

Minnesota Humanities Center Cargill Core Knowledge Connection Background & Initial Results

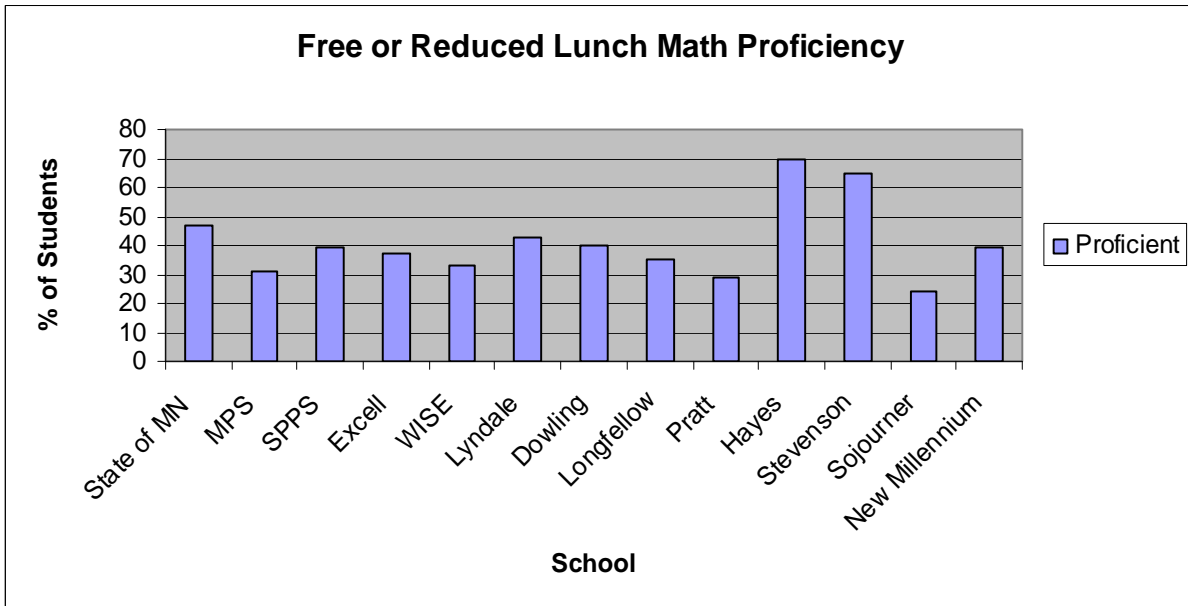
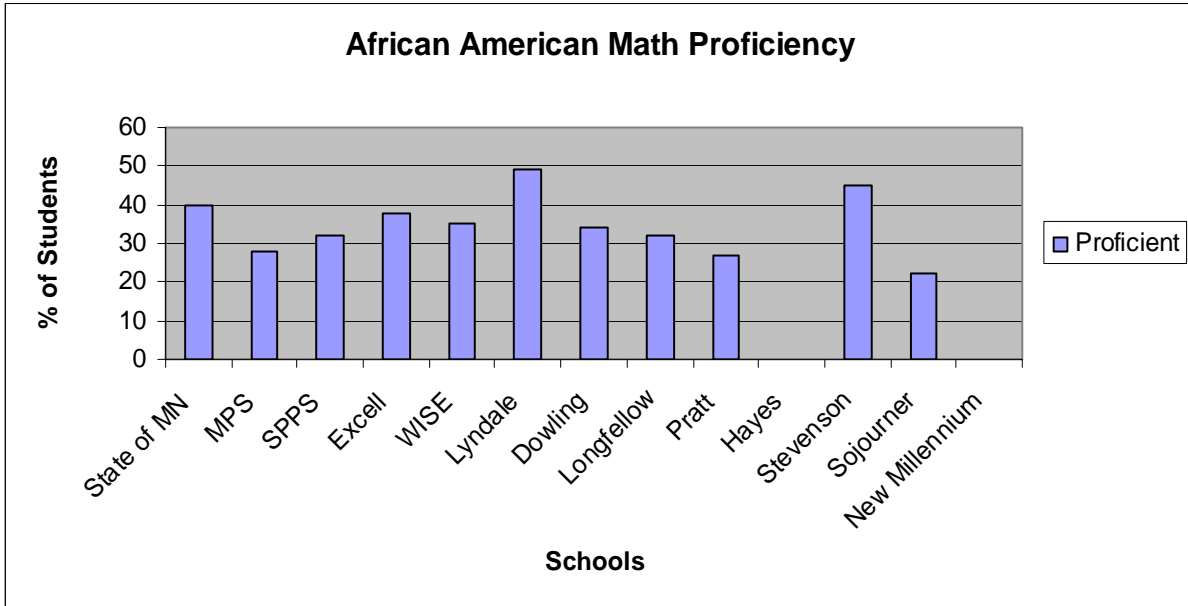
The Cargill Core Knowledge Connection program strives to strengthen student learning, raise academic achievement and help to close the achievement gap. It provides financial and technical assistance for selected schools implementing academic content based on the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence. The Core Knowledge program is drawn from the work of E. D. Hirsch, Jr., a professor of education and English at the University of Virginia. It is built on the idea that a core of common learning is necessary to ensure a sound and just education that promotes academic achievement and opportunity for all students. Core Knowledge accomplishes this through a specific and shared curriculum that builds a solid foundation of knowledge, grade by grade.

There are currently ten schools participating in the Cargill Core Knowledge Connection. All the schools are located in Minneapolis or its Northern and Western suburbs and all meet the federal definition of high-poverty schools (more than 40% of students receive free or reduced price lunch). Schools currently in the program include four schools from the Minneapolis Public Schools: Dowling Urban Environmental Learning Center, Longfellow Community School, Pratt Elementary, and Lyndale Community School; two schools from Fridley Public Schools: Stevenson Elementary and Hayes Elementary, and four public charter schools: Excell Academy, the Carter E. Woodson Institute for Student Excellence (WISE), New Millennium Academy, and Sojourner Truth Academy. The Cargill Core Knowledge Connection began in 2000 and was expanded in 2005. The current program ends during the 2009-2010 school year. Currently the program serves 3,500 students.

The Cargill Core Knowledge Connection is designed to increase academic achievement and close the achievement gap for economically disadvantaged children. Measurements to date indicate that the program is making a positive contribution to academic achievement in partner schools. Initial results are (Appendix A and Appendix B provide comparisons of Cargill Core Knowledge Connection schools to student performance statewide, in Minneapolis Public Schools, and in St. Paul Public Schools):

- **Math Proficiency:**
 - 8 of 10 (80%) schools exceeded Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) math proficiency average for free or reduced lunch students.
 - 6 of 8 (75%) schools exceeded MPS math proficiency average for African American students. (Two schools (Hayes and New Millennium) have no or statistically incalculable African American Student populations.)
- **Reading Proficiency:**
 - 6 of 10 (60%) schools exceeded MPS reading proficiency average for free or reduced lunch students. 1 of 10 (10%) meets MPS reading proficiency average.
 - 6 of 8 (75%) schools exceeded MPS reading proficiency average for African American students. (Two schools (Hayes and New Millennium) have no or statistically incalculable African American student population).

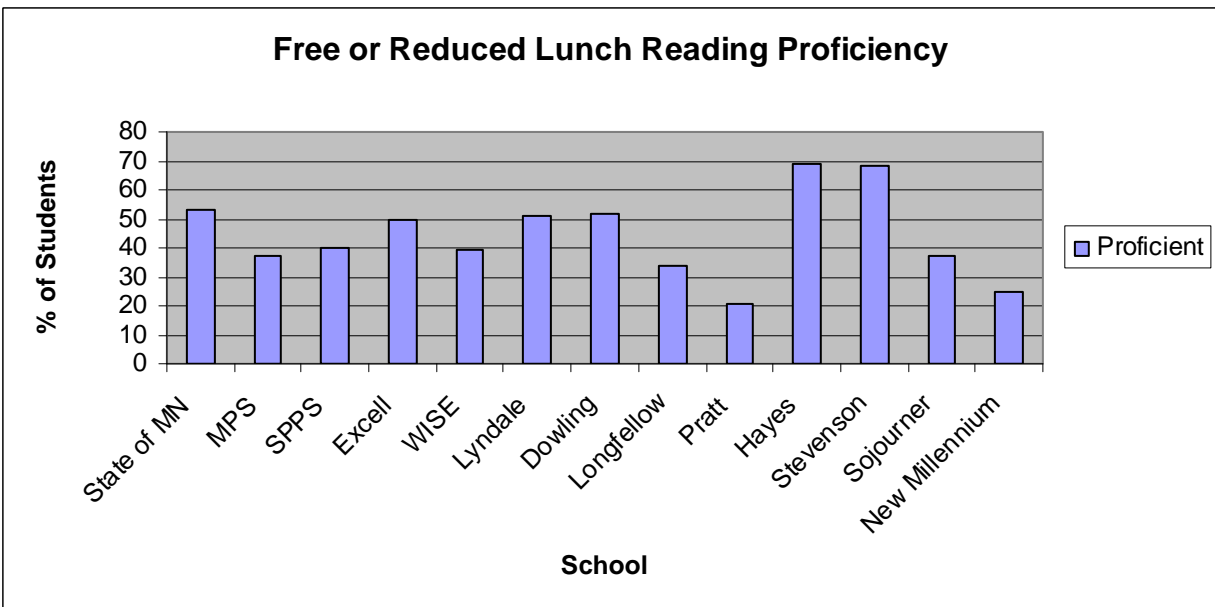
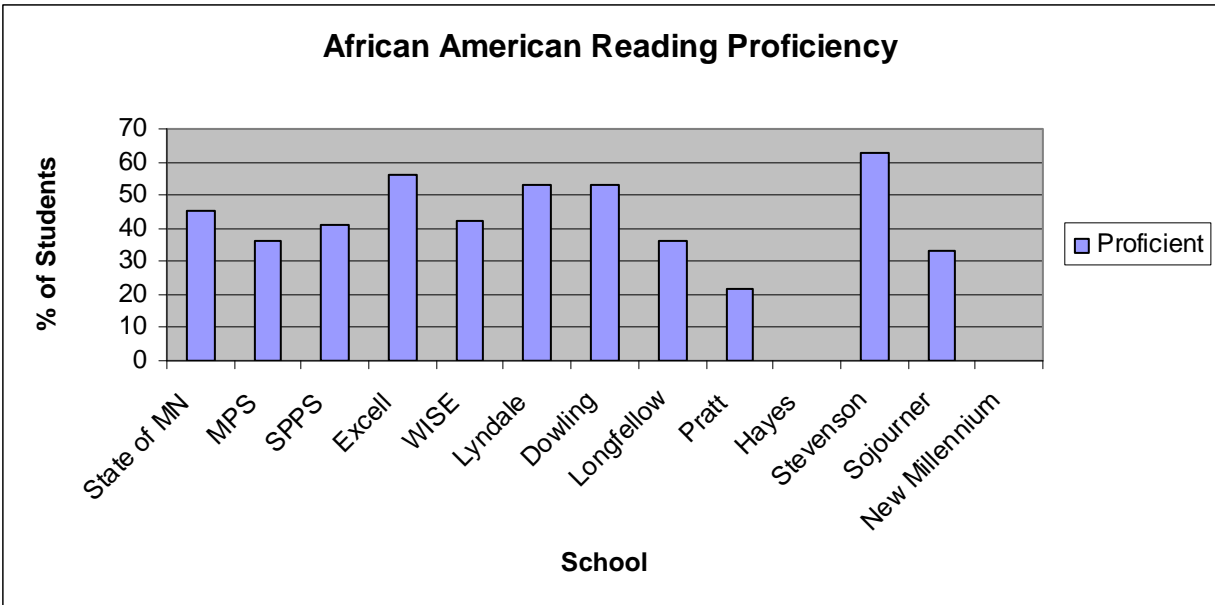
Appendix A: Math Proficiency Comparison



MPS = Minneapolis Public Schools

SPPS = St. Paul Public Schools

Appendix B: Reading Proficiency Comparison



MPS = Minneapolis Public Schools
 SPPS = St. Paul Public Schools