THE FACTS

Between 1982 and 1994, mathematics achievement among all 17-year-old students increased, with the most dramatic progress occurring among Black and Hispanic students, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Similar gains were made by the other groups tested on the NAEP assessment, 9- and 13-year-old students.

Trends in Average Math Scale Scores
By Race/Ethnicity, 1982 and 1994

NEXT STEPS

A substantial achievement gap persists between white students and minority students. Most of this achievement difference can be attributed to the disproportionate representation of minority youth among those who are from low-income families. In high poverty schools, 40% of mathematics teachers do not have a major or minor in math compared to 28% of mathematics teachers in low-poverty schools (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future, p.16). States and school districts need to focus on hiring qualified, credentialed math teachers for all students and on recruiting individuals into the teaching profession who have or will have mathematics credentials.