Consistent Federal Educational Reform Failure: A Case Study of Nebraska from 2010-2019

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**Abstract**

Beginning with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, the federal government has been trying unsuccessfully to fix education and raise the performance of poor students. The more recent reauthorizations of ESEA, *No Child Left Behind* (2001) and *Every Student Succeeds* (ESS) (2015), hold teachers and administrators accountable for student performance and simply shame the underperforming schools. These continued unsuccessful efforts have ignored the warning in the Coleman Report in 1966 that education has relatively little influence on student achievement compared to factors outside of school. In this paper, we focus on the state of Nebraska’s responses to these latest federal bullsh-initiatives designed to improve the “lowest performing” schools. Data provided by the Nebraska Department of Education for 2010-2019 revealed absolutely no improvement or reduction in achievement gaps whatsoever. It is time taxpayers should demand accountability for insidious decisions that have cost both billions of dollars and too many teachers and administrators their jobs, shamed high-poverty schools, and yet produce nothing to show for it.

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The Emperor walked under his high canopy in the midst of the procession, through the streets
of his capital. All the people standing by, and those at the windows, cried out, “Oh! How
beautiful are our Emperor’s new clothes! What a magnificent train there is to the mantle; and
how gracefully the scarf hangs!” No one would admit these much-admired clothes could not be
seen because, in doing so, he would have been saying he was either a simpleton or unfit for his
job. (*The Emperor’s New Clothes* by Hans Christian Anderson).

When it comes to educational reform, a similar fear exists among those who, rather than pretending to see success, clearly see over fifty years of ineptitude. Most stand on the sidelines and applaud the parade of continuous reform efforts aimed at fixing broken schools, teachers, and administrators. Educators and students have been subjected to extensive, federally ordered, education reform efforts for over a half century. These reform efforts have cost taxpayers countless billions and, worse, cost educators their jobs with little to show in the way of results. In this paper, we take a closer look at the impact of these federal efforts on Nebraska public schools’ recent academic performance based on testing results over the decade ending in the 2018-19 school year. The question driving this study has been, simply, is it worth it?

**A History of Reform Bullsh-initiatives**

It is no secret that throughout the history of the United States, underrepresented minorities (URM) have not experienced the same level of success as others. Any effort to reverse this trend by trying to help URM children is unquestionably noble. But it is also noble to evaluate whether such efforts result in success. Imagine if our government proposed to spend trillions of dollars on Ivermectin to treat Covid-19. Would we demand evidence that this ineffective treatment worked? Of course. But why do we not demand similar evidence that educational reform works?

In 1965, Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan and his staff wrote a report titled, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*. The report concluded that civil rights legislation would not be enough to repair the damage done to African Americans. More would be required.

In this new period the expectations of the (African) Americans will go beyond civil rights. Being Americans, they will now expect that in the near future equal opportunities for them as a group will produce roughly equal results, as compared with other groups. *This is not going to happen*. (italics added)

What will produce equal results? Some believe that education is the solution. Ensure all citizens receive the same, quality education and the tide will turn for URM.

**Money for Schools with Impoverished Students**

That same year, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which provided federal money to schools that served impoverished children – many of which are URM. The goal was to increase the performance of poor students who had struggled to keep up with their wealthy, more affluent counterparts. Enter scapegoat number one: insufficient spending. But would spending more on education lead to better performance for poor students? The congressionally mandated (by the Civil Rights Act of 1964) Coleman Report (1966) explored just that question. One of its findings was that school quality measures (e.g., per pupil expenditure) had minimal correlations with student achievement, whereas family background (e.g., income) had large correlations with student achievement. Thus, it was concluded that increased spending on education would not lead to equality of student achievement.

Taking all these results together, one implication stands out above all: That schools bring little influence to bear on a child’s achievement that is independent of his background and general social context; and that this very lack of an independent effect means that the inequalities imposed on children by their home, neighborhood, and peer environment are carried along to become the inequalities with which they confront adult life at the end of school.

But does the Coleman Report’s conclusion hold true today? A recent examination of data from 1992 to 2015 confirmed that increased spending has no effect on achievement (Hanushek, 2016). Incidentally, the one erroneous finding in the Coleman Report, that the backgrounds of other students at the school were related to a student’s achievement, ultimately led to forced desegregation and busing. Enter scapegoat number two – segregation. The federal orders to desegregate cost millions, were very controversial, and still did not result in increased African American student achievement.

Despite numerous attempts to dismiss the reports by Moynihan and Coleman, their conclusions concerning failure to improve the conditions of URM were, unfortunately, prophetic. In 1965, the black-white achievement gap was roughly a standard deviation. Today, it remains about a standard deviation (Hanushek, 2016). Despite the counter evidence, federally ordered school reform efforts to improve the achievement of impoverished children, many of whom are URM, have continued for 56 years. How many dollars have been spent on these reform efforts? Wait before you begin the calculations. Sadly, there is more. Much more.

One of the saddest lessons of history is this: If we’ve been bamboozled long enough, we tend to reject any evidence of the bamboozle. We’re no longer interested in finding out the truth. The bamboozle has captured us. It’s simply too painful to acknowledge, even to ourselves, that we’ve been taken. Once you give a charlatan power over you, you almost never get it back (Sagan, 1997).

**A Nation at Risk - 1983**

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education published its report – *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* which continued the nonsensical pursuit of educational reform. The report concluded that our educational system was broken. Rather than simply recommending more spending, the Commission evaluated the quality of teaching in American public education and recommended performance-based salaries to improve teaching. The rationale was that subpar student test scores could be raised simply by motivating some lazy teachers or replacing them with motivated ones. Certainly, something or someone could be blamed for low student achievement. Enter scapegoat number three - the teacher. If increased spending and desegregation could not fix education, then getting rid of bad teachers was the solution.

**An Inconvenient Truth**

An enormously erroneous assumption has been used to support the continuation of educational reform efforts - student academic success is mostly “caused” by factors that exist inside the walls of the classroom and school building (e.g., per pupil spending, teaching quality, administrator quality, classmates, etc.). Thus, students who have the good fortune of getting “good” teachers, for example, tend strongly to succeed academically, whereas students who have the misfortune of getting “bad” teachers tend strongly to fail academically. This assumption, quite simply, is false. The truth is closer to the conclusions of the Coleman Report – education has much less to do with a child’s success than other influences outside of school. Thus, not surprisingly, educational reform efforts that attempt to improve teaching quality to allow all children to succeed academically have failed miserably.

Consider the head-scratching teacher value-added system employed by the Houston, Texas independent school district recently. Teachers, principals, and yes, even the superintendent were fired or awarded merit raises based on how much students improved on state tests. Superintendent Terry Grier was awarded an almost $100,000 merit raise based on calculations that lack reliability and validity and are simply too stupid to describe (Amrein-Beardsley et al., 2016).

The repeated failure to reduce achievement gaps has been consistently ignored by politicians, government regulators, faculty of university teacher training programs, school administrators and teachers. All are guilty of failing to acknowledge that the emperor is indeed marching naked. The strong correlation between poverty and student achievement is well known and rather consistent (Lacour & Tissington, 2011). The average academic performance of randomly grouped K-12 students is inversely proportional to the level of financial poverty of those students. Bad teachers are not disproportionally assigned to teach financially impoverished students nor are good teachers disproportionally assigned to teach non-impoverished students.

**No Child Left Behind**

As previously mentioned, iterations of ESEA have continued with lofty goals and equally disappointing results. The efforts to improve teaching ability by getting rid of bad teachers spurred by the *Nation at Risk* report did not result in reduction of achievement gaps. Undaunted, in 2001, President George W. Bush signed the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) as a reauthorization of ESEA. This law required statewide testing in public schools (if they were to continue to receive federal funds for education) and demanded that test performance improve, or teachers *and principals* would be removed from the school. Bush was influenced by the “success” of Houston, Texas schools under Superintendent Rod Paige. By holding principals accountable, the schools had improved dramatically. Enter scapegoat number four. Principals joined teachers in terms of being accountable for poor student performance, despite evidence that principals account for much less than paltry 1% to 7% of variance in student achievement outcomes attributed to teachers (Detterman, 2016; Hanushek, 1997). Unfortunately, it was later revealed that the improved student test scores and decreased dropout rates reported by Houston schools were due to falsifying records. But not before Bush chose Paige to be Secretary of Education and lead the charge for NCLB.

How have the “fire or replace principals” educational reform efforts fared? Heissel and Ladd (2018) evaluated the federally funded North Carolina school reform effort called “Turning Around the Lowest Achieving Schools” (TALAS). To be eligible to receive the SIG, states had to employ one of four models – two of which involved replacing the principal. There was no evidence that replacement of principals led to an increase in leadership quality or student test scores at the low-performing schools. Robinson and Bligh (2019) reported other cases besides Houston where large urban school districts in high poverty areas reported incredible “turnarounds” where the test performance of poor students improved during the NCLB era. Unfortunately, for each turnaround, they also found where principal accountability led to test and/or reporting fraud by the school leaders similar to the Houston story.

**Every Student Succeeds**

The most recent, and equally insidious, reauthorization of ESEA, the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA), was signed in 2015 by President Barack Obama and moved much of the enforcement of the demand for improved academic performance in public schools back to the states, with federal oversight. ESSA also moved away from firing teachers and principals to simply shaming schools whose students did not perform well by requiring the grading of schools (A, B, C, D, or F or some other form of categorization) based upon academic achievement test performance. Enter scapegoat number five: the schools themselves. If spending more money, desegregation, and firing teachers and principals does not work, then shame the schools.

**Nebraska’s Response to the Bullsh-initiatives: Hoop Jumping**

The previously mentioned educational reform mandates are from federal legislation passed by Congress, signed by three presidents, and interpreted through regulations by the U.S. Department of Education. Nebraska and other states must comply or lose federal money which would mean tax increases for their citizens. Nebraska has often attempted to minimize the damage from these federal mandates to educators and students, sometimes at great risk of losing that federal money.

In April 2000, Nebraska adopted the STARS (School-based, Teacher-led, Assessment Reporting System) – where districts designed tests and teachers had freedom in what they taught. School districts were responsible for accountability efforts with individual schools. This system had barely taken flight in 2001 when NCLB passed. For the next eight years, Nebraska successfully applied for waivers and adjustments to NCLB using STARS rules but was eventually forced into NCLB rules and required uniform statewide tests beginning with the 2009-10 school year. With the implementation of the federal *School Improvement Grant* (SIG) program in 2009, the lowest achieving five percent of schools were labeled *Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools* (PLAS). PLAS were further defined as *Need Improvement* if they failed to make adequate yearly progress by the 2nd year or had less than a 75% graduation rate. Need improvement schools were eligible for a grant of $500,000 for three years if they adopted one of four methods intended to correct the school’s perceived inadequacy:

1. Turnaround – fire principal and all teachers and hire back no more than 50%.
2. Close the school and reassign students to other nearby schools.
3. Convert to a charter school (which was not allowed in Nebraska).
4. Transition – fire principal and adopt other measures (in some cases the principal was simply transferred)

The Nebraska Performance Accountability System (NePAS) was implemented in 2012 to rank schools. NePAS was a complicated system using graduation rates, school grade scores, improvement (school grade improvement), growth (student improvement) and participation, and still had the NCLB AYP requirement and PLAS remained in force.

Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, NePAS was replaced with yet another accountability system - AQuESTT (A Quality Education System for Today and Tomorrow). As part of AQuESTT every school had to complete an Evidence-Based Analysis (EBA) questionnaire. AQuESTT is a monster – it takes 28 pages to explain and 83 columns on a spreadsheet to calculate the rankings. Suffice it to say that much of the weight in classification depended on test results and other measures that strongly correlate with test scores. Schools are categorized as one of four types with 15% as excellent, 50% as great, 30% as good, and 5% as need improvement.

Similar to PLAS, once identified, at least three of the “need improvement” schools are selected for intense intervention from the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) whether they want it or not from NDE or a consultant hired by NDE. The intent is to:

* Diagnose key areas of school effectiveness
* Develop a progress plan for improvement
* Monitor and support the progress plan implementation

The content of the progress plan for improvement includes:

* Required actions for improvement
* Measurable indicators of progress
* Strategies for improvement
* Timelines for improvement

The NDE or consultant annually reviews the plan and the progress under the plan. Additionally, a plan board reviews the plan and determines when a priority school may exit the priority status.

**Two Different Worlds for Excellent and Need Improvement Schools**

Table 1 shows the four AQuESTT categories broken down by race and FRL percentages. Not surprisingly, contrasting the Excellent and Need Improvement categories simply reveals high poverty vs. low poverty schools. For the 395 schools in the largest (1,000 or more students) 27 school districts, which include over two thirds of Nebraska’s students, schools with 30% or less of their students receiving FRL accounted for 87% of the excellent schools and none of the need improvement schools. On the other hand, schools with over 70% or more of their students receiving FRL accounted for none of the excellent schools and 85% of the need improvement schools. The AQuESTT categorization also reveals clear racial differences in the two worlds. Since 1965, race and poverty continue to be unwelcome guests at the educational reform parties. The two extreme categories mostly contain schools that exist in two different worlds: the haves and the have nots.

**Low-Performing Schools and Sources of Poverty**

Tables 2-6 show five different types of high-poverty schools in Nebraska. The number of times each school was categorized as *need improvement* during the five NePAS years (2010-2015) and the three years AQuESTT was assessed (2015-16, 2017-18, and 2018-19) are listed, in addition to FRL rates. Viewing each table, one can see where and how poverty exists in Nebraska. In most states, poverty can be found in the poorest areas of large cities where many URM live. Tables 2 and 3 show schools located in poorest parts of the two largest cities in Nebraska – Omaha and Lincoln. Table 4 shows schools that are located near meat packing plants in smaller cities. These schools also have large percentages of URM students. Table 5 shows schools located on Native American reservations. Finally, lest the reader is led to believe that the only poor performing schools are those with high percentages of Black, Hispanic, or Native American students, Table 6 shows schools with relatively low URM percentages (less than 30) and yet perform poorly (classified as need improvement) due to high poverty rates.

**Any Evidence of Success Resulting from Transformation Interventions?**

We now take a closer look at three schools listed in the tables who have not only been classified as need improvement but also received SIGs in the past 10 years to determine whether any reform efforts have been successful. All three schools chose the Transformation model as part of the SIG. Transformation requires (1) replacing the principal along with taking steps to increase teacher and school leader effectiveness, (2) instituting comprehensive instructional reforms, (3) increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools, and (4) providing operational flexibility and sustained support. Is there any scientific evidence that replacing the principal will increase student performance? Absolutely none.

Table 7 shows the progress made in terms of Reading and English Language Arts test scores. These scores as reported by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) are average scores for groups of students and do not represent the scores of any individual students. Nearly every Nebraska classroom and school includes one or more students whose test scores are among top tier of all students in the state. Moreover, every racial, demographic, and socioeconomic group of students includes many students whose test scores are among the top tier of all Nebraska students. It is not uncommon, for example, for half or more of financially impoverished students to meet or exceed the test score standards set by the Nebraska Department of Education. Nonetheless, average test scores for schools are the basis for ratings and need improvement classifications.

**Throwing off the Scent: Using the Same Test and Changing the Test**

When simply examining test scores to determine whether educational reform efforts are successful or unsuccessful, several pitfalls can occur. For example, when a new test is introduced, average scores for most schools typically increase the first few years – regardless of any supposed interventions. This can occur for numerous reasons, such as teachers begin teaching to the test once they have seen it, students know what types of content and items to expect, and item drift (knowledge of some items is shared with future test takers). Thus, the increases shown in Table 7 for the first few years may simply reflect this very common experience with new tests. In fact, if we look at *every* school in the state, most have the same pattern of increases in average scores the first few years. Thus, if a state simply keeps using the same test, it will appear that improvements are made in terms of increasing scores.

Additionally, changes were made to the state testing in 2017 and 2018 that may be misleading in terms of changing test scores. The ELA test was made more difficult in 2017, as was the math test in 2018. Computer-adaptive testing was also introduced in 2018. Each of these changes had the effect of decreasing scores statewide. The reduction was even greater for students who typically score higher on the tests. Computer adaptive testing made it more difficult for them to demonstrate mastery. Thus, while it may appear that achievement gaps decreased slightly, this was not due to any improvements for poorer students. In assessing whether the Transformation model implemented at the three SIG schools led to improvements, we need to keep this in mind.

We begin with Omaha Nation High School. Located in the town of Macy (pop. ~1,000), on the Omaha Reservation, in the northeast part of the state, the school has been categorized as needing improvement *all eight years* the rankings have occurred. Absentee rates are near 75%. That means, on average, students are missing over three days out of five per week. The best attendance day by far? Mondays. Teachers report that children show up on Mondays simply because most have not had a meal since Friday. In the community, unemployment is high. Alcoholism is rampant on the reservation. One cannot imagine the home life for the students. Omaha Nation High School was given almost $700K for the SIG. Looking at Table 7, as previously mentioned, it appears that scores improved for the first few years but were not sustained and scores dipped back near where they were prior to the intervention. This trend followed the pattern for ALL schools in the state and, thus, there is no evidence that the SIG money led to improvements.

Next, we examine Madison Middle School, located in Madison (pop. ~2,500) which, like Macy, is in the northeast part of the state, but not on a reservation. The town’s major employer is Tyson Fresh Meats which employs about 1,200 workers. Hispanic student enrollment is about 80%. Madison ranks in the bottom 5% of all middle schools in the state in terms of math and reading proficiency. Table 7 shows the progress made by the $1.7 million Transformation intervention. Nothing.

Finally, we have Crawford Elementary School, located in Crawford (pop. ~1,000) in the northwest corner of the state. Unlike Omaha Nation and Madison, the school has only 7% minority student enrollment. Test scores are below average, but nothing near the performance of Omaha Nation or Madison. Why was this school given over $1.2 million as part of a SIG Transformation in 2014? More importantly, was there any improvement? Table 7 reveals none.

In terms of money spent, for all 26 Nebraska SIG recipients since 2010, the total amount of funding was $34,151,799. Yes, close to 35 million dollars has been spent just in the state of Nebraska to “transform” low-performing schools. An evaluation completed in 2015, halfway through, concluded what our current data reveal: the SIGs did not lead to sustained improvements (Welch et al., 2015).

**Yet More Evidence of No Evidence**

Failure to reduce achievement gaps or produce even modest gains in test scores can be found in other high poverty schools who were not as fortunate to qualify for federal money as part of a SIG. Table 8 shows eight urban, high FRL elementary schools broken down by race and FRL. Table 9 shows their average test scores over a 10-year period for Reading and ELA. Here we again see that federal demands that Nebraska threaten teachers’ and administrators’ careers under NCLB and later shame them under ESSA have accomplished nothing. The one thread that links these children is poverty. Until poverty is addressed, the emperor remains naked. Tables 10 and 11 show an example of a very low FRL (1%) school. The pattern of test scores is the same as the previous schools: modest gains through 2016 and then decreases. Achievement gaps remain.

**Conclusions**

After over a half century of ESEA federal money, 19 years of NCLB threats to teachers and principals, and five years of ESSA trying to shame school districts into closing the achievement gap for all races and family income levels, we still see two worlds in education in Nebraska: affluent mainly white students and everyone else. W. Edwards Deming, the guru who set the standard for quality in business throughout the world, made heavy reference to “management by the numbers,” where managers sit in their offices and make decisions based on numbers from computer sheets and ignore what is going on outside the office (items three and five of his seven deadly diseases). Categorizing schools as excellent or in need of improvement simply based on NePAS and AQuESTT formulas are examples of this boneheaded style of management. Teacher, principal, and school accountability based on test scores have been ordered by NCLB and ESSA and designed to threaten or shame educators into doing their job better to close the achievement gap. This forces NDE to place sometimes slanderous monikers on schools that have dedicated and hard-working educators. It also misleads many parents about the quality of their schools. There are no such things as “good” and “bad” schools. There are only students and how those students perform on tests has very little to do with the schools.

Pitting schools against each other to produce rankings makes even less sense. Numbers from schools in the Santee Native American reservation likely have very different meanings than those from Elkhorn school districts (highly affluent), Grand Island with high immigrant populations, Omaha Public Schools with high inner-city populations, Saint Paul schools with a mostly rural population, or McPherson County with 61 students in the entire district. Management by the numbers is certain to be counterproductive for students and teachers alike in an endeavor as complex as education. It simply leads from a system like PLAS with two criteria to one like AQuESTT with four that takes too many pages to explain and an 83-column spreadsheet to calculate.

The only obvious results of these policies of threatening and shaming has been driving teachers out of the profession and reducing the numbers of college students enrolling in teacher education programs. There is absolutely no evidence of closing the achievement gap. How do taxpayers tolerate such a record? After 56 years of failure to even nudge the achievement gap under ESEA, 19 years of failure under NCLB and five years of failure under ESSA, it is time to scrap the threaten and shame policies used in these federal directives and stop blaming teachers and administrators for policy failures and acknowledge the research that most educators have known for decades: poverty drives achievement in education. It is time to reevaluate if we have any hope of improving the lives of URM and poor children.

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Table 1. Four AQuESTT school performance categories by race and FRL.

Category Number White African American Hispanic Native American FRL

Need Improvement 38,499 31% 18% 36% 5% 61%

Good 118,983 59% 8% 25% 1% 52%

Great 141,587 79% 3% 12% 0.7% 38%

Excellent 36,684 85% 2% 6% 0.4% 31%

Table 2. Schools located in Omaha with high FRL.

 Categorized as Need Improvement

School NePAS Years AQuESTT Years 2010-11 %FRL

Bancroft Elementary School 4 3 42

Benson Magnet High School 5 3 76

Bryan High School 4 2 75

Conestoga Magnet Elem School 4 2 93

Fontenelle Elementary School 4 3 86

Minne Lusa Elementary School 4 3 85

Omaha South Magnet High School 5 2 84

Table 3. Schools located in Lincoln with high FRL.

 Categorized as Need Improvement

School NePAS Years AQuESTT Years 2010-11 %FRL

Belmont Elementary School 3 0 75

Culler Middle School 2 0 83

Clinton Elementary School 2 1 93

Everett Elementary School 5 0 94

Lincoln High School 5 0 60

Lincoln Northeast High School 1 2 51

Park Middle School 3 0 73

Table 4. Schools located near meat packing plants.

 Categorized as Need Improvement

School NePAS Years AQuESTT Years 2010-11 %FRL

Bryan Elementary School 2 0 64

Crete Elementary School 4 0 56

Gibbon High School 0 2 45

Madison Middle School 3 3 71

Schuyler High School 4 3 63

Cardinal Elementary School 4 0 66

Table 5. Schools located on Native American reservations.

 Categorized as Need Improvement

School NePAS Years AQuESTT Years 2010-11 %FRL

Santee High School 5 3 80

Omaha Nation High School 5 3 90

Winnebago High School 3 3 78

Walthill High School 5 3 89

Table 6. Schools that are in smaller cities, less than 30% minority, with high FRL.

 Categorized as Need Improvement

School NePAS Years AQuESTT Years 2010-11 %FRL % Minority

Alcott Elementary School 4 0 76 21

Banner County High School 2 0 48 17

Chase County Elem School 4 0 37 24

Crawford Elementary School 3 0 40 7

Dorchester Elementary School 1 1 45 27

Elba Secondary School 3 3 67 9

Table 7. Reading and English Language Arts Scores for three Nebraska schools who received a School Improvement Grant.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Crawford Elementary | 107 | 120 | 124 | 131 | 106 | 90 | 87 |
| Madison Middle School | 96 | 89 | 93 | 102 | 72 | 83 | 88 |
| Omaha Nation High School | 51 | 51 | 56 | 67 | 49 | 55 | 54 |

Table 8. High FRL, No SIG elementary schools in Nebraska.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FRL**\* | **Students** | **White** | **African American** | **Hispanic** | **Native American** |
| Druid Hills (Omaha) | 95% | 328 | 12% | 54% | 17% | 1% |
| Indian Hill (Omaha) | 91% | 630 | 6% | 31% | 59% | 1% |
| Wakonda (Omaha) | 89% | 401 | 12% | 54% | 9% | 2% |
| Clinton (Lincoln) | 94% | 475 | 41% | 27% | 20% | 1% |
| Everett (Lincoln) | 89% | 445 | 32% | 11% | 38% | 1% |
| Howard (Grand Island) | 95% | 375 | 11% | 1% | 85% | 2% |
| Harney (South Sioux City) | 94% | 353 | 10% | 17% | 80% | 3% |
| Washington (Fremont) | 90% | 309 | 15% | 1% | 84% | 0% |

 \* FRL rate from 2015 – no rate available since then

Table 9. Reading and English Language Arts Scores for High FRL, No SIG Nebraska schools.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Druid Hills (Omaha) | 69 | 74 | 81 | 77 | 76 | 77 | 84 | 77 | 68 | 68 |
| Indian Hill (Omaha) | 75 | 84 | 87 | 88 | 90 | 97 | 101 | 78 | 73 | 71 |
| Wakonda (Omaha) | 67 | 69 | 74 | 72 | 80 | 85 | 93 | 67 | 61 | 69 |
| Clinton (Lincoln) | 85 | 99 | 96 | 104 | 97 | 103 | 112 | 90 | 74 | 73 |
| Everett (Lincoln) | 101 | 97 | 95 | 99 | 103 | 107 | 114 | 93 | 77 | 79 |
| Howard (Grand Island) | 76 | 85 | 89 | 94 | 107 | 107 | 100 | 79 | 74 | 77 |
| Harney (South Sioux City) | 77 | 85 | 99 | 98 | 105 | 111 | 113 | 92 | 78 | 83 |
| Washington (Fremont) | 70 | 82 | 93 | 83 | 84 | 88 | 89 | 82 | 64 | 62 |

Table 10. Example of a Low FRL, No SIG elementary school in Nebraska.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FRL**\* | **Students** | **White** | **African American** | **Hispanic** | **Native American** |
| Fire Ridge (Elkhorn) | 1% | 468 | 91% | 2% | 4% | 0% |

Table 11. Reading and English Language Arts Scores for a Low FRL, No SIG Nebraska school.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Fire Ridge (Elkhorn) | 118 | 127 | 126 | 138 | 142 | 151 | 150 | 127 | 103 | 106 |