The Facts
Between 1982 and 1994, the science achievement of all 17-year-old students increased, with the greatest gains occurring among minority students, as measured on 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 Science 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, 20% of science teachers do not have a major or a minor in science compared to 14% of science 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 science teachers for all students and on recruiting into the teaching professions individuals who have or will have science credentials.