

# CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP:

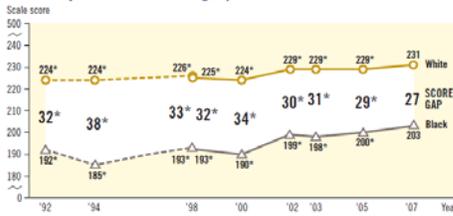
Pittsburgh Public Schools

## INITIATIVES TOWARDS IMPROVEMENT

*"If one gets behind in a race, he must eternally remain behind or run faster than the man in front. You've got to give him the equipment to catch up."*  
 Martin Luther King, Speech, 1966

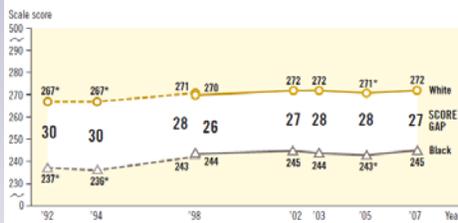
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Figure 5 Trend in fourth-grade NAEP reading average scores and score gaps, by selected racial/ethnic groups



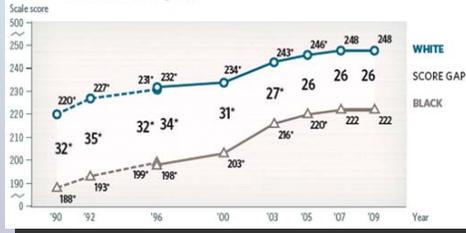
## 2007 NAEP Reading Grade 4th / 8th

Figure 6 Trend in eighth-grade NAEP reading average scores and score gaps, by selected racial/ethnic groups



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), various years, 1990-2007 Reading Assessments.

**Figure 1** Trend in fourth-grade NAEP mathematics average scores and score gaps, by selected racial/ethnic groups



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), various years, Mathematics 1990-2009

## 2009 NAEP Mathematics Grade 4th / 8th

**Figure 3** Trend in eighth-grade NAEP mathematics average scores and score gaps, by selected racial/ethnic groups



- **Brief history African-American education**
- **Desegregation**
- **Brown v. Board of education (1954)**
- **Pittsburgh's plan/desegregation**

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*Dr. Martin Luther King  
Speech, 1966*

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▪ **Adequate yearly progress report**

▪ **Mission for district**

- State tests below basic-> above
- High expectations
- Attractive safe environment
- Best pedagogical practices
- Highly trained teachers

▪ **Challenge call**

▪ **The achievement gap/future**

- High percentage of minorities
- Skills and the workplace
- College questionable?

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■ Purpose of this report facts/method (33) (15)

■ Programs and initiatives

- Curriculum
- Reading/Language
- Early Development
- Math
- High School Reform
- Suspension
- Parent Engagement
- Accelerated Learning Academies
- Youth Intervention
- Career Development
- Special Education
- Gifted Program
- Magnet Program
- Title/EAP
- Summer School
- Summer Dreamers
- Teacher/Leadership
- Courageous Conversations
- Pittsburgh Promise
- Models

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■ Analyzing Data In The District

Gap (30.7% Reading-29.3% Math)  
African-American Students-PSSA-2009

READING

READING

Gr.4	below basic	proficient	adv.	Gr.8	below basic	proficient	adv.
2005				2005	39.0%	25.0%	11.1
2006	31.4%	31.1%	9.2	2006	33.5%	28.4%	16.4
2007	33.2%	32.8%	7.4	2007	28.6%	28.9%	15.4
2008	30.5%	30.9%	10.8	2008	23.6%	31.3%	25.7
2009	30.3%	32.8%	11	2009	24.0%	27.9%	30.3

MATH

MATH

Gr.4	below basic	proficient	adv.	Gr.8	below basic	proficient	adv.
2005				2005	45.4%	20.9%	11.4
2006	24.7%	37.0%	22.4	2006	40.9%	21.5%	11.9
2007	30.9%	36.3%	15.6	2007	39.3%	27.1%	11.8
2008	27.4%	32.8%	24.9	2008	32.2%	29.9%	17.6
2009	23.1%	38.1%	22.9	2009	28.4%	26.1%	19.3

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education Assessment and Accountability  
Division: e-metric system-2008-09/see appendixes

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- **Below Basic to Proficient**
- **PSSA, diagnostic: DIBELS, 4Sight, teacher made**
- **Individual classrooms**
- **Weaknesses**

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education Assessment and Accountability  
Division: e-metric system-2008-09/see appendixes

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## **Attacking the problem Initiatives/redesigned programs**

- **Curriculum**
- **Resources**
- **Personnel/learning teams**

## **Professional development**

- **Meaningful/ongoing**
- **In school/District staff  
teachers/principals**

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## EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Combined program
- Certified teachers
- Secretary of Education/state review
- 68% AA students
- 101 centers/31 support
- Sequenced curriculum/kindergarten  
Family-play-social and cognitive development

**A solid program for early primary grades**

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## Reading And Language Arts

- Phonics-research based
- National reading organizations
- Extended instructional time
- Variety of supplemental resources
- On-going diagnostic evaluation-SRI
- Differentiated instruction (AA skills)
- Coaches/intervention R.T.
- African-American literature (high school)
- Reading subgroups-180-skill building  
(Tier levels)

\* AA history course

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## Mathematics

- Algebraic infusion early
- Extended time
- Diagnostic/weaknesses
- Differentiated groups (AA-skills)
- Computer skills building
- Peer discussion/student exploration
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade weakness
- Algebra requirements
- AB/BC algebra
- SBM-PSSA-help-workshop
- Coaches/tutors

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## Accelerated Learning Academies

- Start of reform
- Research backs extended time
- Improved environment-improved academics
- Fewer discipline problems
- America's choice-training

## High School Reform

- Small LC - design
- C+T - 1,475/590 AA
- IB, ST/UP - schools
- S&T-tutors-mentors, % average student/AA
- University Prep-tutors
- Large African American population
- Expansion of math & course requirements
- More rigorous for all
- Graduation requirement (AA-problem)
- 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Nation-high school orientation

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## Suspension

- Number of AA students
- Frequent 3 days out of school
- Alternative learning centers
  - Hearings/all cases evaluated
  - PBI/ post behavior intervention



## High School Summer School

- Needs to be redesigned
- High % of AA students

## Summer Dreamers' Academy

- Literature-locate BB - (AA students)
- Related recreation act
- Have 9<sup>th</sup> grade ready

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## Gifted Programs

▪CAS	139 AA	TOTAL	948
▪AP	200 AA	TOTAL	829

Gifted requires an IQ test, CAS and AP do not

## Magnet Schools

- Good for racial diversity
- Local audit/nationally
- AA students show positive results

	AA	OTHER
K-5	1,430	2,459
6-8	1,068	1,977
9-12	1,399	2,532

SOURCE-DISRICT ASSESSMENT-DIVISION

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## **Stereotype Pressure**

- What others think
- Difficult to produce

## **Courageous Conversations**

- Equity in the classroom
- Inner thoughts about others
- Administrators/teachers

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## **Parent Engagement-Major Events**

- Community meetings/school PTA/PTO
- Need more African-American parent involvement
- Information to parents-students / mail
- Ideas to get young AA parents

## **Teacher / Leadership**

- Better training for teachers
- Gates' teacher effectiveness
- In depth evaluation system for both teachers and principals (RISE)
- PELA-selection and training of new principals
- AA teachers/ w teachers
- Recruitment-HBCU

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## Title / EAP

- Free lunch
- Instructional aides
- Tutors- EL, M, HS
- After school programs/curriculum on skills building

## Youth Intervention/Gangs

- Before problem happens-\team
- Visit schools-talk with students
- Good communication with police
- Good results with mentors
- After school support for AA students

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## Pittsburgh Promise

- Available to all students
- 2.0 grade point/ increase to 2.5 (AA)
- Excellent marketing/contact students
- 1<sup>st</sup> year class

AA 286

other 438

SOURCE:PROMISE REPORT 2008

## Models/African American Improvement

- Nationally/some charter schools
- Educational trust
- Own backyard

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## Recommendations

1. Early childhood
2. Understanding peer pressure
3. Differentiated instruction
4. Reading support vs. math
5. Closing the gap a major goal
6. Explore alternatives to suspension
7. New African-American literature course

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## Recommendations

8. Add books to summer dreamers
9. Make summer school worth something
10. Lasting results-Pittsburgh Promise
11. Team to monitor progress, maybe \*ILP for BB students
12. Gifted African Americans
13. Target areas on the data

\*Individual Learning Plan

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