

RIO GRANDE HIGH SCHOOL SPECIAL REPORT

A STUDY OF SELECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES RELATED TO SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

INTRODUCTION

RGHS Grande High School (RGHS) has received supplemental funds for a period of time to help improve the educational programs offered to students. This special study examines student outcomes that the enhanced instructional programs may have influenced. Because there are no specific programs to which funding is tied it is not possible to attribute any changes in outcome to any specific supplemental funding but to the funding in general.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

On three different comparisons of achievement, RGHS students performed markedly below district and state performance. AP enrollment has increased over the past three years but an analysis of AP class grades and exam performance suggest that classroom grades may not reflect the standards of achievement typically defined for AP classes. While dropout rates show improvements across the years of study, there are fluctuations in rates that are not seen in other schools. Overall, RGHS students do not out-perform their peers, exceed predicted scores or show significant improvement on other educational measures. While this brief does not provide conclusive evidence, it is an important contributor in evaluating the impact of supplemental funding at RGHS

SUPPORTING DATA

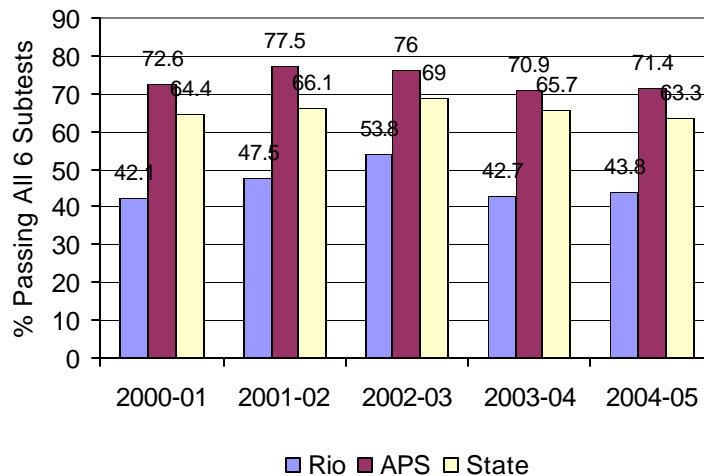
ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY

Students in NM public high schools participate in three statewide achievement assessments: 9th grade SBA, 11th grade standards assessment and the 10th grade high school competency exam. Overall, performance at RGHS is consistently below the district scores and the state scores on these 3 different measures.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPETENCY EXAM

The passing rate reported for the HSCE is one that measures the percent of 10th graders taking and passing all six subtests on a single attempt. Passing rates for the last 5 years have remained relatively stable with one small increase in 2002. Generally, the percent passing at RGHS is slightly more than 25 points below the district passing rate. This trend is reflected in Figure 1.

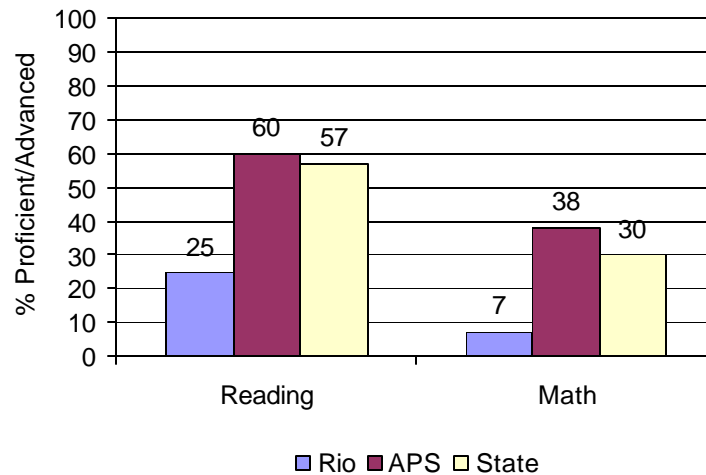
Figure 1. – Percent 10th Graders Passing All Subtests on the HSCE (State data not available for 2004)



11TH GRADE STANDARDS

The 11th grade assessment in reading and math has been administered 3 consecutive years with dramatic changes to the instrument from 2004 to 2005. The comparison is similar both years. Significantly fewer RGHS students achieve proficiency than the rates for the district or the state. Figure 2 shows these rates.

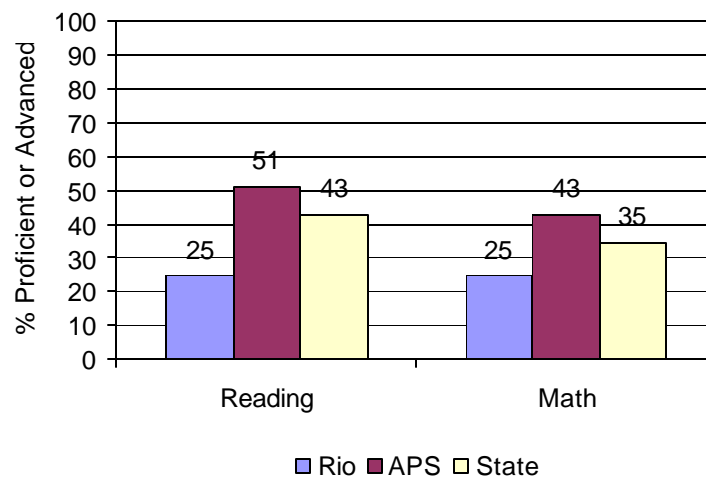
Figure 2 – Percent of 11th Graders Proficient in Reading and Math 2005 (RGHS, APS, State)



NINTH GRADE ASSESSMENT

The 9th grade standards assessment has been administered only two years (2005 & 2006) and scores from the most recent assessment are not available. A comparison to the percent of students earning proficient or advanced shows RGHS students below district and state rates for 2005. Individual school reports for the 2006 data will not be available until September 2006.

Figure 3 – Percent 9th Graders Proficient in Reading and Math 2005 (RGHS, APS, State)

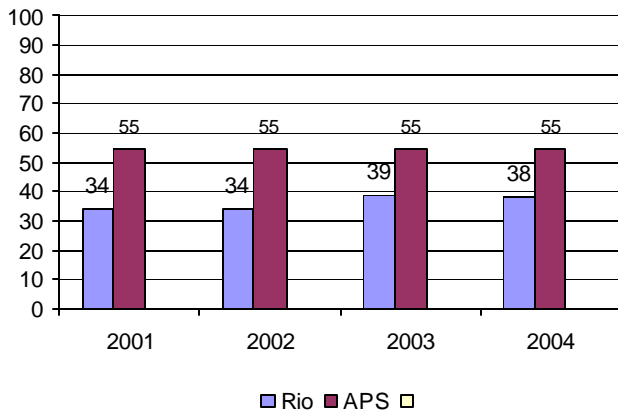


TERRANOVA

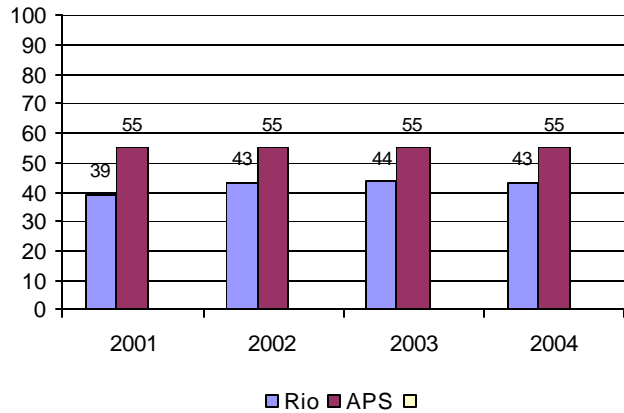
Prior to implementation of state standards assessments, achievement was measured by the TerraNova, a norm-referenced assessment. Scores for 2003 and 2004 are presented for RGHS

and the district. RGHS students' mean scores in reading and math at 9th grade are below the district averages, the national average and the state average. Figure 4 shows these averages with the line at 50 representing the national average for both reading and math.

Figure 4 – TerraNova 9th Grade Averages for Reading



Math

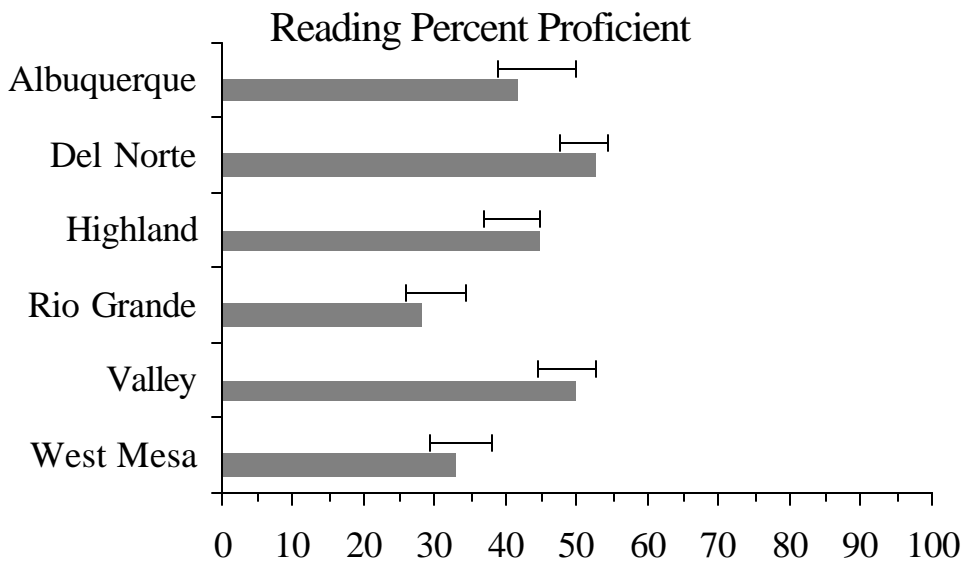
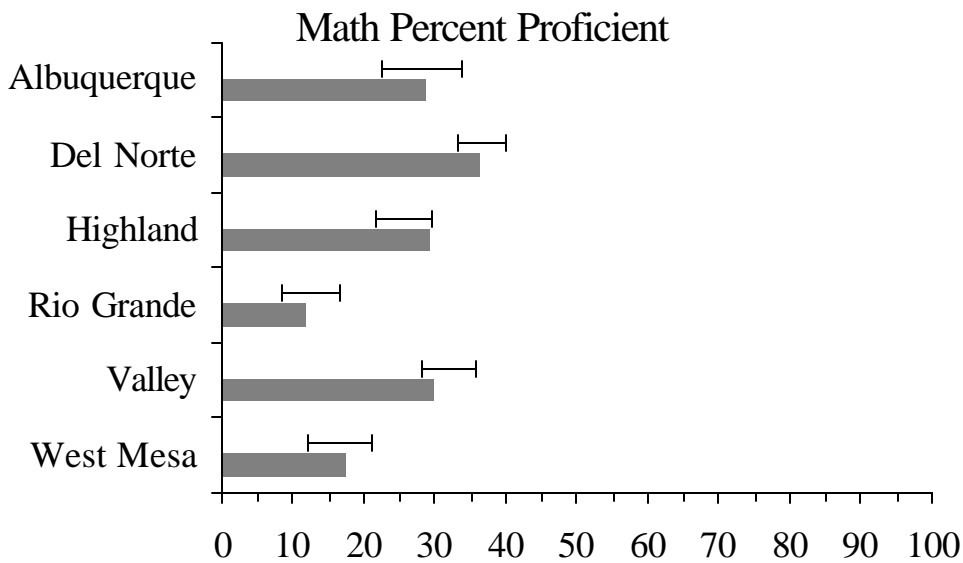


FACTORS AFFECTING ACHIEVEMENT

Research shows that certain student characteristics have significant influences on student achievement. An analysis strategy that takes into account the impact of these characteristics on performance provides a more appropriate evaluation of the effectiveness of the educational program. The Statistical Peers for Benchmarking (Dunavin, 2006) report provides a more comprehensive explanation of the statistical process. The assumption is that education programs are redesigned to break the associations between these factors and achievement. Further, when supplemental funding is available, the hypothesis would be that the students would perform beyond the levels predicted by the analysis.

The regression analysis shows that the percent proficient of RGHS students did not exceed predicted proficiency rates even with supplemental funding. This is also the case for 2004-05 state testing (Dunavin, 2005). Other schools did exceed predictions without supplemental funding. Figures 5 and 6 show the conclusions.

Figures 5 and 6 Statistical Peers for Benchmarking



*Solid bars show schools' percent proficient achieved.
Hairlines show expected achievement range (95% confidence interval).*

OTHER PERFORMANCE MEASURES

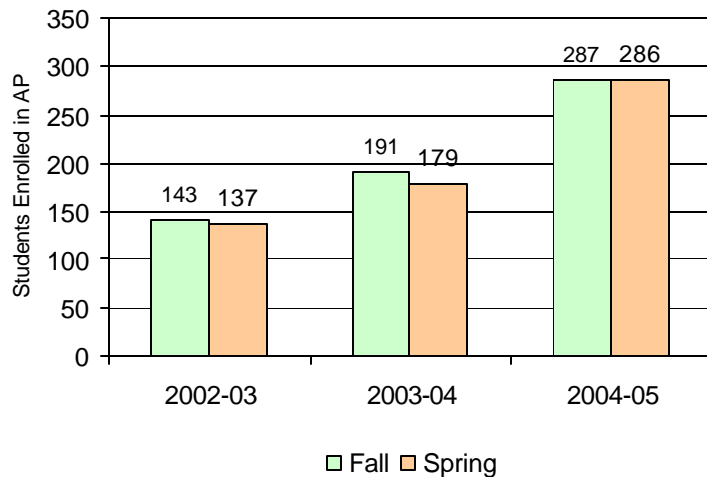
During the past 5 years, APS has instituted a number of initiatives to increase the enrollment in advanced courses. Two evaluation strategies that have been used are the older instructional equity audit (Mearns 2000) and newer analysis of APS course offerings and enrollment (Loughrey, 2005)

AP COURSE OFFERINGS AND ENROLLMENT

A variety of Advanced Placement course are offered at RGHS. Generally RGHS has the one of the highest number of course offerings among APS high schools. Supplemental funds have

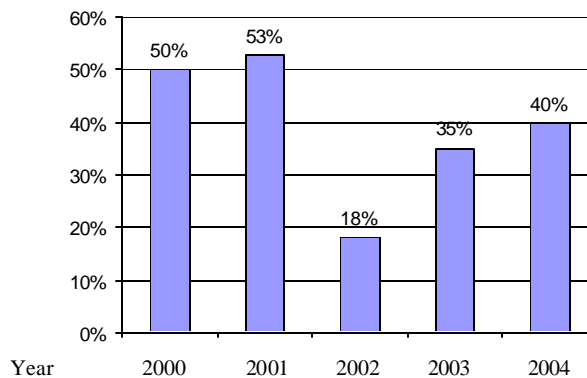
assisted in the provision of these low-enrollment courses. The different APS courses available to a school to offer is limited by The College Board to 35 possible courses. In APS, the range of offerings extends from 6 to 13 courses at any high school. RGHS has offered from 8 to 13 over the past 3 years. Enrollment in AP courses has steadily increased from 2002-03 through 2005 as shown in figure 7.

Figure 7 – AP Course Enrollment for 3 Most Recent Years



From 2000 to 2004 an analysis of grades earned in *AP classes* shows *students are highly successful*. On average, 40% of the classes have more than 70% of the students earning an A or B. The graph shows that the highest grades were in the earlier years but most recent data available shows high levels of success, too. The grading practices for AP classes are not governed by The College Board although the curriculum is defined in each course.

Figure 8 – Percent of Classes with Majority of the Grades A and B

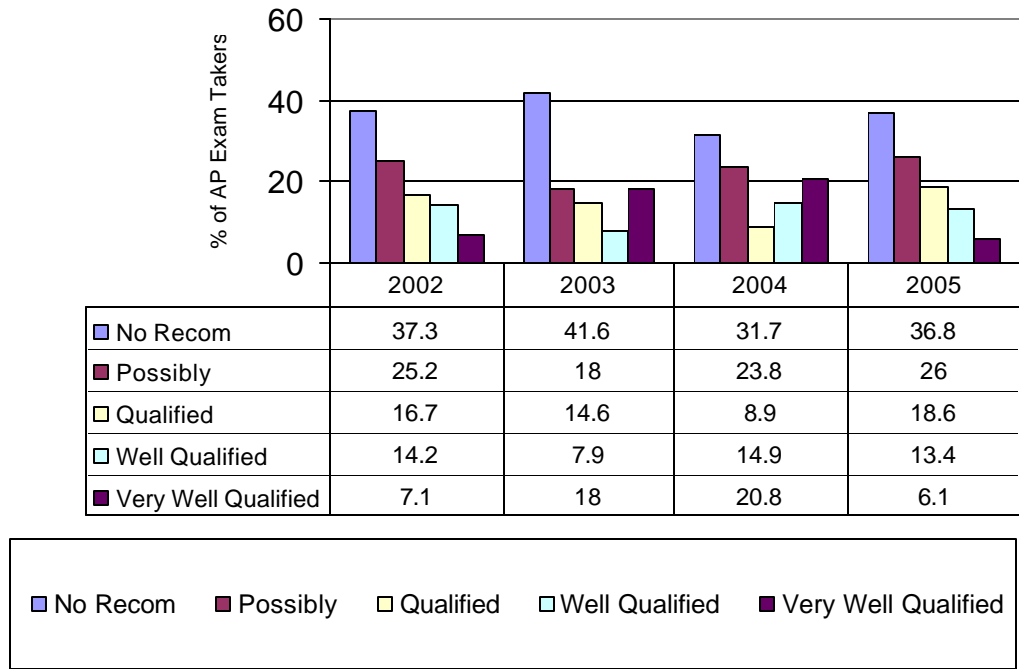


An external measure of AP course success is students’ scores on the national AP exams. These exams administered by The College Board rates a student’s performance on a 5-point scale: no recommendation, possibly qualified, qualified, well qualified, and extremely well qualified (qualification references qualified for college credit).

The test ratings do not show the same level of success as that reflected in teacher assigned grades. During 2002, nearly 20% of the classes had the majority of students earning an A or B while 62% of the AP exam takers failed to reach qualified status. In 2003, 59% failed to

achieved qualified status while 35% of the classes had a majority of As and Bs. In 2004, 54% failed to reach qualified status while 40% of the classes were considered highly successful (see figures 8 and 9)

Figure 9 – AP Exam Ratings for RGHS Students

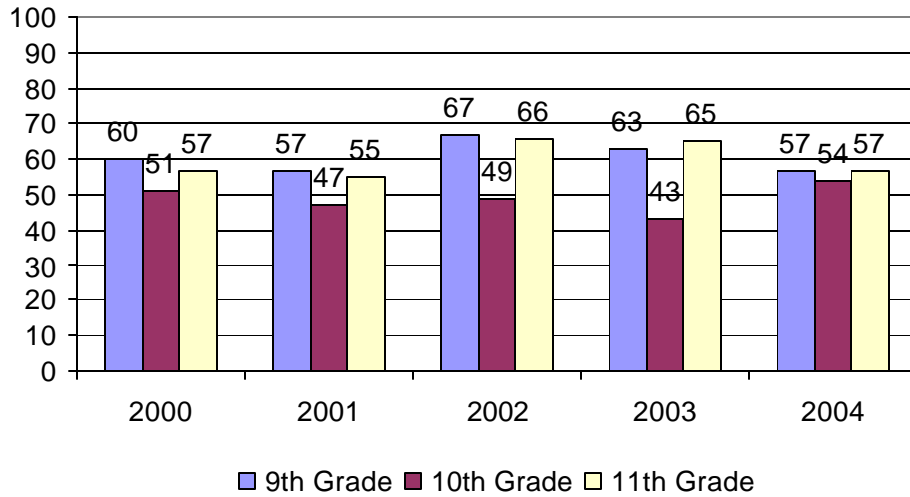


While neither grades or exam scores should be considered the one definitive measure of success, this analysis suggests that classroom grades assigned in RGHS AP classes may not reflect the standards of achievement typically defined for AP classes.

GRADE PROMOTION

The percent of students earning enough credits for promotion offers a general picture of student achievement and may be one indicator of the success of supplemental programs and differentiated instruction. A study of smaller learning communities (SLC)) (Heath, 2003, 2004 and 2006) provides one benchmark for grade promotion. On average, without the SLC implementation, high schools had an average of 76% of students earning sufficient credits for promotion. During the last 5 years, RGHS has had promotion rates ranging from 53% to 61% of 9th to 11th graders. From 2002-2004 RGHS was provided funding for SLC, one goal of which was to increase credit earnings for grade promotion. With this funding the Freshman Academy showed significant results in credits earned for 9th graders but once the freshman academy concept was discontinued, promotion rates for 9th graders returned to rates comparable to those prior to SLC.

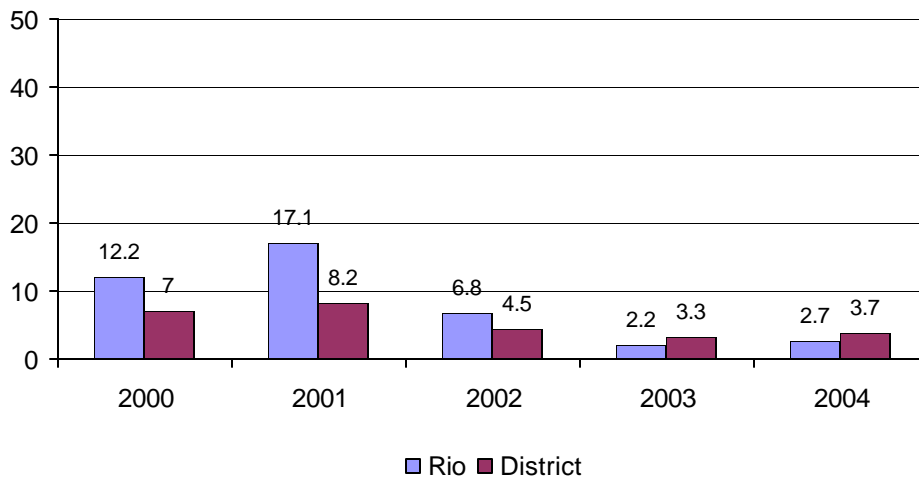
Figure 10 – Percent of Students Promoted



DROPOUT AND GRADUATION

APS calculates annual dropout rates that reflect the percent of students starting high school who fail to successfully complete the year or fail to return the following year. A four year analysis shows significant decreases in dropout with some noticeable variations in the rates at RGHS. These fluctuations are not present in any other APS comprehensive high schools and therefore comparisons to other high schools are difficult. When annual dropout rates have a significant and sustained decrease of this nature there is typically a comparable increase in graduation or dropout rates in the cohort. However, RGHS does not show this trend across the two different strategies for reporting dropout rates. Figure 11 shows RGHS and the district dropout rates for the most recently available 5 years.

Figure 11 - Annual Dropout Rates for RGHS and District



APS also calculates a cohort status report. This process follows students from their freshman year through their anticipated graduation rate four years later. Figures 12 & 13 show the recent 5 year comparison for RGHS and the district. While dropout rates show declines, graduation rates are below the district and do not show increases – a phenomenon consistent with grade

promotion statistics already presented. While this simply may reflect lower **on-time** graduation rates, the 5th year study of graduates from RGHS does not suggest that is the case.

Figure 12 – RGHS Cohort Status Report 2001-2004

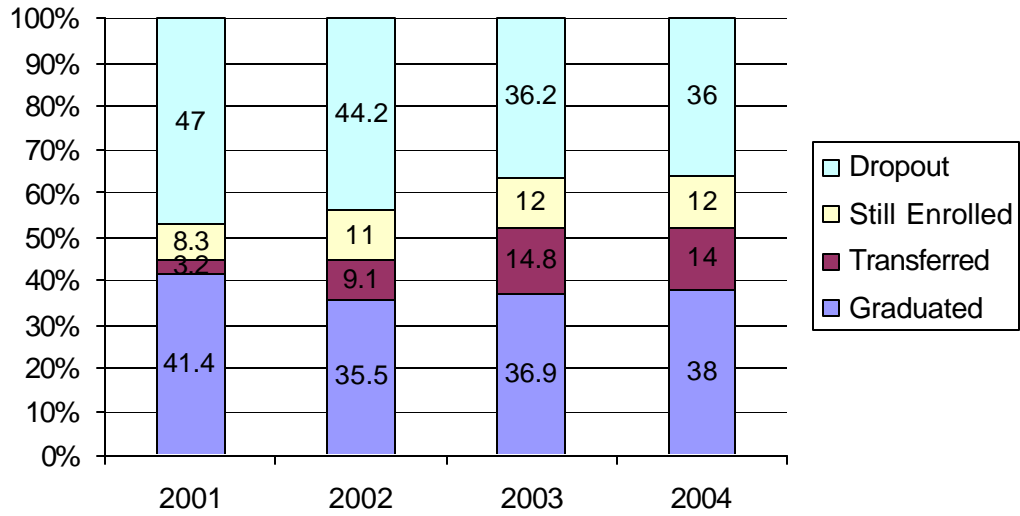
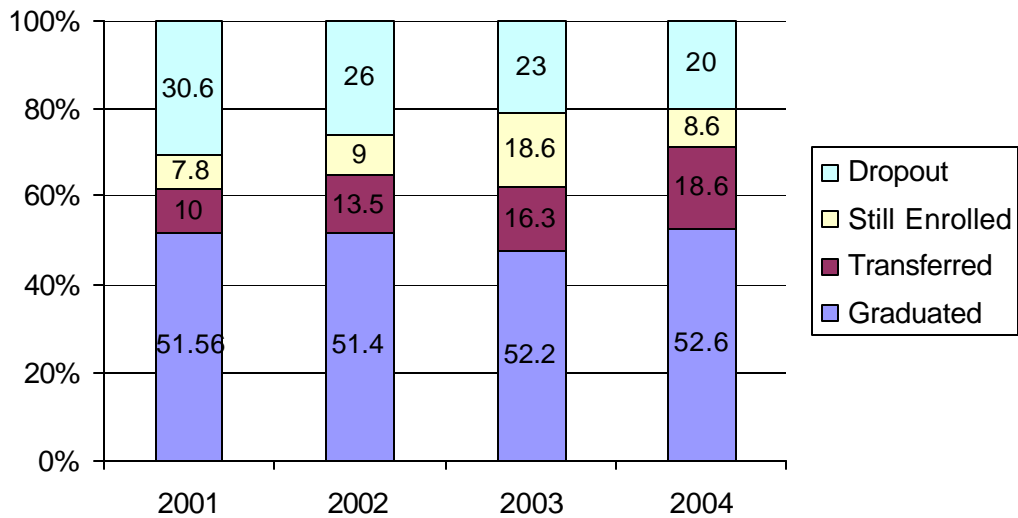


Figure 13 – District Cohort Status Report 2001-2004



AYP RATINGS

For two consecutive years the PED has used a comparable strategy to provide a rating of Adequate Yearly Progress (NCLB). During the most recent two years RGHS has not met AYP. However, under a different rating system in 2003-04, RGHS met standards. The tables below show the ratings summary for the last three years.

School/District Designations			2006 AYP School Summary																																																																																	
School RIO GRANDE HIGH Grade Range: 09-12			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th colspan="2">Met AYP Goal¹</th> <th colspan="3">Met Participation Rate²</th> <th rowspan="2">Met Additional Indicator</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Math</th> <th>Reading</th> <th>Math %</th> <th>Reading %</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>All Students</td> <td>NO</td> <td>NO</td> <td>YES</td> <td>95.4</td> <td>YES</td> <td>95.9</td> <td rowspan="10">YES</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Caucasian</td> <td>YES</td> <td>YES</td> <td>YES</td> <td>97.4</td> <td>YES</td> <td>98.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>African-American</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hispanic</td> <td>NO</td> <td>NO</td> <td>YES</td> <td>95.0</td> <td>YES</td> <td>95.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian/Pacific</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Native American</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>English Language³ Learners</td> <td>NO</td> <td>NO</td> <td>NO</td> <td>93.6</td> <td>YES</td> <td>95.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Students with Disabilities</td> <td>NO</td> <td>NO</td> <td>NO</td> <td>94.6</td> <td>NO</td> <td>94.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Economically Disadvantaged</td> <td>NO</td> <td>NO</td> <td>YES</td> <td>95.1</td> <td>YES</td> <td>95.8</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>							Met AYP Goal ¹		Met Participation Rate ²			Met Additional Indicator	Math	Reading	Math %	Reading %		All Students	NO	NO	YES	95.4	YES	95.9	YES	Caucasian	YES	YES	YES	97.4	YES	98.7	African-American							Hispanic	NO	NO	YES	95.0	YES	95.4	Asian/Pacific							Native American							English Language ³ Learners	NO	NO	NO	93.6	YES	95.2	Students with Disabilities	NO	NO	NO	94.6	NO	94.6	Economically Disadvantaged	NO	NO	YES	95.1	YES	95.8
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CONCLUSIONS

Overall, Rio Grande High School does not show sustained and significant increases or decreases in a variety of student performance measures. Generally, RGHS students do not reach district or state levels on achievement measures but based on a single year analysis, RGHS student outcomes did meet a predicted achievement level.

The analyses presented in this report were predicated on the idea that supplemental funds were distributed across a variety of instructional improvement endeavors and therefore should show an impact on different measures of achievement.

An assumption can be made that RGHS should reach predicted levels of achievement with standard funding and would exceed predictions of achievement with supplemental funding. If that is the expectation underlying the supplemental funding, then this analysis would suggest that RGHS did **not** reach that expectation.

RGHS received two sources of supplemental funding during the period of study. The funds for the freshman academy were provided through the grant for smaller learning communities. The use of these funds was governed by a set of expectations from the granting agent and RGHS staff was obligated to follow these guidelines. Small differences in student outcomes were seen when this focused funding was applied with oversight. These differences were not sustained after the grant funds were exhausted.

The additional funding provided to RGHS was through a district fiscal decision that provided significant operational funds to the RGHS administration to use to address the educational needs of students enrolled at the school. The general description provided to the evaluation team was that the RGHS staff used the supplemental funds to lower PTR across a variety of classes with the expectation that the strategy would increase achievement and lower dropout rates. The results presented in this study do not support that the general strategy of a lowered PTR showed a significant change in any of the indicators over the time of extra funding at Rio Grande High School.

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