, etc.) than those enrolled for shorter periods. Again in 2000-01, students enrolled for longer periods of time had lower absenteeism. What is not known, however, is whether students who were enrolled for longer periods of time were somehow different from those enrolled for shorter periods of time. Still, this finding warrants consideration by LEAs as they plan the nature and duration of their ALPs and interventions.

5. **Second Year for Alternative "Schools" in the ABCs Accountability Model.** In 2000-01, alternative *schools* were required to participate in the statewide accountability program for the second year. In addition to three state testing-based indicators, they chose three local option indicators (for a total of 6). The top five local indicators selected in 2000-01 related to parental involvement, school safety, administrative goals, grades, and attendance. Sixty-eight of the 70 alternative schools in the model (97%) made either expected or exemplary growth in 2000-01, up from 70% in 1999-2000. By type of indicator, 92 percent of local option components were met, while only 40 percent of testing-based components were met.

**Summary**

Trends found in this sixth year of evaluation are generally consistent with previous years. While any one factor, or set of factors, does not necessarily place students at risk, combinations of circumstances can create potential for school failure and dropping out. Students in ALPs are not only more likely to have family demographic risk factors, such as lower levels of income and parental education, they also have more school-based risk factors that negatively impact learning, such higher rates of suspension and dropout. When the repeated experiences of school failure are added to other risks, it is not surprising that so many students disengage from school. The need for effective and early intervention for students at-risk of school failure is clear.

**Summary (cont.)** The Department of Public Instruction leadership has made specific staff assignments for programmatic responsibility for ALPs within the Division of School Improvement. The data in this report and their implications will be shared with and studied by this staff as they continue to assist LEAs in the development and improvement of ALPs across the state. Improvement is a continuous process for programs serving this challenging population of students.

Recommendations presented in this report are drawn not only from data herein, but also from the reports on case study schools and qualifications of ALP staff completed in previous years of the evaluation. Systematic observations made by visits to many ALPs by the Safe/Alternative Schools Section staff in the Division of School Improvement also contributed to the recommendations.

# • Introduction

## Alternative Learning Program (ALP) Evaluation Plan

This report represents findings from the sixth year (2000-01) of an annual, legislatively-required evaluation of alternative learning programs (ALPs) in North Carolina. Each year new information has added to the understanding of alternative learning programs (ALPs). The evaluation plan was designed to build knowledge about alternative schools, the students who attend them, and the staff who teach in them in an effort to improve academic and behavioral outcomes for youth at risk of school failure.

With the focus of the state and nation on closing the achievement gap for at-risk and minority students, the ALP evaluation is again reporting disaggregated data on a variety of indicators for selected gender/ethnic groups. Also, one section of the report is devoted to the second year of participation in the state ABCs Accountability Model for officially designated alternative "schools."

## Alternative Learning Program (ALP) Defined

ALPs include schools and programs with a wide array of activities, locations, and student characteristics. ALPs may have an academic, therapeutic, and/or behavioral focus. The criteria established to identify ALPs for the evaluation were taken from the language in the original legislation passed by the 1995 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly (amended G.S. 115C-238.47). In order to establish parameters for the evaluation, ALPs are included that meet the following definition. An ALP is:

> *A program that serves students at any level, serves suspended or expelled students, serves students whose learning styles are better served in an alternative program, or provides individualized programs outside of a standard classroom setting in a caring atmosphere in which students learn the skills necessary to redirect their lives.*

While there may be other local programs designated as "alternative," the evaluation is limited to ALPs that:

- provide primary instruction for students enrolled,
- offer course credit or grade-level promotion credit in core academic areas,
- are for selected at-risk students,
- are outside the standard classroom,
- are for a designated period of time (not “drop-in”), and
- assist the student in meeting requirements for graduation.

## Number of ALPs and Students in the Evaluation

Of the 206 ALPs identified in the 2000-01 school year, 167 continued from the 1999-2000 school year, 39 were new programs, and 5 were newly merged from previous programs. Table 1 shows the trends over five years for the number of ALPs in the evaluation, the number of programs continued from the previous year, the number dropped from the evaluation each year, and the number of new ALPs reported each year. The reason for dropping an ALP from the evaluation is most often because evaluation staff finds that it does not meet the specified definition.

**Table 1. Number of ALPs in the Evaluation, 1996-97 to 2000-01**

| Year | Total # of ALPs | Dropped from Evaluation | Continued from Previous Year | New ALPs in our Evaluation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2000-01 | 206 | 19 | 167 | 39 |
| 1999-00 | 186 | 27 | 149 | 37 |
| 1998-99 | 176 | 21 | 151 | 27 |
| 1997-98 | 172 | 23 | 147 | 25 |
| 1996-97 | 170 | 13 | 158 | 12 |

The number of ALPs remained relatively steady from 1996-97 through 1998-99. There has been an increase in the number of ALPs in the last two years, as well as, an increase in the ALP student enrollment from 1999-00 to 2000-01 (from 15,636 to 16,845 students, respectively). Table 2 shows a decrease in the median number of students served in alternative learning programs and schools from 1999-00 to 2000-01, suggesting programs are working with fewer students. Previous ALP Evaluation recommendations have included the need for smaller ALPs to better meet academic and social/personal needs of students.

**Table 2. Median Number of Students in ALPs, 1999-00 to 2000-01**

| Year | Type of ALP | Median Number of Students |
|---|---|---|
| 2000-01 | Program | 27 |
| | School | 114 |
| 1999-00 | Program | 29 |
| | School | 118 |

Note: See next section for distinction of programs versus schools.

## Alternative Schools versus Programs

Although both are referred to as alternative learning programs (ALPs) throughout this report, there are important distinctions between alternative schools and alternative programs. One of the most important distinctions has to do with funding.

Alternative *schools* are funded through ADM funds (average daily membership of students attending the school during the first two months of the school year). A principal is assigned to the school if it has seven or more staff and/or 100 or more students. The facilities are often located on campuses separate from other schools or in separate buildings, and many maintain their own transportation systems. Alternative schools must have an official school code assigned by the NC Department of Public Instruction.

In the state's ABCs Accountability Model, the school is the unit of accountability. The State Board of Education implemented a policy in 1999-2000, based on legislation, applying a new accountability policy to alternative *schools*. Development of the policy was complicated for a number of reasons. Because each LEA has the freedom to develop a design that meets locally established priorities of student needs, no two alternative schools are alike. Further, student enrollment is often subject to significant fluctuation from month to month since most of these schools have flexible admission policies. These fluctuations may be increased by highly mobile or transient subsets of students who frequently change residences usually concurrent with seasonal employment opportunities. Another challenge in developing the new policy for alternative schools was the fact that many of the ABCs components do not exist in all alternative schools (e.g., all courses may not be offered). This policy therefore is somewhat different from the ABCs Accountability Model for regular schools. It allows each alternative school to use six accountability indicators, three of which are locally developed based on the school's mission and the needs of its student population. LEA superintendents and local boards of education are required to approve the locally designed accountability plans, which must also be an integral part of the alternative schools' School Improvement Plans.

The number of alternative schools officially classified by the state has increased over the five years from 1997 to 2001, from 56 in 1996-97 to 69 in 2000-01. Several alternative schools are not included in this evaluation either because LEA superintendents did not report them to the evaluators or because they exclusively serve special populations, such as behaviorally and emotionally handicapped students (which do not meet the criteria for the evaluation).

Alternative *programs*, on the other hand, are generally dependent on the schools in which they are housed for their funding and all other resources (e.g., staffing and materials). Occasionally there are special funds from grants and other sources, but this funding is not predictable over time. Students in alternative *programs* are included in the accountability model for the school in which the program resides or the school that is the "home school" of the student.

## Organization of This Report

The 2000-01 report is organized in the following sections:

- Methodology describing the various data sources used for the evaluation, including rosters containing student data from ALPs and how statewide testing data are used.
- Description of students by various characteristics, including demographic variables as well as their status with respect to selected special classifications.
- Descriptions of non-test-based school performance variables such as grade retention, absences, suspension/expulsions, dropouts, end-of-year status, and plans after high school.
- End-of-Grade test results for $4^{th}$ through $8^{th}$ graders, including disaggregated results.
- End-of-Course tests results on Algebra I, English I, and Biology EOC Tests, including disaggregated results.
- Description of the At-Risk Student Services/ALP Budget trends, specifically the percentages designated for ALPs.
- Results of the second year for alternative schools in the ABC Accountability Model.

# • Methodology

## Data Sources

The evaluation was implemented using a combination of sources and measures (Table 3). The data collection process begins with a solicitation to superintendents in each LEA to identify ALPs and contact persons. Two hundred and six ALPs were identified in the 2000-01 school year. All identified ALPs were asked to complete a Student Data Roster listing each student who enrolled in the ALP during 2000-01 and to provide basic demographic information, primary reason for entry into the ALP, and status for special populations.

In previous years, a sample of ALPs was drawn (random sample stratified by geographic region) for more intensive study. In 2000-01, however, the sample was dropped and each individual ALP was surveyed more completely.

North Carolina End-of-Grade and End-of-Course test results as well as information about students who had dropped out of school were also utilized for all ALPs. Students in the ALPs were matched against NCDPI data files in order to conduct these analyses.

**Table 3. Data Sources for 2000-01 ALP Evaluation**

| Instrument | Description | Respondents | Data Collection Schedule |
|---|---|---|---|
| Superintendent Identification/Verification Information | Identify district ALPs and contact person(s). | LEA Superintendents | September 2000 |
| Survey for Basic Program Information | Collect basic information about identified ALPs. | ALP Administrator | September 2000 or when new ALP was identified |
| Student Data Roster | All identified ALPs asked to send in list of all students enrolled during school year. Data elements include: student name, student id, student referred by, home school code, grade level, sex, race, age, with whom does the student reside, exceptional category, Willie M, Section 504, Limited English Proficient, date of entry, why in ALP, disciplinary action, re-enrolled, number of grades student repeated, number of days enrolled in ALP, number of days absent, number of courses passed, number of courses failed, was HS Competency passed, was HS Comprehensive passed, early exit from ALP, end-of-year status, number of graduation credits earned | ALP Teachers and Personnel | June 2001 |

## ALP Survey Return Rates

All identified ALPs completed and returned the Student Data Rosters (206) for a 100 percent return rate.

## Achievement Test Results: Matching Process

All of the achievement data included in this report were obtained from (a) NC End-of-Grade (EOG) tests for grades 3 through 8, and (b) selected NC End-of-Course (EOC) tests, and (c) the High School Comprehensive Test given in the tenth grade. The lists of ALP students available from the Student Data Rosters were matched against these state databases. For purposes of this study, three End-of-Course tests were selected for analysis: Algebra I, English I, and Biology. These courses were selected because they are the EOC tests most commonly taken by students in ALPs and because they represent three distinct subject areas.

**EOG Matching.** Some of the ALP analyses required calculating expected growth on reading and mathematics scores from 2000 to 2001. That calculation requires that students found in the 2001 EOG testing database also have a score for the 2000 EOG administration from the previous grade level. LEAs now match pre- and post-test scores for each of their students as part of their ABC Accountability responsibilities. ALP students who are on record as **only** having taken the 2000 **or** the 2001 EOG tests were not included in these analyses, since scores from both years were necessary to calculate growth.

The matching procedures were intricate. For a number of reasons, data for all students are not found in any statewide database. Careful, systematic procedures were used in order to match the maximum number of data elements possible. Approximately 77 percent of all ALP students in grades 4 - 8 were found in the EOG databases for both years (Table 4). Even though all ALP students were not found, the number of students with a full set of matched data for 2000 and 2001 gives a picture of growth in ALP student achievement and is the best indicator available. Because of the larger number of ALP students in grades 6-8, results are likely more reliable for grades 6-8.

**Table 4. Number of ALP Students Matched to EOG Data, 1999-00 to 2000-01**

| Grade | Total ALP Enrollment 1999-00 | Total ALP Enrollment 2000-01 | Number of Student Matched 1999-00 | Number of Student Matched 2000-01 | Percent Matched 1999-00 | Percent Matched 2000-01 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 53 | 66 | 46 | 47 | 87 | 71 |
| 5 | 84 | 165 | 74 | 131 | 88 | 79 |
| 6 | 1256 | 1352 | 1086 | 1129 | 86 | 84 |
| 7 | 1966 | 2183 | 1633 | 1584 | 83 | 73 |
| 8 | 2620 | 2687 | 2041 | 2080 | 78 | 77 |
| TOTAL | 5979 | 6453 | 4880 | 4971 | 82 | 77 |

**EOC Matching.** The matching process for EOC tests presents additional complications. Every student enrolled in Algebra I, English I, and/or Biology should have been administered those respective EOC tests. However, there is no master list indicating which ALP students were enrolled in Algebra I, English I or Biology. Therefore, when a given ALP student is not located in an EOC database, it is impossible to know whether the reason for the missing test score is (a) the student was not enrolled in the subject, (b) the student was absent for an extended period and missed the test, (c) the student missed the test for other reasons, or (d) the student had a different ID number or misspelled last name. Since the number of students that should have been tested is not known (the denominator), it is impossible to calculate the precise percentage of ALP students matched against the 2001 statewide EOC database. The number of ALP students matched with their respective EOC test scores likely underestimates the actual number of ALP students enrolled in these courses. However, the number matched (Table 5) should be large enough to be considered indicative of the results for ALP students in general on these tests.

**Table 5. Number of ALP Students Having 2000-01 EOC Test Scores**

| Course | Number ALP Students Tested 1999-00 | Number ALP Students Tested 2000-01 |
|---|---|---|
| Algebra I | 951 | 991 |
| English I | 1608 | 1641 |
| Biology | 870 | 1008 |
| H.S. Comprehensive | 732* | 878* |

*Students took both Reading and Math

# • Student Description

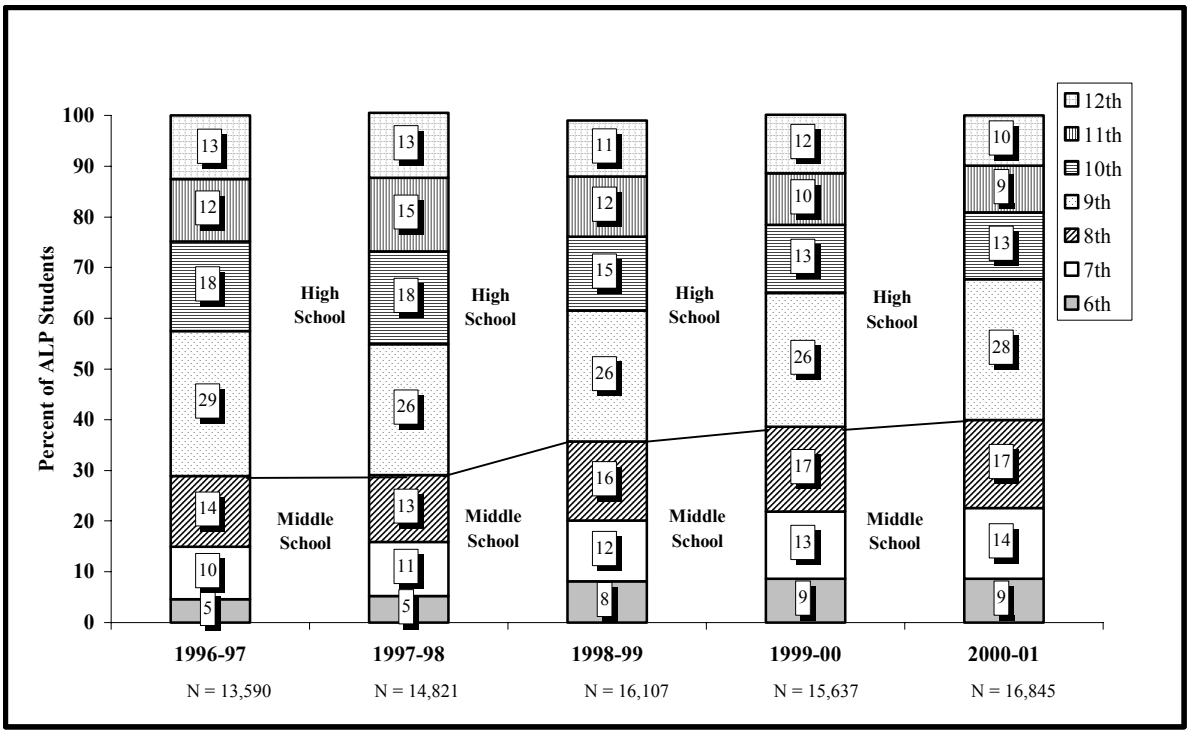
## Introduction

The section on *Student Description* provides basic information about Alternative Learning Program enrollments, reasons for entry into an ALP, any identified special conditions, and student demographics.

The majority of information for this section comes from the Student Data Roster. Every student who enrolled in one of the 206 identified ALPs during 2000-01 was listed on a Student Data Roster, which provided basic demographic information, primary reason for entry to the ALP, and any identified special conditions. Data are actually available for 204 of the ALPs since two ALPs reported no student enrollment. Parent education level and free/reduced price lunch eligibility come from End-of-Grade test (grades 3-8) and End-of-Course test (grades 9-12) data.

## ALP Enrollment by Grade

**Figure 1. Percent of Students Enrolled in ALPs by Grade Level (6-12), 1996-97 to 2000-01**




Note. The total N reported above includes students in elementary grades (K-5) and 59 students for which no grade was reported.

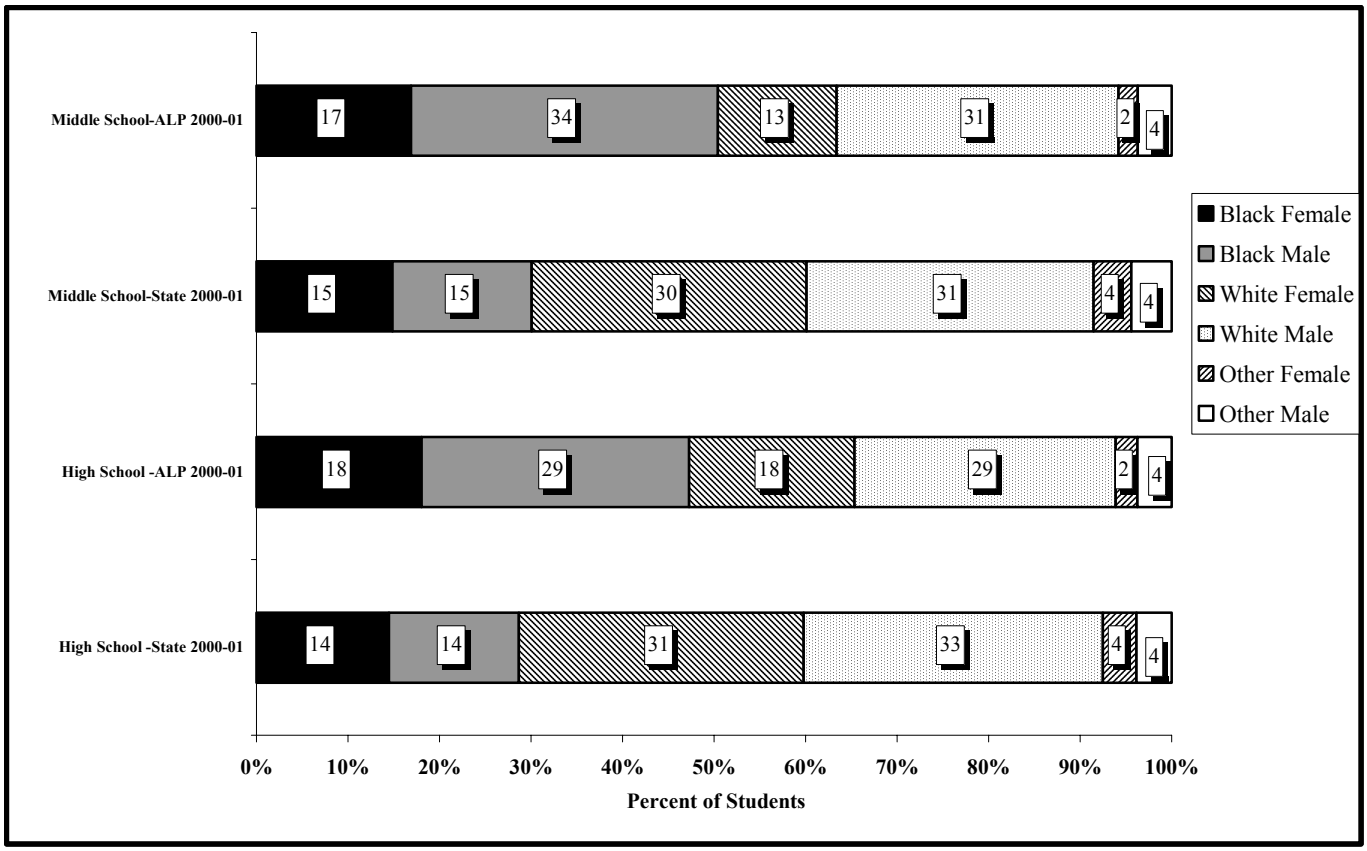
- A total of 16,845 students (duplicated counts) or 16,048 students (unduplicated counts) were reported as enrolled in the 206 identified ALPs with returned rosters. Grades K through 5 had small numbers of students, ranging from 7 in Kindergarten to 173 in Grade 5 for a total of 310 students. All together they account for less than 2 percent of the population, and are not shown in Figure 1.

- Patterns of enrollment percentages across grade levels show an increase in recent years in the percentage of ALP students who are in the middle grades (6-8). The 9th grade continues to be the most common grade level represented among ALP students.

- There was an increase in the number of students served in ALPs in 2000-01 compared to 1999-00.

## Enrollment by Ethnicity and Gender

**Figure 2. Ethnicity and Gender of Students in ALP and State by Middle and High School, 2000-01**




- Compared to the general school population, there are significantly fewer White females and more Black males placed in ALPs in both middle and high school. This difference is greater for middle school than for high school.

- The percentages of all other ethnic categories are similar to the state percentages.

For a complete breakdown of numbers and percentages of students in ALPs by grade level, ethnicity and gender, see Appendix B.

## Primary Reason Enrolled in ALP

**Figure 3. Primary Reason for Enrollment into ALP for Middle School by Gender and Ethnicity, 2000-01**

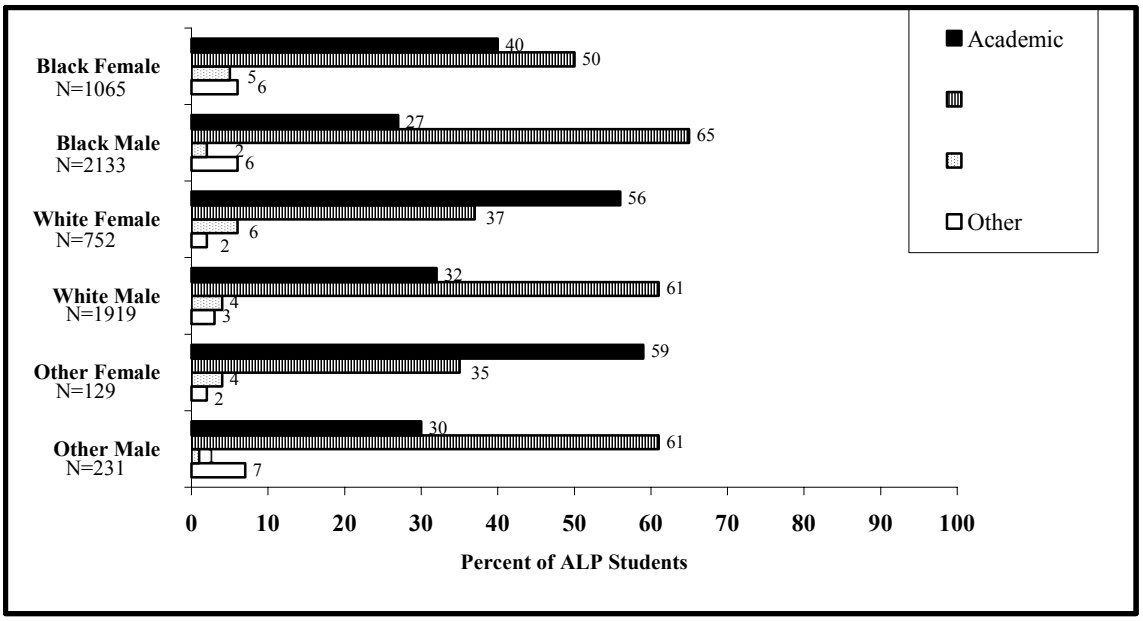
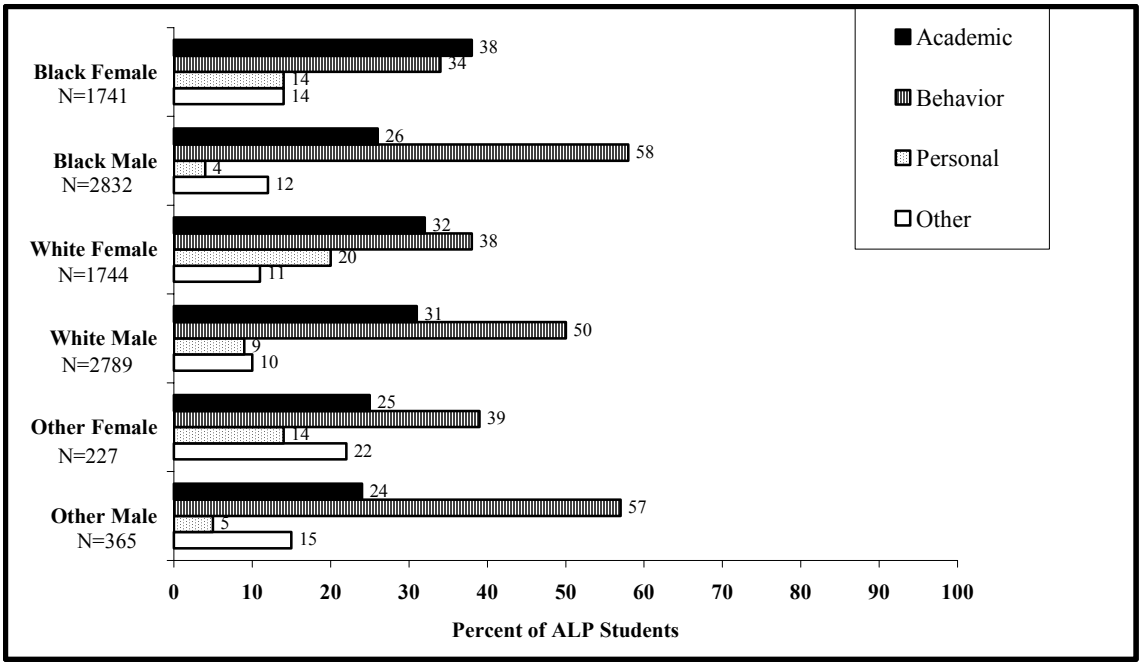



**Figure 4. Primary Reason for Enrollment into ALP for High School by Gender and Ethnicity, 2000-01**




Note. Academic Reasons are academic difficulty and academic acceleration.
Behavioral Reasons are disruptive behavior, substance abuse, attendance/truancy, and aggressive behavior.
Personal Reasons are personal problems, emotional problems, work/job, student/parent choice, and pregnancy.
Other Reasons are unspecified.

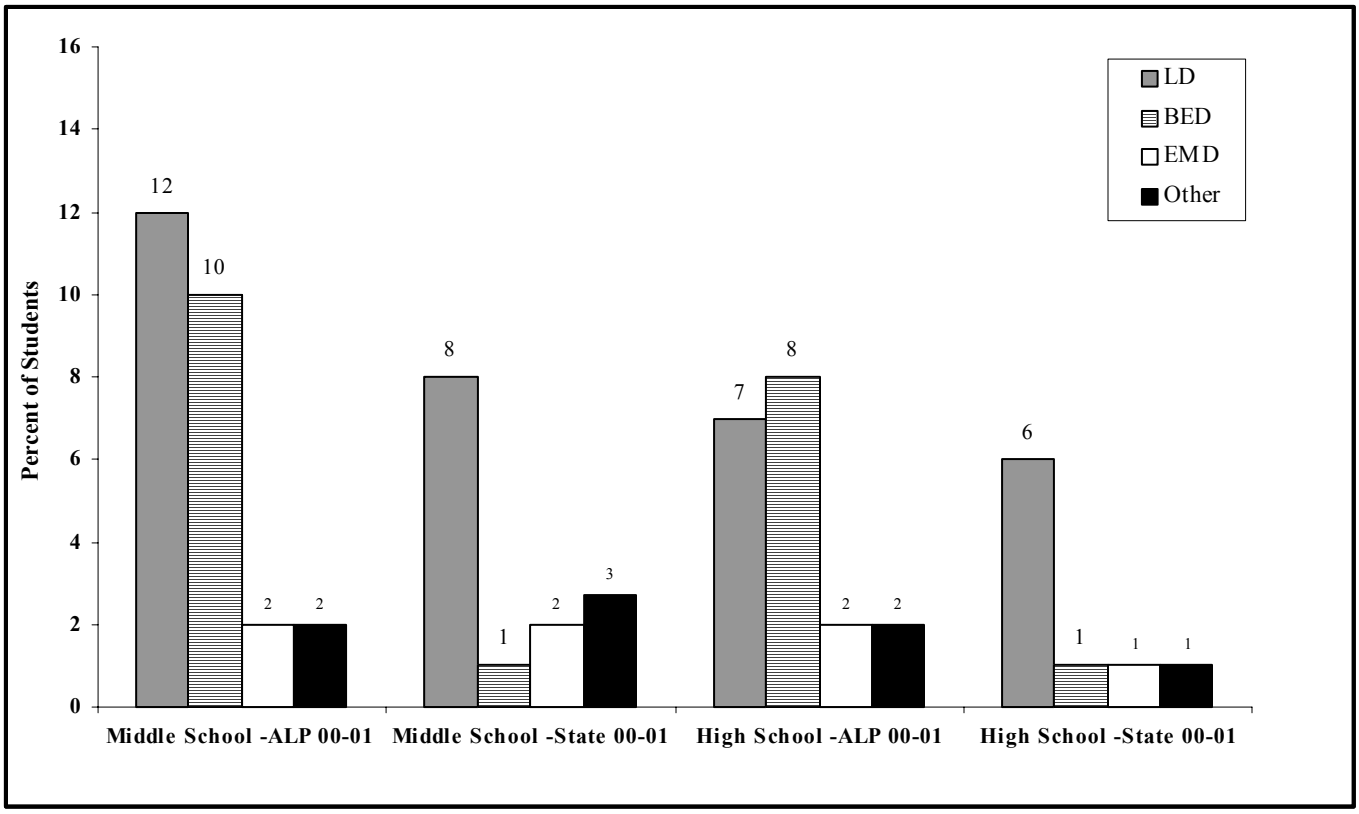
The following observations hold for both middle and high school:

- Males are more likely than females to be placed in ALPs for behavioral reasons, while females are more likely than males to be placed in ALPs for academic reasons.

- The difference in reasons for enrollment among racial groups is small, with Blacks somewhat more likely than Whites or others to be placed in ALPs for behavioral reasons, and Whites and others somewhat more likely than Blacks to be placed in ALPs for academic reasons.

## Exceptional Child Status

**Figure 5. Exceptional Child (EC) Status for ALP Students by Middle and High School, 2000-01**



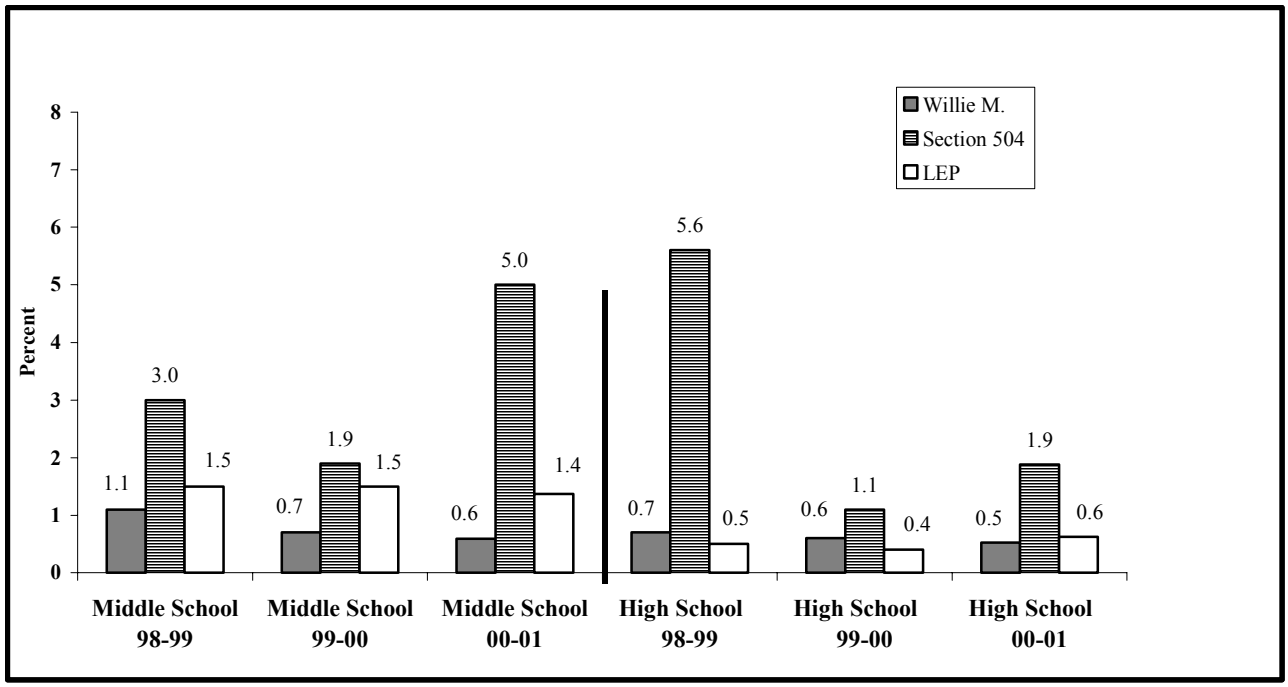

- In middle and high school, a higher percentage of ALP students receive special education services compared to the general student population (26 percent versus 14 percent for middle school and 19 percent versus 9 percent for high school).

- The greatest differences between the middle school ALP EC population and the state middle school EC population are the larger percentage of students served under the Learning Disability (LD) and Behaviorally-Emotionally Disability (BED) categories in ALPs.

- The greatest difference between the high school ALP EC population and the state high school EC population are the larger percentage of students served under the Behaviorally-Emotionally Disability (BED) category in ALPs.

## Special Status Students

**Figure 6. Special Status for ALP Students by Middle and High School, 1998-99 to 2000-01**



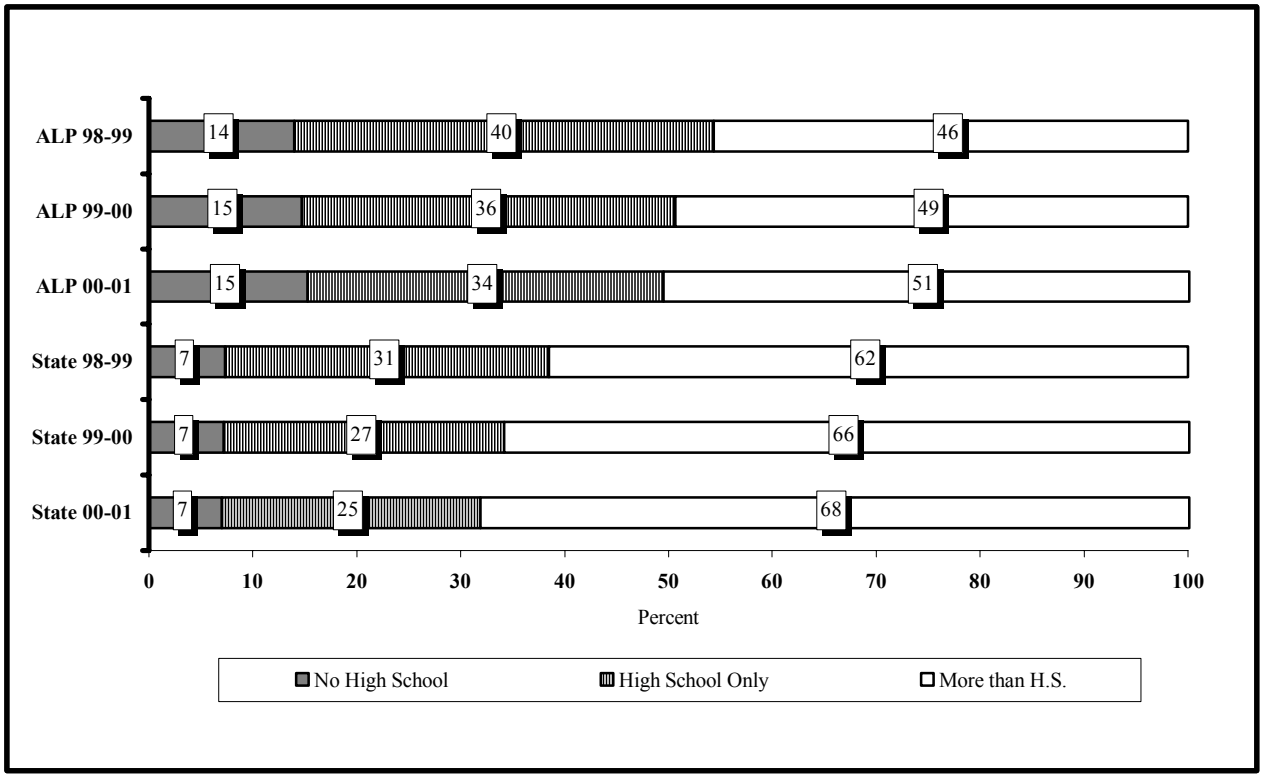

Notes. The scale of the vertical axis on this graph may make small differences seem larger. The Willie M program was officially discontinued in July of 2000; however, some students who were served in that program when it was in existence are still enrolled in school.

- After a decline between 1998-99 and 1999-2000, the percentage of students in ALPs receiving services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act increased between 1999-2000 and 2000-01.

- The percent of students in ALPs classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) has remained relatively constant since 1998-99.

## Parent Educational Level

**Figure 7. Parent Education Levels for Students Taking Any of Three EOC Tests (Grades 9-12) for State and ALPs, 1998-99 to 2000-01**

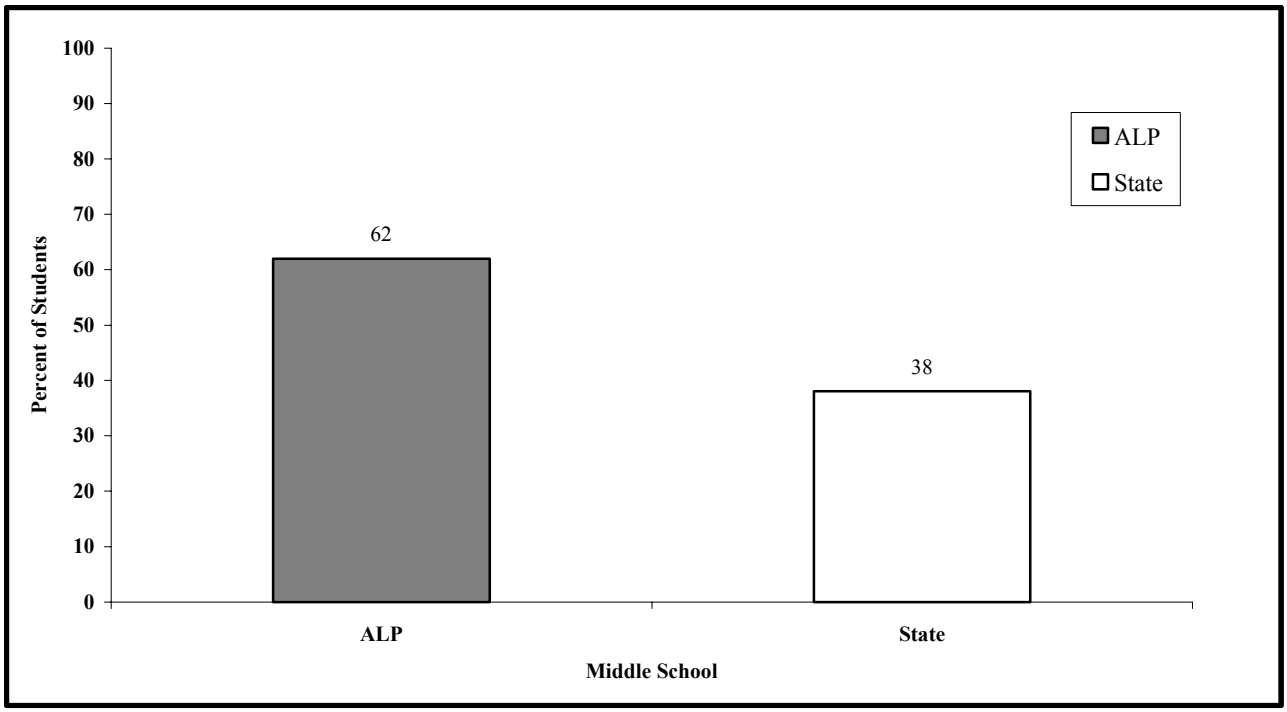



- For all years of this study (only the last three years are shown since previous years were similar), parents of ALP students taking EOC tests had lower levels of education overall than parents of students in the general student population.

- The increase in parent education level among students in ALPs parallels the increase among students statewide, with more parents having more than a high school education each year.

## Free/Reduced Lunch Status

**Figure 8. Percent of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Lunch, 2000-01**

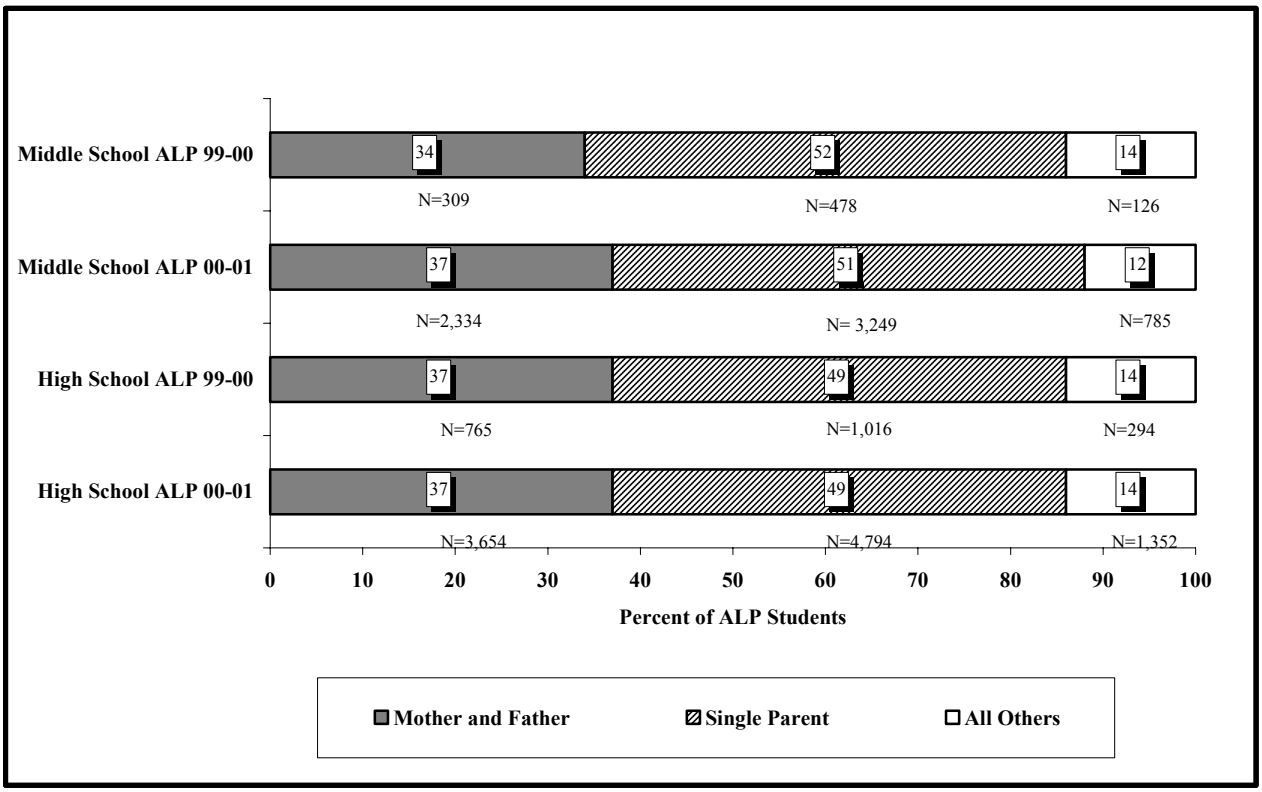



Note. Free/reduced price lunch status for high schools is not reported here, as many high school students prefer not to report eligibility status in high school, and percentages are therefore less reliable.

- About two-thirds of middle school students in ALPs who took EOG tests in 2000-01 were eligible for free or reduced price lunch, as compared to less than half of middle school students statewide.

## ALP Students' Living Arrangements

**Figure 9. Living Arrangements for ALP Students by Middle and High School, 1999-00 to 2000-01**




- Less than half of students enrolled in ALPs live with two parents (either biological or step).

- At the middle and high school levels, about half of ALP students live with a single parent. This compares to an overall state average of approximately 33 percent of children in single parent homes.[3] This pattern has held largely constant across the six years of this study.

[3] 2002 Kids Count Data Book, Annie E. Casey Foundation (available at http://www.aecf.org).

## Summary for Student Description

Overall, students in ALPs are more likely to be male and Black than students in the general population. These data continue to raise concern about the academic performance of selected gender and ethnic groups. A higher percentage of ALP students are also identified as exceptional compared to the general student population.

Other information indicates the high level of risk factors for students in ALPs. Primary reasons for being in an ALP are most frequently related to academic difficulty or disruptive behavior. Students in ALPs are more likely to live with a single parent than are students in the general student population. Based on parent education level, single parent status, and free/reduced price lunch status indicators, ALP students appear more likely to live in lower-income families than students in the general population. Thus, ALPs do appear to be serving students who are at increased risk of school failure.

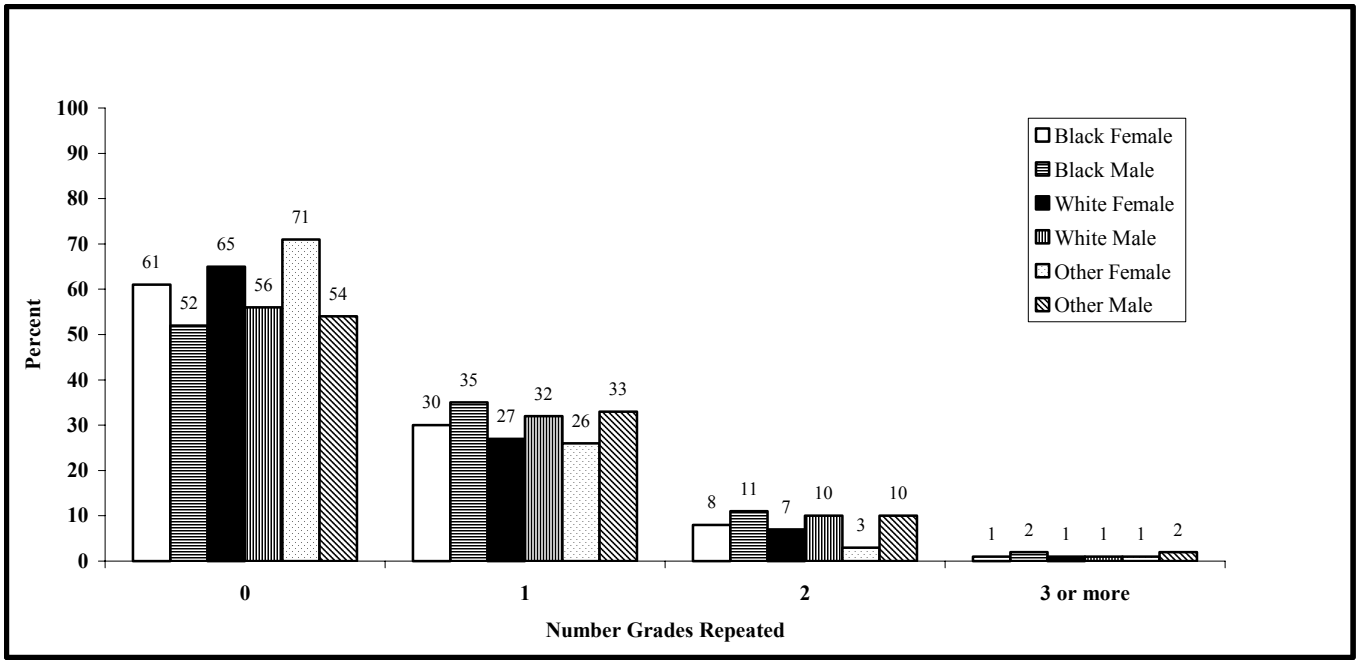
# • Current School Performance of Students

## Introduction

This section reports several indicators of the academic performance of students in ALPs during the 2000-01 school year. Most of the information in this section is derived from the ALP Student Data Roster, information from state EOG databases for grades 4-8, and information from state EOC databases for grades 9-12. Other indicators are drawn from the 2000-01 State Dropout Database and the 2000-01 Suspension/Expulsion Database.

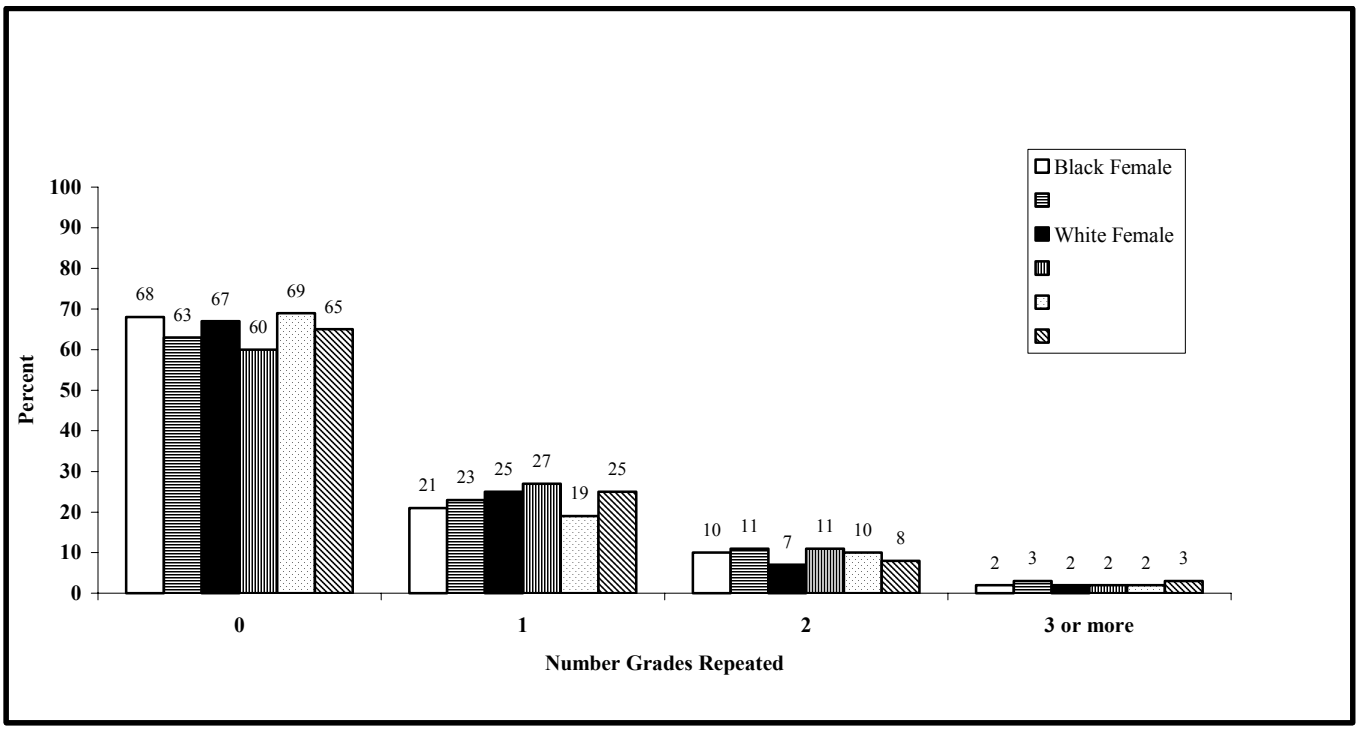
## Grades Repeated

**Figure 10. Number of Grades Repeated for Students Enrolled in Middle School ALPs, 2000-01**




Note. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

**Figure 11. Number of Grades Repeated for Students Enrolled in High School ALPs, 2000-01**



**Grades Repeated**

- Approximately 46 percent of middle school and 35 percent of high school students enrolled in ALPs in 2000-01 had repeated *at least one grade*.

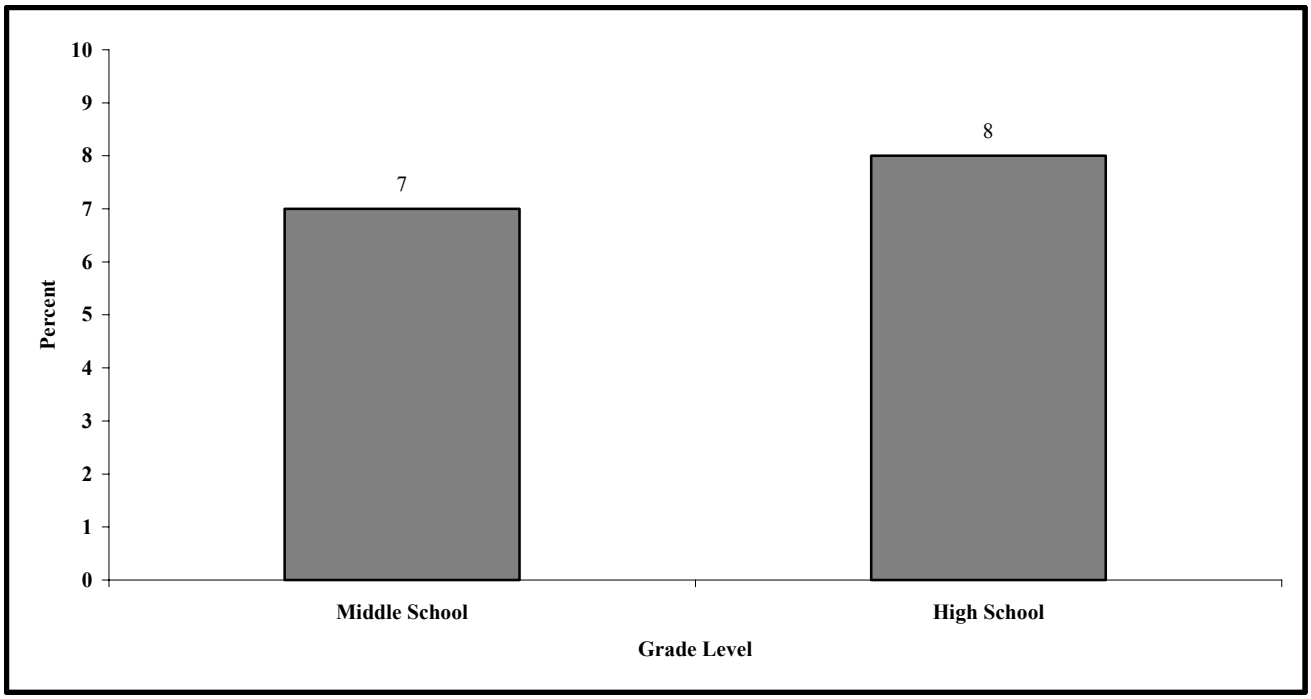
- Between one-quarter and one-third of all ethnic/gender groups repeated one grade in middle school. Substantially fewer students repeated two or more grades.

- Between one-fifth and one-quarter of all ethnic/gender groups repeated one grade in high school. Fewer repeated two or more grades.

- In general, male ALP students were more likely to have repeated a grade than females. This was particularly true at the middle school level.

## Re-enrollment in ALP by Grade Level

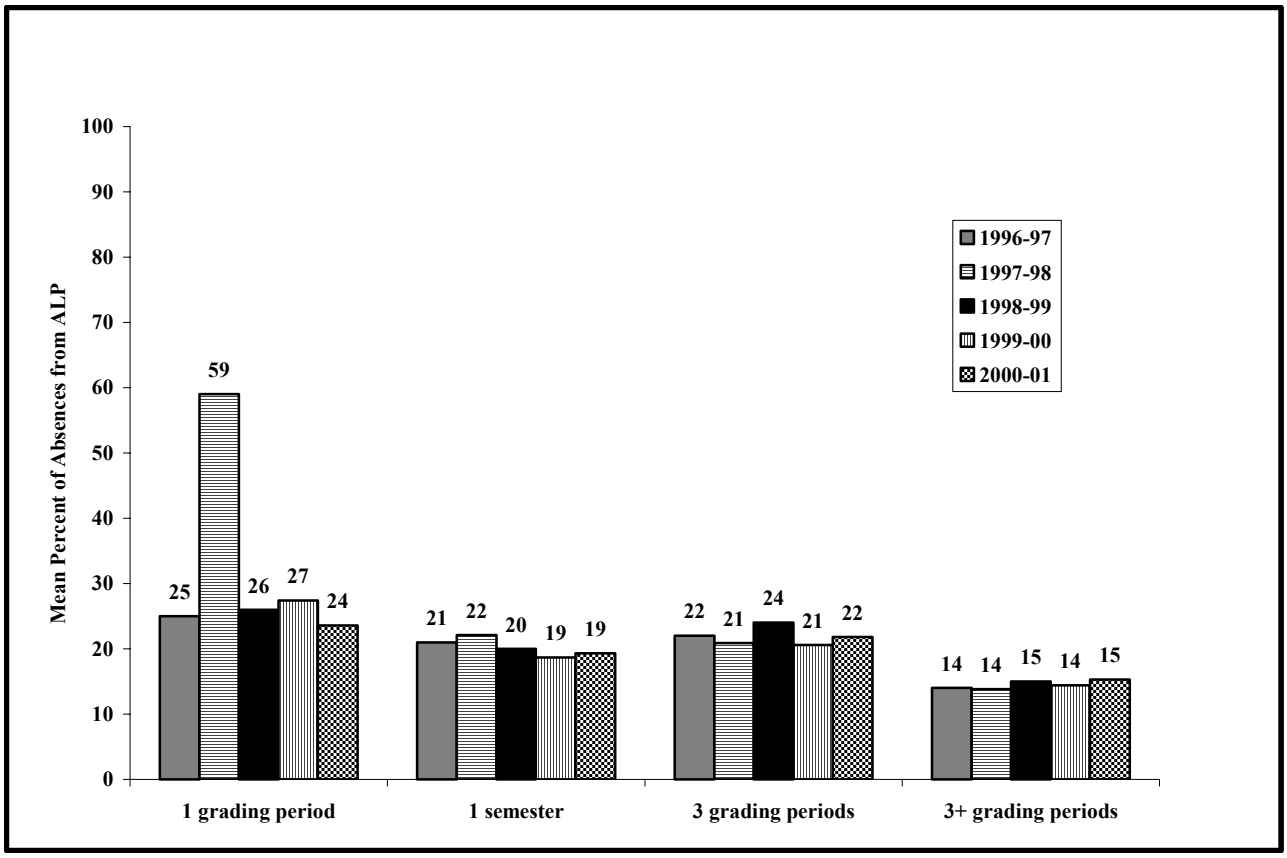
**Figure 12. Percent of Students Re-enrolled in ALP by Middle and High School, 2000-01**




- Seven percent of middle school ALP students and eight percent of high school ALP students enrolled in an ALP on more than one occasion during the 2000-01 school year.

## Absences by Length of Time in ALP

**Figure 13. Percent of Students Absent by Number of Grading Periods Spent in ALP, 1996-97 to 2000-01**



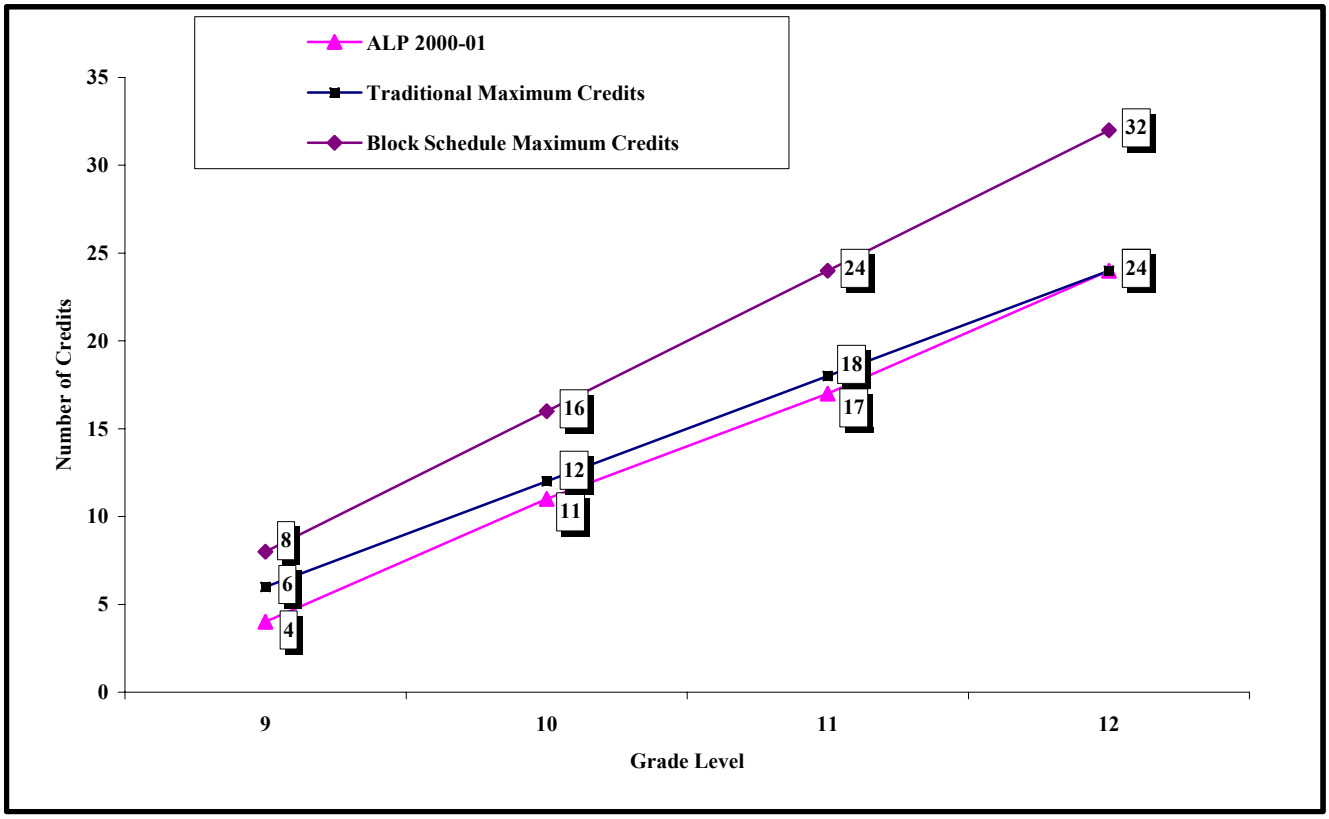

Notes. Four grading periods equal one school year. Data for years prior to 2000-01 were reported by a small sample of ALPs. Data for 2000-01 was reported by all ALPs. Percent of students absent during ALP enrollment was calculated as number of days absent from the ALP divided by the total number of days enrolled in the ALP. Because the number of days enrolled varied substantially, percentages rather than number of days absent, were used as the measure.

- Absenteeism in ALPs has remained stable across years, with the exception of students enrolled for 1 grading period in 1997-98. Percentages are similar across grading periods, with students enrolled for 3 or more grading periods having a lower rate of absences.

- Even among students enrolled for more than three grading periods, 15 percent represents 27 instructional days absent in a 180-day school year.

## Total Graduation Credits by Grade Level

**Figure 14. Total Graduation Credits Earned by Grade Level, 2000-01**

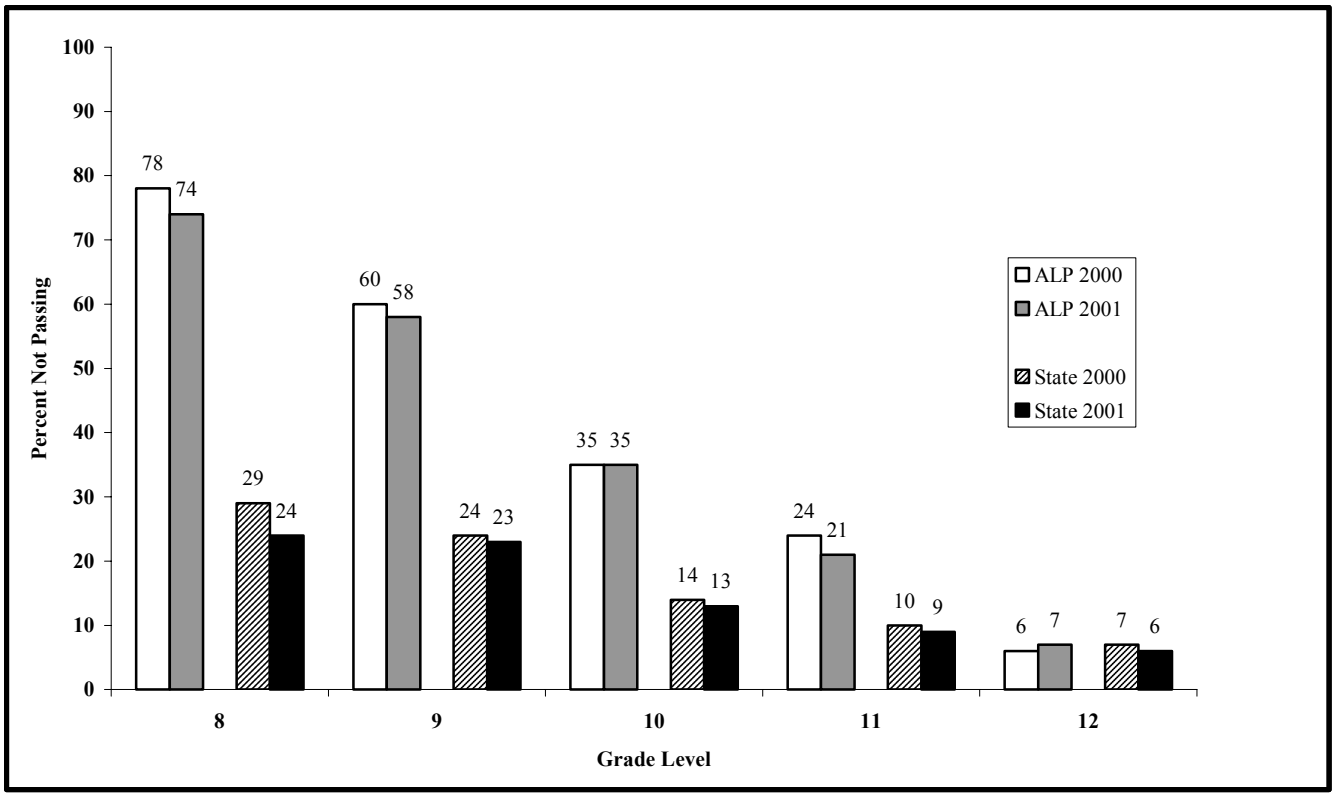



The total number of actual credits earned by the end of the school year for ALP students is shown above. To indicate how these students compare to other students, the maximum number of cumulative credits possible at each grade level is shown on the line graphs for a traditional schedule (6 credits per year) and a 4 x 4 block schedule (8 credits per year).

- High school students enrolled in ALPs are on average 1-2 credits below the maximum credits attainable in a traditional schedule for grades 9-11.
- Twelfth grade students enrolled in ALPs, on average, have earned more than the 20 credits required for graduation under a traditional schedule.
- The small difference between credits earned by ALP students and the maximum possible credits attainable may be due in part to high dropout rates. ALP students have a dropout rate of about 15.8 percent versus 4.3 percent statewide (see Figure 19). The students who remain in school into the higher grade levels (in both ALPs and other public schools) are likely to have earned more credits.

## Non-Completion of Competency Requirement

**Figure 15. Percent of Students Not Passing Competency Requirement for ALP and State by Grade Level, 1999-00 to 2000-01**




Notes. Data for 1999-00 was reported by a small sample of ALPs. Data for 2000-01 was reported by all ALPs. Non-completion rates for ALP students were obtained from the teachers or ALP administrators at the end of the school year. The figures for the state come from the competency tests after they are scored in the summer and are completed for each grade. Percent of non-completion was based on known passing or failing with missing data excluded. Students with missing competency status might be less likely to have completed their competency requirement, so the results reported in this figure for both ALP and state non-completion may be underestimated.

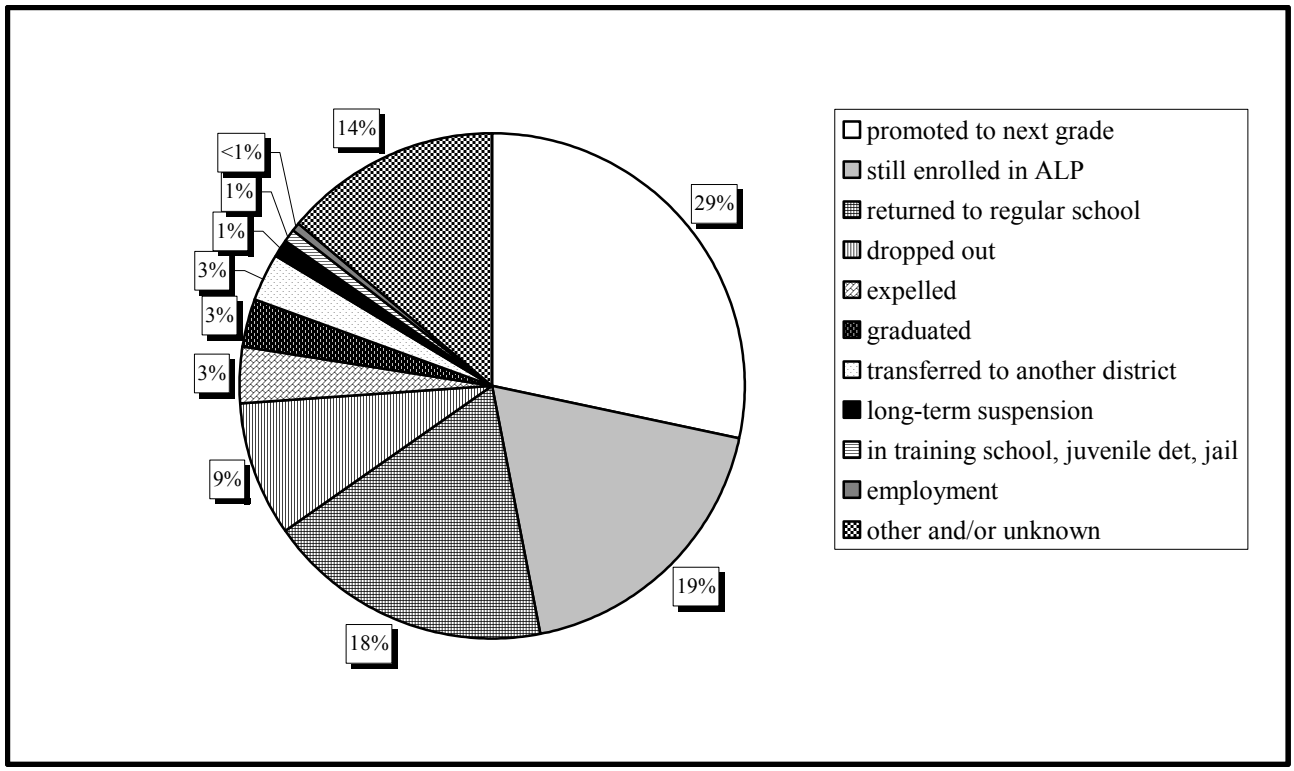
- ALP students have failed to complete the competency requirement at a much higher rate than the general student population over the past four years (only two years are shown).

- It is not until the 10th grade that the majority of ALP students have passed the competency requirement. By the 12th grade, most (93 percent) of the remaining ALP students had completed the competency requirement. *However, many students drop out of school during high school. This makes the rate for non-completion look lower than it probably is, since data for dropouts are not included.*

## Expulsions

While expulsions do not occur often, they are an important event. Students expelled from school are not allowed to re-enroll in any regular school in the LEA; however, they are sometimes allowed to enroll in ALPs. In 2000-01, 230 students were reported to be enrolled in ALPs because they were expelled from their home school. At the end of the school year, the ALP reported the status of each of these students.

**Figure 16. End-of-Year Status of Students Enrolled for Expulsion, 2000-01**

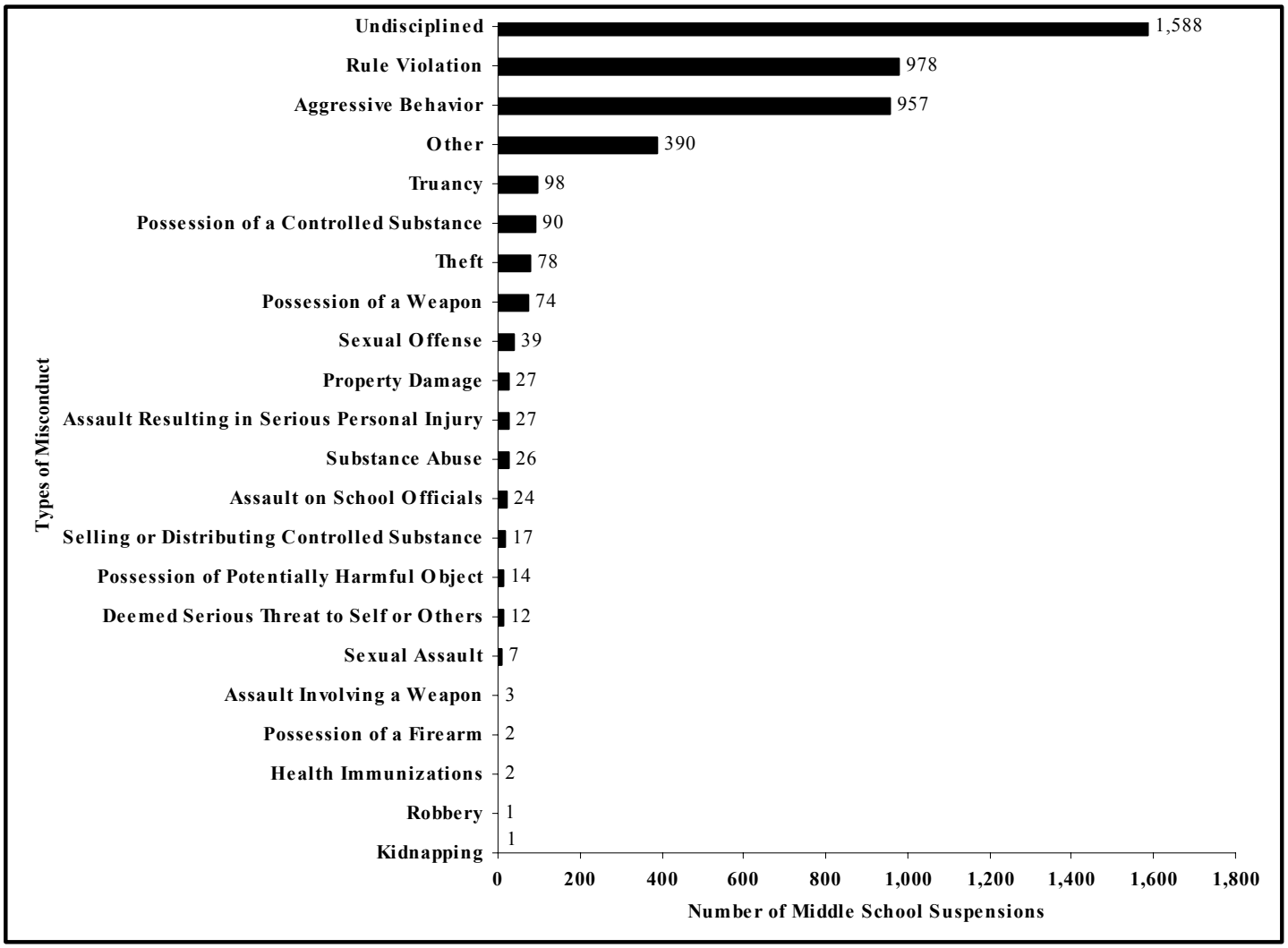



- Sixty-six percent of the students enrolled in ALPs due to an expulsion from their home school in 2000-01 were promoted to the next grade, were still enrolled in an ALP, or had returned a regular school by the end of the year.

- Very few of the students (3%) expelled from regular school and placed in ALP were subsequently expelled from the ALP that same year.

## Suspensions

**Figure 17. Types of Misconduct Resulting in ALP Middle School Suspensions, 2000-01**

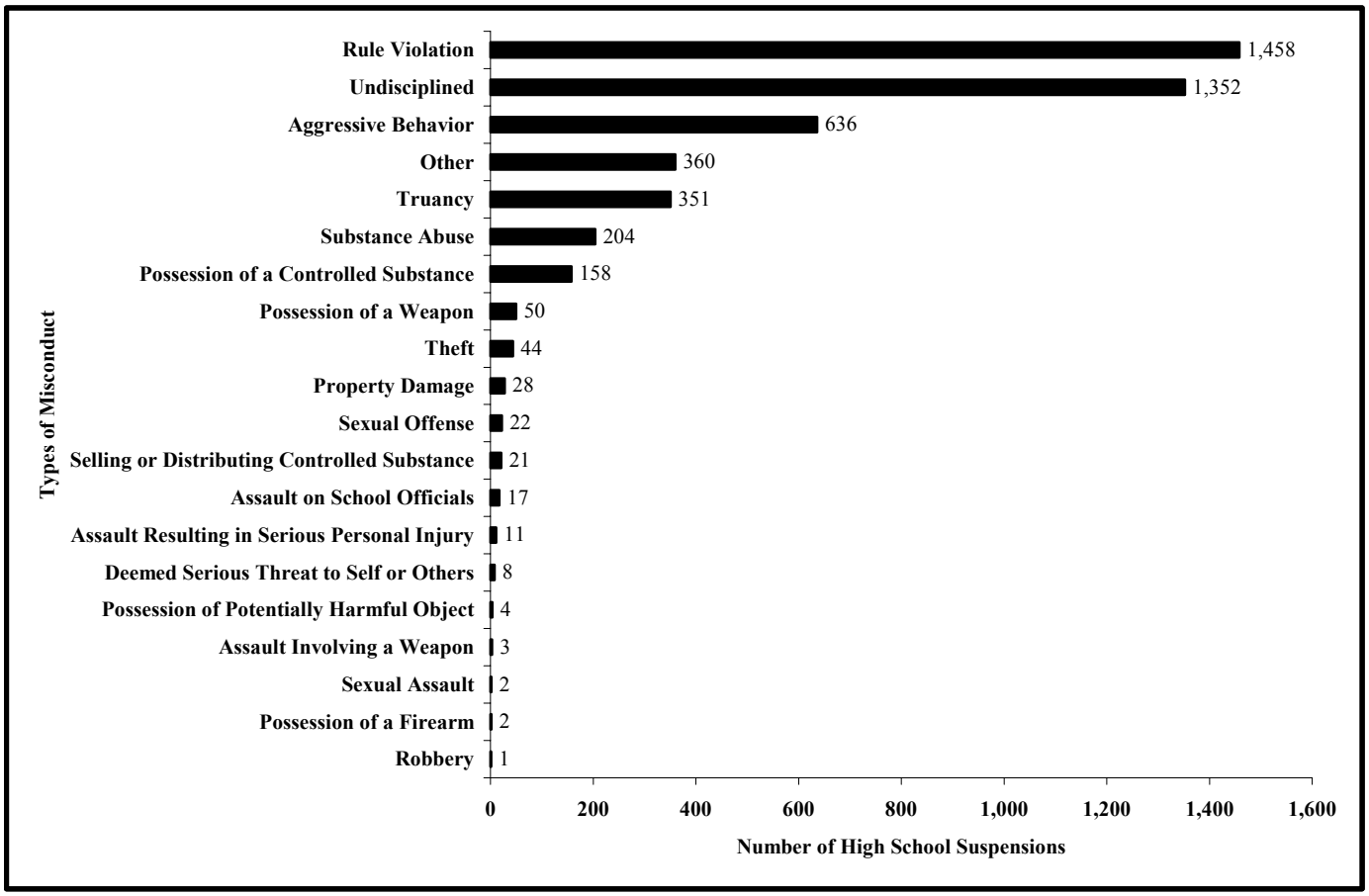



Note: Reason for suspension was not reported for 100 of 4,555 suspensions given to middle school ALP students in 2000-01. Suspensions shown here include suspensions from ALPs as well as suspensions that students may have been given prior to a student enrolling in an ALP.

- ALP middle school students received 4,555 suspensions in 2000-01. This corresponds to a rate of one suspension per every 1.5 students, compared to a statewide figure of 1 per 6 students (see NCDPI, Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions Supplement, 2000-01, available at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/evaluation).

- The most common types of misconduct resulting in suspension from ALP for middle school students were undisciplined behavior, rule violation, and aggressive behavior. These are the same three types of misconduct that are most common statewide (see NCDPI, Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions, 2000-01, available at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/evaluation).

**Figure 18. Types of Misconduct Resulting in ALP High School Suspensions, 2000-01**



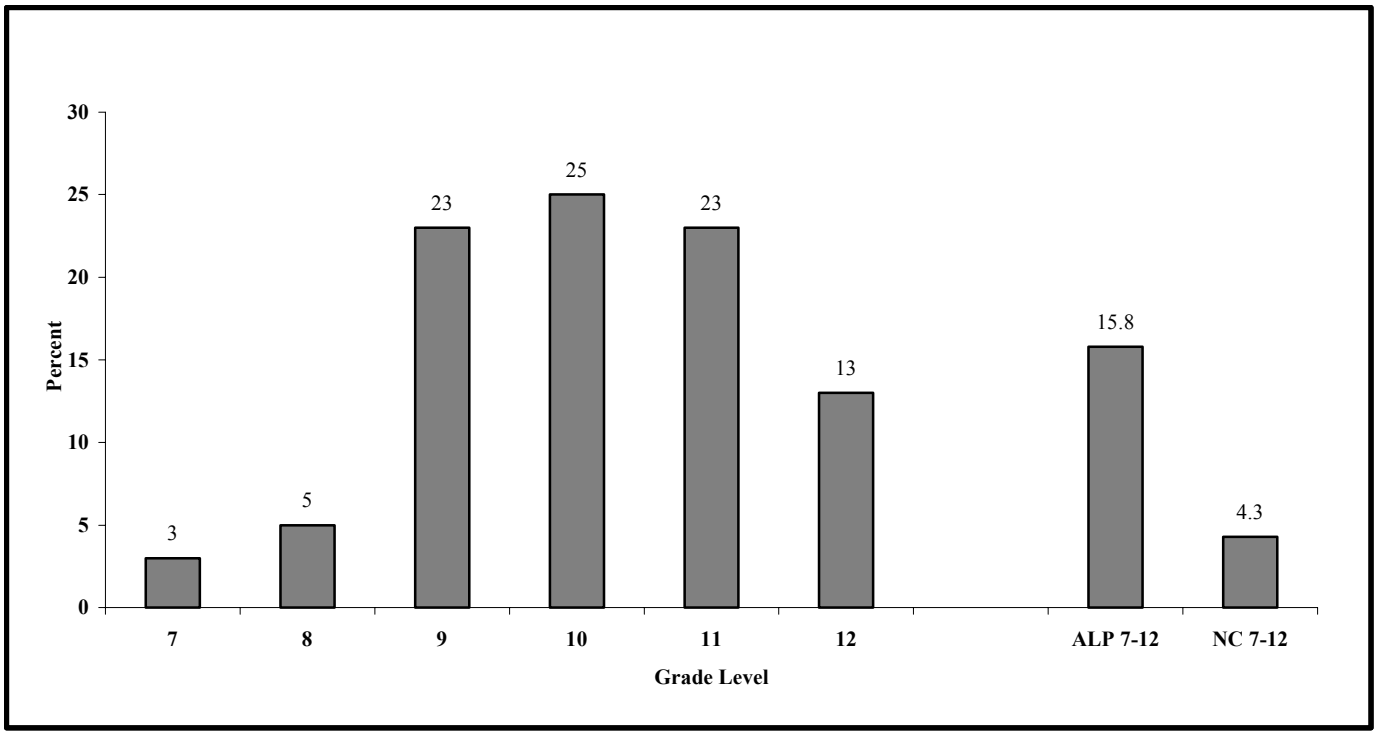

Note: Reason for suspension was not reported for 24 of 4,756 suspensions given to high school ALP students in 2000-01. Suspensions shown here include suspensions from ALPs as well as suspensions that students may have been given prior to a student enrolling in an ALP.

- ALP high school students received 4,756 suspensions in 2000-01. This corresponds to a rate of approximately one suspension per every 2 students, compared to a statewide figure of 1 per 6 students (see NCDPI, Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions Supplement, 2000-01, available at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/evaluation).

- The most common types of misconduct resulting in suspension from ALP for high school students were rule violation, undisciplined behavior, and aggressive behavior. These are the same three types of misconduct that are most common statewide (see NCDPI, Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions, 2000-01, available at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/evaluation).

## Dropout Rates for ALP and State

**Figure 19. Percent of ALP Students Dropping Out by Grade Level for ALP and by Total for ALP and State, 2000-01**




ALP students listed on the Student Data Roster were matched against the statewide dropout database to obtain these results.

- Across grades 7-12, ALP students dropped out at a rate 3.5 times higher than students statewide. In 1999-00, this gap was slightly larger (18.8% for ALP students versus 4.6% statewide).

- Nearly three-fourths of ALP dropouts occur between grades 9 and 11.

## Reasons for Dropouts

**Table 6. Reasons Given for Dropping Out of Middle School by Grade, 2000-01**

| Reasons | Percent | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Grade 6 | | Grade 7 | | Grade 8 | |
| | ALP | State | ALP | State | ALP | State |
| Moved | 30.0 | 65.6 | 8.3 | 35.8 | 7.0 | 26.3 |
| Long-term suspension | 40.0 | 7.8 | 11.7 | 6.3 | 16.4 | 7.7 |
| Expulsion | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.0 | .4 | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| Attendance | 30.0 | 17.2 | 61.7 | 39.2 | 60.2 | 42.1 |
| Discipline | 0.0 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 1.6 | 1.9 |
| Other | 0.0 | 4.7 | 15.0 | 15.3 | 14.8 | 21.4 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| **Total number of students** | **10** | **128** | **60** | **288** | **128** | **693** |

**Table 7. Reasons Given for Dropping Out of High School by Grade, 2000-01**

| Reasons | Grade 9 | | Grade 10 | | Grade 11 | | Grade 12 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ALP | State | ALP | State | ALP | State | ALP | State |
| Moved | 8.7 | 9.9 | 5.6 | 7.7 | 7.1 | 6.4 | 3.0 | 5.9 |
| Long-term suspension | 8.7 | 4.4 | 5.2 | 2.8 | 4.7 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 1.8 |
| Expulsion | 1.5 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0.6 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Attendance | 55.0 | 59.2 | 57.0 | 57.6 | 61.8 | 56.8 | 59.7 | 57.1 |
| Discipline | 3.5 | 2.9 | 4.4 | 2.4 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 1.3 |
| Chose work over school | 5.9 | 4.8 | 6.6 | 5.7 | 5.3 | 5.5 | 10.5 | 6.1 |
| Academic | 3.0 | 6.9 | 3.3 | 9.2 | 5.6 | 10.5 | 6.5 | 12.5 |
| Other | 13.9 | 11.0 | 17.2 | 14.0 | 13.4 | 16.4 | 16.4 | 14.9 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| **Total number of students** | **982** | **7862** | **519** | **5987** | **322** | **4736** | **201** | **2769** |

Notes. Included in the Other Reasons category for grades 6-8 are: need to care for children, incarcerated in adult facility, marriage, unstable home environment, pregnancy, runaways, employment necessary, suspected substance abuse, community college dropout, health problems, academic problems, and choice of work over school.
Included in the Other Reasons category for grades 9-12 are: need to care for children, incarcerated in adult facility, marriage, unstable home environment, pregnancy, runaways, employment necessary, suspected substance abuse, community college dropout, and health problems.
*Moved* is an unknown status, reported here as a conservative estimate of those students dropping out of school.

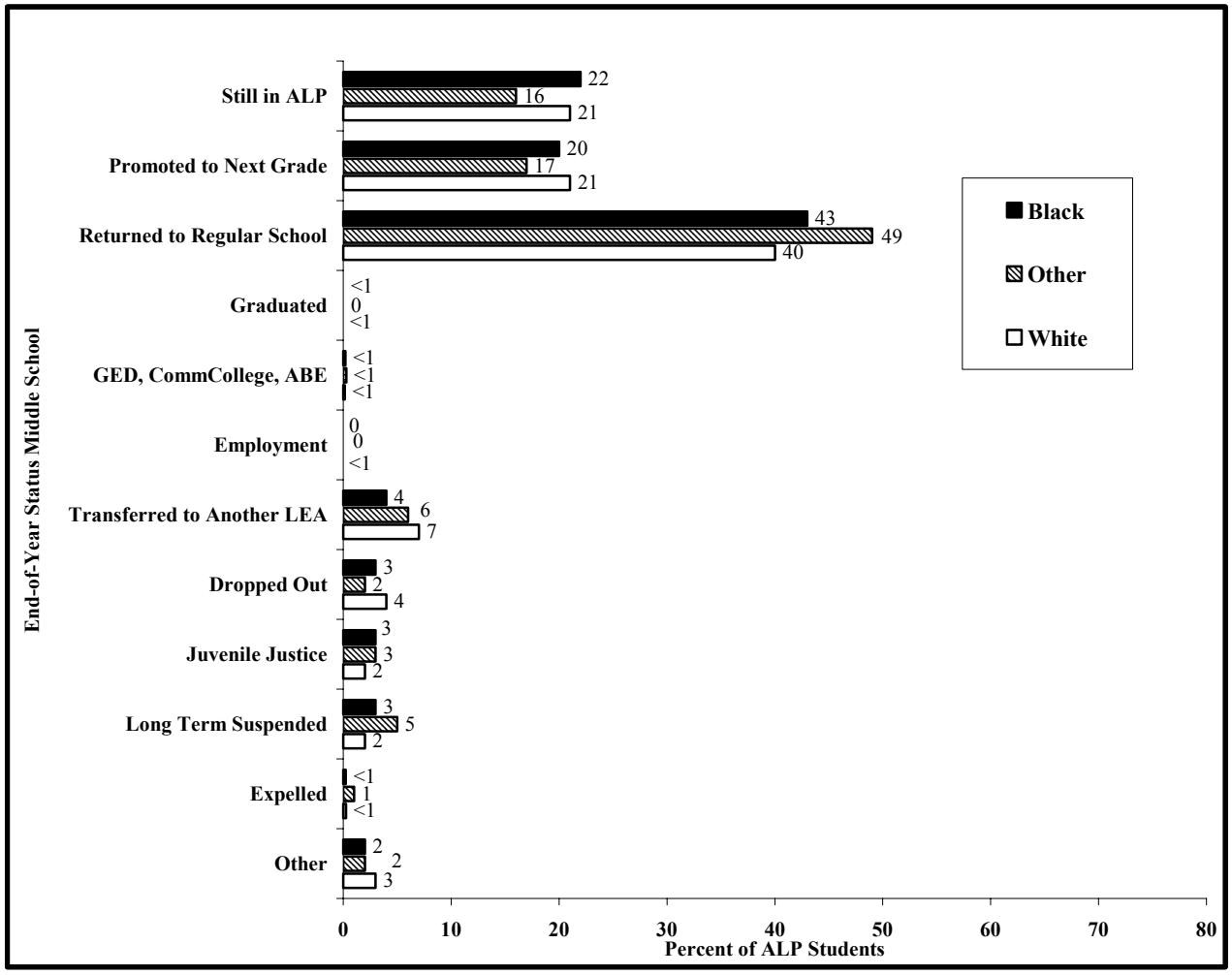
- The reason most often given for ALP students dropping out of school is, by far, attendance. However, this finding is also true for non-ALP students, although at slightly lower percentages.

- In high school, ALP students are more likely than non-ALP students to drop out for behavioral reasons (long-term suspension, expulsion, and discipline). Non-ALP students are more likely than ALP students to drop out for academic reasons.

- In middle school, ALP students are even more likely than non-ALP students to drop out because of long-term suspension and attendance reasons.

## End-of-Year Status

**Figure 20. End-of-Year Status by Ethnicity for Middle School Students Enrolled in ALPs, 2000-01**



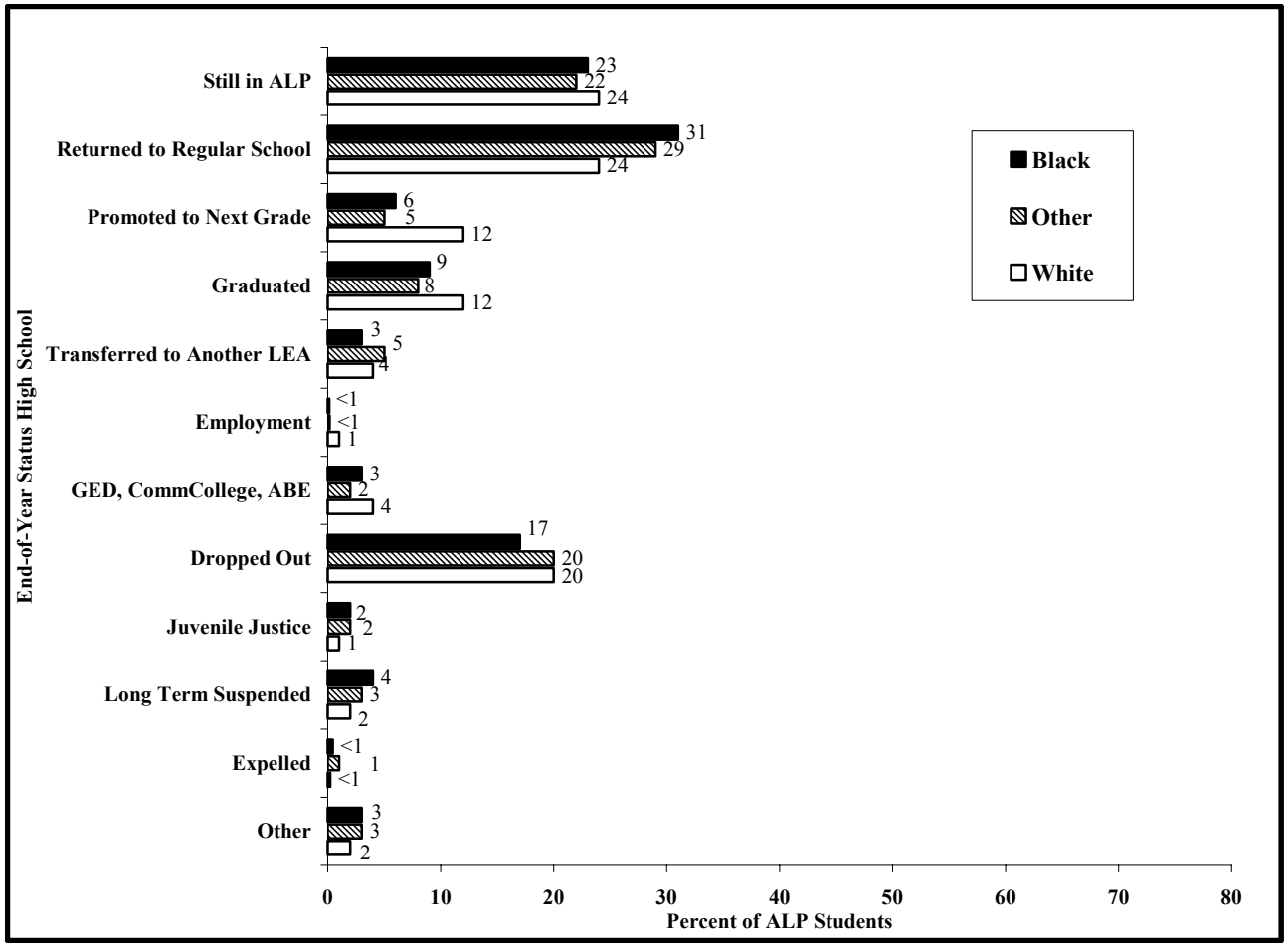

Notes. "Graduated" at the middle school level probably means "Graduated from Middle School to High School." Data come from all ALP enrolled students.

- Eighty two percent of middle school ALP students in 2000-01 either returned to a regular school, remained enrolled in an ALP, or were promoted to the next grade at the end of the school year.

- There was very little difference in end-of-year status for middle school ALP students from different ethnic groups.

## End-of-Year Status (continued)

**Figure 21. End-of-Year Status by Ethnicity for High School Students Enrolled in ALPs, 2000-01**



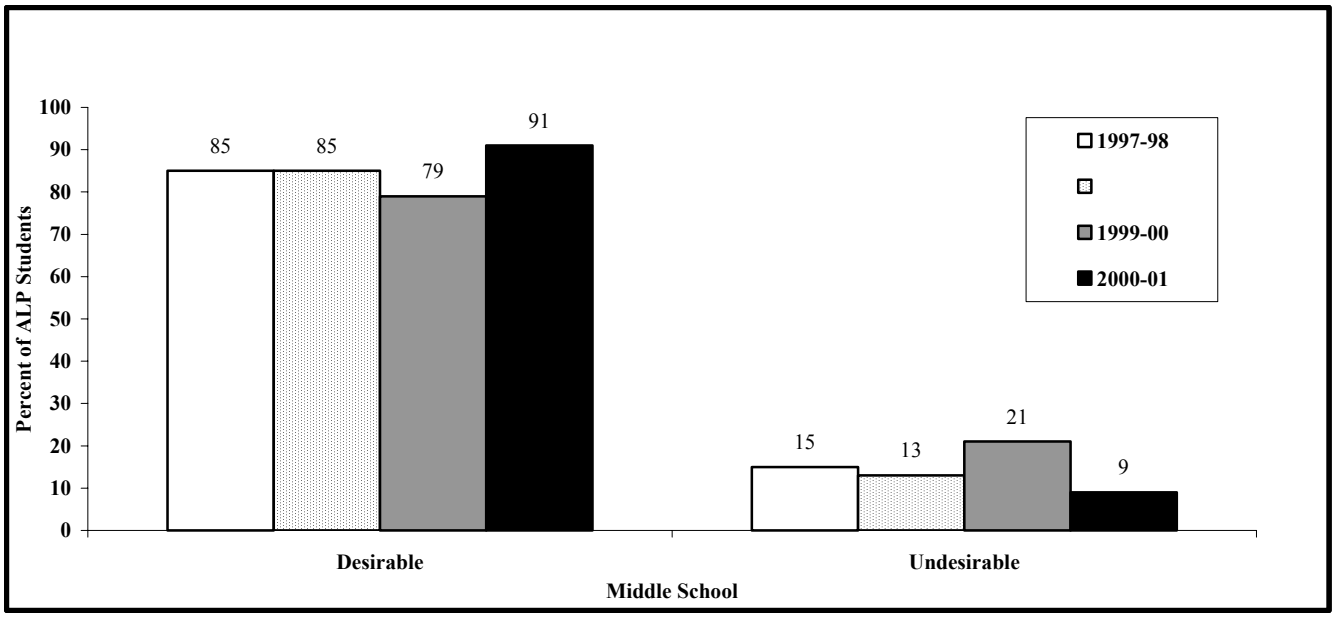

- The most common status at the end of the school year for high school ALP students was to return to regular school followed by continued enrollment in the ALP.

- There was very little difference in end-of-year status for high school ALP students from different ethnic groups. The higher proportion of White students who graduated at the end of the year probably reflects the higher proportion of White ALP students enrolled in 12th grade.

- Dropping out was much more common at the high school level than at the middle school level (Figure 20), but many of those enrolled in middle school grades were not sixteen years of age and therefore were still subject to compulsory attendance laws.

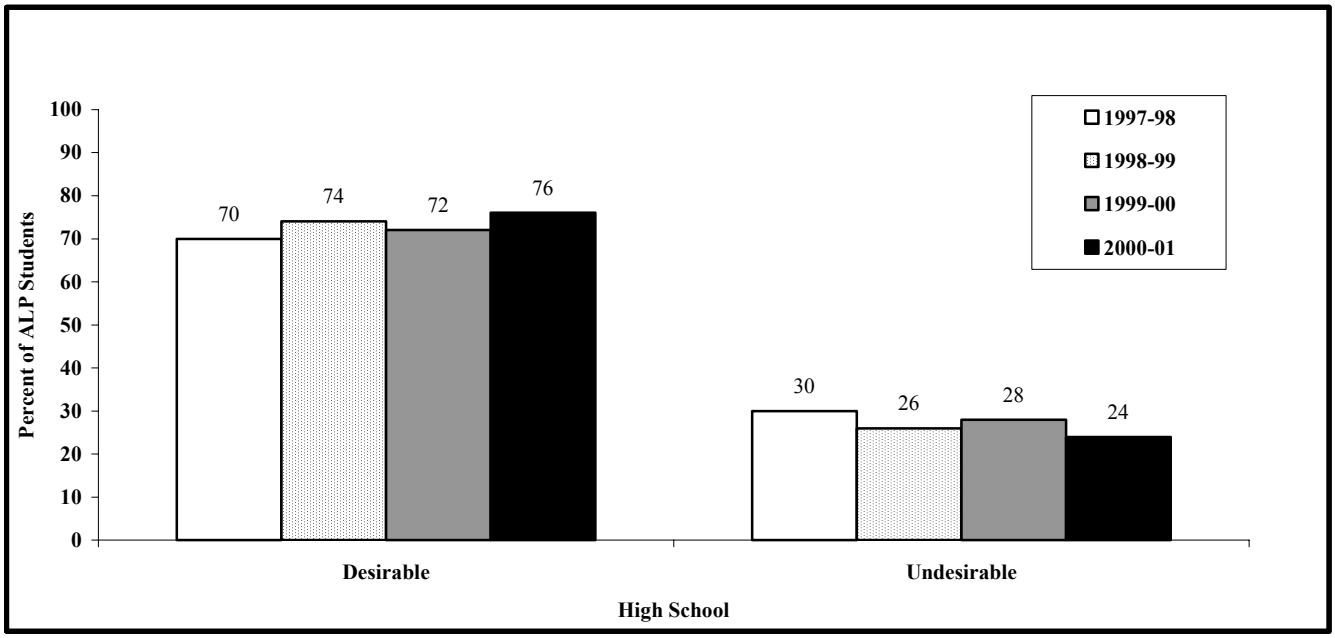
## Desirable versus Undesirable End-of-Year-Status for ALP Students

**Figure 22. Desirable vs. Undesirable End-of-Year Status for Middle School Students Enrolled in ALPs, 1997-98 to 2000-01**




Note. Data for years prior to 2000-01 were reported by a small sample of ALPs. Data for 2000-01 was reported by all ALPs.

**Figure 23. Desirable vs. Undesirable End-of-Year Status for High School Students Enrolled in ALPs, 1997-98 to 2000-01**




Notes. Data for years prior to 2000-01 were reported by a small sample of ALPs. Data for 2000-01 was reported by all ALPs. *Desirable Status* includes still in ALP, returned to regular school, graduated, promoted to next grade, transferred to another LEA, entered GED program. *Undesirable Status* includes dropped out, involved with the juvenile justice system, long term suspended, expelled, and left school for employment.

**Desirable vs. Undesirable End-Of-Year-Status for ALP Students (continued)**

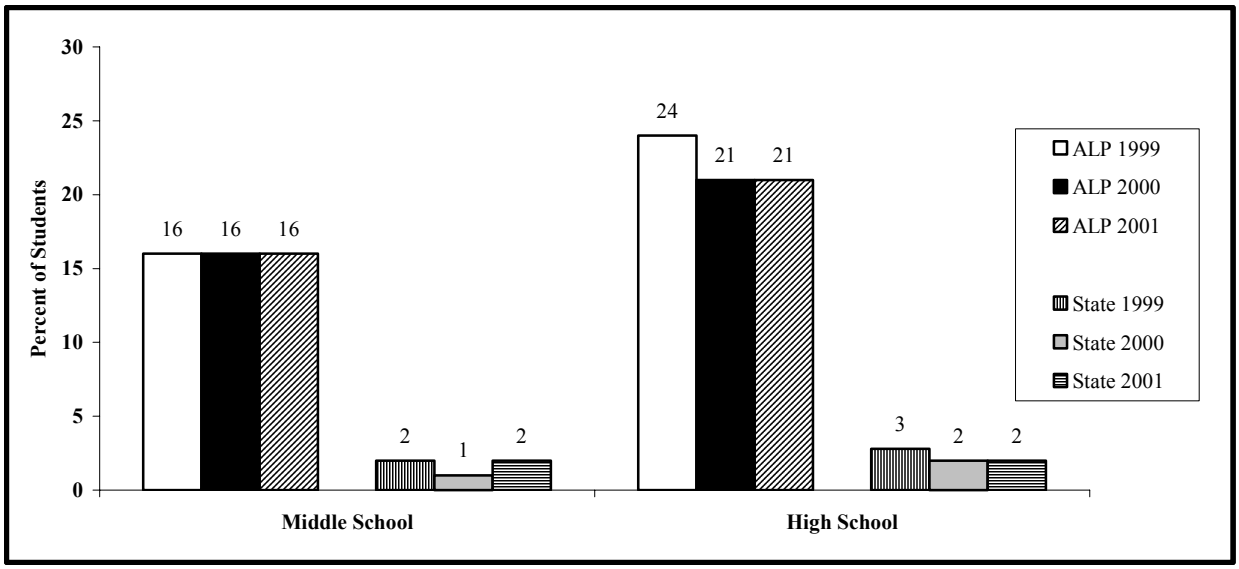
- For most ALP students enrolled in high school as well as middle school grades, the status at the end of the school year for the four years of the study was positive or desirable (e.g., they were still in school or had graduated).

- Middle school ALP students had somewhat better end-of-year outcomes than high school students for all four years.

- Patterns for the end-of-year status have remained relatively stable for the past four years for middle and high school. Because the data was originally drawn from a sample of ALPs and was drawn from all ALPs for the first time in 2000-01, however, caution should be used when interpreting changes in the prevalence of desirable end-of-year status.

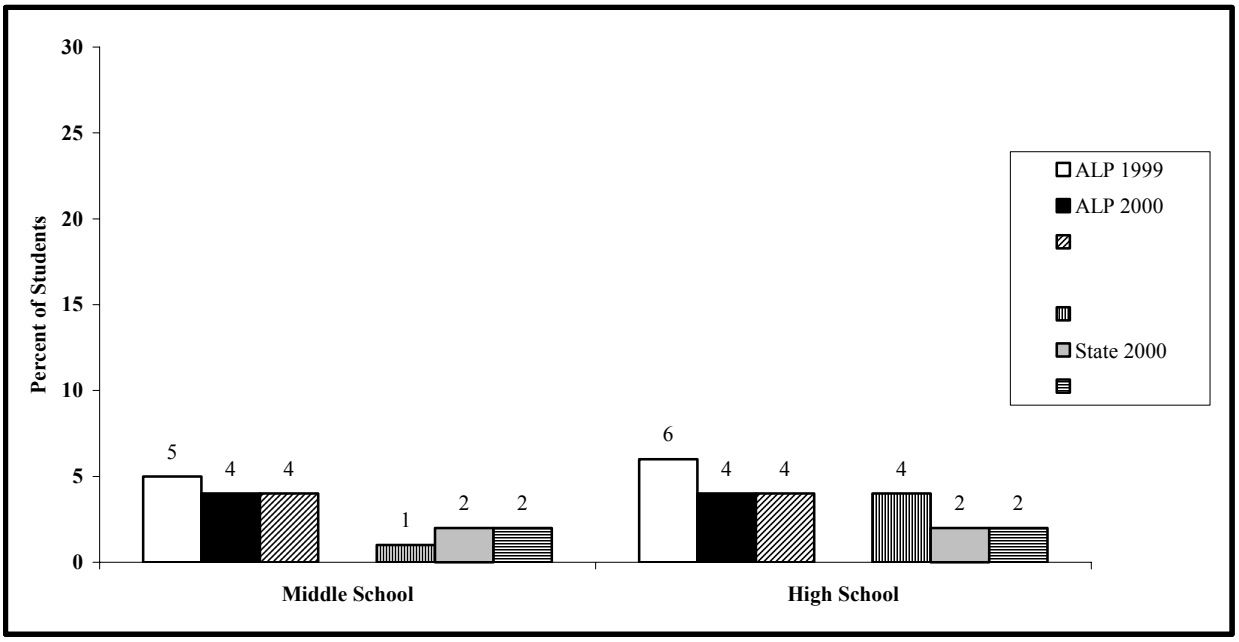
## Homework

**Figure 24. Percent of Students With No Homework Assigned - State and ALPs, 1998-99 to 2000-01**




Note. Source is student-reported data on EOC or EOG answer sheets.

**Figure 25. Percent of Students Who Do Not Do Assigned Homework - State and ALPs, 1998-99 to 2000-01**



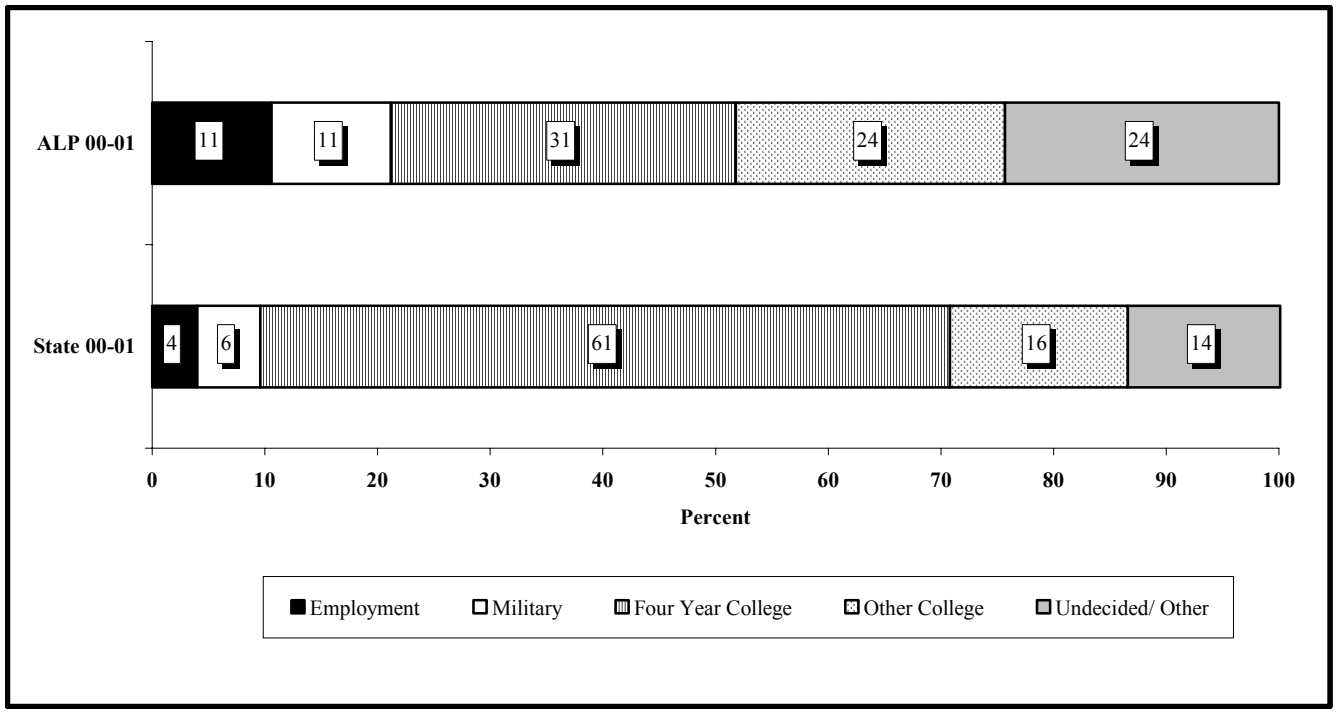

Note: Source is student-reported data on EOC or EOG answer sheets.

- In 2000-01 substantially more ALP students reported having no homework assigned compared to students statewide.

- In 2000-01, four percent of ALP middle and high school students report not doing homework that was assigned, compared to two percent of students across the state.

## Plans After High School

**Figure 26. Students' Plans After High School for ALPs and the State, 2000-01**




Note: Data come from EOC tests, grades 9-12.

- ALP students were about half as likely to have plans to attend a four-year college as students statewide. This smaller proportion is accompanied by larger percentages for ALP students in every other category as compared to students statewide.

- Combining "Other College" with "Four-Year Colleges" results in 55 percent of ALP students compared to 77 percent of students statewide planning to attend some form of post-secondary education.

## Summary for Current School Performance

There are both positive and negative performance indicators for students enrolled in ALPs. ALP students who remain in school appear to make steady progress toward graduation, though at a slower rate than the regular student population. The majority of students enrolled in ALPs have desirable end-of-year status. That is, most of them stay in school, graduate, or undertake a GED program. Further, longer enrollment in ALPs is associated with better attendance, although we cannot be sure that this outcome is a result of the ALP or the nature of students enrolled for longer periods of time. Students who are enrolled in ALPs and who remain enrolled through grade 12 tend to accumulate enough credits to graduate from high school.

Middle school ALP students seem to have higher referral rates for disruptive behavior than in high school ALP students, where attendance and personal problems are a larger part of the reasons for enrollment (see previous section of this report). Of the students enrolled due to expulsions from regular school, the majority were promoted to the next grade, remained in the ALP, or returned to regular school after attending the ALP. Middle and high school students enrolled in ALPs are most often suspended for the same types of misconduct as students statewide including, rule violations and both undisciplined and aggressive behavior. However, they are also suspended at a much higher rate than students in the general student population.

More students enrolled in ALPs report having no homework assigned to them than do students statewide. Also, more ALP students enrolled in middle school report not completing assigned homework than students did across the state (although percentages among both groups are small). Based on previous case studies conducted for this evaluation during the 1998-99 year, it appears that some ALPs reduce the amount of homework assigned, or do not assign homework, as part of a strategy to keep students in school by reducing academic demands. Teachers in ALPs also report that it is frequently difficult for ALP students to complete homework in home environments not well suited for studying. It appears ALP teachers may anticipate student difficulties in completing work outside school and simply stop assigning homework.

# • End-of-Grade Test Results

## Introduction to End-of-Grade Tests

Similar to previous reports, this section of the report for 2000-01 includes student achievement data disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, and exceptional child status.

Each student in grades three through eight is expected to take reading and mathematics End-of-Grade tests. Only certain students (some students with disabilities and/or limited English proficiency) did not take these tests in 2000-01.

Results on the tests are reported in developmental scale scores, ranging from a low of approximately 100 to a high of approximately 200 across all grades in reading and 200 to 310 in math. Statewide gains in scale score points are established from one grade level to the next. Grade-level proficiency is determined by the percentage of students performing at Achievement Levels III and IV.

In addition, the growth formula for the ABCs Accountability Model provides expectations by grade and by school for "expected growth" across grades based on where matched students (cohorts) in the school scored the previous year.

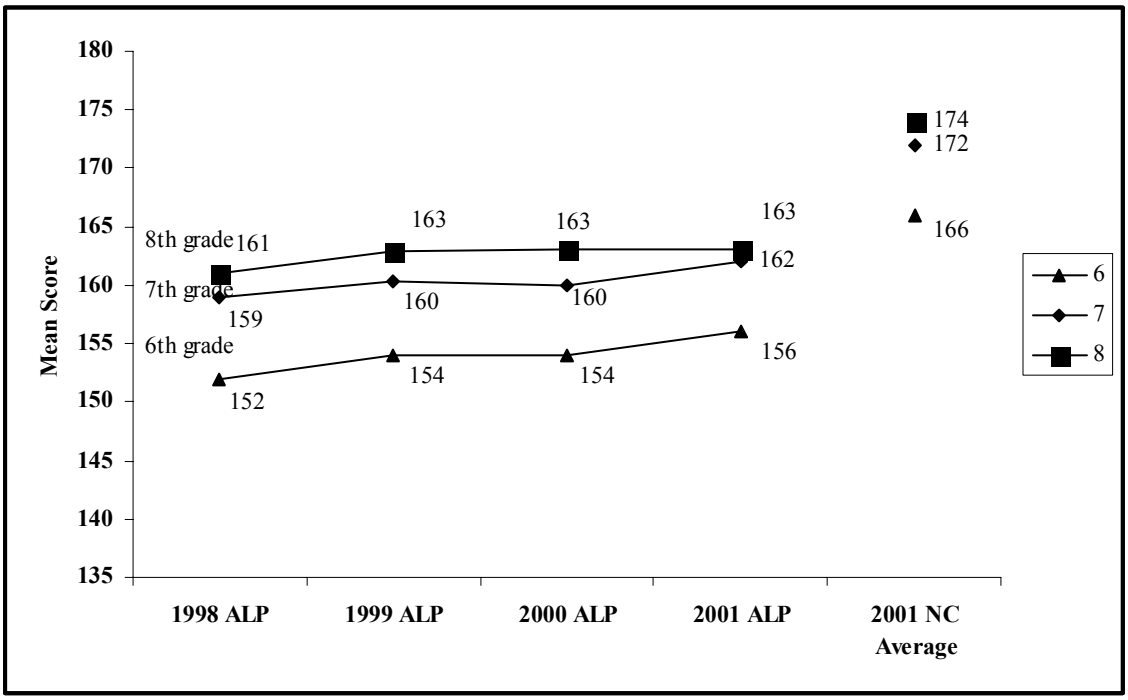
The results in this section are based on 2001 EOG tests. Where growth — actual or expected (predicted) — is reported, the difference between 2000 EOG scores and 2001 EOG scores is used for the calculations.

Because the useable number of available matched scores for third, fourth, and fifth graders was so small, these results cannot be reliably reported and are not shown in this section. Scores are available for 1,129 sixth graders, 1,584 seventh graders, and 2,080 eighth graders.

While the ABCs Accountability Model growth formula was developed to be applicable to "schools," it is used here for ALP students statewide by grade level as if they were one school. This use may not technically meet the assumptions underlying the model but provides at least an estimate of academic growth for ALP students compared to all students.

## Mathematics EOG Scale Scores for ALP and State

**Figure 27. Average EOG Mathematics Scale Scores by Grade Level for ALP Students Over Time and State Average in 2000-01**




Note. The lines in this graph do *not* represent cohort groups over time.

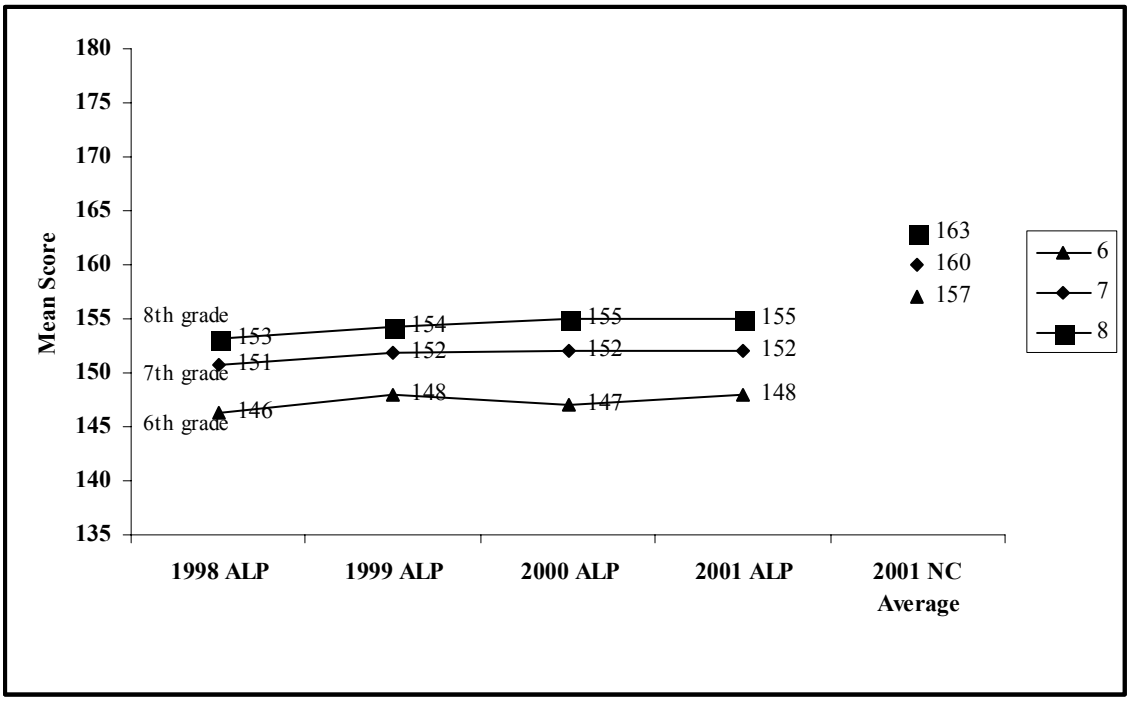
- For grade 8, average Mathematics EOG scale scores for ALP students remained exactly the same from 1998-99 through 2000-01, and were more than 10 scale score points below the state averages.

- For grades 6 and 7, average Mathematics EOG scale scores for ALP students increased slightly in 2000-01, but were still 10 scale score points below the state average.

- Because of small numbers of ALP students at grades 4 and 5, these data are inconclusive and are not presented.

## Reading EOG Scale Scores for ALP and State

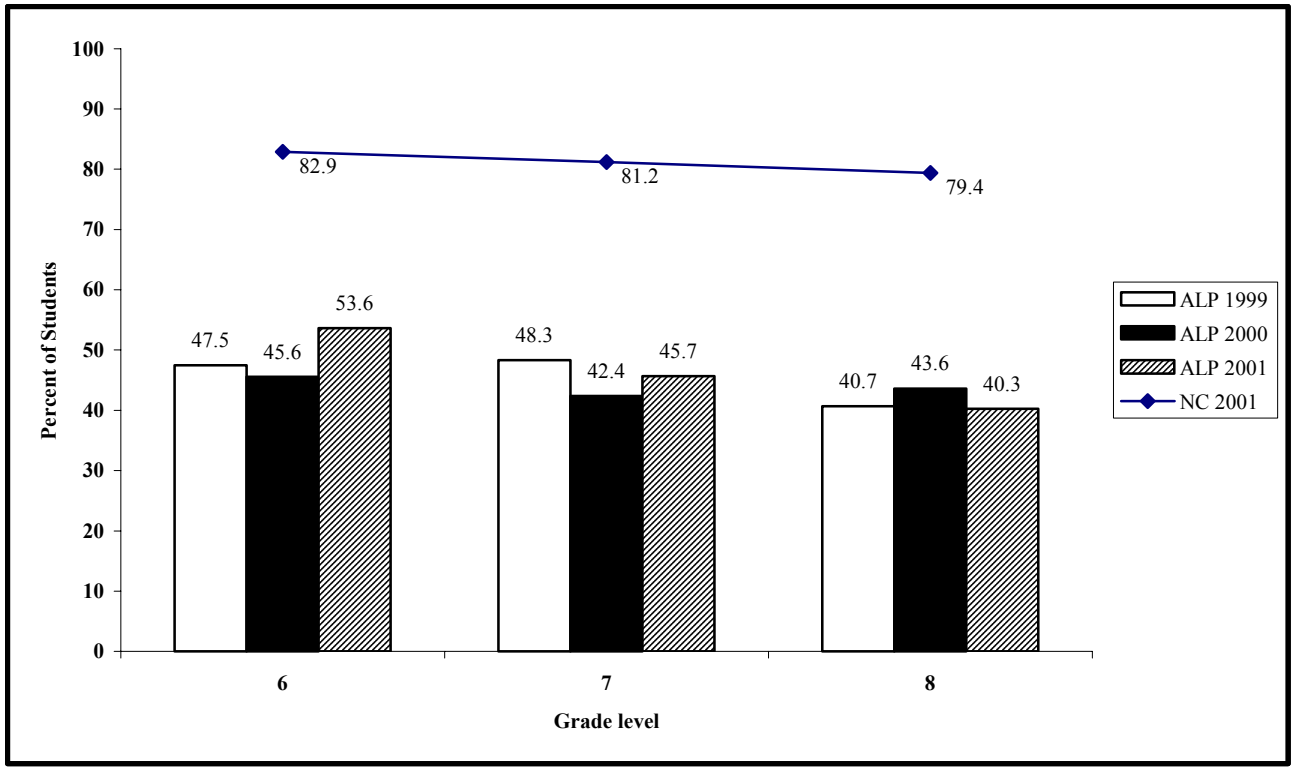
**Figure 28. Average EOG Reading Scale Scores by Grade Level for ALP Students Over Time and State Average in 2000-01**




- Average Reading EOG scale scores for ALP students ranged from eight to nine scale score points below the state average across grade levels in 2000-01.
- Scores for ALP students across grades in 2000-01 are similar to scores from prior years.
- Because of small numbers of ALP students at grades 4 and 5, these data are inconclusive and are not presented.

## Mathematics EOG Proficiency

**Figure 29. Percent of Students Scoring Level III or IV on Mathematics EOG Tests for ALPs and State, 1998-99 to 2000-01**



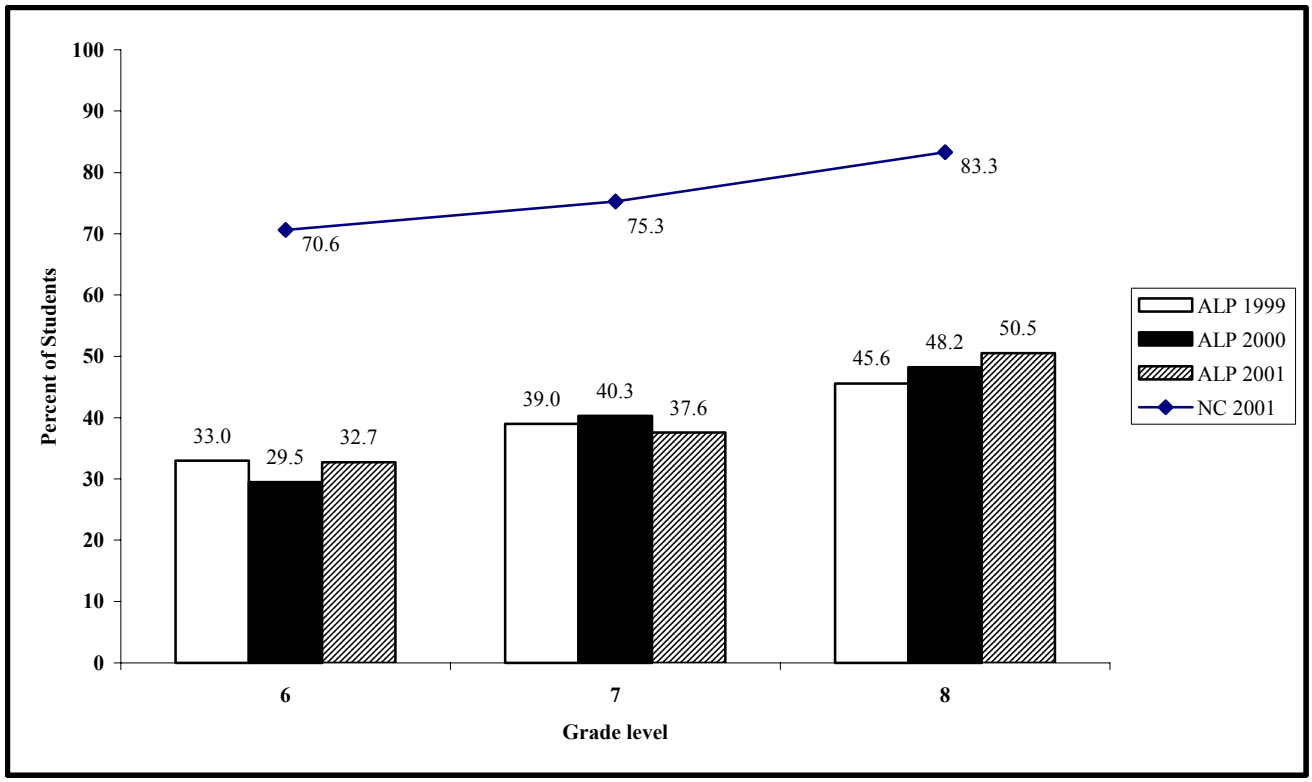

Note. Proficiency on EOG tests indicates grade level equivalent performance or higher.

- The gap between the proficiency of ALP students versus students across the state is substantial for all years between 1998-99 and 2000-01.

- Proficiency rate patterns for ALP students on the mathematics EOG test have varied across grade levels and years.

## Reading EOG Proficiency

**Figure 30. Percent of Students Scoring Level III or IV on Reading EOG Tests for ALPs and State, 1998-99 to 2000-01**




Note. Proficiency on EOG tests indicates grade level equivalent performance or higher.

- The percent of ALP students scoring at-or-above Achievement Level III in reading is substantially below that of students statewide each year between 1998-99 and 2000-01.
- Proficiency rate patterns for ALP students in reading vary across grades and years, although they have generally been higher at higher grade levels.

## End-of-Grade Achievement Levels by Ethnicity

**Figure 31. Percent of Students Across EOG Math Achievement Levels by Ethnicity, 2000-01**

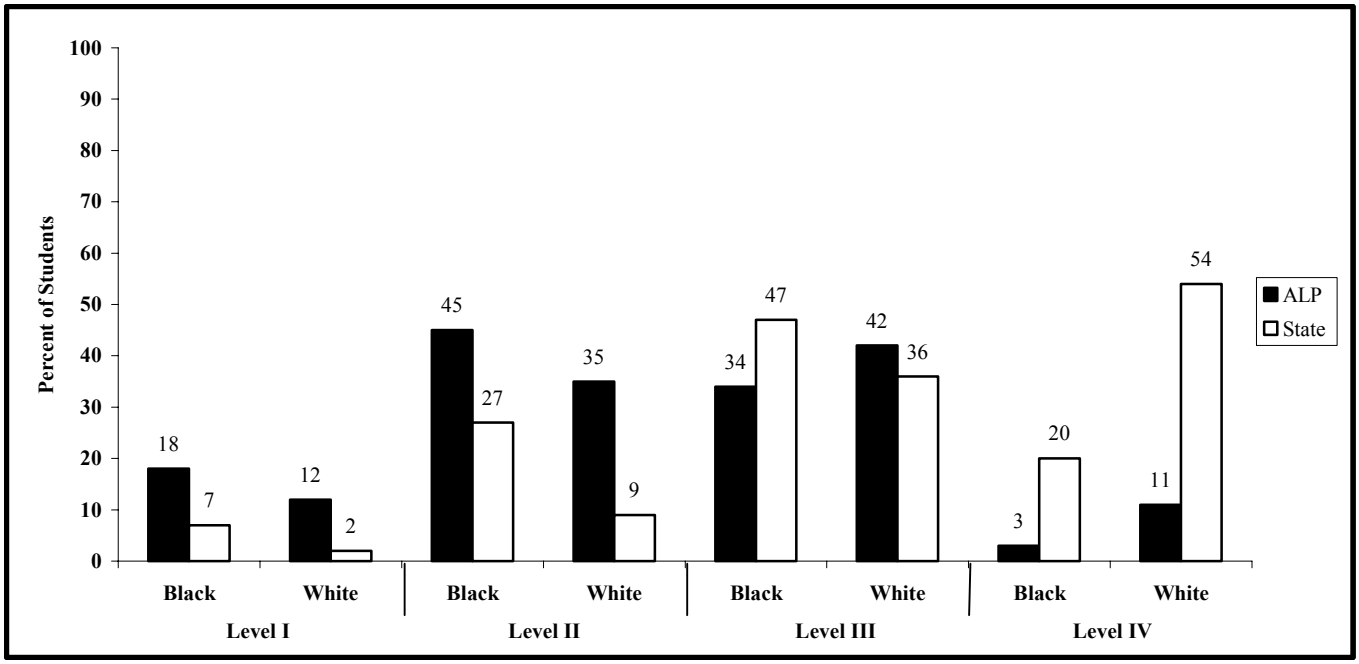
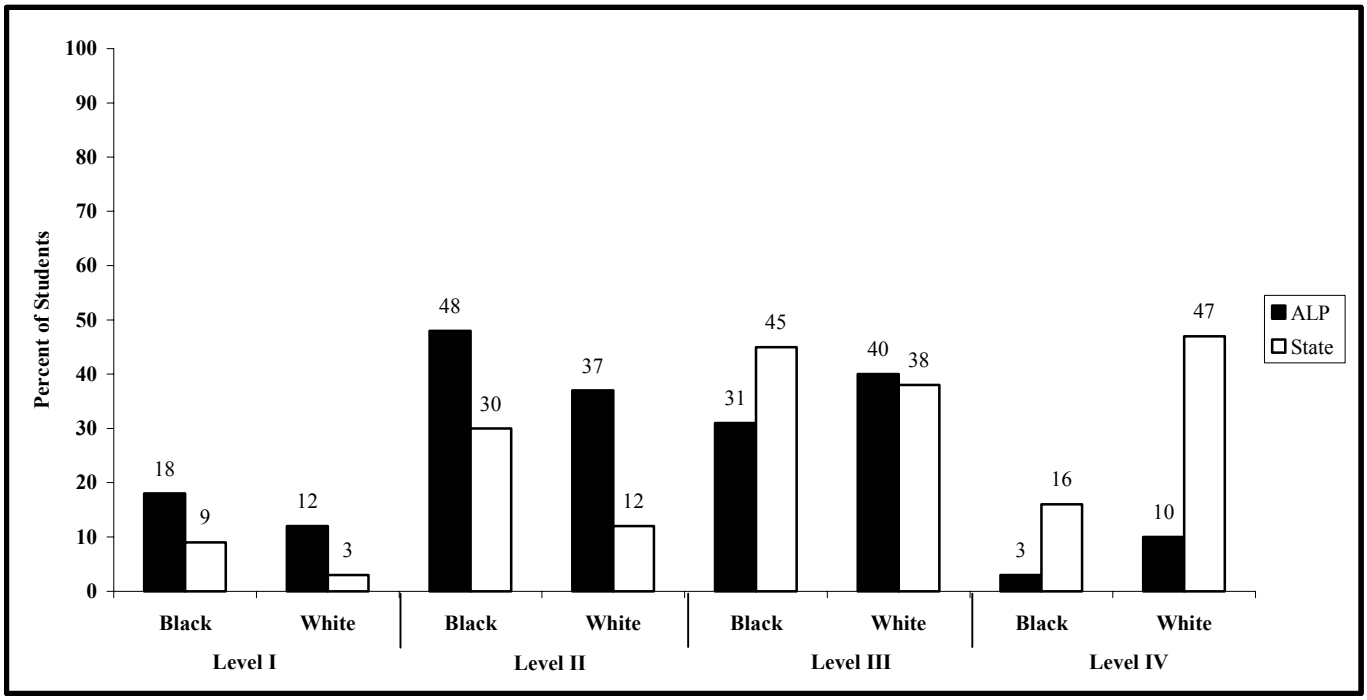



**Figure 32. Percent of Students Across EOG Reading Achievement Levels by Ethnicity, 2000-01**

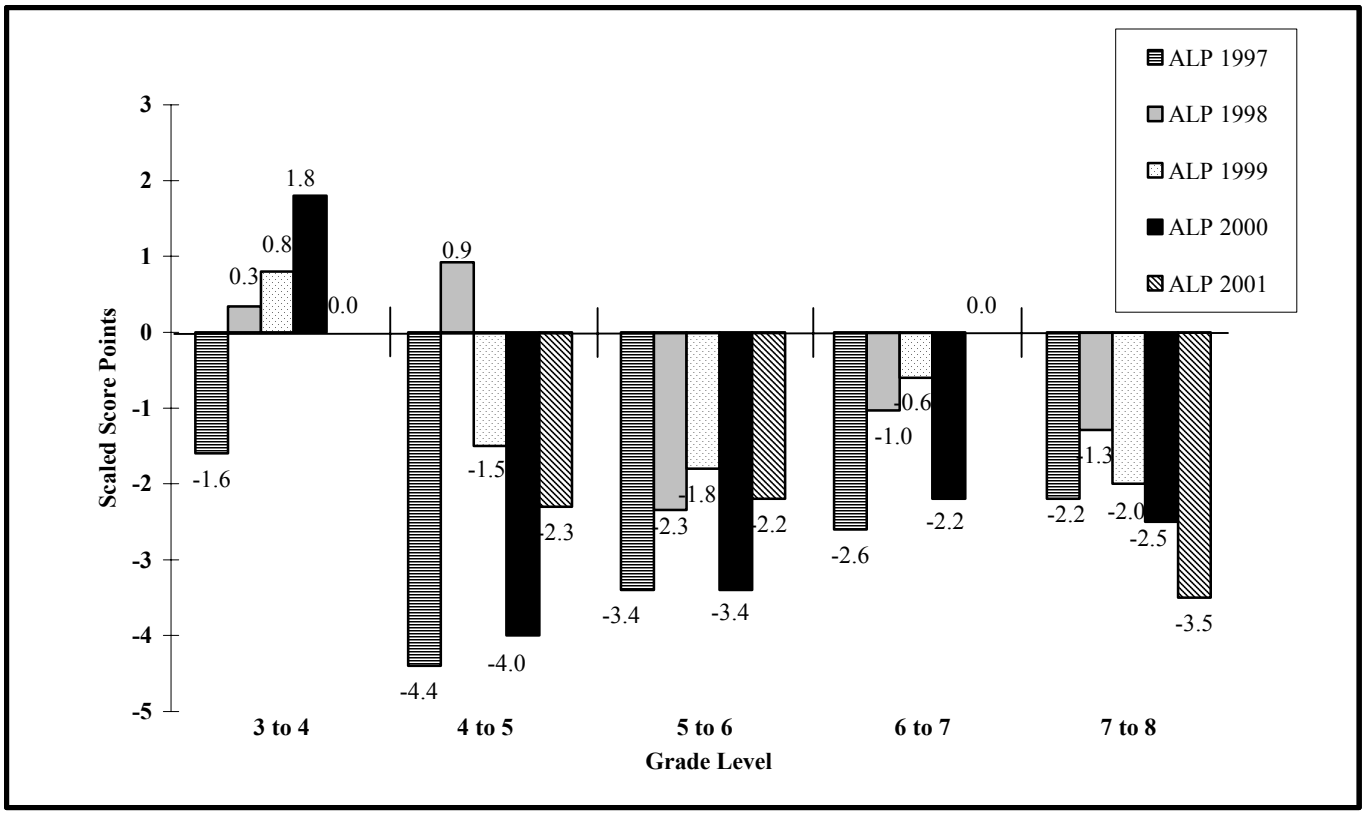


- The pattern of the percent of students in each Achievement Level was similar for Math and Reading for both ethnic groups and for ALP and state students. This pattern illustrates the lower achievement of ALP students, with very few Black or White ALP students receiving level IV scores.

- Both White and Black ALP students performed worse than their peers statewide, but the discrepancy is most evident among White students receiving Level IV scores.

## Expected Versus Actual Growth in Mathematics EOG Scores for ALPs

**Figure 33. Expected versus Actual Growth on Mathematics EOG Test by Grade Level, 1996-97 to 2000-01**

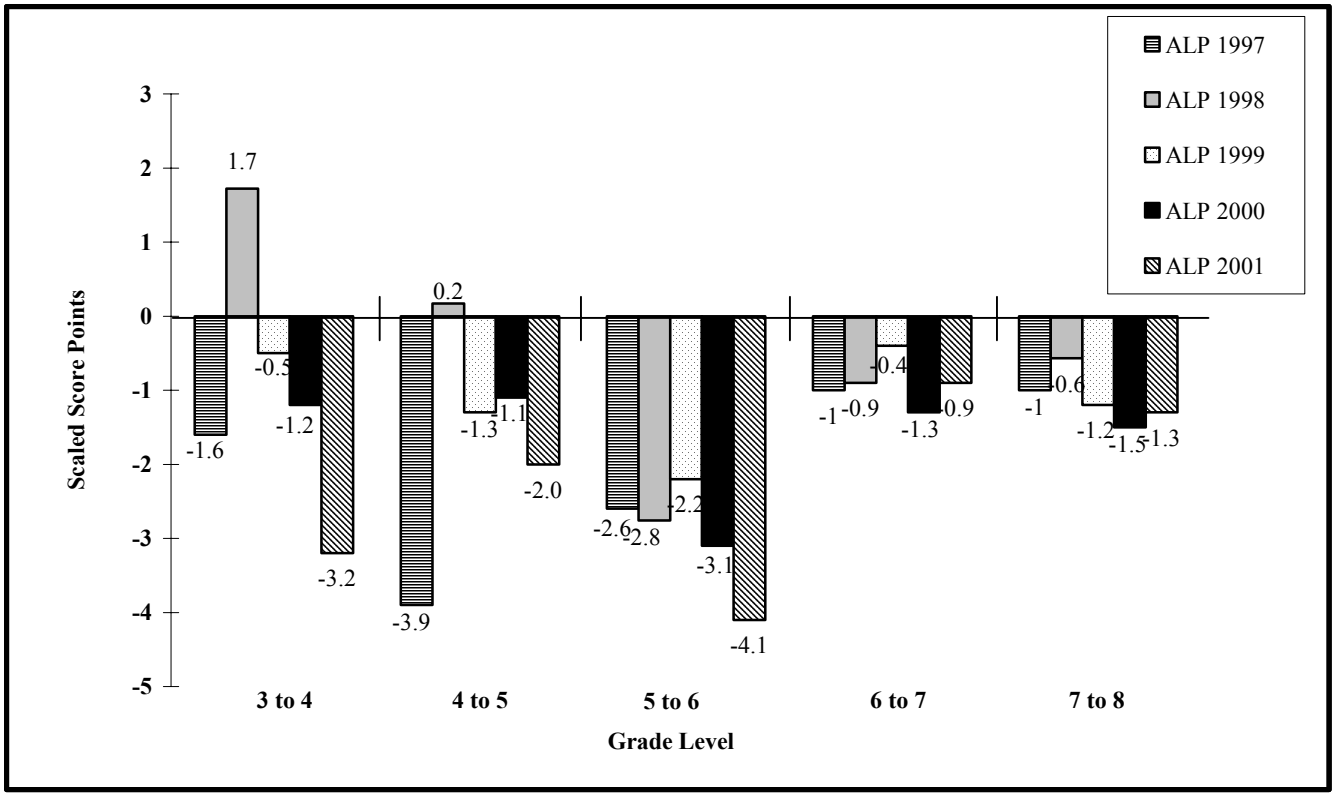



The North Carolina ABCs Accountability Program provides for a calculation of *expected growth* for schools across the state. For the purposes of this report, all ALP students at a given grade level were treated as if they were a grade level in a single regular school, and expected growth was calculated based on their performance on end-of-grade testing. Figure 33 represents *expected* versus *actual* growth, as determined by the ABC growth formula. Zero on the vertical scale would mean expected growth was met. Where the graph extends below zero, the *actual* grade-level growth was the designated number of points below the *expected* growth. These data are for matched cohorts of students.

- As a whole, students enrolled in ALPs during 2000-01 did not achieve *expected* growth in mathematics at grade levels five, six and eight as projected from the ABC Growth Formula. In 2000-01, students at grade eight showed a drop that was greater than in the previous year.
- While students in grade 4 met expected growth, numbers of ALP students at this grade are small and conclusions should be drawn with caution.

## Expected Versus Actual Growth in Reading EOG Scores for ALPs

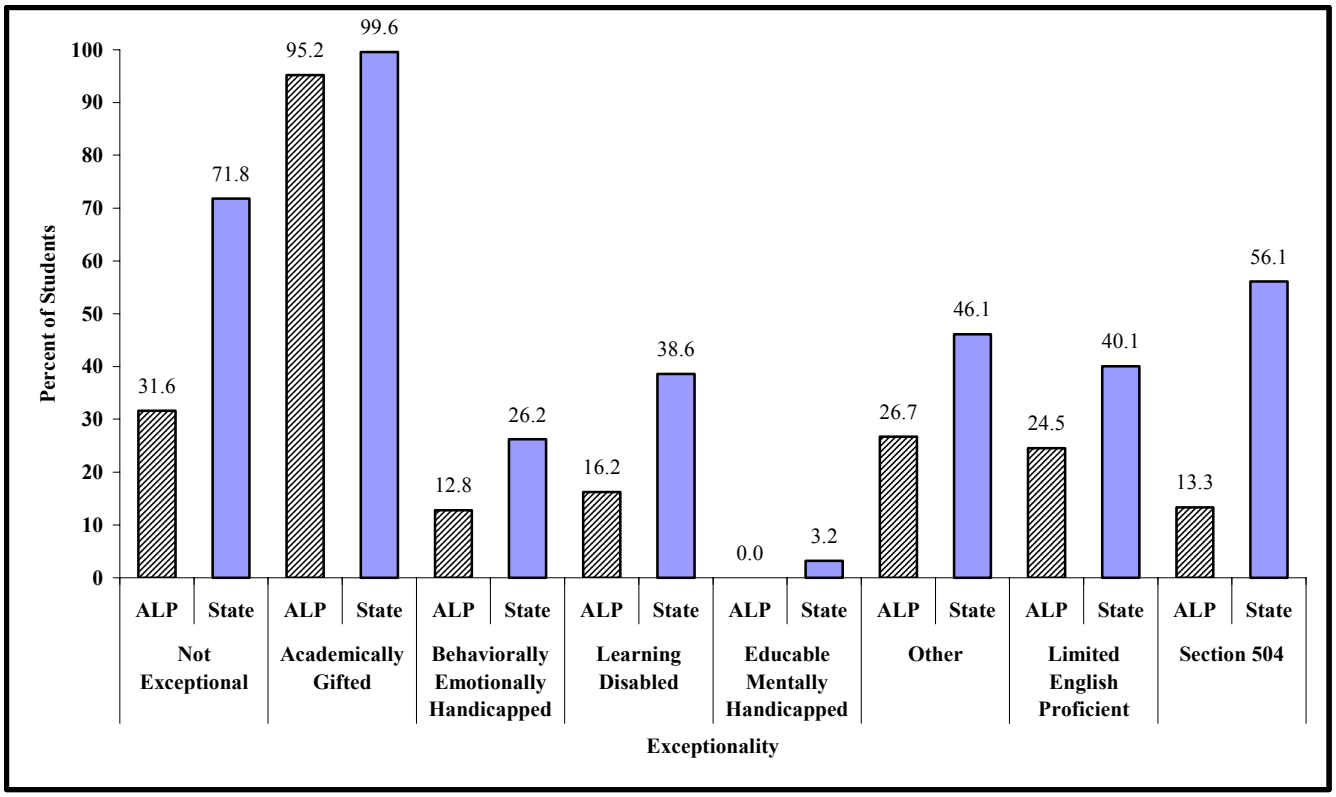
**Figure 34. Expected versus Actual Growth on Reading EOG Test by Grade Level, 1996-97 to 2000-01**




- Students enrolled in ALPs during 2000-01 did not achieve *expected* growth in reading at any grade levels.

## EOG Proficiency by Areas of Exceptionality

**Figure 35. ALP and State Percent Scoring Level III or IV by Exceptionality in Both Reading and Math, Grades 3-8, 2000-01**




- State exceptional students performed better than ALP exceptional students for all categories of exceptionality.

- The performance discrepancy between ALP students and students statewide who are not exceptional is greater than in all exceptional status categories, except Section 504.

## Summary for End-of-Grade Tests

For both reading and mathematics, ALP students performed well below the overall student population on End-of-Grade tests, with respect to both absolute scores (i.e., Developmental Scale Scores and percent proficient) and growth. State proficiency rates range from 71 to 87 percent for reading and math, while ALP rates ranged from 24 percent to 54 percent in 2000-01. Grades 4 and 7 met expected growth on EOG mathematics tests in 2000-01. However, ALP students have typically not made expected growth on EOG tests in either reading or mathematics.

# • High School Test Results

## Introduction

The North Carolina State Testing Program added end-of-course (EOC) multiple choice testing for high school subjects in 1985-86 beginning with Algebra I. As part of the ABCs Accountability Model, the program currently tests students in ten required courses: Algebra I, Algebra II, Biology, Chemistry, ELP (Economic, Political, and Legal Systems), English I, Geometry, Physical Science, Physics, and U.S. History.

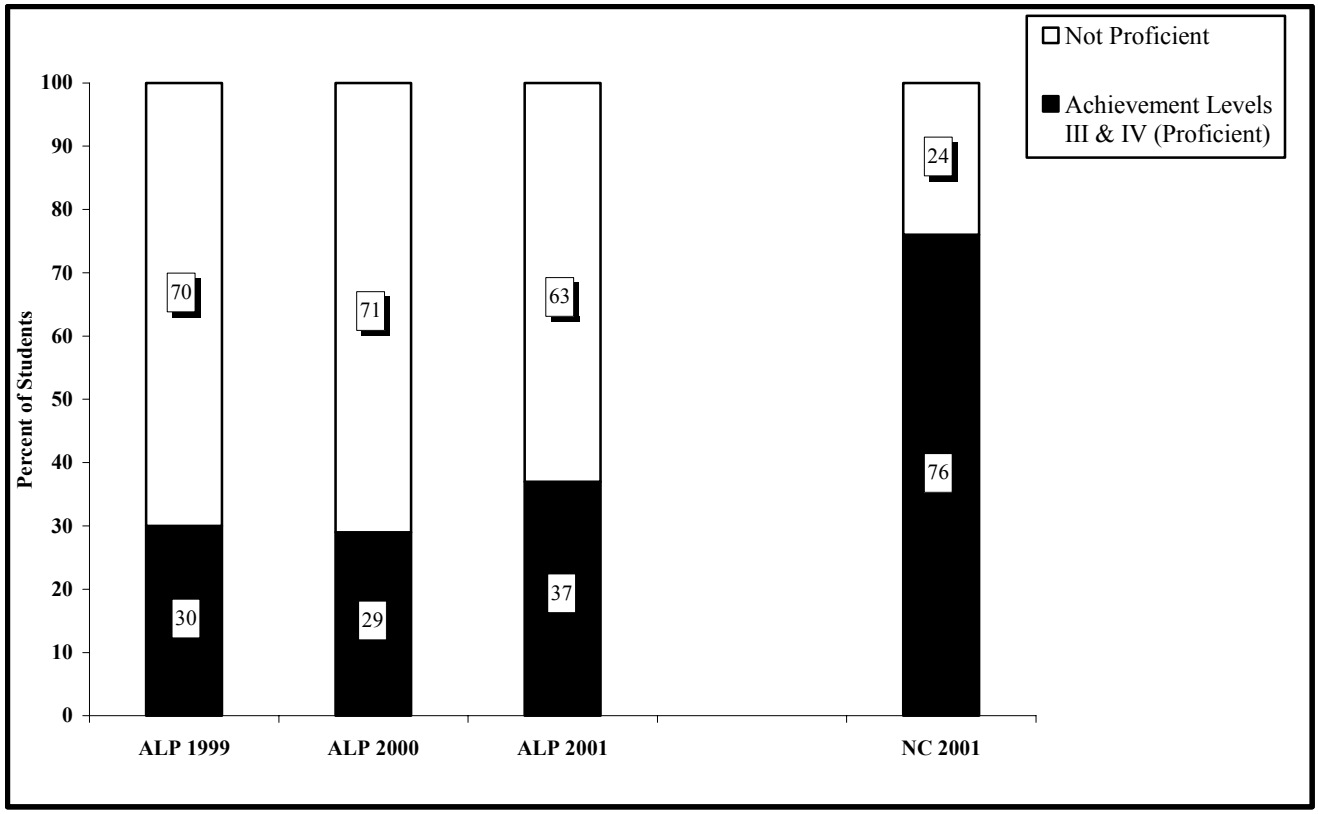
As is true for the End-of-Grade tests, achievement on EOC tests is divided into four levels, with performance at Level III and Level IV defined as proficient. Students performing at-or-above proficient *consistently demonstrate mastery of the course subject matter and skills* of the course and are prepared for further, more advanced study.

In this evaluation, ALP and statewide proficiency scores are compared for the three most widely completed tests: Algebra I, Biology, and English I. The results in this section are based on 2001 EOC tests. Results are reported in terms of the percentage of students who scored at Achievement Level III or IV on the test; EOC scale scores are not reported here.

It is important to note that comparisons of ALP test scores across years must be made cautiously. Matching EOC data is not trivial, and probably resulted in a nonrandom selection of scores each year. Students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg sometimes used student ID numbers on their tests that were not the Social Security numbers on the ALP rosters. Also, unlike EOG tests, EOC tests can be taken at different grade levels. Differences in EOC test scores could therefore be due to 1) actual differences (improvements in teaching/ learning), 2) differences in characteristics of students taking the test, 3) different matching characteristics, and 4) different grade distributions taking the test.

## Algebra I EOC Performance

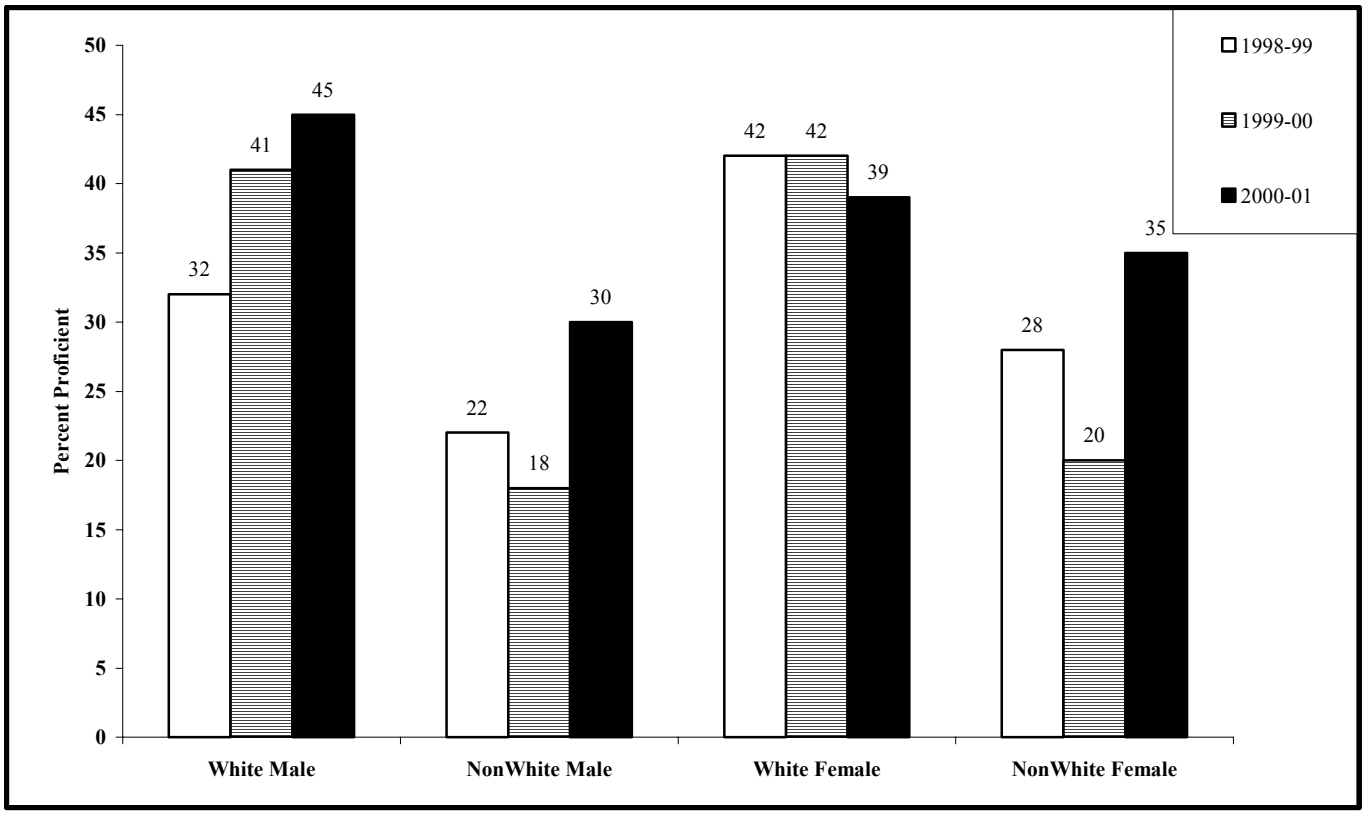
**Figure 36. Percent of Students Proficient on Algebra I EOC Test for ALPs (1998-99 to 2000-01) and State (2000-01)**




- The percentage of ALP students scoring at or above Achievement Level III on the Algebra I EOC test increased between 1998-99 and 2000-01. However, the proficiency rate for ALP students remains substantially below the proficiency rate for the state.

## Algebra I EOC Performance by Ethnicity and Gender

**Figure 37. Percent of ALP Students Proficient on Algebra I EOC Test by Ethnicity and Gender, 1998-99 to 2000-01**



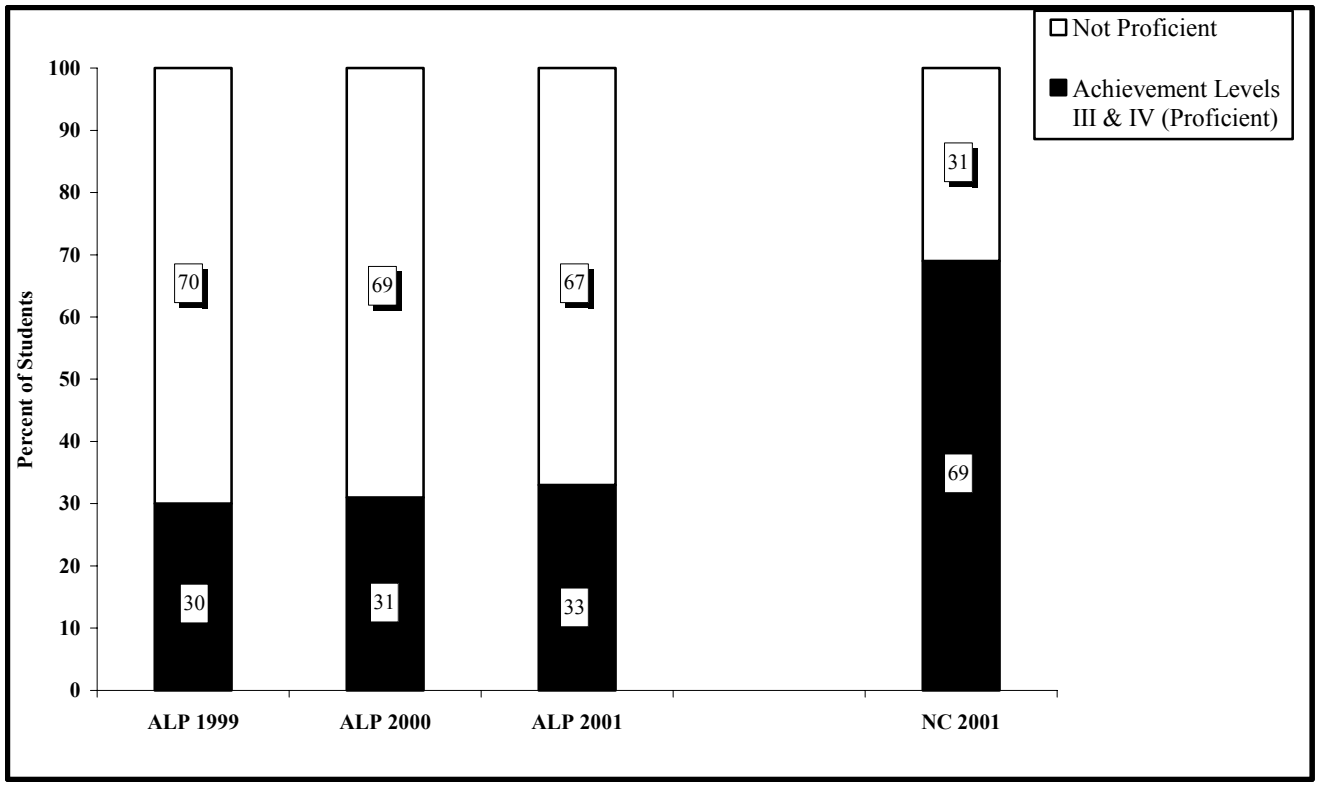

- In 2000-01, about 45 percent of White males and 39 percent of White females in ALPs scored at achievement level III or IV on the Algebra I EOC Test. Nonwhite females (35 percent) and Nonwhite males (30 percent) performed slightly lower.

- While White males improved substantially from 1998-99 and now perform better than White females, White females' performance dropped compared to 1998-99. Nonwhite students performed better than in 1998-99 and 1999-00.

- The percentage of ALP students scoring at or above Achievement Level III on the Algebra I EOC test has increased over the past three years for each gender/ethnic group displayed except for White females. The increases among non-White students overall are greater than for White students.

## English I EOC Performance

**Figure 38. Percent of Students Proficient on English I EOC Test for ALPs (1998-99 to 2000-01) and State (2000-01)**

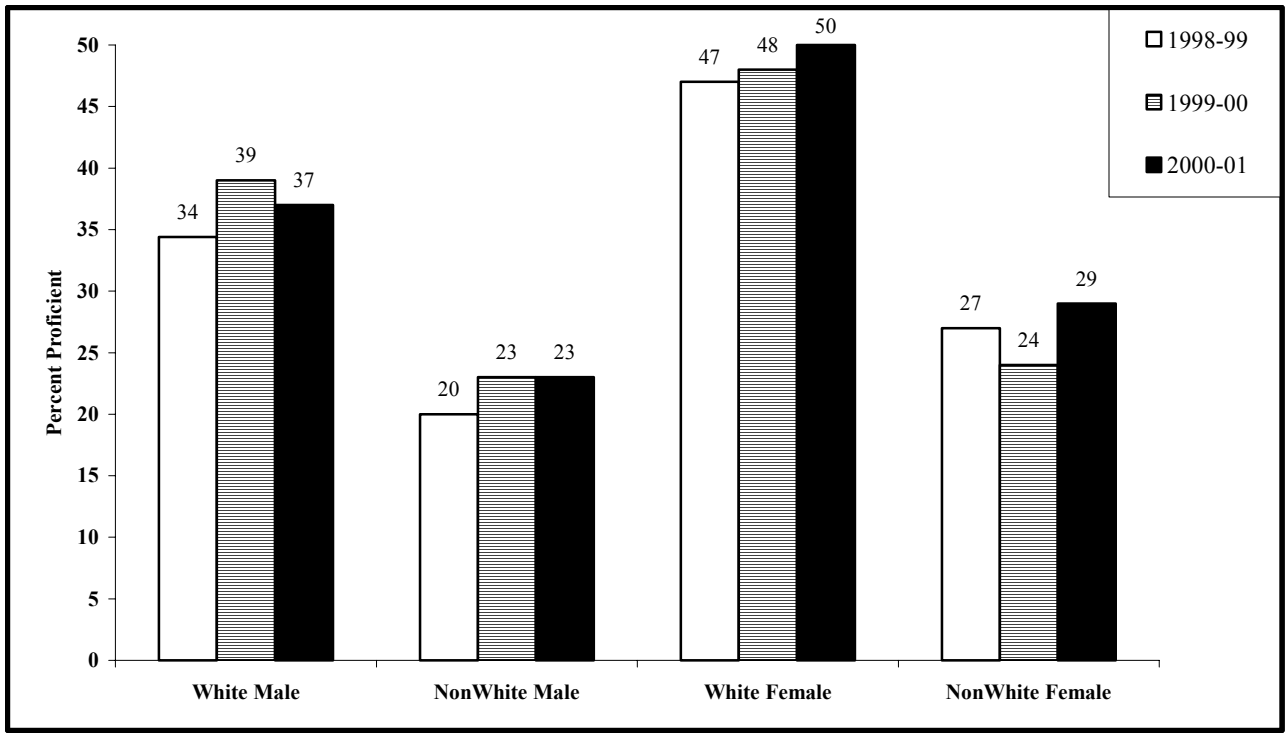



Note. Proficiency on EOC tests indicates performance at Achievement Level III or Level IV.

- The percent of ALP students scoring at or above Achievement Level III on the English I EOC test has remained essentially stable since 1999, and remains substantially below the rate for the state.

## English I EOC Performance by Ethnicity and Gender

**Figure 39. Percent of ALP Students Proficient on English I EOC Tests by Ethnicity and Gender, 1998-99 to 2000-01**




- The pattern of performance on the English I EOC test across ethnic/gender subgroups for ALP students varies widely. All subgroups have gained in proficiency since 1998-99.

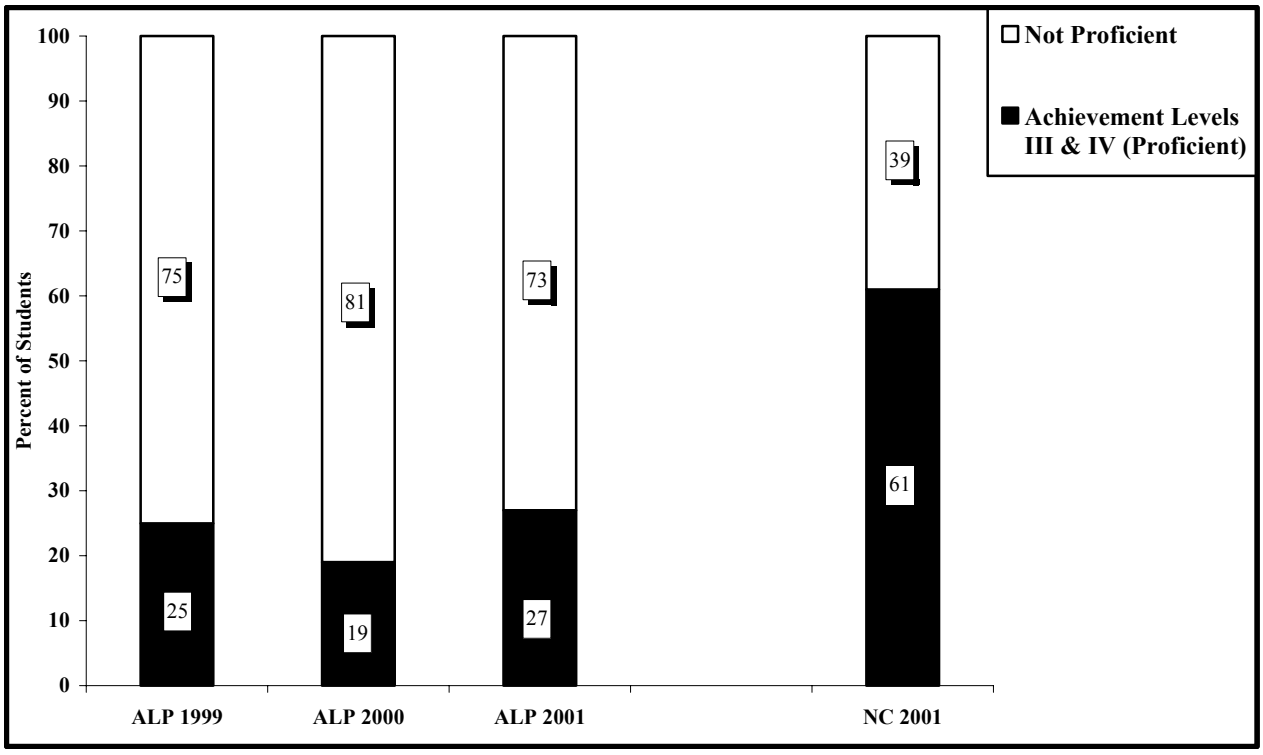
- White females have made gains from 28 percent in 1995-96 (not shown) to 50 percent in 2000-01.

- White males have also made gains from a proficiency rate of 15 percent in 1995-96 (not shown) to 37 percent in 2000-01.

- Nonwhite males have made consistent gains, especially since 1995-96 (6 percent proficient - not shown) leveling off since 1999-00. Nonwhite females made strong gains until 1998-99, but dropped slightly in 1999-00 and then increased to 29 percent in 2000-01.

## Biology EOC Performance

**Figure 40. Percent of Students Proficient on Biology EOC Test for ALPs (1998-99 to 2000-01) and State (2000-01)**

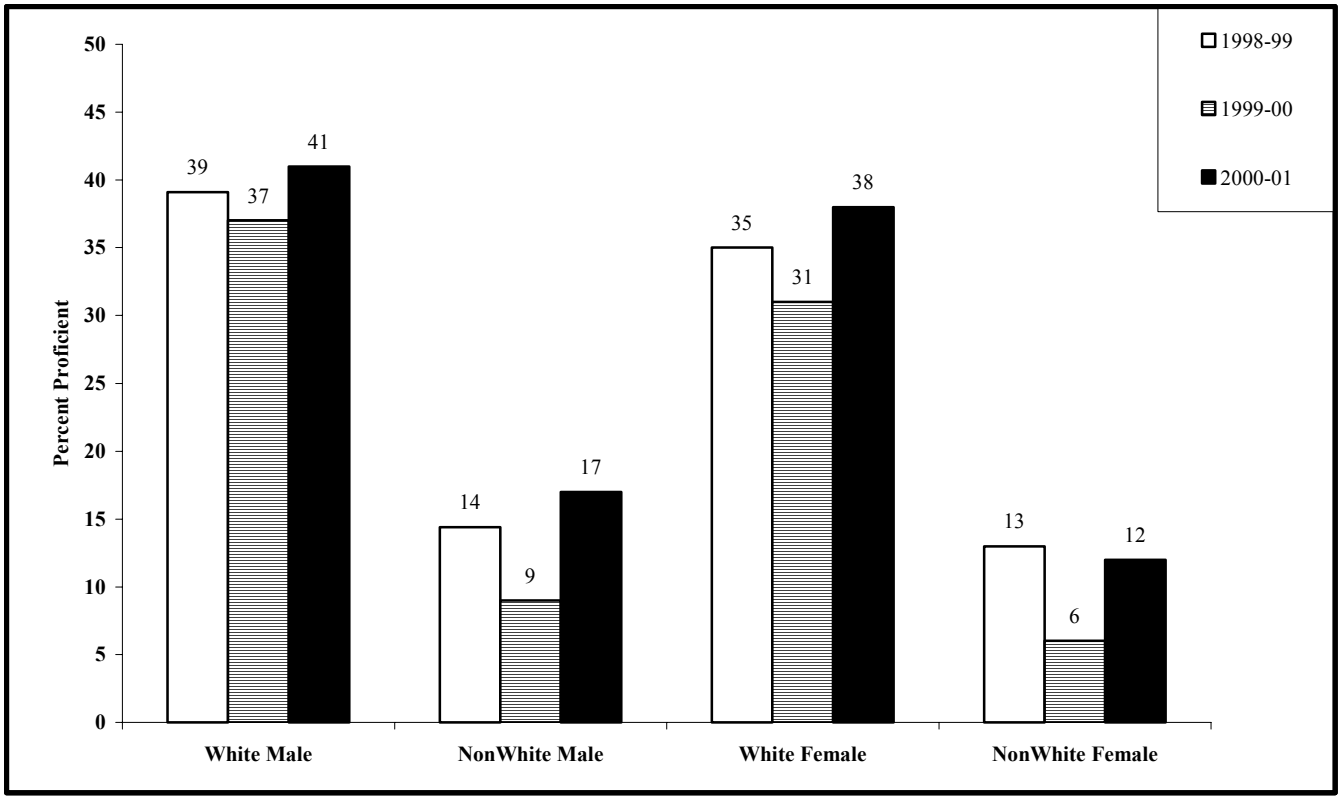



- The percent of ALP students scoring at or above Achievement Level III on the Biology EOC test increased between 1999-00 and 2000-01, but remains substantially below the rate for the state.

- Proficiency on the Biology EOC test is lower than Algebra I and English I EOCs for both ALP students and all students statewide.

## Biology EOC Performance by Ethnicity and Gender

**Figure 41. Percent of ALP Students Proficient on Biology EOC Test by Ethnicity and Gender, 1998-99 to 2000-01**




- The pattern of performance across gender/ethnic groups for ALP students taking the Biology EOC test varies widely.

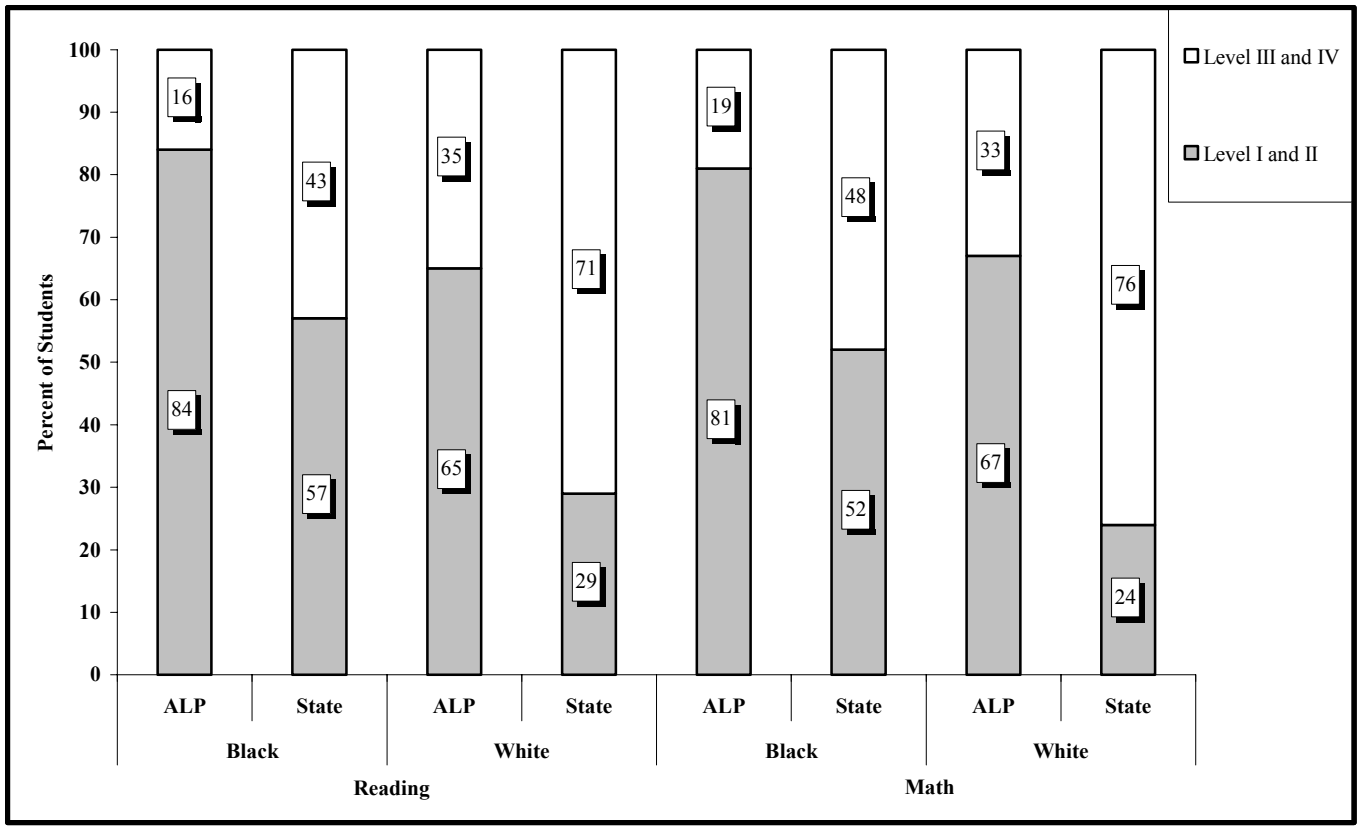
- The proficiency levels of all gender/ethnic groups taking the Biology EOC test increased in 2000-01.

- White male ALP students had the highest proficiency rate for Biology. White female ALP students performed at a slightly lower proficiency rate.

- Nonwhite ALP students have lagged behind their White counterparts each year on the Biology EOC test since 1998-99.

## High School Comprehensive Test Performance

**Figure 42. Percent of Students by Achievement Levels on the High School Comprehensive Test by Ethnicity for ALP and State, 2000-01**




- The distribution across Achievement Levels reflects the considerably lower performance of ALP students on the High School Comprehensive test, with much smaller percentages at Levels III and IV on both Reading and Mathematics.

## Summary for High School

Algebra I, English I, and Biology are three courses that are required for graduation from high school in North Carolina public schools. The percentage of ALP students achieving proficiency on these three EOC tests appears to be increasing, but still lags far behind the general student population. In 2000-01, on the Algebra I EOC test, 37 percent of ALP students scored at achievement level III or IV, an increase of eight points from the previous year. For English I, 33 percent scored at or above achievement level III, up two points from 1999-00. For Biology around 27 percent scored at achievement level III or IV, increasing eight points from the previous year.

In the 2000-01 school year, White males and females had the highest proficiency rates among ALP students for tests in Algebra I, English I, and Biology. The largest differences by ethnicity were found on the Biology EOC test.

In recent years, White and non-White males and females have had increasing proportions scoring at proficient levels (III or IV) on all three tests, with a few exceptions. White females lost three percentage points on Algebra I in 2000-01, and White males lost two percentage points on English from 1999-00 to 2000-01. There remains, however, a significant gap in the performance of White and non-White students across all three EOC tests, with non-White students scoring lower than White students. These gaps largely mirror those seen at the overall state level.

The overall increase in proficiency since 1996 on all three EOC tests exceeds the gain for students statewide. This change may reflect a change in the students placed in ALPs or an increased focus on academic performance for these students. Certainly, without passing these courses, ALP students will have a more difficult time in obtaining a high school diploma.

# • At-Risk Student Services/Alternative Schools and Programs Budget Trends 1996-2001

## ALP Funding and Use of Funds

Allotments to LEAs from the State At-Risk Student Services/Alternative Schools and Programs Fund are based on average daily membership (ADM) and number of poor children. Since Fiscal Year (FY) 1996-97, LEAs determine how these funds are spent and are required to track and report to the state specific expenditures for ALPs from this Fund. Although the state funds appropriated to this Fund from the General Assembly have steadily increased during this period of time, most of the increase is a result of growth in ADM. The total percentage of the Fund that LEAs have expended for ALPs has also increased slightly each year.

The total appropriation to the Fund increased from $117,471,232 in 1996-97 to $164,413,250 in 2000-01. The percentage of the appropriation spent on ALPs increased approximately 2-3 percent per year between 1996-97 and 1999-2000 and then dropped approximately 2% in 2000-01. ALP expenditures from the total Fund have ranged from 14.75 percent in 1996-97 to a high of 21.92 percent in 1999-2000. As in previous years, the largest proportion in 2000-01 was spent on ALP teacher salaries, benefits, teacher assistants, and instructional support. Table 8 provides a description of expenditures in the two subcategories of the Fund, including ALPs and the At-Risk Student Services.

## Table 8. Statewide Summary
## At-Risk Student Services / Alternative Schools and Programs
## Expenditures for July 1, 2000 - June 30, 2001

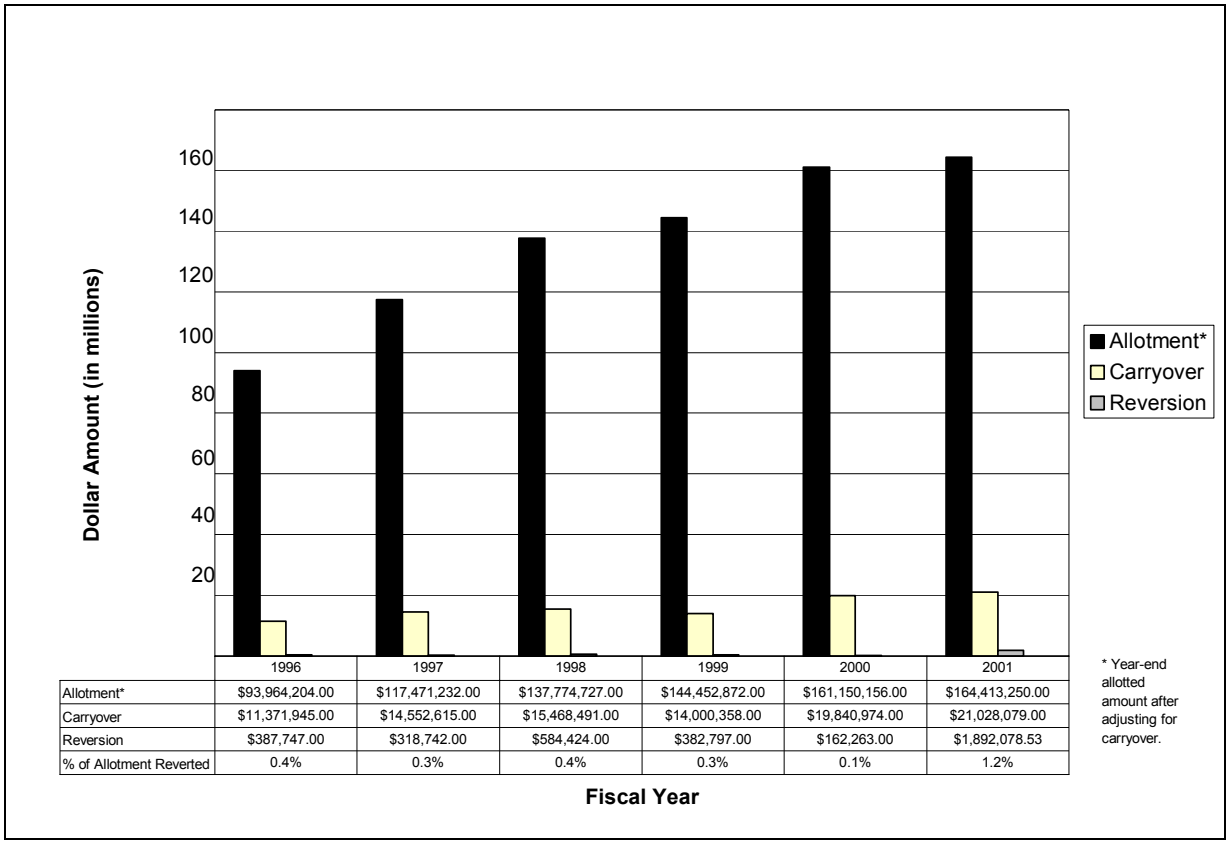
Total Budget: [1] 164,413,250.00

| Expenditure Description | **Alternative Programs & Schools** Serves students with specialized needs in different ways and/or time frames than regular schools. | | **At-Risk Student Services** Regular school special services for remediation, dropout prevention, drug abuse, school safety, etc. | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Expended as of June 30, 2001 | Percent of Total | Expended as of June 30, 2001 | Percent of Total | Expended as of June 30, 2001 | Percent of Allotment |
| Teachers | 16,858,786.93 | 50.88% | 44,259,222.13 | 33.58% | 61,118,009.06 | 37.17% |
| Employer Benefits | 5,102,002.10 | 15.39% | 15,737,130.80 | 11.94% | 20,839,132.90 | 12.67% |
| School Resource Officer [2] | 1,128,596.19 | 3.41% | 16,052,921.47 | 12.18% | 17,181,517.66 | 10.45% |
| Teacher Assistants | 2,533,876.43 | 7.65% | 11,020,920.13 | 8.36% | 13,554,796.56 | 8.24% |
| Tutors | 727,256.78 | 2.19% | 6,862,780.07 | 5.21% | 7,590,036.85 | 4.62% |
| Contracted Services | 1,347,312.60 | 4.07% | 6,762,201.01 | 5.13% | 8,109,513.61 | 4.93% |
| Instructional Support | 2,426,033.99 | 7.32% | 8,483,843.79 | 6.44% | 10,909,877.78 | 6.64% |
| Instructional Supplies | 283,204.40 | 0.85% | 7,278,076.06 | 5.52% | 7,561,280.46 | 4.60% |
| Computer Eq.(Cap/Non-Cap.) | 213,463.15 | 0.64% | 3,290,975.45 | 2.50% | 3,504,438.60 | 2.13% |
| Drivers/Trans-Safety Asst. | 231,708.43 | 0.70% | 1,380,328.28 | 1.05% | 1,612,036.71 | 0.98% |
| Clerical Assistants | 608,879.10 | 1.84% | 1,662,070.04 | 1.26% | 2,270,949.14 | 1.38% |
| Workshops/Sub Pay | 347,728.26 | 1.05% | 1,818,878.70 | 1.38% | 2,166,606.96 | 1.32% |
| Equipment(Cap./Non-Cap.) | 78,465.70 | 0.24% | 1,339,101.44 | 1.02% | 1,417,567.14 | 0.86% |
| Assistant Principal | 511,921.44 | 1.54% | 1,494,610.39 | 1.13% | 2,006,531.83 | 1.22% |
| Computer Software | 43,758.32 | 0.13% | 990,351.17 | 0.75% | 1,034,109.49 | 0.63% |
| Custodians | 416,378.45 | 1.26% | 208,890.53 | 0.16% | 625,268.98 | 0.38% |
| Supplies & Materials | 49,195.75 | 0.15% | 242,351.99 | 0.18% | 291,547.74 | 0.18% |
| Audiovisual/Library Books | 3,642.84 | 0.01% | 309,294.75 | 0.23% | 312,937.59 | 0.19% |
| Textbooks | 3,069.00 | 0.01% | 82,089.66 | 0.06% | 85,158.66 | 0.05% |
| Other[3] | 225,736.88 | 0.68% | 2,524,809.34 | 1.92% | 2,750,546.22 | 1.67% |
| Total | 33,141,016.74 | 100.00% | 131,800,847.20 | 100.00% | 164,941,863.94 | 100.34% |
| | **20.09% of total** | | **79.91% of total** | | | |

Notes
[1]The Total Budget includes carryover from FY 1999-2000.
[2] School Resource Officer expenditures includes salary, contracts, supplies/materials, travel, and equipment.
[3] Other includes: Electric, utilities, rentals, energy cost, travel, telephone, postage, advertising , printing/binding reproduction, field trips, oil, tires and tubes, vehicle repair parts, fuel, other transportation services, sal-food service, sal-work study student and other insurance judgments.

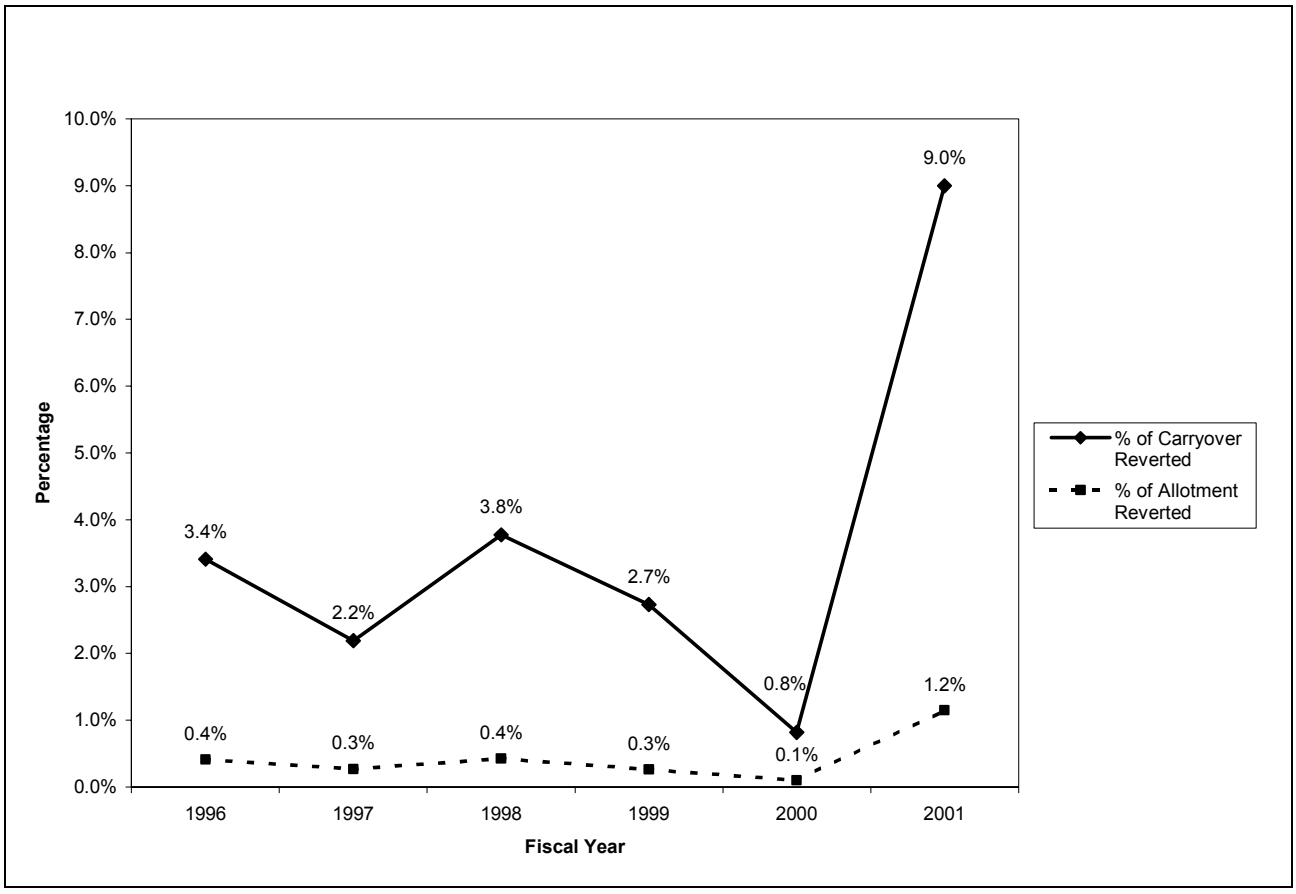
LEAs are permitted to "carry over" At-Risk and ALP dollars unspent by the end of each FY (June 30) until the end of August, since some LEAs use those funds to support summer school programs. In 2000-01, 86 percent of the At-Risk Fund was spent by the end of the fiscal year. Figure 43 shows the trends from 1996-2001 in annual allotments, annual carryover amounts, and the amount reverted each year because the funds were still unspent at the end of August. Figure 44 shows the trends over the same period of years for the percent of the carryover as well as the percent of the total allotment that was reverted. The percent reverted had declined until 2000-01 for both the percent of carryover and of the allotment.

**Figure 43. At-Risk Carryover and Reversion Dollars**




| | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allotment* | $93,964,204.00 | $117,471,232.00 | $137,774,727.00 | $144,452,872.00 | $161,150,156.00 | $164,413,250.00 |
| Carryover | $11,371,945.00 | $14,552,615.00 | $15,468,491.00 | $14,000,358.00 | $19,840,974.00 | $21,028,079.00 |
| Reversion | $387,747.00 | $318,742.00 | $584,424.00 | $382,797.00 | $162,263.00 | $1,892,078.53 |
| % of Allotment Reverted | 0.4% | 0.3% | 0.4% | 0.3% | 0.1% | 1.2% |

**Figure 44. At-Risk Reversion Percentage**



## • Second Year of ABCs Accountability Policy for Alternative Schools

Alternative schools (those alternative programs officially designated as "schools") were included in the ABCs Accountability Program for the first time in 1999-2000 as a result of legislation and a new policy adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE). Early in the process of implementing the ABCs Accountability Program statewide, it was recognized that a "one size fits all" model would not work with the diversity represented among alternative schools. As the student population becomes increasingly diverse, so do LEA efforts to find suitable "alternatives" to address the range of learning needs of their students.

Due in part to the time and effort needed to develop and phase in the ABCs Accountability model for K-8 and for high schools statewide, the State was initially unable to simultaneously address all the "exceptions" to the accountability model. During the initial years of the model, alternative schools were either treated like regular schools in the ABCs model if the school had sufficient data, or their accountability was based on the performance of the schools they served. For most alternative schools, their accountability was based on the success of the regular schools they served. That arrangement changed when the 1999 Session of the General Assembly specifically dealt with the issue of including alternative schools in the statewide accountability program.

### Legislation and SBE Policy Development

Session Law 1999-397, enacted by the 1999 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly, included the following requirements:

> *As part of its evaluation of …effectiveness…the State Board shall, through application of the accountability system…, measure the educational performance and growth of students placed in alternative schools…If appropriate, the Board may modify this system to adapt to the specific characteristics of these schools.*

In response to this legislation, the SBE established HSA-C-013, the policy for incorporating alternative schools into the ABCs, effective as of the 1999-2000 school year. That same legislation also required the SBE to adopt policies that define what constitutes an *alternative school* versus an *alternative program*. SBE Policy HSP-Q-001 defines an alternative school as follows:

> *An alternative school …serves at-risk students and has an organizational design based on the DPI assignment of an official school code. An alternative school is different from a regular public school and provides choices of routes to completion of school. For the majority of students, the goal is to return to the regular public school. Alternative schools may vary from other schools in such areas as teaching methods, hours, curriculum, or sites, and they are intended to meet particular learning needs*.

By definition, *alternative programs* are not included in the ABCs Policy since they do not have a unique school code. Instead, they are typically organized as part of a larger regular school. Achievement test results for students in alternative programs count toward the ABCs results for the schools with which they are affiliated.

## Description of Alternative Schools ABCs Accountability Plan

During the 1999-00 and 2000-01 school years, each alternative school's ABCs accountability plan had six components, three testing components based on state test scores and three components based on local indicators selected from each school's improvement plan.

### State Testing-Based Accountability Components

Most alternative schools are organized in one of the following four grade-level groupings: grades 6-8, 6-12, 9-12, or K-12. Therefore, the three testing-based indicators in the accountability policy are based on the state tests administered at the appropriate grade levels. Students in grades 6-8 take End-of-Grade tests, while high school students take End-of-Course tests and the High School Comprehensive Test. All students must pass the reading and mathematics sections of the NC Competency Test before they graduate. Students have their first opportunity to pass the Competency Tests when they are in the eighth grade. If unsuccessful, students are to receive remediation and have multiple opportunities to re-take the tests (only the parts they failed) before their scheduled graduation. The three testing-based components of the accountability policy include the following:

1. High school End-of-Course tests (Algebra I, English I and II, Biology, US History, and ELPS) and/or End-of-Grade tests for grades 3-8,

2. NC High School Comprehensive Test results, and

3. Change in passing rate on the reading and mathematics sections of the NC Competency Test (from end of $8^{th}$ to end of $10^{th}$ grade).

All three-mandated testing-based components apply to alternative schools that contain any high school grades. However, for alternative schools including only grades 6-8, the results of the End of Grade tests are counted three times to represent the three testing-based components in the policy. The Performance Composite, which is the percent of students achieving at-or-above Achievement Level III on all of the tests administered at a school, is also reported for each school.

**Local Option Accountability Components**

Alternative schools are most often designed to be small schools that offer small class size in order to provide a more personalized and individualized education to students. By design, there are concentrations of students who are having trouble in school, often doing poorly on achievement tests and other measures of school success. School districts therefore design their alternative schools based on the unique needs and strengths of the students who enroll there. They are encouraged to create orderly, supportive, and caring learning environments to improve student attendance and discipline. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods and instructional approaches, preferably based on research and best practices with similar students, in order to actively engage students in the learning process and improve student achievement. The bottom line is keeping students in school and on track for graduation and well prepared for adult life after high school.

In order to accommodate the diversity among the alternative schools in the state, their accountability is also partly based on the school's success in meeting three locally specified accountability components. These components are called Local Option Accountability Indicators and are typically elements of the school's annual School Improvement Plan. The three local option components reflect priority goals (e.g., increased attendance, graduation rates, and parent involvement) that are necessary to support improved achievement for the students enrolled in the alternative school and to carry out the mission of the school.

The LEA Superintendent and the Local Board of Education must approve each alternative school's accountability plan as part of its School Improvement Plan. Specifically, Local Boards of Education must approve each alternative school's local accountability indicators annually by December 15. Samples of typical Local Option Accountability Indicators in use during the 1999-00 school year are included in the Table 9.

**Table 9. Typical Local Option Accountability Indicators and Related Measures**

| Typical Local Option Accountability Indicators | Baseline | Results |
|---|---|---|
| By the end of the school year, we will have had a number of parent conferences, as measured by the parent conference log, to equal two for at least 50% of our total enrollment for the year. | >=50% | 54.3% |
| At least fifty percent of the individual students who remain in the program for 30 days or more will maintain a 90% rate of attendance. | 33.3% | 21.0% |
| The average daily attendance will exceed 60% of students in membership. | 60% | 66.73% |
| Reduce the percentage of W-2 dropouts by 4% from a 1998-99 baseline of 34%. | 34% | 22.8% |
| The school will sponsor at least five activities per semester involving students with local Human Service Agencies. | 5 per semester | 1st Semester - 9; 2nd Sem - 28 |
| The number of students who improve their GPA in course work for the 1999-2000 year will be 80%. | 80% | 98% improved GPA for year |
| Students will be tracked for improvement in GPA in Alternative School by comparing the student's GPA upon arrival to their GPA upon return to the student's base school. | 50% | 55% improved GPA at alt. school |

## Defining and Measuring Local Accountability Indicators

Although different alternative schools may use the same category of indicator (e.g., customer satisfaction), they most likely define and measure the indicator differently. In addition, some indicators have a more direct link to improving student achievement than others (e.g., improving school attendance). A review of the local indicators submitted statewide yielded several criteria that are important to the integrity of local indicators as sound gauges of accountability. They include the following:

- The indicator is measurable;
- The indicator is a necessary support for improving achievement and learning;
- The indicator is of sufficient value to be considered an indicator of school accountability in the State ABCs Accountability Program;
- Appropriate, sound measures are clearly stated for indicators;
- A baseline measure of the indicator is provided;
- The end-of-year results of progress are clear and accurate; and
- It is clear from the results reported whether the indicator of accountability is met or not met.

Initially, some alternative schools had difficulty selecting indicators that were relevant and essential to improvement in student achievement. Some had difficulty adequately defining the indicators and/or determining appropriate measures of them. The types of problems typically included the following:

- The indicator was not measurable.
- The indicator was not essential to improved student achievement.
- Two indicators were described in the same goal statement.
- Insufficient information was provided on how the indicator was to be measured.
- No baseline measure provided.

Many alternative schools did a good job of developing their local indicators of accountability. However, any one of the problems listed interferes with an objective, definitive judgment of whether or not the school's results meet the requirements of the SBE Accountability Policy. There were multiple problems with the indicators/measures of some alternative schools.

**Most Frequently Selected Local Option Accountability Indicators**

During the first year of the policy (1999-2000), alternative schools used a total of 35 different local option indicators. In an analysis of the ABCs results for the following two years, the number of different indicators remained approximately the same, although there were some changes in terms of the most commonly selected indicators. The frequency distributions of the local indicators each year were analyzed and ranked, with the rank of one being given to most frequently chosen indicator. The top eight indicators for 1999-00 are shown in Table 10, as well as their respective rank for the 2000-01 and 2001-02 school years.

**Table 10. Most Frequently Chosen Local Indicators in 1999-00**

| Local Option Accountability Indicators | Rank in 1999-2000 | Rank in 2000-01 | Rank in 2001-02 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Increase Parental Involvement | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Improve Attendance | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Reduce Suspension | 3 | 4 | 9 |
| Improve School Safety | 4 | 7 | 2 |
| Improve GPA/Grades | 5 | 6 | 4 |
| Improve Customer Satisfaction | 6 | 8 | 26 |
| Reduce Incidence of Dropouts | 7 | 15 | 15 |
| Increase Community Involvement | 8 | 5 | 7 |

Five of the eight most common indicators selected in 1999-2000 were still among the top eight chosen in 2001-02. Improving customer satisfaction has become less common as a local indicator over time, while goals related to administrative tasks (e.g., completing Individualized Education Plans for students in a timely manner, etc.) ranked third in 2001-02.

### ABCs Status and Incentive Awards for Alternative Schools

According to the SBE Accountability Policy, alternative schools qualify for incentive pay and recognition levels based on the rewards and sanctions schedule in Table 11.

**Table 11. Criteria for Determining ABCs Status and Incentive Awards of Alternative Schools**

| Number of Components Met | Recognition Level Analogous to: |
|---|---|
| 5 or 6 out of 6 | Exemplary Growth/Gain |
| 3 or 4 out of 6 | Expected Growth/Gain |
| 2 out of 6 | No Recognition |
| 1 out of 6 | Low Performing |

Note. These criteria were changed for the 2001-02 school year to account for the elimination of the High School Comprehensive Test for non-Title I schools.

Some concern has been expressed about the fact that alternative schools can meet the level of expected growth/gain by meeting *only* their three local accountability indicators and none of the testing-based indicators. However, many alternative educators note the additional challenges they face by having a population consisting largely of students with multiple and complex risk factors (e.g., school, family, social/emotional, behavior, and personal), many of whom have a long history of being unsuccessful in terms of achievement test performance. In designing the accountability policy for alternative schools, deliberate thought was given to the requirements to receive different incentive awards. The policy was purposefully designed so that schools with little or no achievement-based data, due to their specific mission, could still compete to receive some level of incentive award. Thus, an alternative school can receive the expected growth level incentive award by meeting the standards for the three local option accountability indicators. However, an alternative school must meet most of the testing-based *and* local option accountability standards in order to achieve exemplary growth status and its accompanying financial incentive awards for staff.

## Alternative Schools' Unique Accountability Challenges

In order to produce a reliable and valid measure of accountability, End-of-Grade tests require a minimum of 15 student scores and End-of-Course tests require 30 student scores. Due to their small size, the ABCs results of most alternative schools are based on a smaller student population per grade than most regular schools. For many of the alternative schools, attendance is a key barrier and is often part of why their students were originally referred there. Since most students enroll in alternative schools for different lengths of time - often depending on the reasons the students enrolled (e.g., suspended, behind academically, pregnant, working) - the turnover in the student population is typically high. The flexibility in student enrollment and exit opportunities may be an advantage for many students, but it can also impact the number of students tested in alternative schools and result in an unstable and unpredictable

enrollment. Having fewer test scores to factor into the school's accountability formula creates additional challenges in showing school improvement based on the achievement indicators. Further, sometimes meeting the 95 percent rule of the ABCs can rest on the attendance of a few students.

A requirement of the ABCs Accountability Program for all schools is that students are tested where they are enrolled. At the end of the year when the tests are administered, some students who enrolled in alternative schools at the beginning of the year have already returned to their regular schools and are tested there. Other students may enroll a day or two before the tests are administered. Alternative school teachers may have invested a great deal of effort in accomplishing success with a student but the school does not receive credit for that effort, since the student is back in the home school by testing time. On the other hand, the alternative school staff may have taught a newly enrolled student for only a few days, but the school is held accountable for the student's level of achievement (in aggregate with the rest of the school) because the student is tested there. The alternative school stands to lose…or gain…in either case (depending on the achievement levels of the students who come and go). This same rule, that students are tested where they are enrolled at testing time, applies in regular schools as well but has less of an impact. The reason is that, with rare exceptions, regular schools do not experience the high rate of student mobility or the small numbers that exists for most alternative schools.

In an attempt to be fair to alternative schools for accountability purposes, if *fewer* than 15 students take the End-of-Grade tests or *fewer* than 30 students take the End-of-Course tests and the school attains its growth and performance goals based on those results, the school is still given credit. However, if the minimum number of students is not tested and the alternative school does not meet its growth and performance goals, the school is not penalized for those indicators. Table 12 details the overall ABCs accountability results for alternative schools for the 2000-01 school year compared to other public schools.

**Table 12. ABCs Accountability Results for Alternative and Other Schools, 2000-01**

| Recognition Category | K-12 Schools | | Alternative Schools | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Schools | Percent | Number of Schools | Percent |
| Exemplary Growth/Gain | 503 | 24.1 | 17 | 24.3 |
| Expected Growth/Gain | 717 | 34.4 | 51 | 72.9 |
| No Recognition | 836 | 40.1 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Low-performing | 30 | 1.4 | 1 | 1.4 |
| No Status (95% rule) | 1 | --- | 1 | 1.4 |
| Total ABCs Schools | 2,087 | | 70 | |

Note: "K-12 Schools" includes charter schools.

Ninety-seven percent of alternative schools met the *expected or exemplary growth/gain* standards, compared just over 58 percent of other schools in 2000-01. The percentages of alternative and other schools considered *low performing* were identical.

For the second consecutive year, alternative schools were more likely to meet or exceed the *expected growth/gain* than other public schools. This may be the result of the differences in the accountability policies for the two types of schools. As indicated earlier, under the current accountability policy an alternative school can meet the *expected growth/gain* standard without reaching any of its testing-based indicators but by meeting all three local accountability indicators. In 2000-01, 51 of the 68 alternative schools in the model that met the *expected growth/gain* standard did in fact meet at least one of the testing-based components. However, the testing-based component that was met in many of those cases was the component related to the change in the percentage of students meeting the competency requirement. Only 26 of the 68 alternative schools (38%) met either the end-of-course/end-of-grade or High School Comprehensive Test components. Unlike the competency component, those two components are based on the growth of individual students and are closely related to the growth components in the accountability model for other public schools. The data in Table 13 shows that overall, alternative schools met less than half (40 percent) of the total possible testing-based components. Similarly in 1999-00, alternative schools met 44 percent of the total possible testing-based components.

**Table 13. Alternative School Status on Components of ABCs Accountability Policy, 2000-01**

| Accountability Component | Total Possible | Number Met |
|---|---|---|
| Local Options | 207 | 190 (92%) |
| Testing-Based Components | 189 | 76 (40%) |

Note: Since some alternative schools may not use the Competency Test and High School Comprehensive Test components due to the grade levels of the students they serve, the total number of unique testing-based components equals less than 3 per school.

## A Work in Progress

The alternative schools' ABCs Accountability data suggest that it is possible to construct an accountability system for alternative schools that sets an achievement standard, while accommodating their uniqueness and special challenges. The mechanisms that enable this system appear to be (a) the flexibility allowing each alternative school to select three local accountability components and related measures based on their own local priorities and (b) the requirement that they get buy-in and approval from their LEA superintendent and local board of education.

Of tremendous value to the alternative schools accountability policy is that alternative educators from across the state had major input into the development of the State Board of

Education policy. The leadership and members of NC Association of Alternative Educators and others helped shape the policy in ways that provide the needed flexibility to customize each school's indicators for their students and local conditions.

Some have questioned whether alternative schools will select local indicators that they are fairly certain to reach or will use weak measures of those indicators. After all, there are monetary incentives to be gained by making expected growth/gain. However, despite their relatively low success rate in meeting testing-based indicators (particularly those that are most closely aligned to the accountability system for other schools), few alternative schools are meeting or exceeding growth targets solely on the basis of local indicators. Others have also suggested that the quality of local indicators can be significantly improved by providing technical assistance with their accountability system. The integrity of the current SBE accountability policy for alternative schools is dependent upon a delicate balance of a number of factors.

A major factor on which the integrity of the policy is dependent is a reliable and rigorous system of checks and balances at the local level, as LEA superintendents and local boards of education are ultimately responsible for approving the local indicators. Another is the belief that every child's education matters and that educators will honor the trust placed in them by students, parents, and the public to provide the best possible educational experiences each child, regardless of his or her educational attainment and/or needs. The entire school district must have high expectations of the staff and students who enroll in alternative schools. There are special challenges in teaching children at risk of school failure, and these students require more and different resources. These resources must be sufficiently concentrated to make an impact.

The future of the alternative school accountability model in North Carolina may be in jeopardy, however, due to the recent passage of the No Child Left Behind Act at the federal level, which calls for a single accountability system in each state for all public schools. Since the alternative schools model differs from the model used for the rest of the public schools in North Carolina, it is unclear as to whether this parallel system can continue to exist without running afoul of federal law. More information as to whether the model will continue to exist will likely come later this year, when the final regulations for this new federal law are released by the U. S. Department of Education.

# Appendix A

## Allotments, Expenditures, and Reversions for the At-Risk Student Services/Alternative Programs and Schools Budget: July 2000-June 2001 by LEA

Source: NC Department of Public Instruction, Division of School Business

**At-Risk Student Services/Alternative Programs and Schools**
**Expenditures for July 1, 2000 - June 30, 2001**

| | | | Expenditures | | | | | | | Reversions | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LEA No. | LEA Name | Allotment** | Alternative Program/Schools | % of Total | At-Risk Student Services | % of Total | School Resource Officer | % of Total | Total Expenditures | Estimated Reversion | % of Allotment |
| 010 | Alamance County | 2,132,548 | 257,575.10 | 12.09% | 1,633,008.88 | 76.62% | 240,588.00 | 11.29% | 2,131,171.98 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 020 | Alexander County | 484,943 | 135,380.86 | 27.93% | 321,378.04 | 66.31% | 27,931.82 | 5.76% | 484,690.72 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 030 | Alleghany County | 169,975 | 32,725.19 | 19.25% | 137,249.79 | 80.75% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 169,974.98 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 040 | Anson County | 746,270 | 254,702.00 | 34.11% | 441,886.99 | 59.18% | 50,123.80 | 6.71% | 746,712.79 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 050 | Ashe County | 511,525 | 221,131.38 | 43.26% | 235,130.90 | 45.99% | 54,960.22 | 10.75% | 511,222.50 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 060 | Avery County | 348,995 | 55,429.45 | 15.90% | 269,693.38 | 77.35% | 23,523.20 | 6.75% | 348,646.03 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 070 | Beaufort County | 1,256,322 | 17,041.52 | 1.36% | 1,072,729.72 | 85.40% | 166,416.90 | 13.25% | 1,256,188.14 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 080 | Bertie County | 944,697 | 248,952.29 | 26.36% | 694,549.39 | 73.55% | 829.29 | 0.09% | 944,330.97 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 090 | Bladen County | 992,386 | 78,920.54 | 7.96% | 760,729.74 | 76.73% | 151,800.07 | 15.31% | 991,450.35 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 100 | Brunswick County | 1,536,648 | 390,845.45 | 25.40% | 798,429.77 | 51.89% | 349,566.62 | 22.72% | 1,538,841.84 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 110 | Buncombe County | 2,734,391 | 650,036.95 | 23.77% | 1,781,649.33 | 65.16% | 302,704.00 | 11.07% | 2,734,390.28 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 111 | Asheville City | 771,212 | 144,279.91 | 18.72% | 568,358.46 | 73.74% | 58,148.94 | 7.54% | 770,787.31 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 120 | Burke County | 1,769,044 | 310,598.70 | 17.56% | 1,205,228.52 | 68.15% | 252,662.50 | 14.29% | 1,768,489.72 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 130 | Cabarrus County | 1,740,214 | 218,916.06 | 12.59% | 1,354,303.82 | 77.91% | 165,182.94 | 9.50% | 1,738,402.82 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 132 | Kannapolis City | 525,470 | 168,885.54 | 32.15% | 318,592.29 | 60.65% | 37,838.00 | 7.20% | 525,315.83 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 140 | Caldwell County | 1,390,304 | 468,407.33 | 33.70% | 771,332.73 | 55.50% | 150,004.39 | 10.79% | 1,389,744.45 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 150 | Camden County | 216,028 | 42,466.29 | 19.66% | 144,871.11 | 67.07% | 28,676.58 | 13.28% | 216,013.98 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 160 | Carteret County | 1,024,874 | 73,232.43 | 7.15% | 795,006.53 | 77.64% | 155,744.54 | 15.21% | 1,023,983.50 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 170 | Caswell County | 474,380 | 125,438.91 | 26.45% | 277,162.28 | 58.43% | 71,720.29 | 15.12% | 474,321.48 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 180 | Catawba County | 1,695,320 | 307,000.55 | 18.12% | 1,121,773.46 | 66.20% | 265,794.88 | 15.69% | 1,694,568.89 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 181 | Hickory City | 538,700 | 51,746.78 | 9.62% | 486,381.20 | 90.38% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 538,127.98 | 67,827.14 | 12.59% |
| 182 | Newton City | 330,443 | 41,898.00 | 12.68% | 288,544.39 | 87.32% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 330,442.39 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 190 | Chatham County | 750,273 | 65,348.87 | 7.50% | 806,500.96 | 92.50% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 871,849.83 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 200 | Cherokee County | 677,444 | 108,963.60 | 14.37% | 649,380.00 | 85.63% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 758,343.60 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 210 | Chowan County | 434,238 | 87,157.92 | 20.07% | 270,820.30 | 62.37% | 76,259.04 | 17.56% | 434,237.26 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 220 | Clay County | 259,567 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 235,330.32 | 89.64% | 27,191.84 | 10.36% | 262,522.16 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 230 | Cleveland County | 1,040,646 | 220,537.00 | 21.20% | 819,611.22 | 78.80% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 1,040,148.22 | 45,737.93 | 4.40% |
| 231 | Kings Mountain City | 364,542 | 116,983.43 | 32.12% | 247,254.44 | 67.88% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 364,237.87 | 101,685.25 | 27.89% |
| 232 | Shelby City | 522,164 | 240,736.43 | 46.12% | 255,197.43 | 48.89% | 26,000.00 | 4.98% | 521,933.86 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 240 | Columbus County | 1,289,504 | 62,196.69 | 4.83% | 1,052,476.65 | 81.69% | 173,628.50 | 13.48% | 1,288,301.84 | 14,420.28 | 1.12% |
| 241 | Whiteville City | 424,588 | 219,676.76 | 51.75% | 173,991.95 | 40.99% | 30,802.00 | 7.26% | 424,470.71 | 5,238.57 | 1.23% |
| 250 | Craven County | 1,953,840 | 307,088.20 | 15.72% | 1,493,021.97 | 76.42% | 153,514.00 | 7.86% | 1,953,624.17 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 260 | Cumberland County | 6,852,648 | 540,546.79 | 7.89% | 5,696,805.75 | 83.17% | 611,862.75 | 8.93% | 6,849,215.29 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 270 | Currituck County | 445,321 | 61,393.22 | 13.80% | 340,417.95 | 76.53% | 42,981.38 | 9.66% | 444,792.55 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 280 | Dare County | 497,447 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 497,321.31 | 100.00% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 497,321.31 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 290 | Davidson County | 1,700,672 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 1,457,154.45 | 85.74% | 242,441.00 | 14.26% | 1,699,595.45 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 291 | Lexington City | 486,438 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 486,235.75 | 99.96% | 192.07 | 0.04% | 486,427.82 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 292 | Thomasville City | 396,366 | 3,457.01 | 0.87% | 350,454.18 | 88.34% | 42,789.47 | 10.79% | 396,700.66 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 300 | Davie County | 502,121 | 108,368.41 | 21.59% | 360,164.53 | 71.76% | 33,358.95 | 6.65% | 501,891.89 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 310 | Duplin County | 1,289,007 | 203,166.97 | 15.76% | 900,542.35 | 69.87% | 185,190.48 | 14.37% | 1,288,899.80 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 320 | Durham Public | 3,754,740 | 704,707.40 | 18.77% | 2,483,379.65 | 66.14% | 566,652.00 | 15.09% | 3,754,739.05 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 330 | Edgecombe County | 1,118,461 | 290,478.72 | 25.97% | 758,925.65 | 67.85% | 69,055.74 | 6.17% | 1,118,460.11 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 340 | Forsyth County | 5,221,252 | 3,865,788.42 | 72.17% | 1,490,809.88 | 27.83% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 5,356,598.30 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 350 | Franklin County | 1,109,030 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 993,255.93 | 89.56% | 115,768.80 | 10.44% | 1,109,024.73 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 360 | Gaston County | 4,442,405 | 348,325.55 | 7.84% | 3,851,918.47 | 86.71% | 241,879.72 | 5.45% | 4,442,123.74 | 0.00 | 0.00% |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 370 | Gates County | 295,524 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 265,539.02 | 89.85% | 29,984.49 | 10.15% | 295,523.51 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 380 | Graham County | 239,338 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 194,568.34 | 81.38% | 44,527.00 | 18.62% | 239,095.34 | 8,036.07 | 3.36% |
| 390 | Granville County | 827,518 | 91,732.14 | 11.09% | 657,433.31 | 79.45% | 78,304.93 | 9.46% | 827,470.38 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 400 | Greene County | 427,538 | 128,205.11 | 30.00% | 299,097.40 | 70.00% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 427,302.51 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 410 | Guilford County | 8,941,673 | 2,235,776.02 | 25.02% | 6,070,231.57 | 67.92% | 631,235.10 | 7.06% | 8,937,242.69 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 420 | Halifax County | 1,157,685 | 190,920.80 | 16.50% | 870,434.79 | 75.23% | 95,611.22 | 8.26% | 1,156,966.81 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 421 | Roanoke Rapids City | 397,588 | 153,413.44 | 38.60% | 200,136.41 | 50.35% | 43,918.32 | 11.05% | 397,468.17 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 422 | Weldon City | 258,006 | 58,844.99 | 22.81% | 170,831.01 | 66.21% | 28,330.00 | 10.98% | 258,006.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 430 | Harnett County | 2,228,828 | 592,978.02 | 26.62% | 1,514,032.54 | 67.96% | 120,862.15 | 5.43% | 2,227,872.71 | 1,442,882.00 | 64.74% |
| 440 | Haywood County | 939,702 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 934,550.01 | 92.96% | 70,761.16 | 7.04% | 1,005,311.17 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 450 | Henderson County | 1,208,769 | 356,066.15 | 27.73% | 740,997.88 | 57.70% | 187,066.20 | 14.57% | 1,284,130.23 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 460 | Hertford County | 800,364 | 289,121.90 | 36.13% | 425,646.66 | 53.19% | 85,544.57 | 10.69% | 800,313.13 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 470 | Hoke County | 885,388 | 186,783.94 | 21.10% | 621,256.83 | 70.19% | 77,085.10 | 8.71% | 885,125.87 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 480 | Hyde County | 280,897 | 93,168.15 | 33.20% | 149,608.84 | 53.31% | 37,847.00 | 13.49% | 280,623.99 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 490 | Iredell County | 1,811,136 | 659,655.17 | 36.45% | 936,134.92 | 51.73% | 213,762.00 | 11.81% | 1,809,552.09 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 491 | Mooresville City | 342,123 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 291,891.69 | 85.32% | 50,230.51 | 14.68% | 342,122.20 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 500 | Jackson County | 563,972 | 82,452.77 | 14.63% | 413,577.92 | 73.38% | 67,552.75 | 11.99% | 563,583.44 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 510 | Johnston County | 2,592,950 | 520,598.30 | 20.08% | 2,071,395.63 | 79.92% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 2,591,993.93 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 520 | Jones County | 322,999 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 325,184.39 | 100.00% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 325,184.39 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 530 | Lee County | 1,237,062 | 255,016.03 | 20.15% | 880,653.04 | 69.58% | 129,995.60 | 10.27% | 1,265,664.67 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 540 | Lenoir County | 1,506,158 | 238,361.67 | 15.83% | 1,267,708.05 | 84.17% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 1,506,069.72 | 52,254.77 | 3.47% |
| 550 | Lincoln County | 1,328,788 | 111,649.60 | 8.41% | 1,192,675.75 | 89.80% | 23,810.00 | 1.79% | 1,328,135.35 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 560 | Macon County | 611,372 | 116,512.40 | 19.06% | 494,821.52 | 80.94% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 611,333.92 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 570 | Madison County | 404,324 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 393,950.94 | 97.53% | 9,966.96 | 2.47% | 403,917.90 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 580 | Martin County | 585,112 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 417,284.64 | 71.32% | 167,820.08 | 28.68% | 585,104.72 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 590 | McDowell County | 621,317 | 270,613.27 | 43.58% | 350,400.58 | 56.42% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 621,013.85 | 27,516.17 | 4.43% |
| 600 | Mecklenburg County | 12,313,682 | 1,515,990.17 | 12.32% | 7,030,507.32 | 57.11% | 3,763,243.50 | 30.57% | 12,309,740.99 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 610 | Mitchell County | 338,202 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 311,439.19 | 92.11% | 26,681.60 | 7.89% | 338,120.79 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 620 | Montgomery County | 755,185 | 422,060.12 | 55.94% | 330,439.90 | 43.80% | 2,000.00 | 0.27% | 754,500.02 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 630 | Moore County | 1,684,342 | 383,899.13 | 22.79% | 1,170,843.19 | 69.52% | 129,558.16 | 7.69% | 1,684,300.48 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 640 | Nash County | 2,441,264 | 70,250.50 | 2.88% | 2,110,399.08 | 86.45% | 260,491.22 | 10.67% | 2,441,140.80 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 650 | New Hanover County | 3,108,474 | 836,563.16 | 26.92% | 2,094,596.05 | 67.39% | 176,903.00 | 5.69% | 3,108,062.21 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 660 | Northampton County | 671,273 | 77,297.68 | 11.52% | 556,892.59 | 83.02% | 36,599.73 | 5.46% | 670,790.00 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 670 | Onslow County | 2,767,353 | 305,741.27 | 11.05% | 1,820,688.60 | 65.80% | 640,754.00 | 23.16% | 2,767,183.87 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 680 | Orange County | 638,217 | 42,955.91 | 6.73% | 545,021.39 | 85.43% | 50,000.00 | 7.84% | 637,977.30 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 681 | Chapel Hill-Carrboro | 943,372 | 58,362.99 | 6.19% | 774,680.45 | 82.15% | 110,000.00 | 11.66% | 943,043.44 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 690 | Pamlico County | 346,041 | 51,930.29 | 15.01% | 260,387.52 | 75.29% | 33,539.85 | 9.70% | 345,857.66 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 700 | Pasquotank County | 980,360 | 346,834.67 | 33.50% | 688,553.47 | 66.50% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 1,035,388.14 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 710 | Pender County | 915,313 | 231,904.45 | 25.35% | 596,245.89 | 65.17% | 86,701.88 | 9.48% | 914,852.22 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 720 | Perquimans County | 346,454 | 69,117.94 | 19.97% | 243,986.53 | 70.48% | 33,062.06 | 9.55% | 346,166.53 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 730 | Person County | 668,620 | 189,479.39 | 28.37% | 444,916.56 | 66.61% | 33,502.90 | 5.02% | 667,898.85 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 740 | Pitt County | 3,041,317 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 3,038,771.41 | 100.00% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 3,038,771.41 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 750 | Polk County | 242,304 | 33,820.26 | 13.97% | 159,474.00 | 65.86% | 48,851.39 | 20.17% | 242,145.65 | 1,605.22 | 0.66% |
| 760 | Randolph County | 1,757,779 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 1,383,391.31 | 78.83% | 371,617.03 | 21.17% | 1,755,008.34 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 761 | Asheboro City | 503,003 | 200,037.32 | 39.81% | 232,478.12 | 46.26% | 69,999.61 | 13.93% | 502,515.05 | 1,960.83 | 0.39% |
| 770 | Richmond County | 1,388,114 | 270,536.87 | 19.50% | 923,007.47 | 66.52% | 194,107.89 | 13.99% | 1,387,652.23 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 780 | Robeson County | 4,892,047 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 4,365,382.45 | 89.28% | 524,103.92 | 10.72% | 4,889,486.37 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 790 | Rockingham County | 2,328,113 | 467,424.84 | 20.09% | 1,324,077.96 | 56.91% | 535,312.00 | 23.01% | 2,326,814.80 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 800 | Rowan County | 2,734,759 | 1,690,271.67 | 61.81% | 1,043,607.03 | 38.16% | 645.00 | 0.02% | 2,734,523.70 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 810 | Rutherford County | 1,323,504 | 338,827.14 | 25.62% | 838,387.56 | 63.40% | 145,099.27 | 10.97% | 1,322,313.97 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 820 | Sampson County | 1,338,087 | 559,805.33 | 41.84% | 281,317.93 | 21.02% | 496,954.09 | 37.14% | 1,338,077.35 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 821 | Clinton City | 443,553 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 391,845.96 | 88.42% | 51,338.86 | 11.58% | 443,184.82 | 5,715.52 | 1.29% |
| 830 | Scotland County | 1,058,646 | 131,837.91 | 12.45% | 895,336.71 | 84.58% | 31,449.14 | 2.97% | 1,058,623.76 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 840 | Stanly County | 1,006,196 | 165,077.32 | 16.41% | 668,234.37 | 66.42% | 172,790.00 | 17.17% | 1,006,101.69 | 0.00 | 0.00% |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 850 | Stokes County | 899,049 | 345,769.40 | 38.49% | 436,998.01 | 48.64% | 115,602.47 | 12.87% | 898,369.88 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 860 | Surry County | 1,197,409 | 367,209.07 | 30.69% | 706,547.11 | 59.05% | 122,679.00 | 10.25% | 1,196,435.18 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 861 | Elkin City | 236,767 | 47,140.64 | 19.91% | 167,009.20 | 70.54% | 22,603.00 | 9.55% | 236,752.84 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 862 | Mount Airy City | 239,960 | 40,148.88 | 16.75% | 199,566.61 | 83.25% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 239,715.49 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 870 | Swain County | 279,320 | 33,607.56 | 12.04% | 245,410.57 | 87.96% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 279,018.13 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 880 | Transylvania County | 701,112 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 700,625.82 | 100.00% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 700,625.82 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 890 | Tyrrell County | 255,135 | 55,904.66 | 21.92% | 129,850.54 | 50.90% | 69,335.35 | 27.18% | 255,090.55 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 900 | Union County | 2,647,155 | 179,080.47 | 6.77% | 2,185,566.90 | 82.62% | 280,790.00 | 10.61% | 2,645,437.37 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 910 | Vance County | 991,642 | 234,395.82 | 23.66% | 645,788.06 | 65.19% | 110,397.85 | 11.14% | 990,581.73 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 920 | Wake County | 8,739,687 | 1,385,314.21 | 15.81% | 6,769,363.83 | 77.28% | 605,408.00 | 6.91% | 8,760,086.04 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 930 | Warren County | 706,059 | 65,232.93 | 9.24% | 579,664.83 | 82.10% | 61,130.95 | 8.66% | 706,028.71 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 940 | Washington County | 485,482 | 0.00 | 0.00% | 394,851.64 | 81.41% | 90,179.63 | 18.59% | 485,031.27 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 950 | Watauga County | 556,419 | 28,462.06 | 5.13% | 477,052.46 | 85.91% | 49,808.24 | 8.97% | 555,322.76 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 960 | Wayne County | 2,423,172 | 1,085,945.15 | 44.82% | 1,307,090.26 | 53.94% | 30,000.00 | 1.24% | 2,423,035.41 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 970 | Wilkes County | 1,251,495 | 215,735.10 | 17.25% | 988,241.38 | 79.02% | 46,640.00 | 3.73% | 1,250,616.48 | 117,198.78 | 9.36% |
| 980 | Wilson County | 1,949,738 | 497,135.96 | 25.54% | 1,449,382.57 | 74.46% | 0.00 | 0.00% | 1,946,518.53 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 990 | Yadkin County | 803,756 | 335,731.74 | 41.79% | 329,078.20 | 40.96% | 138,574.00 | 17.25% | 803,383.94 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| 995 | Yancey County | 390,785 | 153,178.08 | 39.26% | 211,922.24 | 54.32% | 25,063.21 | 6.42% | 390,163.53 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| | Total | 164,413,250 | 32,012,420.55 | | 115,747,925.73 | | 17,181,517.66 | | 164,941,863.94 | 1,892,078.53 | 1.15% |

* Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

** Year-end allotted amount after adjusting for carryover.

# Appendix B

## Students Enrolled by Grade Level and by Ethnicity/Gender, 2000-01

| Grade Level | Total Enrollment | | Black | | | | | | White | | | | | | Other | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Total | | Male | | Female | | Total | | Male | | Female | | Total | | Male | | Female | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| K | 7 | 0.04 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0.04 | 5 | 0.03 | 1 | 0.01 | 1 | 0.01 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.01 |
| 1st | 8 | 0.05 | 5 | 0.03 | 3 | 0.02 | 2 | 0.01 | 3 | 0.02 | 3 | 0.02 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2nd | 27 | 0.16 | 13 | 0.08 | 11 | 0.07 | 2 | 0.01 | 13 | 0.08 | 13 | 0.08 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.01 | 1 | 0.01 | 0 | 0 |
| 3rd | 24 | 0.14 | 14 | 0.08 | 12 | 0.07 | 2 | 0.01 | 10 | 0.06 | 9 | 0.05 | 1 | 0.01 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4th | 71 | 0.42 | 45 | 0.27 | 39 | 0.23 | 6 | 0.04 | 25 | 0.15 | 21 | 0.13 | 4 | 0.02 | 1 | 0.01 | 1 | 0.01 | 0 | 0 |
| 5th | 173 | 1.03 | 117 | 0.70 | 83 | 0.49 | 34 | 0.2 | 51 | 0.30 | 39 | 0.23 | 12 | 0.07 | 5 | 0.03 | 3 | 0.02 | 2 | 0.01 |
| 6th | 1,418 | 8.45 | 737 | 4.39 | 503 | 3.00 | 234 | 1.39 | 600 | 3.58 | 426 | 2.54 | 174 | 1.04 | 79 | 0.47 | 50 | 0.30 | 29 | 0.17 |
| 7th | 2,309 | 13.76 | 1,176 | 7.01 | 802 | 4.78 | 374 | 2.23 | 1,011 | 6.03 | 714 | 4.26 | 297 | 1.77 | 122 | 0.73 | 74 | 0.44 | 48 | 0.29 |
| 8th | 2,854 | 17.00 | 1,405 | 8.37 | 902 | 5.38 | 503 | 3.00 | 1,269 | 7.56 | 888 | 5.29 | 381 | 2.27 | 180 | 1.07 | 120 | 0.72 | 60 | 0.36 |
| 9th | 4,579 | 27.28 | 2,216 | 13.21 | 1,467 | 8.74 | 749 | 4.46 | 2,042 | 12.17 | 1,304 | 7.77 | 738 | 4.40 | 319 | 1.90 | 205 | 1.22 | 114 | 0.68 |
| 10th | 2,171 | 12.93 | 1,069 | 6.37 | 649 | 3.87 | 420 | 2.50 | 976 | 5.82 | 611 | 3.64 | 365 | 2.18 | 126 | 0.75 | 80 | 0.48 | 46 | 0.27 |
| 11th | 1,517 | 9.04 | 703 | 4.19 | 401 | 2.39 | 302 | 1.80 | 741 | 4.42 | 435 | 2.59 | 306 | 1.82 | 73 | 0.44 | 36 | 0.21 | 37 | 0.22 |
| 12th | 1,628 | 9.70 | 687 | 4.09 | 373 | 2.22 | 314 | 1.87 | 851 | 5.07 | 473 | 2.82 | 378 | 2.25 | 88 | 0.52 | 49 | 0.29 | 39 | 0.23 |
| Total | 16,786 | 100 | 8,187 | 48.79 | 5,245 | 31.26 | 2,942 | 17.53 | 7,598 | 45.3 | 4,941 | 29.45 | 2,657 | 15.84 | 995 | 5.94 | 619 | 3.7 | 376 | 2.24 |

# Appendix C

## Student Data Roster, 2000-01

# 2000-01 Alternative Learning Program Student Data Roster

**Program ID Number** ___ ___ ___

*Please fill out all information for each student as they enter the program. A student that re-enrolls during the year should be listed on the roster **each time** they re-enter. Please use the answer codes on the attached instruction sheet to complete the questions. If you do not have an instruction sheet, please call (919) 515-1301. If you choose to use the diskette to record your data, please write the name of your ALP on the front of the diskette.*

| Student Name (First / M. I. / Last) | SSN | Referred by | Home School Code | Grade level | Sex | Race | Age | With whom does student reside? | EC Category | Willie M | Section 504 | LEP | Date of entry (MM/DD/YYYY) | Why in? | Disciplinary Action? | Re-enrolled? | Number grades student repeated | Number days enrolled in ALP | Number days absent (Reg. Sch. / ALP) | Number courses passed this year (Reg. Sch. / ALP) | Number courses failed this year (Reg. Sch. / ALP) | Was HS Competency passed? (Reading / Math) | Was HS Comprehensive passed? (Reading / Math) | Early exit from ALP | Early Exit/ End of year status | Number graduation credits earned to date |
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Submit by June 15, 2001

NCDPI/TOPS-AG 10/2/2000

Page _____ of _____

# Alternative Learning Program Student Data Roster

**Instruction Sheet for the 2000-2001 school year**

Please fill out all information for each student as they enter the program.
A student ***that re-enrolls during the year should be listed again on the roster each time they re-enter***.
If you choose to use the diskette to record your data, please write the name of your ALP on the front of the diskette.

The following codes should be used.

| **Data** | **Information** |
|---|---|
| **Student Name** | Student's name [First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name] |
| **SSN** | Social Security Number |
| **Referred by** | The student was referred to the ALP by:<br>1 = Home school<br>2 = Parent/student choice<br>3 = Training school<br>4 = Detention center<br>5 = Mental health facility<br>6 = Other |
| **Home School Code** | Enter the student's six digit Home School Code number. The first three digits are the LEA number, and the last three digits are the School number. |
| **Grade level** | PK, K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 |
| **Sex** | M = Male, F = Female |
| **Race** | W = White B = Black H = Hispanic M = Multi-racial<br>A = Asian N = American Indian O = Other |
| **Age** | Age at current entry into program. |
| **With whom does student reside?** | 01 = Mother & Father<br>02 = Mother & Stepfather<br>03 = Mother only<br>04 = Father & Stepmother<br>05 = Father only<br>06 = Guardian<br>07 = Grandparent(s)<br>08 = Foster Home<br>09 = Group Home<br>10 = Student has own residence<br>11 = Other Family Member<br>12 = Other |
| **EC Category** | Exceptional Child Category:<br>1 = Learning Disabled<br>2 = Behaviorally/Emotionally Handicapped<br>3 = Educable Mentally Handicapped<br>4 = Other<br>5 = None |
| **Willie M** | Is the student classified as Willie M?<br>1 = Yes<br>2 = No |
| **Section 504** | Is the student classified as Section 504?<br>1 = Yes<br>2 = No |
| **LEP** | Is the student classified as Limited English Proficient?<br>1 = Yes<br>2 = No<br>3 = Unknown |
| **Date of entry** | Enrollment date (month, day, and year). |
| **Why in?** | Why did the student enter the program? Please indicate only **ONE** primary reason.<br>01 = Academic Difficulty<br>02 = Academic Acceleration<br>03 = Disruptive Behavior<br>04 = Attendance/Truancy<br>05 = Work/Job<br>06 = Pregnancy<br>07 = Substance Abuse<br>08 = Aggressive Behavior (e.g. fighting, threats)<br>09 = Personal Problems<br>10 = Emotional Problems (e.g. depression, abuse)<br>11 = Student/Parent Choice<br>12 = Deemed serious threat to self or others<br>13 = Other |

**Disciplinary Action**

Was the student enrolled because of any of the following disciplinary actions by the regular school?

1 = Short-term Suspension (less than 10 days)
2 = Long-term Suspension (more than 10 days)
3 = Expulsion

**Re-enrolled?**

Has this student enrolled in this ALP at any other time this school year?

1 = Yes
2 = No

**Number grades student repeated**

How many grades has this student repeated?

**Number days enrolled in ALP**

Total number of school days enrolled in the ALP for this placement (list each ALP enrollment separately).

**Number days absent**

Number of days absent during 2000-01.

Reg. Sch. = Number of days absent while enrolled in regular school during 2000-01 (if unknown, enter "u").

ALP = Number of days absent while enrolled in ALP during 2000-01.

**Number courses passed this year**

Number of courses passed in the current school year regardless of where they were taken.

Reg. Sch. = Number of courses passed in the current school year in regular school. (If unknown, enter "u")

ALP = Number of courses passed in the current school year in the ALP.

**Number courses failed this year**

Number of courses failed in the current school year regardless of where they were taken.

Reg. Sch. = Number of courses failed in the current school year in regular school. (If unknown, enter "u")

ALP = Number of courses failed in the current school year in the ALP.

**Was HS Competency passed?**

Has the student passed the High School Competency requirement/test?

Reading: 1 = Yes 2 = No
Math: 1 = Yes 2 = No

**Was HS Comprehensive passed?**

Has the student passed the High School Comprehensive test?

Reading: 1 = Yes 2 = No
Math: 1 = Yes 2 = No

**Early Exit**

Did the student exit the ALP prior to the end of the school year?

1 = Yes
2 = No

**Early Exit/ End of year status**

Indicate each student's status at the end of the year or, if the student exited the ALP before the end of the year, indicate student status upon exit from ALP. For student enrolled in ALP more than once during the year list each enrollment separately.

01 = Still enrolled in Alternative School
02 = Returned to Home/Regular School
03= Graduated from High School
04= Promoted to next grade level
05 = Transferred to another School District
06 = Transferred to Community College GED Program or Adult Basic Education prior to graduation
07 = Dropped out of school
08 = In Training School, Juvenile Detention Center, or Jail
09 = Long-term suspension
10 = Expelled from School
11 = Left school for employment prior to graduation
12 = Other

**Number graduation credits earned to date**

Total number of graduation credits earned to date (if unknown, enter "u").

Thank you for you assistance.

***If you have any questions concerning this form contact Kathleen Snyder at (919) 515-1301.***

**Return the Student Data Roster by US Mail no later than June 15, 2001 to:**

**Ms. Kathleen Snyder**
**North Carolina State University**
**Box 7401**
**Raleigh, NC 27695-7401**

Remember to retain a copy of the completed data for your records. Please put the name of your ALP and LEA on the diskette if you are submitting a diskette instead of a paper copy of the roster.