

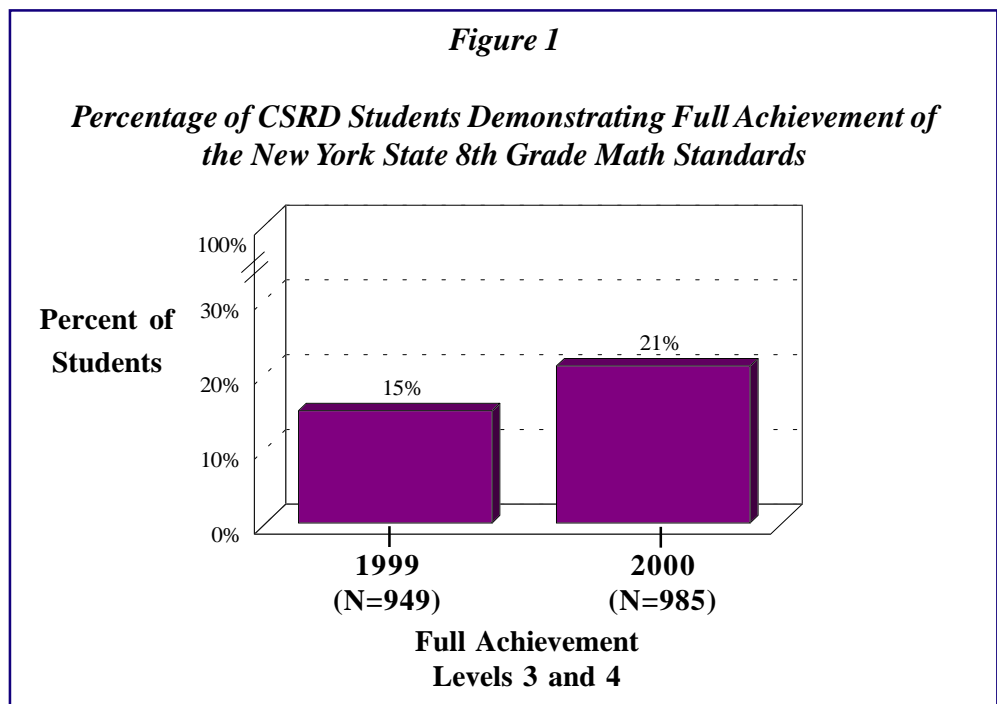


## *CSR D Students Make Noteworthy Progress on the New York State 8th Grade Math Test—No Progress is Found on the 4th Grade Math Test*

### **Key Findings from the Statewide Evaluation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program**

Research on the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstrations (CSR D) program in New York presents both a picture of progress and stagnation in Math for the high-need students served by the CSR D. The research conducted by the State’s independent evaluator for CSR D, *Westchester Institute*, shows that 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in CSR D schools scored higher on the Math test in 2000 than in 1999. Students’ test scores improved from a mean score of 683 in 1999 to a mean score of 689 in 2000—a gain of 6 points.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, students lost 1 point on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade Math test, with the average test score decreasing from 632 in 1999 to 631 in 2000.

The good news is that the average score gain found on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math test means that more students are meeting the State’s learning standards in Math. In fact, the percent of CSR D students who mastered the standards in math increased *significantly* from 15% to 21% ( $p < .03$ ) over the course of one year (see **Figure 1**). This increase was matched with a significant decrease in the percent of CSR D students who showed minimal achievement ( $p < .00$ ), with only 38% of students meeting minimal achievement in 2000 compared with 47% in 1999.<sup>1</sup>

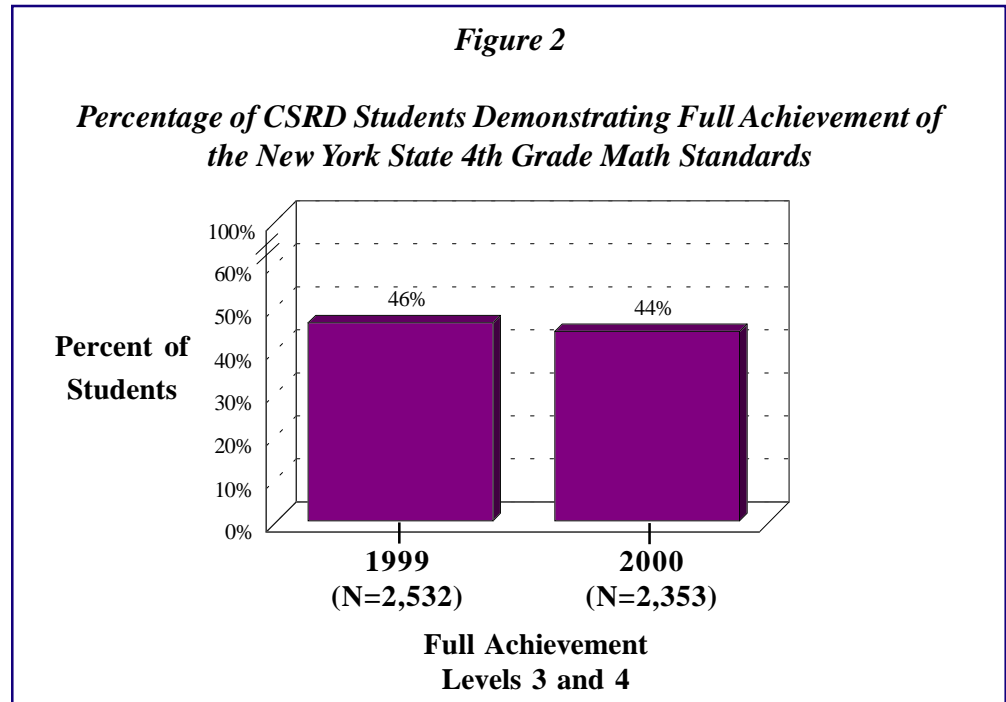


<sup>1</sup> Results of 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math test are based on 8 (80%) first-round CSR D schools.

<sup>2</sup> Results of 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math test are based on 32 (95%) first-round CSR D schools.

In fact, the percent of CSRD students who mastered the standards in math increased significantly from 15% to 21% ( $p < .03$ ) over the course of one year.

The one-point loss on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade math average test score (632 in 1999 compared to 631 in 2000), however, means that fewer students are meeting the State's learning standards in Math. Specifically, 44 percent of CSRD 4<sup>th</sup> graders mastered the learning standards in math in 2000, which is down from 46 percent in 1999 (see **Figure 2**).



### HOW DOES THE PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN CSRD SCHOOLS COMPARE WITH STUDENTS IN COMPARABLE SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS STATEWIDE?

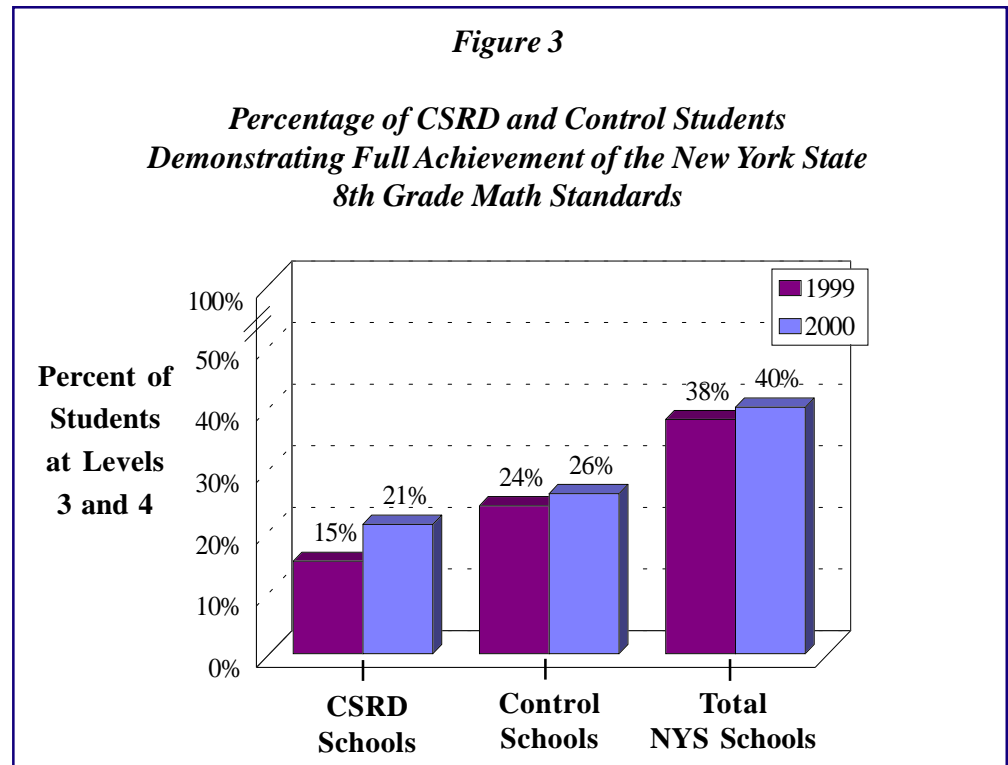
The purpose of the CSRD program is to help “transform entire schools through a consistent and coordinated program”<sup>1</sup> in an effort to improve student achievement in high-poverty schools. The ultimate goal is to have student achievement in CSRD schools match that of schools in communities marked by more resources. To determine if the CSRD program in New York State was successful in meeting the ultimate goal, we compared student performance in the CSRD schools with student performance in comparable schools and in all public schools across New York State. Our findings suggest some promise for CSRD schools that are striving to help their students get up to speed.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math test, CSRD students made *greater* progress toward meeting the State learning standards than students both in comparable schools and

<sup>3</sup> p. 3, U.S. Department of Education (2000). Early Implementation of the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program Summary Report. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

*On the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math test, CSRD students made greater progress toward meeting the State learning standards than students state-wide—a 6-point versus a 2-point gain., respectively.*

statewide—a 6-point versus a 2-point gain, respectively (see **Figure 3**). And while the 4<sup>th</sup> graders in CSRD schools experienced some loss, this loss was also felt by other public schools across the state. Specifically, the same 2-point loss in the percent of students who achieved mastery in CSRD schools was exhibited in public schools across the state. This finding suggests that greater efforts need to be made by all schools in order to improve student achievement in math.



There is, however, one caveat to these comparisons. Despite the progress shown by 8<sup>th</sup> graders in CSRD schools and the comparable losses from the 4<sup>th</sup> graders, the majority of 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in CSRD schools have not yet mastered the learning standards in Math. The bottom line is that the achievement gap between CSRD students and their peers still exists.

**For further information about this research brief or about the New York State CSRD Evaluation, please contact Dr. Thomas Kelsh at (518) 427-9840.**