

1. Reading Crisis at SFUSD High Schools

Just a few weeks before this report was due to be filed, we received raw data that included the Spring 2001 SAT-9 scores for SFUSD schools.¹ While we were not able in this short period of time to conduct an extensive analysis of this new information, particularly since the new comparative API data will not be available until January 2002, we were still able to discern how the most recent district performance fits in with the academic achievement analysis in this section.

¹ These scores are reproduced, building-by-building, in Appendix III.

The Spring 2001 SAT-9 grade level charts show very low scores in reading at over half of the district's high schools. This information is totally consistent with the findings set forth above regarding the extremely poor performance of the SFUSD high schools, and suggests nothing less than a crisis in reading ability at the district's high school level.

It is important to note again that while standardized test scores never tell you the whole story, it is indisputable that very low scores or very high scores have significant implications. On the Spring 2001 SAT-9, national percentile rankings (NPR) in the teens and lower on the reading section were not only the norm at the persistently lowest performing SFUSD schools, but were also present in all grades at Galileo and for the 11th graders at Burton and ISA (7 out of the district's 13 basic high schools altogether).

NPR SAT-9 Reading Scores (Spring 2001 By Grade - not matched)
(second line reflects changes in grade level scores from last year)

Grades	9	10	11
Balboa	11 -7	11 -1	13 -4
Burton	29 -1	28 +3	19 -14
Galileo	19 -9	19 -5	19 -5
ISA	30 -0	30 -3	19 -16
McAteer	17 -1	11 -7	17 -5
Mission	13 -4	9 -2	15 +3
O'Connell	24 -2	19 -2	24 +10
Lowell	79 -2	81 +1	84 +4

The above table shows that the lowest reading scores at SFUSD high schools include the 11th percentile rankings at Balboa (grades 9 & 10) and McAteer (grade 10), and an NPR of only 9 for the 10th graders at Mission. This in stark contrast with Lowell: 79, 81, and 84 for the three grades respectively.

Math scores are significantly higher at these schools, and indeed throughout the district...following the pattern we have seen for some time.

It should be noted that *no* elementary school in the district has reading scores this low (i.e. under 20) at any grade level, with the one exception of Bret Harte at Grade 5 (18th NPR). And no middle school has reading scores this low except for the 7th graders at Franklin & G.R. Davis (14th NPR). The crisis is really at the high school level. It is present at more than half of the schools, and it correlates directly with attendance figures documented in the Paragraph 39-41 section below that are even lower at the high school level this year than they were last year.