

Reading Proficiency by Grade & County

A persistent achievement gap between low-income students and their higher income peers, specifically in early literacy skills and reading proficiency rates, indicates that disparities in early learning persist throughout childhood. Gaps in achievement contribute to a rising high school drop-out rate, which directly conflicts with future job demands: it is predicted that 73% of all local replacement and new jobs will require education beyond a high school diploma (Skills 2010 Technology Corridor Report). For every child to succeed, regardless of their socio-economic background, the Cedar Rapids community must assist the children and families who struggle with achievement.

To address these gaps, interventions must start early in children’s lives. Research has shown that 44 of 50 students who were poor readers at the end of first grade remained poor readers at the end of fourth grade. (Juel, *Journal of Educational Psychology* 80, no. 4 (1988): 437-447.) As poor readers enter middle school, they are more likely to fail courses and to eventually drop out of school (Jerald, *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning Data System*, June 2006).

Disparities in Proficiency

- 09/10 School Year Eastern Iowa – Benton, Jones, Cedar, Iowa, Linn and Washington Counties
 - 69% of low-income fourth graders were proficient in reading, compared to 84% of higher income students
 - 61% of low income eighth graders were proficient in reading, compared to 75% of their higher income peers.
 - 68% of low income 11th graders were proficient in reading, in contrast with 84% of higher income students.

- 09/10 School Year (Cedar Rapids Community School District)
 - 64% of low-income fourth graders were proficient in reading, compared to 86% of higher income students.
 - 54% of low-income students were proficient in 8th grade reading, compared to 85% of their higher-income classmates.
 - 62% of low-income students were proficient in 11th grade reading, compared to 89% of higher-income students.

Proficiency rates are color coded to highlight trends across years and populations.

	County	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
4th Grade Reading Proficiency by CRCSD, County, and State								
4th grade, All students (%)	CRCSD	70.34	68.36	70.65	74.91	76.5	74.9	73.65
	Linn	75.35	73.97	75.99	78.87	80.96	80.51	79.08
	Benton	76.86	76.67	79.9	81.62	83.33	82.66	83.56
	Cedar	82.34	82.38	81.17	81.7	81.43	81.49	81.24
	Iowa	75.16	80.58	84.44	83.33	83.08	83.63	83.18
	Jones	78.71	80.02	78.5	79.58	83.95	87.05	81.82
	Washington	73.1	71.42	74.02	71.43	71.4	74.49	76.06
	State	75.9	76.59	77.64	78.39	78.82	78.87	79.39
4th grade, low Socio-	CRCSD	51.36	49.23	53.71	59.18	61.32	59.79	58.06

Economic Status (%)	Linn	55.34	53.65	57.33	61.01	64.16	64.11	61.92
	Benton	63.04	61.87	61.39	66.67	72.07	68.8	73.29
	Cedar	64.94	64.33	68.67	73.68	69.52	71.13	72.22
	Iowa	63.33	71.70	74.14	67.12	72.29	78.87	71.67
	Jones	73.03	67.39	63.64	68.99	77.12	79.25	72.07
	Washington	61.34	60.55	62.07	65.75	60.24	59.62	58.74
	State	60.50	62.36	63.76	65.01	65.67	66.01	67.19
4th grade, African-American (%)	CRCSD	50.66	46.82	48.76	54.89	55.99	50.45	50.14
	Linn	51.39	51.56	52.39	56.13	57.26	54.29	54.1
	State	48.40	53.00	56.37	56.63	57.09	56.95	57.66
4th grade, Caucasian (%)	CRCSD	73.63	72.14	74.42	78.18	80.00	79.54	78.71
	Linn	76.88	76.32	78.39	81.07	83.18	83.15	81.97
	Benton	76.96	76.98	80.21	80.73	81.97	82.54	83.17
	Cedar	82.31	82.83	82.14	82.62	81.24	81.58	81.86
	Iowa	75.30	81.52	84.41	83.98	83.68	83.13	82.64
	Jones	78.98	80.66	79.02	79.57	84.12	87.14	81.52
	Washington	73.94	73.13	75.12	72.36	73.18	77.26	79.36
	State	78.60	78.88	80.16	81.00	81.48	81.6	82.13

Source: Iowa School Profiles, Iowa Department of Education (<http://www.iowaschoolprofiles.com/>)

 = 50 or below

 = 50-60

 = 60-70