THE NEW DEMOGRAPHY OF AMERICA'S SCHOOLS

Immigration and the No Child Left Behind Act

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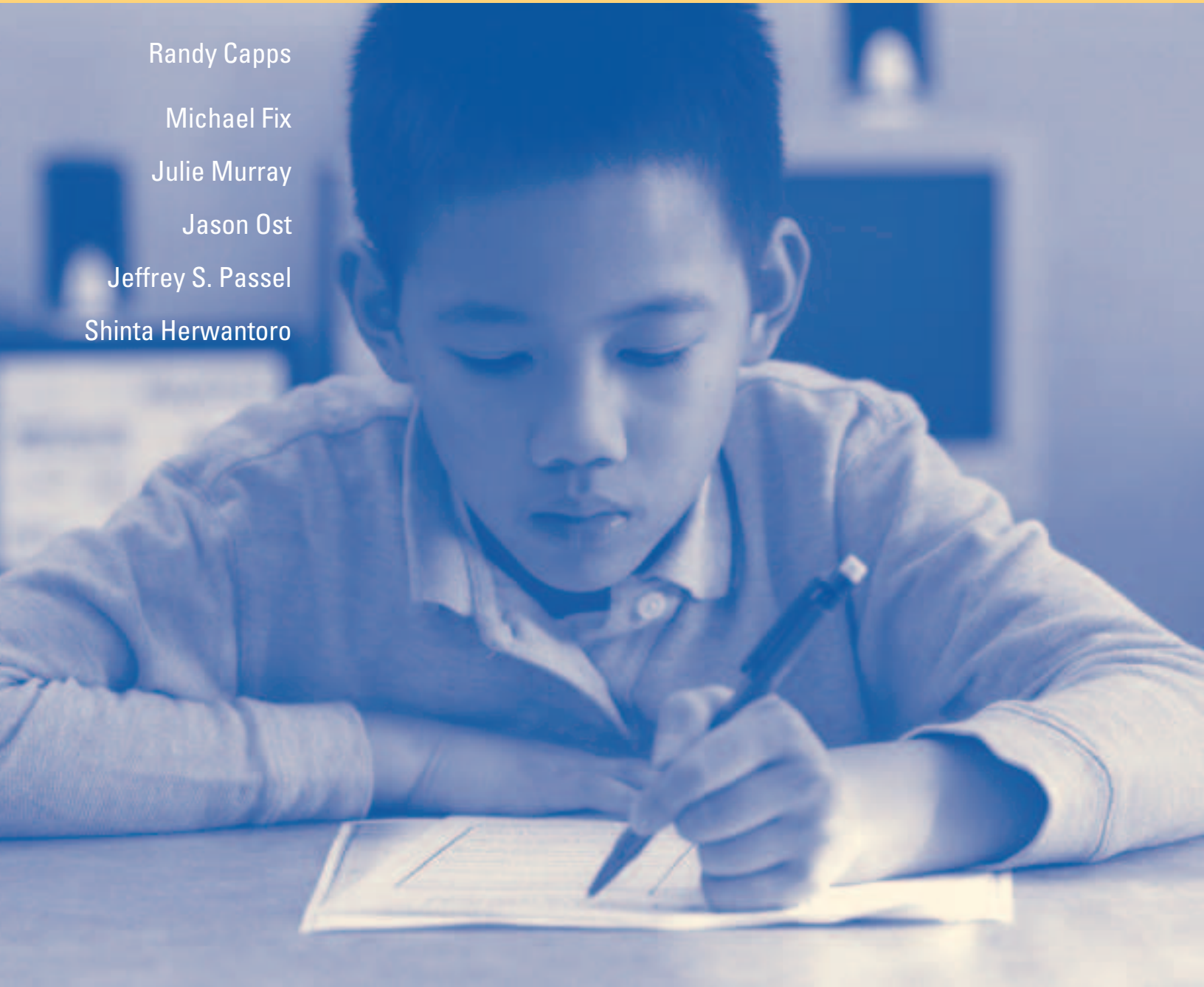
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INTRODUCTION

The demographics of U.S. elementary and secondary schools are changing rapidly as a result of record-high immigration. These demographic shifts are occurring alongside implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, the landmark 2002 federal law that holds schools accountable for the academic performance of limited English speaking children and other groups that include many children of immigrants. This report explores how immigration is changing the profile of the nation's elementary and secondary student population during this era of reform.[1]

NCLB Could Improve the Education of Immigrants' Children

No Child Left Behind has the potential to improve the education of children of immigrants and limited English speaking children in several important ways. Most key provisions affecting limited English proficient (LEP) and immigrant students are set out in Title I and Title III of the Act.[2] Title I requires schools to improve the performance of LEP students on assessments of reading and mathematics beginning in 3rd grade (U.S. Department of Education 2002). Many children of immigrants are limited English proficient. They also often fall into one or more of the NCLB Act's other protected classes, including "major racial and ethnic groups" (blacks, Hispanics, and Asians), low-income students, and students in special education programs.[3]

Title I also mandates that schools report assessment results for students in these protected classes, and that schools be held accountable for improvements in the performance of these students.[4] Schools that do not sufficiently improve the performance of students in these groups over an extended period are subject to interventions, including allowing parents to send their children to another school and offering supplemental services such as after-school programs. Continued failure to meet performance targets will eventually lead to school restructuring and possibly even closure (U.S. Department of Education 2002).

Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act requires schools to measure and improve students' English proficiency, with states held accountable for improving English proficiency on an annual basis.[5] The law provides support for states and school districts to create new assessments of English proficiency, as well as alternative assessments—in the form of native-language tests or accommodations on English-language tests—to help accurately measure LEP students' performance in reading and mathematics.

NCLB is likely to promote changes in curricula for LEP students—whether enrolled in dual language, bilingual, or English immersion programs—so these students can perform better on standardized content area assessments. Since LEP students will be required to learn the same content and pass the same assessments as other students, NCLB could better integrate and align LEP students' classroom instruction with instruction provided to others. And because NCLB holds schools accountable for LEP students' English proficiency, the law may alter language programs and produce an

increased focus on rapid English acquisition. Further, every bilingual and ESL classroom, just like other classrooms, must have a highly qualified teacher, one who is credentialed and holds a degree or significant expertise in the subject areas he or she teaches (U.S. Department of Education 2004a).

NCLB may also produce more emphasis on enrolling LEP children in pre-kindergarten (PK) and other early education programs to better prepare them for classroom instruction and the national assessments. Research has shown that early education programs help narrow gaps in preparation for elementary school (Haskins and Rouse 2005; Takanishi 2004). By highlighting achievement gaps among major racial and ethnic groups and for LEP children, NCLB may lead to more investment in early education programs that serve these children, whether Head Start, school-based PK, or other child care programs with strong education components.

Finally, parents of LEP students and immigrant parents have the same rights as other parents under NCLB: to be informed of their child's progress on assessments, their school's progress on meeting standards, and their right to transfer their child to another school if the local school fails to sufficiently progress. Parents of LEP children must also be informed about the type of language instruction their children are receiving and that they have the right to refuse bilingual or ESL instruction for their children. NCLB requires schools to communicate with parents in the languages they speak "to the extent practicable" (U.S. Department of Education 2004b).

NCLB Poses Challenges for Schools with Large LEP and Immigrant Populations

No Child Left Behind also poses many challenges for children of immigrants, LEP students, and the schools serving them, particularly those with large numbers of children of immigrants. Because of ongoing residential and school segregation by race, ethnicity, and income, many schools are linguistically segregated. Over half (53 percent) of LEP students attend elementary and secondary schools where over 30 percent of their classmates are LEP; conversely, 57 percent of English proficient students attend schools where less than 1 percent of all students are LEP (Van Hook and Fix 2000). Many schools with large LEP populations also have large Hispanic, Asian, and low-income student populations, since children in immigrant families often share these characteristics. Schools serving large populations in several of these groups must meet performance standards for all groups or face the interventions required by NCLB.

NCLB may change the quality or nature of education received by children of immigrants and LEP students. Its emphasis on testing may narrow the focus to subjects covered by the standardized tests, especially in schools that have difficulty meeting their performance targets. Additionally, with English proficiency foremost among their goals, schools may rely less on dual language immersion programs that build students' English *and* native language skills, instead adopting transitional bilingual or English immersion programs, even for younger LEP students. Parents who would like their children to continue receiving at least some instruction in a language other than English may find their options increasingly limited. Finally, students who do not score well on tests—such as late-entering immigrants and those who have difficulty learning English—may grow discouraged by their poor performance and possibly drop out of school. High LEP dropout rates create additional challenges for high-LEP schools, which must meet state-set graduation standards required under NCLB for LEPs and other students.

Data and Topics Covered in This Report

The report draws its data mostly from the 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing. The census includes information on child age and school enrollment, nativity and citizenship of parents and

children, English language proficiency, family income, and other key demographic factors. Unlike school-based data, the census provides comparability across the nation, at the state and local levels, and across decades, enabling us to underscore trends over time. The Urban Institute's assignments of legal status to noncitizens have further enhanced the value of census data by allowing us to identify additional subgroups, including children with undocumented parents.[6]

The report begins by describing children of immigrants and limited English proficient children. Next, it discusses children of immigrants in low-income families—another protected group under NCLB. After that, the report examines how family income and parental education interact with linguistic proficiency and isolation. Finally, the report describes characteristics of children of immigrants who fall within the major racial and ethnic reporting groups mandated under NCLB—Latino, Asian, and black students—and draws comparisons among children with parents from different countries.

CHILDREN OF IMMIGRANTS

One in Five Students in Pre-Kindergarten to 12th Grade

Between 14 and 16 million immigrants entered the country during the 1990s, up from 10 million during the 1980s and 7 million during the 1970s.[7] Immigration flows in the 1990s far exceeded those in any decade in the nation's history. Legal immigration ranged from 700,000 to more than 1 million people a year during the 1990s, while undocumented migration added an estimated 500,000 foreign-born people a year by the end of the decade. This high pace of immigration was sustained during 2000–04, with the foreign-born population increasing by over 1 million a year.

The total foreign-born population passed 34 million in 2004, according to the U.S. Current Population Survey (figure 1). This total is more than 3 million people higher than in 2000 and more than triple the figure of 10 million in 1970. The foreign-born share of the U.S. population more than doubled from less than 5 percent in 1970 to almost 12 percent in 2004. With sustained high levels of immigration, the foreign-born population may reach 42–43 million and account for over 13 percent of the total U.S. population by 2010. Although in absolute numbers the foreign-born population is at a record high, the foreign-born share of the population will remain below the peaks of over 14 percent during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

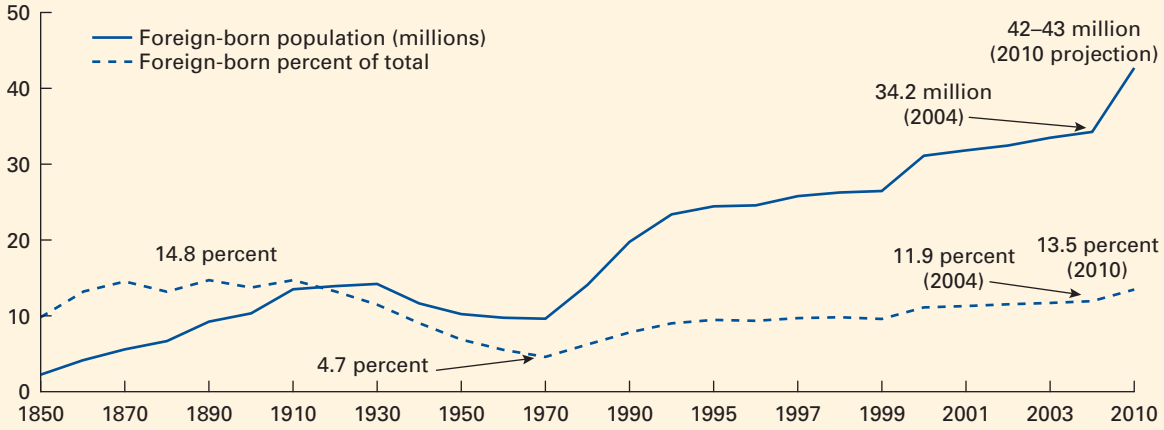
Children of Immigrants Increase to One in Five School-Age Children

Sustained high levels of immigration have also led to a rapid increase in the number of children with immigrant parents.[8] By 2000, immigrants represented one in nine of all U.S. residents, but their children represented one in five of all children under age 18. Children of immigrants represented an even higher share—one in four—of all school-age children who were low-income, defined by eligibility for the National School Lunch Program.[9] The relatively large share of children with immigrant parents is due in part to higher fertility among immigrant women, and to the fact that more immigrant women than U.S.-born women are of childbearing age (Ford 1990; Forste and Tienda 1996). Since immigrants on average have lower incomes than U.S. natives, a higher share of children of immigrants are lower-income than children of natives (Reardon-Anderson, Capps, and Fix 2002).

The share of children of immigrants among the school-age population has also grown rapidly, from 6 percent in 1970 to 19 percent in 2000 (figure 2). By 2000 there were 11 million children of immigrants out of 58 million total children enrolled in PK through 12th grade (table 1).[10] Because immigrants have most of their children after arriving in the United States, about three-quarters of children of immigrants are native-born, while about one-quarter are foreign-born. In 2000 there were 3 million foreign-born children, accounting for 5 percent of all school-age children, up from 2 percent of children in 1970.

The share of children who are first-generation immigrants increases in the upper grades.[11] In 2000, 16 percent of all students in pre-kindergarten were children of immigrants, but only 2 percent

FIGURE 1. United States Foreign-Born Population, 1850–2010

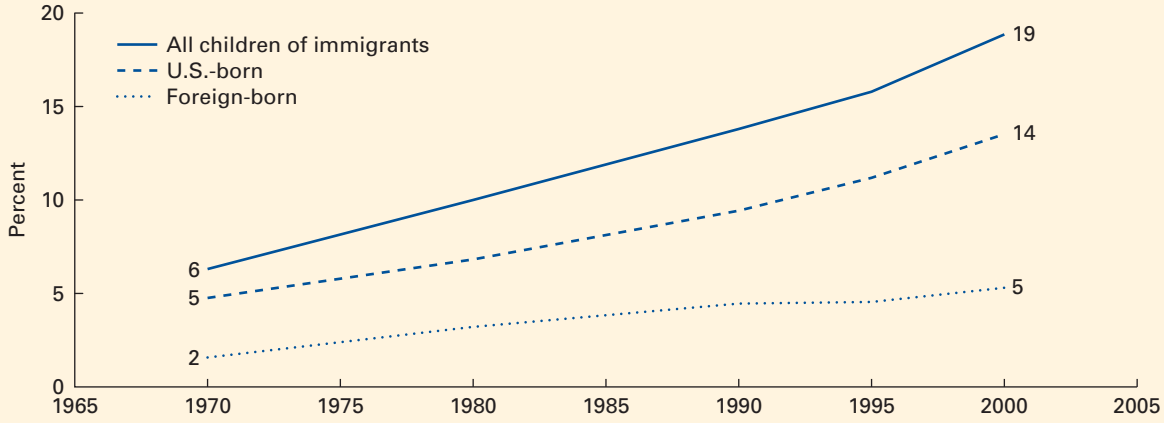


Sources: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, U.S. Current Population Survey, various years.

were foreign-born (figure 3). In the upper grades (6 to 12), children of immigrants composed 19 percent of the total student population, while the foreign-born represented 7 percent of the total. In the upper grades, over one-third of all children of immigrants were first-generation, compared with only one-eighth in pre-kindergarten.

Rapidly rising immigration means that immigrants represent an increasing share of all parents giving birth each year. Thus the highest share of children with immigrant parents occurs among children who were born most recently. Following this age distribution, there are more children of immigrants in the lower grades, with the highest share in kindergarten.

FIGURE 2. Share of School-Age Children with Immigrant Parents, 1970–2000



Sources: Van Hook and Fix (2000), Urban Institute tabulations from Census 2000 Supplementary Survey Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS).
Notes: Children of immigrants have at least one parent born outside the United States. Immigrants exclude individuals born in Puerto Rico.

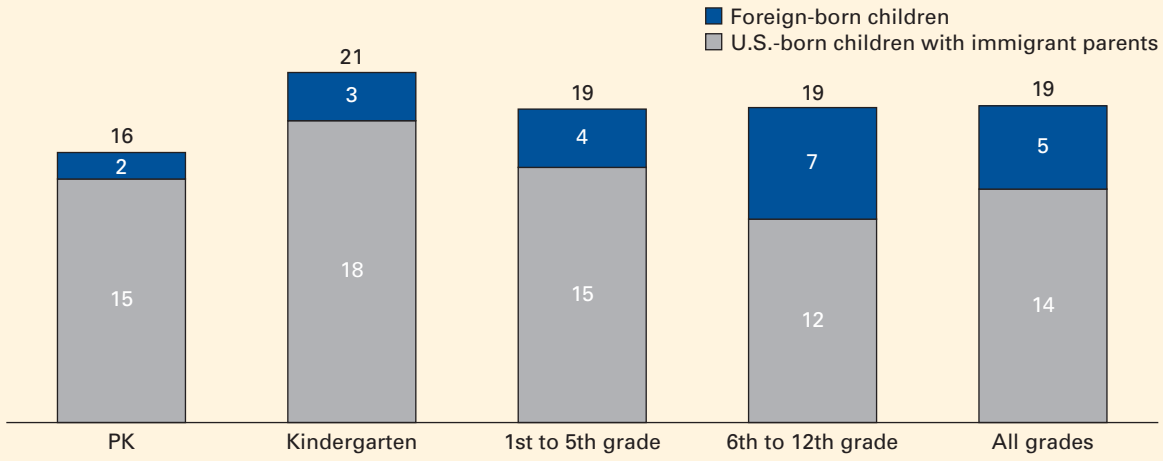
TABLE 1. Children of Immigrants and LEP Children in the United States, 2000

	All grades	PK	Kindergarten	1st to 5th	6th to 12th
Children of immigrants (1,000s)	10,757	803	873	3,637	5,444
Share of all children	19%	16%	21%	19%	19%
Foreign-born children (1,000s)	2,901	100	129	714	1,958
Share of all children	5%	2%	3%	4%	7%
Second-generation children (1,000s)	7,856	703	744	2,923	3,486
Share of all children	14%	14%	18%	15%	12%
Limited English proficient children (1,000s)	3,289	[a]	402	1,275	1,612
Share of all children	6%	[a]	10%	7%	6%
Linguistically isolated children (1,000s)	2,794	241	322	1,182	1,049
Share of all children	5%	5%	8%	6%	4%
All children	**57,746**	**4,954**	**4,154**	**19,383**	**29,255**

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Note: Percentages may not add up due to rounding.
[a] Because the census measures English proficiency starting at age 5, this table does not disaggregate LEP figures for children in pre-kindergarten.

According to this logic, one would expect children of immigrants to be an even higher share of children in pre-kindergarten than in kindergarten. However, children of immigrants make up a relatively small share (16 percent) of those enrolled in pre-kindergarten, suggesting substantial underenrollment.[12] Other recent studies, such as those using the Survey of Income and Program Participation and the Urban Institute's National Survey of America's Families, have shown relatively

FIGURE 3. Children of Immigrants and Foreign-Born Children by Grade Level, 2000 (percent)



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Note: Percentages may not add up because of rounding.

low rates of enrollment in early education programs among children of immigrants, especially Latinos. The lowest rates of early education enrollment tend to be among children from lower-income families and those whose parents have less formal education and more limited English skills. These characteristics are common among many immigrant families, especially those that are undocumented and from Mexico and other Latin American countries. Other potential explanations include cultural differences in mothers' work and child-rearing patterns, as well as access barriers to child care (Capps et al. 2005; Hernandez 2004; Liang, Fuller, and Singer 2000; Takanishi 2004).

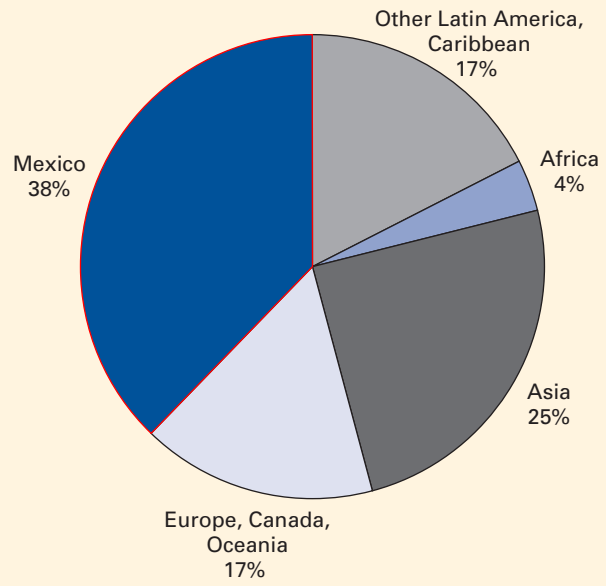
The foreign-born, or first-generation, share of children is highest in the upper grades because older children have lived longer and therefore have had more opportunity to enter the United States. For example, an 18-year-old could have entered the United States any time over the past 18 years, while a 6-year-old only has had six years—one-third as long—to enter the country.

These trends suggest that secondary schools face special challenges since they have a larger share of children who are first-generation immigrants. Many foreign-born children enter U.S. schools with limited English proficiency or with relatively few years of formal schooling in their home countries. These foreign-born children often have difficulty making the academic transition into U.S. secondary schools. Moreover, foreign-born children have been raised in a different school system, which may also affect their transition into U.S. schools.

Almost Two-Fifths of All Foreign-Born Children Are Mexican

Mexico is the largest source country for U.S. immigration. In 2000, over half of foreign-born elementary school children were born in Mexico, other Latin American countries, or the Caribbean (figure 4). Another quarter were born in Asian countries. Only 17 percent were born in Canada, Europe, or Oceania (Australia or New Zealand). The smallest share (4 percent) were born in Africa.

FIGURE 4. Country or Region of Birth for Foreign-Born Children, PK to 5th Grade, 2000



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Note: Percentages may not total 100 because of rounding.

The sending country distribution shown here reflects the overall pattern for immigrants in the United States. Whether we look at younger foreign-born children, older children, or immigrant parents with children, we see the same pattern: just over half were born in Latin America and the Caribbean, with over a third born in Mexico.[13] This pattern represents a departure from historical patterns: during previous waves of immigration in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the vast majority of U.S. immigrants were born in Europe.

If we look at individual countries of origin, Mexico predominates. In 2000, about 355,000, or 38 percent of all foreign-born children in PK to grade 5, were born in Mexico (table 2). Each of the other top 10 countries sending immigrants to the United States accounted for less than 35,000 children, or less than 4 percent of all foreign-born elementary school children. The country of origin pattern for children in grades 6 to 12 is similar, with Mexico again accounting for over one-third of the total, although the next nine most common countries differ slightly.

TABLE 2. Top 10 Countries of Birth for Foreign-Born Children by Grade Level, 2000

PK to 5th Grade			6th to 12th Grade		
	Number (1,000s)	Percent		Number (1,000s)	Percent
Mexico	355	37.6	Mexico	879	37.0
India	32	3.4	Philippines	82	3.5
Canada	31	3.3	Dominican Republic	81	3.4
Philippines	29	3.1	Vietnam	79	3.3
China	29	3.1	El Salvador	78	3.3
Korea	27	2.8	Korea	62	2.6
Russia	25	2.7	China	53	2.2
Dominican Republic	24	2.6	Haiti	47	2.0
Vietnam	19	2.0	Guatemala	47	2.0
Colombia	18	1.9	India	47	2.0
All countries	**943**	**100.0**	**All countries**	**1,958**	**100.0**

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

The other most frequent countries of origin for immigrant children include Canada, Russia, Haiti, and several Asian and Latin American countries, suggesting that—beyond Mexico—the population of foreign-born children is very diverse. Apart from Canada, these countries are all substantially poorer than the United States.

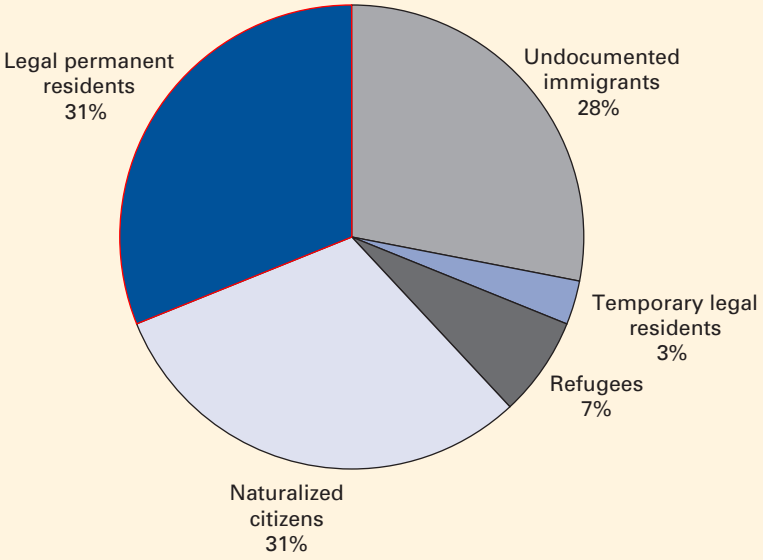
Most Children of Immigrants Are U.S.-Born Citizens, but Many Have Undocumented Parents

Three-quarters of children of immigrants are born in the United States and are therefore U.S. citizens (Capps 2001). They enjoy the same rights and privileges as other U.S.-born citizens; however, many have parents who do not. Undocumented parents may be wary of interacting with institutions such as public schools owing to fear of deportation or other immigration-related consequences. Additionally, a comparatively small share of these children are themselves undocumented immigrants. While all children—including undocumented children—have a right to attend public schools,[14] undocumented children may also be fearful of schools and other institutions.

The number of undocumented immigrants has been increasing more rapidly than the number of legal immigrants over the past several years. As a result, the share of all immigrants who are undocumented has been rising.[15] According to our best estimates,[16] the share of all immigrants who were undocumented rose from about 25 percent in 2000 to 28 percent in 2003. By 2003, there were almost as many undocumented immigrants as legal permanent residents or naturalized citizens (figure 5). Relatively small shares of immigrants were admitted as refugees or as students or temporary workers in certain occupations.[17]

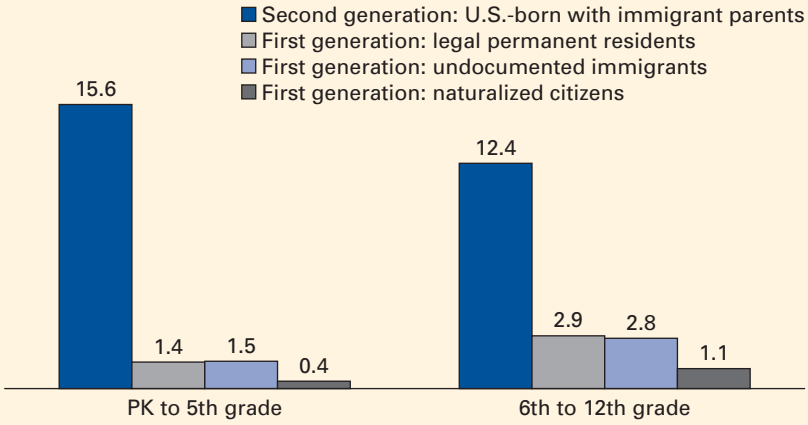
Despite the fact that so many immigrants are noncitizens—either legal or undocumented—the vast majority of school-age children are U.S.-born citizens, and a small share of all school-age children are undocumented. In PK to 5th grade, for instance, 16 percent of all children in 2000 were second-generation, U.S.-born citizens, while only 3 percent were first-generation immigrants (figure 6). Of first-generation elementary school children, most were noncitizens, split approximately evenly between undocumented and legal permanent residents. However, only 1.5 percent of all children in PK to 5th grade were undocumented.

FIGURE 5. Citizenship and Legal Status of U.S. Immigrants, 2003



Sources: Urban Institute estimates based on March 2003 Current Population Survey, adjusted for undercount, and U.S. Department of Homeland Security data.
Note: Refugees entered the United States in 1980 or later.

FIGURE 6. Legal, Undocumented, and Naturalized Immigrant Children by Grade Level, 2000 (percent)



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

In the higher grades (6 to 12), 12 percent of all children in 2000 were second-generation, and 7 percent were first-generation. Three percent of all children were undocumented, and a roughly equal share were legal permanent residents. Thus, although concerns about legal status and citizenship are more important considerations in secondary than in elementary schools, undocumented children make up a small share of the total school-age population at both levels.

A higher share of school-age children, however, have noncitizen and undocumented parents. In 2000, 8 percent of all elementary school children and 7 percent of secondary school children had parents who were legal permanent residents (figure 7). The share with undocumented parents was 5 percent for children in PK to 5th grade and 4 percent for children in 6th to 12th grade. In many schools, the shares of parents who are noncitizens and undocumented may be much larger.

In secondary schools, most children with undocumented parents are themselves undocumented. In 2000, almost two-thirds (65 percent) of children in grades 6 to 12 with undocumented parents were themselves undocumented; the remainder was mostly U.S.-born citizens. In PK to grade 5, this pattern was reversed: 30 percent were undocumented and 70 percent were U.S.-born citizens.

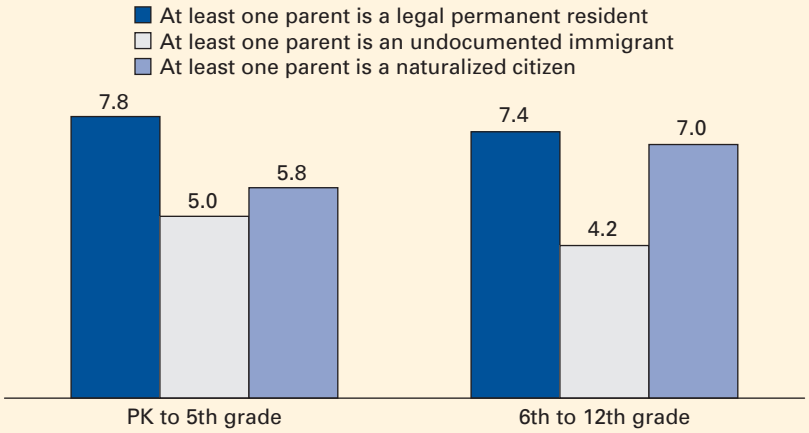
Children of Immigrants Are Concentrated but Dispersing Rapidly

Like all immigrants, children of immigrants are heavily concentrated in the six states with the largest populations: California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey. Together these six states accounted for two-thirds of all immigrants and 69 percent of all elementary school children of immigrants in 2000; this was down slightly from three-quarters of all immigrants and 73 percent of children of immigrants in 1990.

Nearly half (47 percent) of California's students in PK to 5th grade are children of immigrants (figure 8). Nine other states had percentages for children of immigrants above the national average (19 percent): Nevada, New York, Hawaii, Texas, Florida, Arizona, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and New Mexico. In 6th to 12th grade, the share of children of immigrants in California was 46 percent—also much higher than in any other state (table 3).

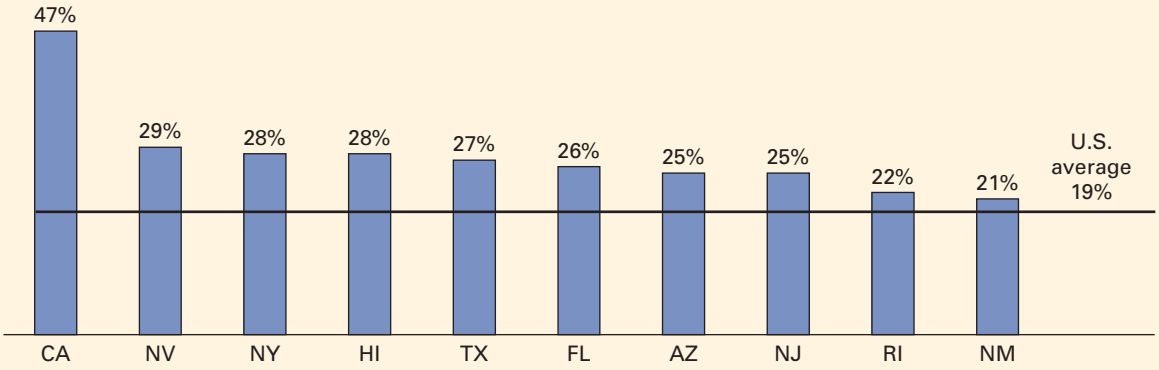
The states with the highest shares of children of immigrants, however, are generally not the states with the fastest growing number of children of immigrants. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of

FIGURE 7. Children with Legal, Undocumented, and Naturalized Immigrant Parents, by Grade Level, 2000 (percent)



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

FIGURE 8. States with the Highest Shares of Children of Immigrants in PK to 5th Grade, 2000



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

children of immigrants in PK to 5th grade grew most rapidly in Nevada (206 percent), followed by North Carolina (153 percent), Georgia (148 percent), and Nebraska (125 percent, as shown in figure 9). Growth in the number of children of immigrants in 6th to 12th grade showed a similar regional pattern for 1990 to 2000, though growth rates were higher in the secondary grades in most states (table 3).

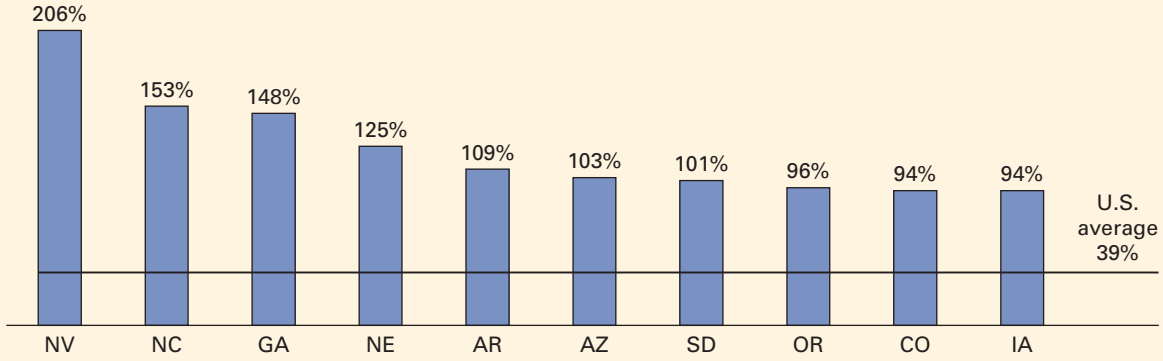
The states with the fastest growing populations of school-age children of immigrants are also among the fastest growing states in terms of overall immigrant populations (Capps, Fix, and Passel 2002). They are located in the Southeast, Midwest, and interior West (neighboring California). States in these regions mostly experienced growth rates exceeding 50 percent for the number of children of immigrants in PK to 5th grade between 1990 and 2000 (figure 10). By contrast, the six major immigration states—California, New York, Texas, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey—experienced slower growth in the number of children of immigrants (under 50 percent) during the 1990s. Similar trends are evident for states in terms of growth in the population of children of immigrants in 6th to 12th grade (table 3).

During the 1990s growth in the number of children of immigrants was substantially faster in secondary than elementary schools (72 versus 39 percent). This pattern was paralleled by a faster increase in the number of LEP students in secondary schools, as we shall see in the next section of the report. These trends point up the mismatch we have documented elsewhere between language and other newcomer resources that are heavily concentrated at the elementary school level, versus the rapidly growing population of LEP and immigrant students at the secondary level. Additionally, rapid growth in the population of children of immigrants may create challenges for schools in meeting NCLB's academic assessment requirements for 8th grade students as well as reducing high school dropout rates for immigrant youth (Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix 2000).

TABLE 3. Children of Immigrants by Grade Level and State

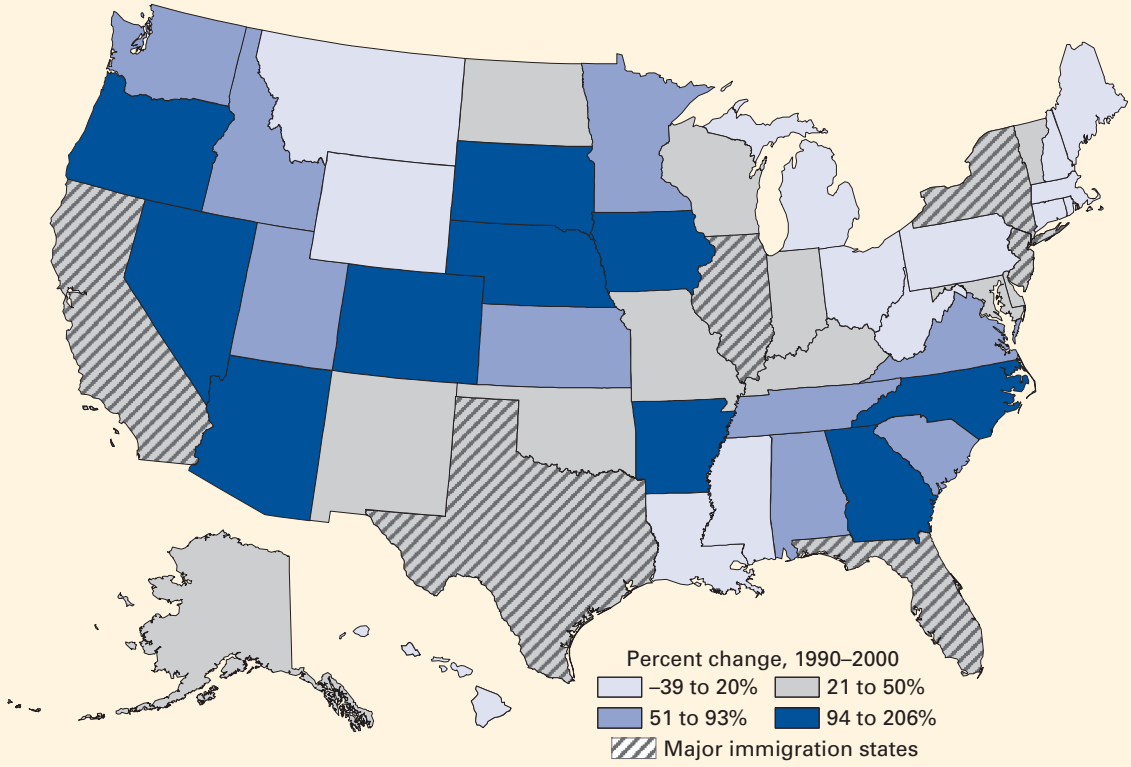
	PK to 5th Grade			6th to 12th Grade		
	Number of children, 2000 (1,000s)	Share of all children, 2000 (percent)	Percent change, 1990–2000	Number of children, 2000 (1,000s)	Share of all children, 2000 (percent)	Percent change, 1990–2000
Alabama	13	3	58	17	4	43
Alaska	7	9	37	5	7	90
Arizona	131	25	103	123	23	119
Arkansas	13	5	109	15	5	130
California	1,687	47	34	1,711	46	76
Colorado	67	15	94	59	14	127
Connecticut	51	15	11	61	18	32
Delaware	7	9	38	7	8	75
District of Columbia	8	17	28	6	15	57
Florida	373	26	47	404	27	98
Georgia	89	10	148	86	10	205
Hawaii	32	28	–1	35	30	27
Idaho	14	10	67	14	9	109
Illinois	250	19	35	262	20	63
Indiana	32	5	35	27	5	49
Iowa	12	4	94	14	5	81
Kansas	26	10	60	23	8	95
Kentucky	13	3	50	10	2	78
Louisiana	18	4	–5	19	4	35
Maine	5	4	–39	7	6	–23
Maryland	85	16	38	88	15	78
Massachusetts	115	19	14	125	21	42
Michigan	88	9	15	90	8	26
Minnesota	49	10	78	47	9	136
Mississippi	7	2	2	7	2	42
Missouri	26	5	22	22	4	61
Montana	4	4	2	3	3	34
Nebraska	13	8	125	12	7	135
Nevada	55	29	206	52	27	241
New Hampshire	9	7	–14	7	6	0
New Jersey	221	25	38	229	28	58
New Mexico	40	21	40	40	18	66
New York	540	28	23	601	31	54
North Carolina	67	9	153	59	8	205
North Dakota	2	3	43	2	3	103
Ohio	49	4	6	48	4	9
Oklahoma	27	8	33	26	7	101
Oregon	48	15	96	51	15	129
Pennsylvania	68	6	16	73	6	38
Rhode Island	22	22	7	22	22	39
South Carolina	16	4	77	17	4	86
South Dakota	3	3	101	3	3	23
Tennessee	27	5	69	23	4	111
Texas	606	27	44	627	27	70
Utah	35	13	74	30	11	90
Vermont	4	5	25	3	5	23
Virginia	93	13	51	88	13	72
Washington	107	18	67	100	16	113
West Virgina	3	2	–19	1	1	–23
Wisconsin	33	6	31	38	7	59
Wyoming	2	3	–23	3	5	–12
All states	**5,313**	**19**	**39**	**5,444**	**19**	**72**

FIGURE 9. States with the Highest Increases in Children of Immigrants in PK to 5th Grade, 1990–2000



Sources: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, Integrated PUMS, 1990 and 2000.

FIGURE 10. Increases in Children of Immigrants in PK to 5th Grade by State, 1990–2000



Sources: U.S. Census Integrated PUMS, 1990 and 2000.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT CHILDREN

A Focus of the No Child Left Behind Act

While the No Child Left Behind Act does not specifically include children of immigrants as a protected subgroup, it does require that schools disaggregate the performance of LEP children on standardized tests. Schools that do not meet performance targets under Title I for LEP students and those in other protected groups are subject to interventions under NCLB. Additionally, Title III of NCLB mandates that states improve the English proficiency of LEP students (U.S. Department of Education 2005). The penalties for states that fail to meet Title III targets are less severe than the penalties for districts and schools that miss their targets under Title I.

LEP Students Increase Rapidly

In 2000, 19 percent or 10.8 million school-age children were children of immigrants, but only 6 percent, or 3.4 million, were LEP. Thus, there are far more children of immigrants than limited English proficient children. In other words, many children of immigrants are not LEP (table 1). The census definition of limited English proficient—which we use throughout this report—includes all children who speak a language other than English at home and speak English less than "very well."[18] The census definition, however, only includes spoken English proficiency and is reported by the census respondent—usually a parent or other adult relative.

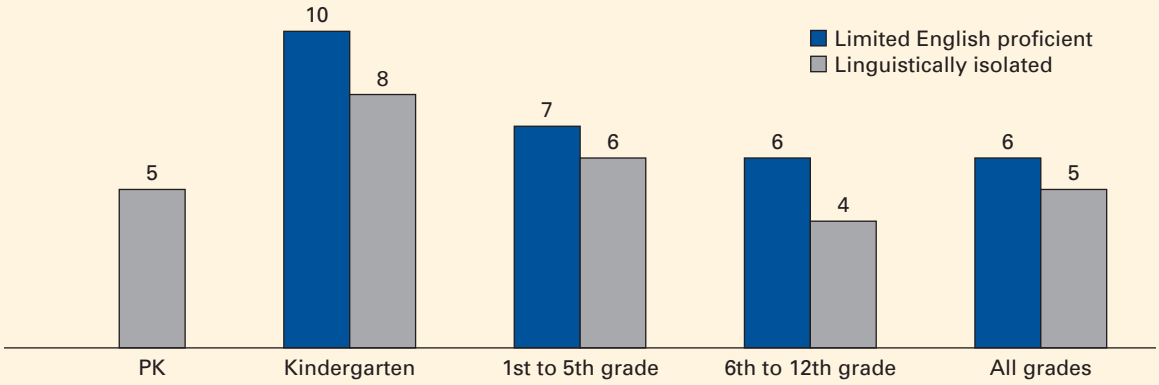
The 2000 Census slighted underreported the number of LEP children compared with State Education Agency (SEA) Survey data. The SEA Survey total for LEP students nationally in 2000–01 was 15 percent higher than the Census 2000 figure for school-age LEP children: 3.9 versus 3.4 million.[19] The SEA data offer a more comprehensive measure of English proficiency: they are based on tests that measure students' ability to understand, speak, read, and write English.

The census data are, however, more comparable across states, as states vary the definition of limited English proficiency for the data they collect. In 2000 there was great variation in the difference between census and SEA data, with California's SEA reporting 400,000 more LEP children than the census. Seventeen states, mostly in the West, reported considerably higher numbers of LEP children in the SEA than appear in the census, while most of the rest of the states—generally in the Northeast, Midwest, and South—reported lower numbers of LEP children.

According to census data, the LEP share of students in PK to grade 5 rose from 4.7 to 7.4 percent from 1980 to 2000, while the LEP share of children in grades 6 to 12 rose from 3.1 to 5.5 percent. In 2000 a total of 1.7 million LEP children were in PK to grade 5, and 1.6 million were in grades 6 to 12 (table 1).

Disaggregating by grade level, the LEP share in 2000 was highest in kindergarten—10 percent, compared with 7 percent in the other elementary grades and 6 percent in the secondary grades (figure 11).[20] Thus, as children move through the school system, the limited English proficient share falls but does not disappear. The decline is due in part to the fact that there are more children in immi-

FIGURE 11. Limited English Proficient and Linguistically Isolated Children by Grade Level, 2000 (percent)



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Notes: Because the census measures English proficiency starting at age 5, this figure does not disaggregate the limited English proficient (LEP) figures for pre-kindergarten. The census defines linguistically isolated households as those in which all members over age 14 are LEP.

grant families in the lower grades, and in part to the fact that many LEP children learn English by the time they reach secondary school.

The share of children with LEP parents is also a matter of concern, since the language parents speak may affect their involvement with schools. In 2000 about 8 percent of children in kindergarten lived in linguistically isolated households (those where all household members over 14 were LEP), compared with only 4 percent of children in grades 6 to 12 (figure 11). Thus the need for translation and interpretation assistance to help meet NCLB parental involvement requirements may be felt more forcefully in elementary than secondary schools. The relatively low share of linguistically isolated children in PK (5 percent) suggests underenrollment of these children.

In 2000 six out of seven LEP children in grades 1 to 5 lived in linguistically isolated households; in secondary school, two out of three did so. High levels of linguistic isolation point up the twin challenges of teaching LEP students and involving limited English-speaking families in their education. Furthermore, linguistic isolation may partially explain why the majority of LEP students in both elementary and secondary schools are U.S.-born, as described later in this report.

Spanish Predominates While Other Non-English Languages Are Diverse

About three-quarters of all LEP children in PK to 5th grade speak Spanish. Spanish predominance is explained by the large share of all immigrants born in Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and several Central and South American countries. Additionally, some LEP children and their parents were born in Puerto Rico, a Spanish-speaking territory of the United States.[21]

While Spanish accounted for 76 percent of all LEP students in PK to 5th grade and 72 percent in 6th to 12th grade, no other language accounted for more than 3 percent of all LEP students in 2000 (table 4). In PK to 5th grade, Chinese and Vietnamese each accounted for between 40,000 and 50,000 students, and no other language for more than 25,000. In 6th to 12th grade, French, Vietnamese, and Chinese each accounted for 50–60,000 students, with Korean ranked next at 31,000. Otherwise, the language distribution for LEP secondary school children is similar to that for elementary school children.

TABLE 4. Top 10 Languages Spoken by Limited English Proficient Children, by Grade Level, 2000

PK to 5th Grade			6th to 12th Grade		
	Number (1,000s)	Percent		Number (1,000s)	Percent
Spanish	1,359	76.1	Spanish	1,394	71.6
Chinese	46	2.6	French	58	3.0
Vietnamese	44	2.5	Vietnamese	57	3.0
Korean	25	1.4	Chinese	53	2.7
Hmong/Miao	24	1.3	Korean	31	1.6
French	20	1.1	French/Haitian Creole	27	1.4
German	19	1.1	German	25	1.3
Russian	17	1.0	Russian	21	1.1
French/Haitian Creole	16	0.9	Hmong/Miao	21	1.1
Arabic	14	0.8	Tagalog/Filipino	20	1.0
All languages	**1,676**	**100.0**	**All languages**	**1,612**	**100.0**

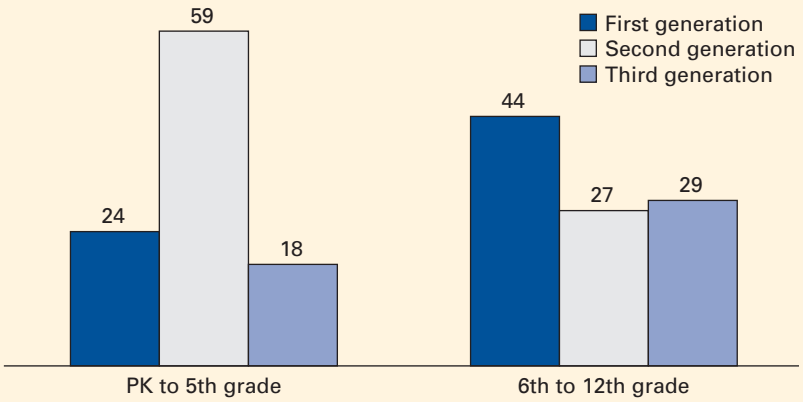
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

There are likely to be economies of scale in providing services to LEP students and outreach to LEP parents in Spanish, especially in major cities and other areas with large immigrant populations. By contrast, very few children speak other languages, making provision of services in these languages much more challenging.

Most LEP Students in Both Elementary and Secondary School Are U.S.-Born

Most LEP students are born in the United States—either as children of immigrants or, in some cases, as children with native-born parents. At the elementary school level, 59 percent of LEP students were second-generation (U.S.-born children of immigrants) and 18 percent were third-

FIGURE 12. Nativity and Generation for Limited English Proficient Children by Grade Level, 2000 (percent)



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

generation (children of natives) in 2000 (figure 12). Only about a quarter (24 percent) of LEP children in elementary school were foreign-born. At the secondary level, a higher share (44 percent) of LEP students was foreign-born. Nonetheless, over half of LEP students in secondary schools were U.S.-born.

Substantial third-generation shares of LEP children (18 percent in PK to 5th grade and 29 percent in 6th to 12th grade) suggest that many children *of natives* who were LEP when they began school remain LEP through secondary school. In 2000, a significant share of LEP children of natives (15 percent) were either born in Puerto Rico or had Puerto Rican–born parents. Other third-generation LEP children may include those with U.S.-born parents of Mexican origin that live in Spanish-speaking communities in the Southwestern border states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California.

The fact that over half of LEP children in secondary schools are second- or third-generation is surprising. Clearly, many LEP children are not learning English even after seven or more years in school. According to NCLB, schools will be held accountable for ensuring all these students learn English and perform at grade level on standardized subject tests, often given in English. Foreign-born LEP children who enter in later grades may be even more challenging because schools have less time to ensure these children learn English and master academic content areas.

Limited English Proficient Children Are Concentrated in Six States but Increasing Rapidly in Others

Five of the six top immigration states—California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois—accounted for 68 percent of all LEP elementary school students in 2000 (table 5). California had the largest share of LEP students (20 percent) among the states in 2000 (figure 13), along with the highest share of children of immigrants. The other four states with LEP shares over 10 percent in PK to 5th grade are also in the Southwest: Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada. New York (9 percent) and Rhode Island (8 percent) both have LEP shares of children above the national average (7 percent). Each has a substantial Puerto Rican population. For 6th to 12th grade, the pattern of LEP student shares by state is similar, although LEP shares are substantially lower overall (table 5).

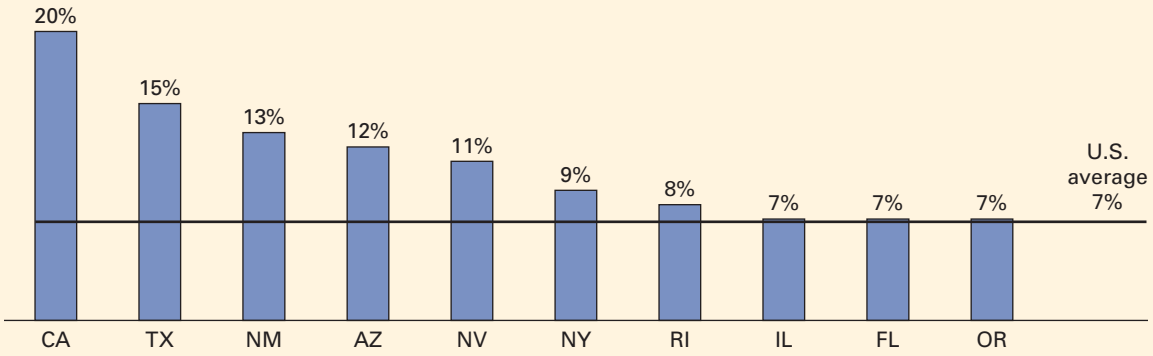
The states with the fastest growing LEP student populations are not the same as those with the largest LEP populations in number or proportion. The numbers of LEP children grew most rapidly between 1990 and 2000 in states in the Southeast, Midwest, and interior West. In fact, two states in these regions experienced phenomenal growth in their LEP elementary student populations during the 1990s: Nevada (354 percent) and Nebraska (350 percent, as shown in figure 14). Four other states experienced LEP student growth rates above 200 percent: South Dakota, Georgia, Arkansas, and Oregon. The fastest growing states are dispersed across all regions of the country (figure 15), including two states—South Dakota and Vermont—that still had very small total LEP student populations in 2000 (table 5).

The LEP student population is growing rapidly across the country, but more rapidly in secondary than elementary schools—just as we saw for the population of children of immigrants in the previous section of the report. During the 1990s, the secondary school LEP population grew by 64 percent, compared with 46 percent at the elementary school level (table 5). As documented elsewhere (Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix 2000), secondary schools have not been structured to promote language acquisition and content mastery for limited English proficient students. Moreover, most resources for bilingual education and English language acquisition have flowed to the elementary school level.

TABLE 5. Limited English Proficient Students by Grade Level and State

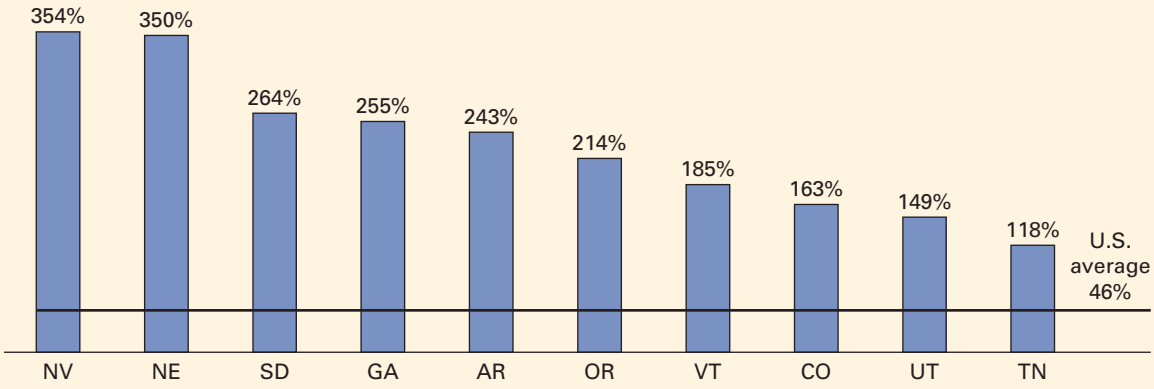
	PK to 5th Grade			6th to 12th Grade		
	Number of children, 2000 (1,000s)	Share of all children, 2000 (percent)	Percent change, 1990–2000	Number of children, 2000 (1,000s)	Share of all children, 2000 (percent)	Percent change, 1990–2000
Alabama	4	1	92	9	2	70
Alaska	3	4	61	3	4	85
Arizona	56	12	80	46	9	88
Arkansas	4	2	243	7	3	99
California	620	20	44	437	12	55
Colorado	24	6	163	21	5	144
Connecticut	14	5	35	16	5	39
Delaware	3	4	91	3	3	137
District of Columbia	2	4	27	2	5	27
Florida	87	7	51	85	6	89
Georgia	26	3	255	34	4	175
Hawaii	6	6	19	6	5	36
Idaho	3	3	75	5	3	87
Illinois	82	7	72	76	6	84
Indiana	12	2	28	13	2	48
Iowa	5	2	79	7	2	60
Kansas	7	3	87	8	3	123
Kentucky	4	1	52	7	2	57
Louisiana	5	1	–14	10	2	5
Maine	1	1	–14	3	2	27
Maryland	14	3	40	17	3	84
Massachusetts	28	5	1	34	6	49
Michigan	21	2	105	27	2	103
Minnesota	19	4	99	17	3	159
Mississippi	2	1	8	4	1	52
Missouri	9	2	43	11	2	55
Montana	1	2	18	2	2	25
Nebraska	5	3	350	6	3	233
Nevada	18	11	354	15	8	224
New Hampshire	1	1	13	2	1	121
New Jersey	48	6	23	52	6	51
New Mexico	23	13	18	19	9	33
New York	146	9	18	153	8	50
North Carolina	25	4	94	26	3	137
North Dakota	1	1	–22	2	3	76
Ohio	17	2	24	25	2	45
Oklahoma	7	2	65	9	2	125
Oregon	19	7	214	16	5	177
Pennsylvania	24	2	27	33	3	55
Rhode Island	7	8	31	7	7	70
South Carolina	5	2	109	10	2	98
South Dakota	2	2	264	1	2	131
Tennessee	8	2	118	9	2	104
Texas	288	15	30	232	10	42
Utah	9	4	149	9	3	89
Vermont	1	1	185	< 1	1	98
Virginia	20	3	89	28	4	86
Washington	33	6	95	25	4	111
West Virgina	1	1	–8	2	1	–9
Wisconsin	15	3	25	19	3	111
Wyoming	1	2	59	1	2	–19
All states	**1,786**	**7**	**46**	**1,612**	**6**	**64**

FIGURE 13. States with the Highest Shares of Limited English Proficient Children in PK to 5th Grade, 2000



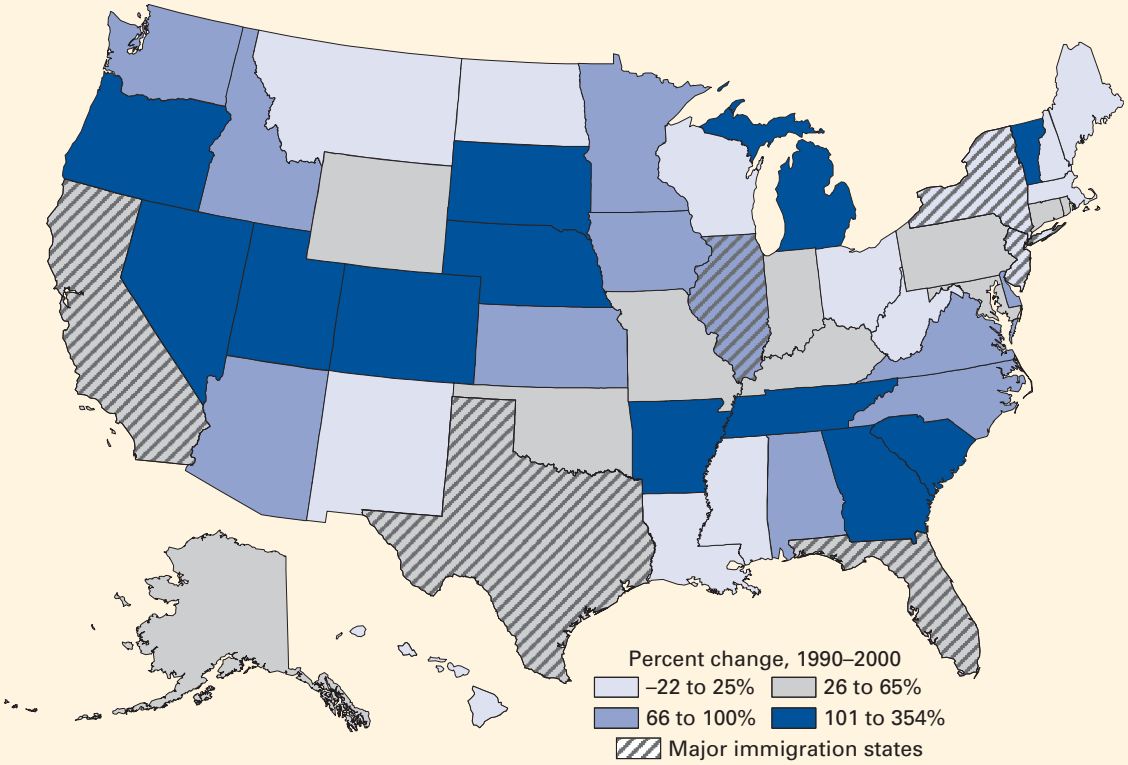
Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

FIGURE 14. States with the Highest Increases in Limited English Proficient Children in PK to 5th Grade, 1990–2000



Sources: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, Integrated PUMS, 1990 and 2000.

FIGURE 15. Increases in Limited English Proficient Children in PK to 5th Grade by State, 1990–2000



Sources: U.S. Census Integrated PUMS, 1990 and 2000.

INCOME AND PARENTAL EDUCATION

Family income and parental education are often key contributors to children's success in school (Hernandez 1999) and are related to implementation of No Child Left Behind. Alongside LEP students and those in major racial and ethnic groups, low-income or "economically disadvantaged" children represent one of NCLB's protected groups whose test results must be disaggregated. NCLB defines low-income students as those who are eligible for the National School Lunch Program, which provides free and reduced-price meals to students with family incomes below 185 percent of the federal poverty level.[22] A large and increasing share of children in immigrant families is eligible for the school lunch program; thus, these children fall into the low-income subgroup for NCLB accountability purposes.

In addition to new assessment mandates, NCLB promotes, and in some instances requires, expanded parental involvement and notification. Both may be more challenging to achieve with immigrant and LEP parents, especially those with low levels of formal education. Most immigrant parents do not have high school degrees;[23] many have less than a 9th grade education. Low parental education may inhibit immigrant parents' school involvement, ability to help children with homework, and understanding of their children's and school's performance.

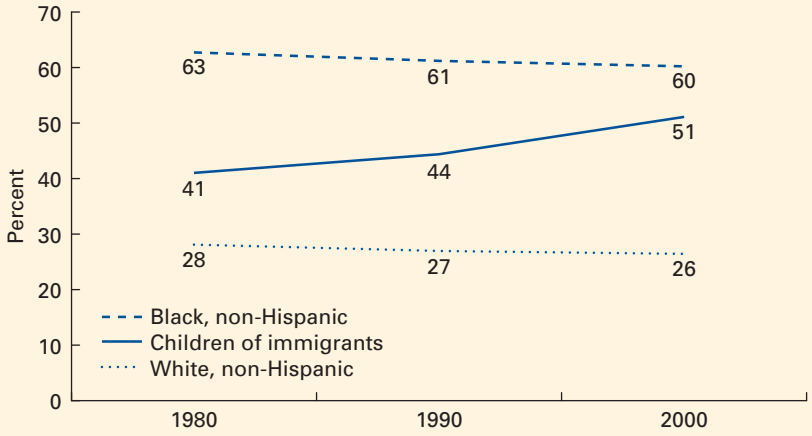
Half of School-Age Children of Immigrants Come from Low-Income Families

As a result of rising poverty rates, by 2000 over half of all children of immigrants in PK to 5th grade were low-income or economically disadvantaged for the purposes of NCLB. The share of low-income elementary school children among white, non-Hispanics remained relatively low, declining slightly from 28 to 26 percent between 1980 and 2000 (figure 16). The share of low-income black, non-Hispanic elementary school children was over twice as high but also fell slightly, from 63 to 60 percent between 1980 and 2000.[24] By contrast, the share of low-income children of immigrants *rose* substantially between 1980 and 2000, from 41 to 51 percent.

When we look at secondary students, we see a similar pattern of economic disadvantage: a relatively high but falling low-income rate for black children, a much lower rate for non-Hispanic whites, and an increasing rate for children of immigrants between 1980 and 2000 (figure 17). However, the low-income share fell faster for blacks and rose more quickly for children of immigrants in 6th to 12th grade than in PK to 5th grade.

In 2000 the low-income rate was considerably higher for elementary school children of immigrants (50 percent) than for children with U.S.-born parents (35 percent, as shown in figure 18). The pattern was similar but rates were lower for children in secondary school.

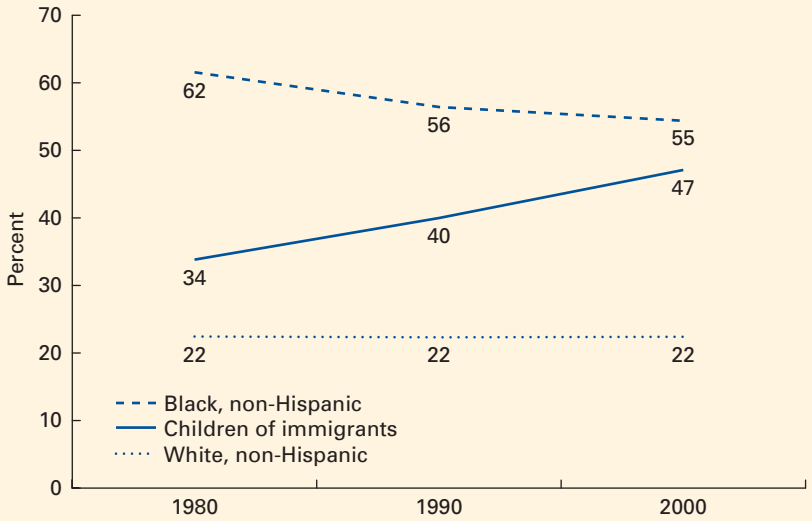
FIGURE 16. Share of Children of Immigrants in PK to 5th Grade from Low-Income Families, 1980–2000



Sources: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, Integrated PUMS, 1980, 1990, and 2000.
Notes: Low-income is family income below 185 percent of the federal poverty level. In this figure, black and white non-Hispanic children include children of both immigrants and natives.

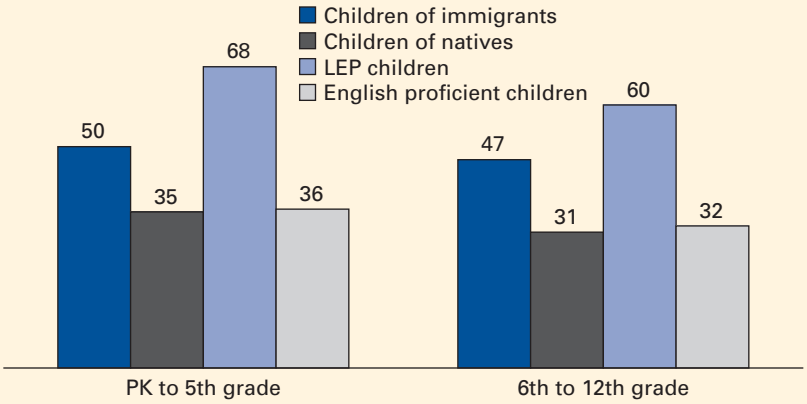
Higher economic disadvantage among elementary than secondary students may be partly a function of the relatively low incomes of young families with young children. Another potential explanation is the relatively high dropout rate among economically disadvantaged children: some are no longer attending school by the time they reach high school (Swanson 2004).

FIGURE 17. Low-Income Rate for Children of Immigrants in 6th to 12th Grade, 1980–2000



Sources: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, Integrated PUMS, 1980, 1990, and 2000.
Notes: Low-income is family income below 185 percent of the federal poverty level. In this figure, black and white non-Hispanic children include children of both immigrants and natives.

FIGURE 18. Low-Income Rates for Children of Immigrants and Children of Natives, by Grade Level, 2000



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Note: Low-income is family income below 185 percent of the federal poverty level.

Two-Thirds of Limited English Proficient Children Come from Low-Income Families

There is also a strong correlation between limited English proficiency and low incomes. In 2000 68 percent of LEP children in PK to 5th grade were low-income, as were 60 percent of LEP children in 6th to 12th grade (figure 18). These rates were nearly twice as high as the rates for English proficient children in comparable grades.

This finding is consistent with previous research showing a high correlation between limited English proficiency and poverty along with other hardship measures (Capps, Ku, et al. 2002). These figures also suggest considerable overlap between LEP and economically disadvantaged children, both groups that count toward schools' performance under NCLB. Most schools with large LEP student populations also have large low-income populations (Cosentina de Cohen, Deterding, and Clewell 2005). NCLB requires these schools to report assessment results for each population separately and to show gains in academic achievement for each group.

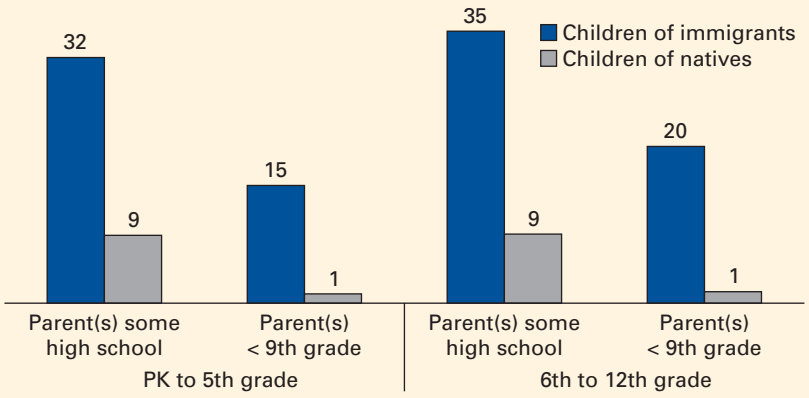
One-Third of Children of Immigrants Have Parents without High School Degrees

In addition to higher poverty rates, children of immigrants are more likely to have parents with relatively little formal education. About 32 percent of children of immigrants in PK to 5th grade had parents without high school degrees,[25] compared with 9 percent of children of natives in 2000 (figure 19). Fifteen percent of children of immigrants in PK to 5th grade had parents with less than 9th grade educations, compared with only 1 percent of children of natives. The gap in parental education between children of immigrants and those of natives was similar among children in 6th to 12th grade.

Half of Limited English Proficient Students Have Parents without High School Degrees

The share of parents without high school degrees is even higher for LEP children than children of immigrants, and levels are higher for children in PK to 5th grade than children in 6th to 12th grade.

FIGURE 19. Parental Education for Children of Immigrants and Children of Natives, by Grade Level, 2000 (percent)

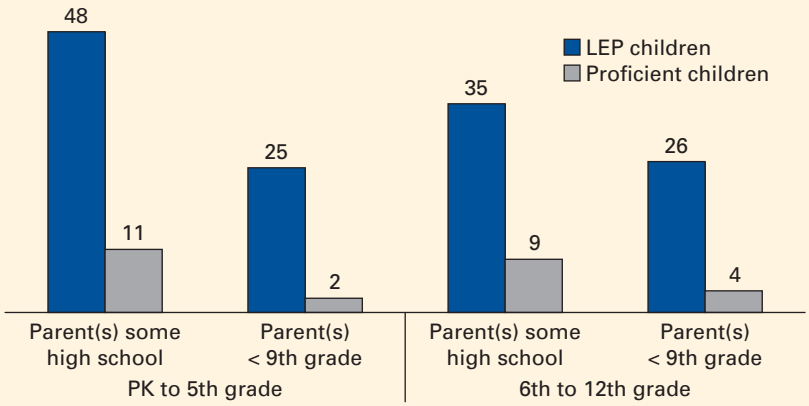


Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

In 2000 almost half of LEP children in elementary school had parents with less than high school educations, and a quarter had parents with less than 9th grade educations (figure 20). Only 11 percent of English proficient children had parents without high school degrees, and just 2 percent had parents who had not completed the 9th grade. In secondary school, a lower share of children of immigrants had parents without high school degrees (35 percent), but this was still several times the share for children of natives.

These findings suggest another challenge facing elementary and secondary schools with high LEP student populations: communicating with parents, many of whom have comparatively low levels of literacy in their native language in addition to not speaking or reading English.

FIGURE 20. Parental Education for English Proficient and Limited English Proficient Children, by Grade Level, 2000



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

VARIATION BY RACE, ETHNICITY, AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Under No Child Left Behind, schools and districts must report—and are held accountable for—the test scores of major racial and ethnic groups. Diverse schools may have to report scores for white, black, Asian, and Hispanic students, in addition to low-income and LEP students. Children of immigrants often fall into both the LEP and low-income subgroups. As we document here, many children of immigrants fall into mandated racial and ethnic subgroups as well. While there is considerable overlap among the LEP, low-income, and Asian or Hispanic subgroups, many Asian and Hispanic students—including many children of immigrants—are not LEP or low-income.

In this section of the report, we disaggregate children of immigrants by race, ethnicity, and country of origin, taking into account those who are limited English proficient, linguistically isolated, low-income, and whose parents lack high school degrees.

Asians and Hispanics Are Most Likely to Be Children of Immigrants

Most Asian and Hispanic children are children of immigrants. In 2000, only 6 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 9 percent of non-Hispanic blacks in PK to 5th grade were children of immigrants, compared with 80 percent of Asian children and 61 percent of Hispanic children (figure 21). While only 1 percent of black and white non-Hispanic children in PK to 5th grade were born outside the United States, 18 percent of Asian and 10 percent of Hispanic children were foreign-born.

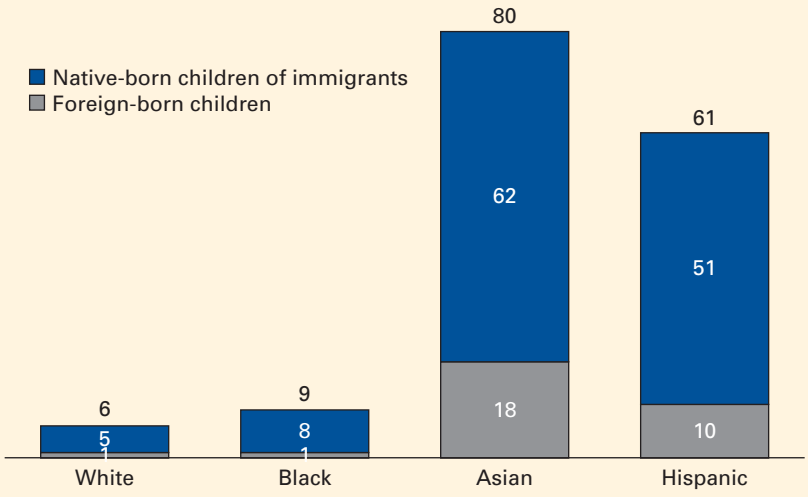
Put another way, about three-quarters of all children of immigrants and foreign-born children in elementary school were Asian or Hispanic in 2000. Fifty-three percent of children of immigrants and 51 percent of foreign-born children were Hispanic; 18 percent of children of immigrants and 24 percent of foreign-born children were Asian.

Foreign-Born Hispanic and Asian Children Are Most Likely to Be Limited English Proficient and Linguistically Isolated

Hispanic and Asian children are also much more likely to be LEP and linguistically isolated than non-Hispanic black and white children. In 2000, almost a third (31 percent) of Hispanic children and almost a quarter (24 percent) of Asian children were LEP, compared with only 2 percent of non-Hispanic black and 1 percent of non-Hispanic white children. From another angle, three-quarters (71 percent) of all LEP children in elementary school were Hispanic, and another 14 percent were Asian. Non-Hispanic black and white children are less likely to be LEP because they are less likely to be children of immigrants.

Rates of limited English proficiency are highest among Hispanic and Asian children of immigrants, especially those who are foreign-born (figure 22). LEP shares for white and black children of immi-

FIGURE 21. Children of Immigrants and Foreign-Born Children in PK to 5th Grade as Shares of Major Racial and Ethnic Groups, 2000

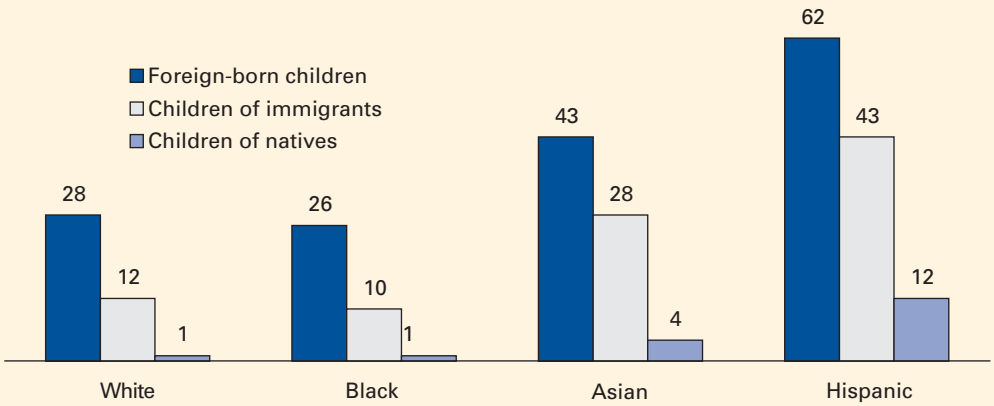


Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

grants are substantially lower, as their parents are more likely to come from English-speaking countries such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and various African and Caribbean nations.

Among all the major racial and ethnic groups except Hispanics, very few children of natives are LEP. The LEP share for white and black elementary school children of natives was less than 1 percent in 2000; the share for Asian children was only 4 percent. But a considerable share of Hispanic children of natives—12 percent—was LEP, a rate as high or higher than the rate for white and black

FIGURE 22. Limited English Proficient Children in PK to 5th Grade by Nativity, Major Racial and Ethnic Groups, 2000 (percent)



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Notes: Children of natives include children with parents born in Puerto Rico. Limited English proficient children speak a language other than English and speak English less than "very well."

children of immigrants. Fifteen percent of these children were of Puerto Rican descent,[26] while others may have been children in multigeneration Mexican-origin families living in Spanish-speaking communities in the Southwest. Patterns of linguistic isolation are similar: rates are highest among foreign-born children and higher for Hispanic and Asian than for white and black non-Hispanic children (figure 23).

Hispanic and Black Children Are Most Likely to Come from Low-Income Families

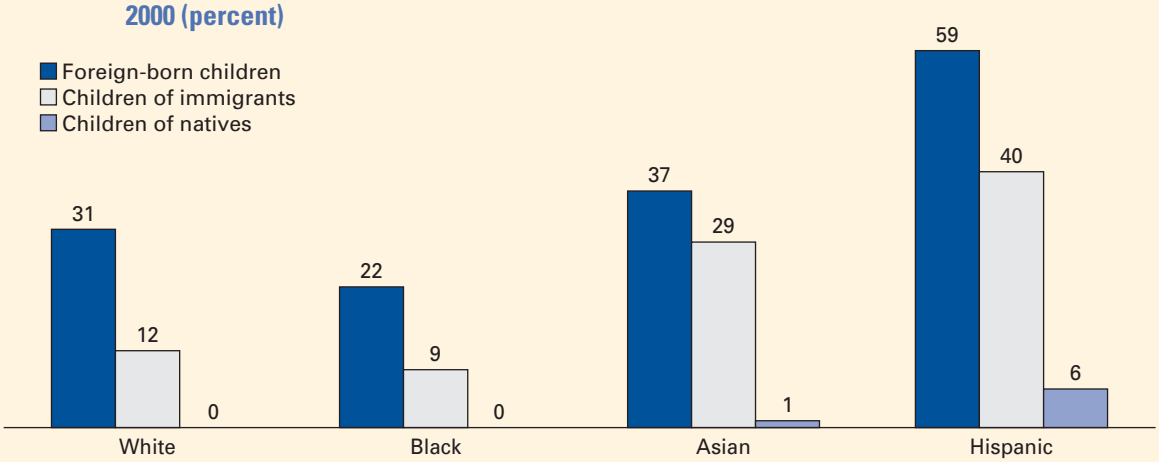
The racial and ethnic patterns regarding income differ sharply from limited English proficiency and linguistic isolation. Hispanic and black children are more likely than their white and Asian counterparts to come from low-income families. While Hispanic, Asian, and white foreign-born children are more likely than their native-born counterparts to be low-income, African Americans are as likely to be low-income as black foreign-born children (figure 24). In 2000, foreign-born Hispanic children in PK to 5th grade were most likely to be low-income (76 percent), followed by Hispanic children of immigrants (66 percent), foreign-born black children (62 percent), and African American children (61 percent).

Poverty rates were much lower for Asian and white children, with the lowest rates among children of natives. In terms of absolute numbers, however, white children of natives were the largest group of low-income children (4.2 million, or 40 percent of all low-income children in PK to 5th grade). Thus, the low-income subgroup recognized under NCLB includes large numbers of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, including white and black children of natives, as well as Hispanic children of immigrants.

Hispanic Children of Immigrants Are Most Likely to Have Parents without High School Degrees

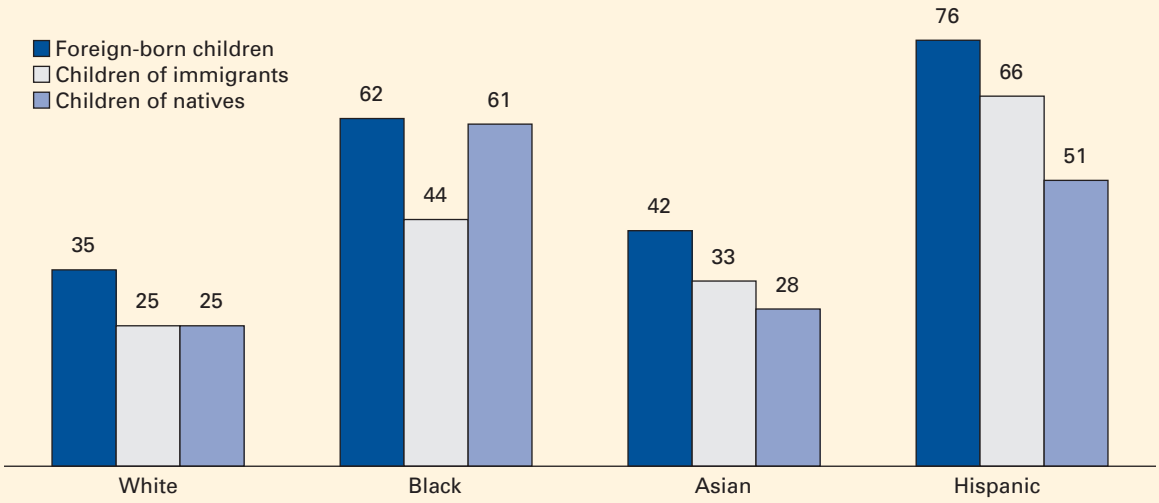
Hispanic children are by far the most likely to have parents without high school degrees. In 2000 in PK to 5th grade, over half (56 percent) of Hispanic *foreign-born* children had parents without high

FIGURE 23. Linguistically Isolated Children in PK to 5th Grade by Nativity, Major Racial and Ethnic Groups, 2000 (percent)



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Notes: Children of natives include children with parents born in Puerto Rico. Linguistically isolated children live in households where all members over age 14 are limited English proficient.

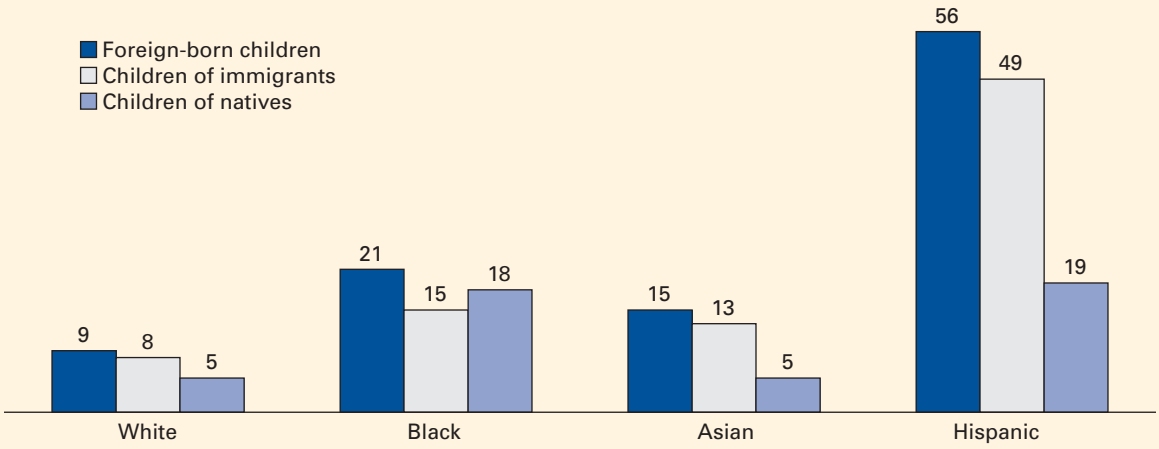
FIGURE 24. Low-Income Rates for Children in PK to 5th Grade by Nativity, Major Racial and Ethnic Groups, 2000



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Notes: Low-income is family income below 185 percent of the federal poverty level, the cutoff for federal school lunch program eligibility. Children of natives include children with parents born in Puerto Rico.

school degrees (figure 25). Hispanic children of immigrants overall were also much more likely to have parents without a high school degree than white, black, or Asian children of immigrants. The share of Hispanic children whose parents lack high school degrees fell sharply across generations from 56 percent for foreign-born children to 19 percent for Hispanic children of natives—a level almost equal that for African Americans (18 percent) and black children of immigrants (15 percent). Poverty

FIGURE 25. Share of Children in PK to 5th Grade Whose Parents Lack High School Degrees, by Nativity, Major Racial and Ethnic Groups, 2000



Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.

levels, however, did not fall as rapidly across generations for black and Hispanic children (figure 24), suggesting the labor market returns to education may be lower for parents of these children, especially African Americans.

Children of Immigrants' Characteristics Vary Greatly by Country of Origin

There are striking differences among the major racial and ethnic groups in terms of English proficiency, income, and parental education. We explore below variations in these characteristics across some of the most common countries of origin *within* each racial and ethnic group. Even though the great majority of children of immigrants in more than one NCLB target group are Hispanic, in fact the population within multiple protected groups is very heterogeneous, including substantial shares of some black and Asian subpopulations.

Black children of immigrants. Jamaica was the most common country of origin for the immigrant parents of black children in PK to 5th grade, followed by Haiti, Nigeria, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana (table 6).[27] Thus, the most common origin countries for black children of immigrants are English-speaking countries, except Haiti. Twenty-three percent of children with parents born in Haiti were LEP, and 21 percent lived in linguistically isolated households. Otherwise, very few black children of immigrants were LEP or linguistically isolated in PK to 5th grade. At the 6th to 12th grade level, similarly low shares of black children of immigrants were LEP or linguistically isolated (table 7).

A relatively large share of black children of immigrants, however, was low-income in 2000. The level was highest for children in PK to 5th grade with Haitian-born parents (51 percent), followed by children with parents born in Guyana (42 percent) and Jamaica (40 percent). Levels for children with parents from Nigeria and Trinidad and Tobago were lower. The share of children with parents without high school degrees was relatively low for all black immigrant countries except Haiti. Among children in 6th to 12th grade, similarly high shares of black children of immigrants were low-income (table 7).

Asian children of immigrants. Immigrant parents of Asian children in PK to 5th grade were mainly born in the Philippines, Vietnam, India, China, and Korea (table 6)—countries that are very diverse geographically, culturally, and economically.[28] Children with parents born in India and the Philippines—both countries with large numbers of English speakers—were relatively less likely to be LEP or linguistically isolated (with rates of 15 percent or lower); they were also relatively less likely to be low-income (under 20 percent) or have parents without high school degrees (under 5 percent).

By contrast, almost half of all children with parents born in Vietnam were linguistically isolated, over 40 percent were LEP or low-income, and about a quarter had parents without high school degrees.[29] Children with parents from China are just as likely as those with parents from Vietnam to be linguistically isolated, and almost as likely to be LEP or low-income. Unlike the Vietnamese, few Chinese immigrants entered the United States as refugees or as family members of refugees. Despite comparatively high parental education levels, children of Korean parents registered relatively high LEP and linguistic isolation.

Hispanic children of immigrants. Compared with black and Asian children, Hispanic children of immigrants show far less diversity by country of origin. What is most striking are their uniformly high levels across all indicators. In 2000 Mexico was by far the most common birthplace for parents of Hispanic children in PK to 5th grade, followed by El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Cuba (table 6).[30] Children of Cuban immigrants were similar to those with parents born in English-speaking Caribbean countries: only 31 percent of children were low-income, 15 percent LEP, 13 percent linguistically isolated, and 11 percent had parents without high school degrees.

TABLE 6. Indicators for Children of Immigrants in PK to 5th Grade by Race, Ethnicity, and Mother's Origin

	Total number of children (1,000s)	Limited English proficient (percent)	Linguistically isolated (percent)	Low-income (percent)	Parents lack high school degrees (percent)
White non-Hispanic	1,090	12	12	25	8
Canada	95	3	0	17	3
Germany	74	5	1	22	4
England	51	0	0	16	2
Mexico	46	21	16	56	28
Italy	42	4	4	18	6
Black non-Hispanic	439	10	9	44	15
Jamaica	85	0	0	40	14
Haiti	71	23	21	51	26
Nigeria	29	4	2	29	0
Trinidad and Tobago	23	1	1	32	8
Guyana	20	2	0	42	10
Asian non-Hispanic	964	28	29	33	13
Philippines	143	6	9	17	3
Vietnam	109	42	48	41	26
India	90	15	10	12	3
China	73	33	50	34	20
Korea	61	24	38	26	3
Hispanic	2,807	43	40	66	49
Mexico	1,694	43	38	68	54
El Salvador	138	36	41	64	53
Dominican Republic	118	37	39	63	31
Guatemala	70	38	44	68	52
Cuba	56	15	13	31	11
Children of Puerto Ricans	265	26	20	54	26

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Note: Low-income is family income below 185 percent of the federal poverty level, the cutoff for federal school lunch program eligibility.

By contrast, 68 percent of children with parents born in Mexico were low-income, 43 percent were LEP, and 54 percent had parents without high school degrees. Children with parents born in the Central American countries of El Salvador and Guatemala, as well as children with Dominican parents, closely resembled Mexicans.

Children with Puerto Rican–born parents, who are considered children of natives, also had rates almost as high as those for children with Mexican-born parents on these indicators. Over half (54 percent) of children with Puerto Rican parents were low-income, about one-quarter (26 percent) were LEP, and one-fifth (20 percent) were linguistically isolated. As shown earlier, children with Puerto Rican parents accounted for about 15 percent of all third-generation Hispanics (i.e., children of natives) in U.S. elementary and secondary schools in 2000.

TABLE 7. Indicators for Children of Immigrants in 6th to 12th Grade by Race, Ethnicity, and Mother's Origin

	Total number of children (1,000s)	Limited English proficient (percent)	Linguistically isolated (percent)	Low-income (percent)	Parents lack high school degrees (percent)
White non-Hispanic	1,142	9	7	24	9
Canada	90	4	1	15	3
Germany	77	3	0	19	6
Italy	60	3	2	18	10
England	49	1	0	15	2
Mexico	34	4	4	46	28
Black non-Hispanic	468	9	6	43	19
Haiti	66	10	8	52	29
Jamaica	62	1	0	34	12
Nigeria	28	5	2	18	1
Trinidad and Tobago	20	1	1	34	9
Guyana	13	0	0	33	11
Asian non-Hispanic	1,079	21	18	35	19
Philippines	140	4	3	16	4
Vietnam	93	19	20	38	38
India	62	7	5	10	4
Korea	61	11	14	23	4
Laos	47	19	15	57	42
Hispanic	2,745	28	23	61	53
Mexico	1,225	19	15	60	58
El Salvador	94	16	21	56	51
Dominican Republic	93	17	17	61	34
Cuba	63	9	6	37	19
Colombia	43	15	15	34	18
Children of Puerto Ricans	306	19	12	52	31

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1 percent PUMS, 2000.
Note: Low-income is family income below 185 percent of the federal poverty level, the cutoff for federal school lunch program eligibility.

CONCLUSION

There has been a sharp rise in the number of children of immigrants, who now compose one-fifth of all U.S. school-age children. Following a steady rise in immigration, the share of children of immigrants among the school-age population increased rapidly from 6 percent in 1970 to 19 percent in 2000. During the 1990s the number of children of immigrants grew more rapidly in secondary than elementary schools (72 versus 39 percent). This relatively higher concentration in secondary schools is important because they have not been structured to promote language acquisition and content mastery for newcomers (Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix 2000).

The share of LEP school-age children also rose over the past two decades. The LEP share of students in elementary schools rose from 5 to 7 percent from 1980 to 2000, while the LEP share of secondary school children rose from 3 to 5 percent. In 2000 the share of LEP students was highest in kindergarten (10 percent) and fell progressively across the grades as LEP children learned English. The rising numbers of LEP students coincides with NCLB implementation and the law's mandates that students meet state standards, that classrooms be staffed with highly qualified teachers, and that parents be notified in their native languages of their children's progress. All present challenges and carry significant resource implications for schools serving immigrant and LEP children.

School-age children of immigrants are concentrated in large states but dispersing rapidly to nontraditional receiving states. Like immigrants overall, school-age children of immigrants are highly concentrated in six states (California, New York, Texas, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey), but their numbers are growing rapidly in many other states. In 2000 almost half (47 percent) of all elementary school–age children in California were children of immigrants. The share of children in PK to grade 5 with immigrant parents exceeded the national average (19 percent) in nine other states: Nevada, New York, Hawaii, Texas, Florida, Arizona, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and New Mexico. Nonetheless, between 1990 and 2000, the fastest increases in the number of children of immigrants were recorded in Nevada (206 percent), followed by North Carolina (153 percent), Georgia (148 percent), and Nebraska (125 percent). LEP students show similar state distribution and growth trends.

While schools in California and the other large, high-immigrant states are most likely to have large numbers of LEP and immigrant children, a widening range of schools nationwide are grappling with rapidly diversifying student bodies. In many instances, the institutional capacity to teach newcomer and non-English-speaking children may be more limited in new immigrant destinations than in traditional gateway communities that can draw on networks of bilingual and ESL teachers, curricula, and other resources. While it can be assumed that schools in both the high-immigrant and new-destination states are incurring significant costs in educating immigrants' children, there are few consistent, broadly accepted data on the level of those costs or the cost-effectiveness of differing language acquisition programs.

Most children of immigrants are native-born, but the foreign-born share is higher in secondary school than in elementary or preschool. Overall, three-quarters of school-age children of

immigrants were born in the United States. The share of children of immigrants who are foreign-born is lowest in pre-kindergarten (one in eight) and highest in grades 6–12 (one in three). The reason for this pattern is straightforward: older children have lived longer and therefore have had more opportunity to enter the United States. Compared with elementary schools, secondary schools have more foreign-born children, including those who arrived recently. Late-entering foreign-born students may have difficulty learning English, mastering academic subjects, and graduating in the limited time they are in U.S. schools. Immigrants who become discouraged by these difficulties may be inclined to drop out of school.

Most LEP students in elementary and secondary schools were born and raised in the United States, and many have U.S.-born parents. This means most LEP students began kindergarten limited English proficient. The fact that over half (56 percent) of LEP children in secondary schools are U.S.-born makes it clear that many children are not learning English even after seven or more years in school. A substantial share (15 percent) of LEP children of natives has parents born in Puerto Rico, a Spanish-speaking U.S. territory, while many others grew up in Spanish-speaking Mexican-origin communities in the Southwest. The large numbers of native-born LEP students across the grades strongly reinforce the logic of NCLB and other reforms that hold schools accountable for the performance of these students.

Most LEP children live in linguistically isolated families and attend linguistically segregated schools. In 2000 about six in seven LEP students at the elementary level lived in linguistically isolated households (those where everyone over age 14 was LEP). High levels of linguistic isolation point up the twin challenges of teaching LEP students and involving limited English-speaking families in their children's education. Linguistic isolation may also partially explain why such large shares of LEP students in elementary and secondary schools are U.S.-born.

LEP students are highly concentrated in the same schools as other LEPs, in part because of ongoing residential segregation by race, ethnicity, and income. In 1999 over half (53 percent) of LEP children attended schools where more than 30 percent of all students were LEP. By contrast, 57 percent of non-LEP students went to schools where less than 1 percent of the students were LEP. The schools with high shares of LEP students face multiple challenges trying meet NCLB standards as they are predominantly urban, enroll large numbers of low-income minority students, and have less experienced principals and teachers than schools that enroll few or no LEPs (Cosentino de Cohen et al. 2005).

Children of immigrants often fall into several of NCLB's protected groups of students. As a result, schools enrolling large numbers of these children are disproportionately missing the law's performance targets. The NCLB Act mandates that schools disaggregate assessment results for students in several protected groups: those who are LEP, black, Hispanic, Asian, low-income, and in special education programs.

There is considerable overlap between children of immigrants and the protected groups listed by NCLB. In 2000 over half (53 percent) of children of immigrants in elementary schools were Hispanic, and 18 percent were Asian. Nearly three-quarters (71 percent) of all LEP children in elementary school were Hispanic, and another 14 percent were Asian. Half of children of immigrants and two-thirds of LEP children were low income.

Since many children of immigrants fall into more than one of the protected groups—especially Latino or Asian, LEP, and low-income—the schools that serve them generally have to meet performance targets for multiple disaggregated groups, and as a consequence are more likely to miss these targets. The compliance challenges presented by the overlapping of these groups beg some important questions. Should alternate, and perhaps more flexible, approaches to measuring the progress of LEP students be adopted (such as measuring individual progress in English acquisition and academic achievement over time)? And should funding formulas include a supplement for schools that enroll multiple protected groups above and beyond those that are currently provided? Answering questions such as these may help NCLB succeed in high-LEP schools, which are among the schools where the law's accountability provisions are most needed.

NOTES

1. We define the elementary grades as pre-kindergarten to grade 5 and secondary grades as 6 to 12, following categories available in the U.S. Census.
2. Throughout this report we use "limited English proficient (LEP)" to refer to children who have difficulty speaking English. This term is synonymous with "English language learner," the term preferred by many school districts and advocates. Our definition is based on the census measure of proficiency: ability to speak English as reported by the survey respondent. States and school districts use different, usually more expansive definitions of LEP, based on tests that measure children's ability to understand, speak, read, and write English.
3. NCLB mandates that schools report performance separately for these groups of students. States are able to define the number of students necessary to constitute a group for reporting purposes, with more than half of states setting the number between 30 and 40 children in a given school or district. See Terri Duggan Schwartzbeck, "Implementing No Child Left Behind: A Look at the Playing Field" (Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, http://www.aasa.org/NCLB/DEC_2003_Pres.ppt.)
4. A fuller discussion of NCLB provisions affecting children of immigrants and LEP students will be available in Julie Murray, Michael Fix, and Wendy Zimmermann, "New Directions for Newcomers: A Roadmap for No Child Left Behind and Limited English Proficient Students" (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, forthcoming).
5. The central purpose of Title III is "to help ensure that LEP children, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency, develop a high level of academic attainment in English, and meet the same standards expected of all children" (U.S. Department of Education 2005).
6. For a description of the methodology underlying the assignment of legal status to noncitizens, see Passel and Clark (1998).
7. Our population estimates throughout this report are based primarily on the 2000 Census, with comparison to earlier decennial censuses for trend analyses. The total number of immigrants is uncertain owing to census undercounts of unknown size. Our best estimate is that the 2000 Census undercounted immigrants by about 1 million. In addition to the census data, our estimates of immigration by decade are informed by U.S. Department of Homeland Security admissions data.
8. Throughout this report, we refer to "children of immigrants" or "children in immigrant families" as those children with at least one parent born outside the United States. In some cases, children of immigrants have one U.S.-born and one foreign-born parent. Following the definition used by the U.S. Census Bureau, we do not consider children with parents born in Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories children of immigrants.
9. The National School Lunch Program offers free and reduced-price school lunches to children with family incomes under 185 percent of the federal poverty level. In 2000, this eligibility threshold equaled about $31,500 for a family of four (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2005). NCLB uses this as the definition for the low-income or "economically disadvantaged" subgroup.
10. We use grade level completion and enrollment figures from the census to determine the population of children in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. We limit our sample to children age 3 through 21.
11. First-generation immigrants are foreign-born children; second-generation immigrants are U.S.-born children of foreign-born parents.

    The census asks respondents which grades their children have completed and in which grade they are enrolled at the time of the survey, but it allows only limited disaggregating of responses. Using the available census data, we were able to categorize PK and kindergarten separately, and to disaggregate grades 1 to 5 for the remainder of elementary school, and 6 to 12 for secondary school.

12. The census does not provide a detailed definition of pre-kindergarten, so this group may include children in Head Start and other forms of center-based child care as well as those in school-based programs.
13. We also examined countries of origin for foreign-born children in grades 6 to 12, as well as for parents of children in PK to grade 5 and grades 6 to 12. Since the country-of-origin patterns were similar among children and parents across grade levels, we only display the pattern for foreign-born children in PK to grade 5 here.
14. In *Plyler v. Doe* (457 U.S. 202 [1982]), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that all children who reside in the United States, regardless of their immigration status, have the right to a free elementary and secondary education.
15. According to our definition, undocumented immigrants are those who entered the United States illegally (often across the border with Mexico), overstayed a valid visa (such as a tourist or student visa), or otherwise violated the terms of their immigration status.
16. The Urban Institute has estimated the number of undocumented immigrants by subtracting the number of legal immigrants over the course of the past few decades—using U.S. Department of Homeland Security data—from the total number of noncitizens counted in the U.S. Census, Current Population Survey, and other official data sources (Passel and Clark 1998). The census and Current Population Survey collect data on nativity and citizenship of adults and children, but they do not collect information on the legal status of noncitizens.
17. Legal permanent residents (LPRs) are immigrants admitted permanently to the United States, usually for employment or because they have a close family member who is a U.S. citizen or LPR. After five years—three years if married to a U.S. citizen—LPRs are eligible to apply for citizenship. In most cases, they must pass a naturalization test to become citizens.

    Naturalized citizens are immigrants who have become citizens.

    Refugees are admitted to the United States owing to fear of persecution, usually from countries on a list developed by the U.S. Department of State. After one year, refugees become LPRs. We include those refugees who have become LPRs or naturalized citizens in the refugee category in figure 5.

    Temporary legal residents include students, workers, and others who entered the United States with a visa for a fixed period of time.
18. In all households where a language other than English is spoken, the census asks whether members of the household speak English "very well," "well," "not well," and "not at all". The census categorizes all people speaking English "well," "not well," or "not at all" as limited English proficient.
19. States collect information on the number of LEP students through schools with the Survey of States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Educational Programs and Services (also called the State Educational Agency Survey or SEA Survey). By 2003–04 the number of LEP students reported by the 50 states and the District of Columbia had increased to 4.3 million (Padolsky 2005).
20. We do not disaggregate LEP figures for pre-kindergarten here because the census does not measure English proficiency for children under age 5.
21. Our analyses in this report only include Puerto Rican children and children with Puerto Rican–born parents who were living in the 50 states or District of Columbia in 2000. Following the Census Bureau's definition of nativity, we do not categorize Puerto Rican–born children or Puerto Rican parents as immigrants. The Census Bureau considers Puerto Ricans and others born in U.S. territories U.S.-born citizens.
22. This threshold equaled about $31,500 for a family of four in 2000. The official U.S. poverty threshold in 2000 was $17,050 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2005).
23. Our definition of high school degree here includes adults who have graduated high school with either a regular diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma.
24. According to our definition, non-Hispanic whites and non-Hispanic blacks include children of immigrants and of natives.
25. In two-parent families, neither parent had a high school degree.
26. We consider children with Puerto Rican–born parents children of natives. We only include Puerto Ricans living in the 50 states and District of Columbia in our analysis.
27. Here we categorize children based on their mothers' country of birth.
28. The five most common parental countries of birth for Asian children of immigrants in grades 6 to 12 were slightly different: the Philippines, Vietnam, India, Korea, and Laos (table 7).
29. In grades 6 to 12, children with parents born in Laos were just as likely as those with parents born in Vietnam to be LEP or linguistically isolated, and considerably more likely to be low-income. This suggests that children with parents from Southeast Asia—many of whom are refugees—are among the most vulnerable school-age children (table 7).
30. For Hispanic children of immigrants in grades 6 to 12, the most common countries of birth were Mexico, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Colombia (table 7).

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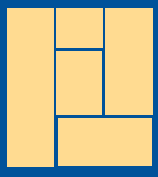
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