

Asian Americans in Washington State: Closing Their *Hidden* Achievement Gaps



Prepared by
Shirley Hune, Ph.D.
David T. Takeuchi, Ph.D.
University of Washington Seattle

Demographics: Who are Asian Americans?

- **Diverse: 24** ethnic groups in U.S. Census.
- **4.4%** of U.S. and **6.6%** (Asian alone) and **8%** (Asian alone and Others- mixed race) in WA (2007).
- Among states, WA is the **5th** largest in percentage and **7th** largest in number of Asian Americans (429,406 in 2007).
- **5 largest groups in WA:** Chinese, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Koreans, and Asian Indians
- Largely **foreign-born: 69%** U. S.; **67%** WA.

Washington's Asian Americans: Economic and Linguistic Challenges and Disparities

■ Poverty

- All Asian **13%** , State average 11%
 - Hmong **46%**, Indonesians 26%, Cambodians 25%

■ Limited English Language Proficiency

- All Asian **40%**, Latinos 37%
 - Vietnamese **66%**, Hmong 62%

■ Educational Attainment (Bachelor's Degree or Higher) Disparities

- All Asian **36.8%**, State average 27.7%
 - Laotians **5.0%**, Cambodians 6.6%, Hmong 10.7%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Asian Americans Students in WA Public Schools

- K-12 enrollment: **8%** of State's student population (80,000+).
- 20 school districts around Seattle Puget Sound and Clark county; **Seattle School District**, the largest **12%**.
- Speak more than **100 languages and dialects**; Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese-Cantonese, Tagalog, Khmer (Cambodian), etc.
- **40%** of As Am students speak a language other than English.
- **31%** of them receive a FRPL.

Asian American Students in Seattle Schools

- **Not living with both parents**
 - All Asian - **28%**
 - SE Asians **46%**, Vietnamese **35%**, Filipino **31%**

- **High school dropout rate**
 - All Asian - **8%**
 - Southeast and Other Asian students **14%**

- **Free/Reduced Lunch Program**
 - All Asian - **47%**
 - Vietnamese **68%**, Other Southeast Asians **60%**

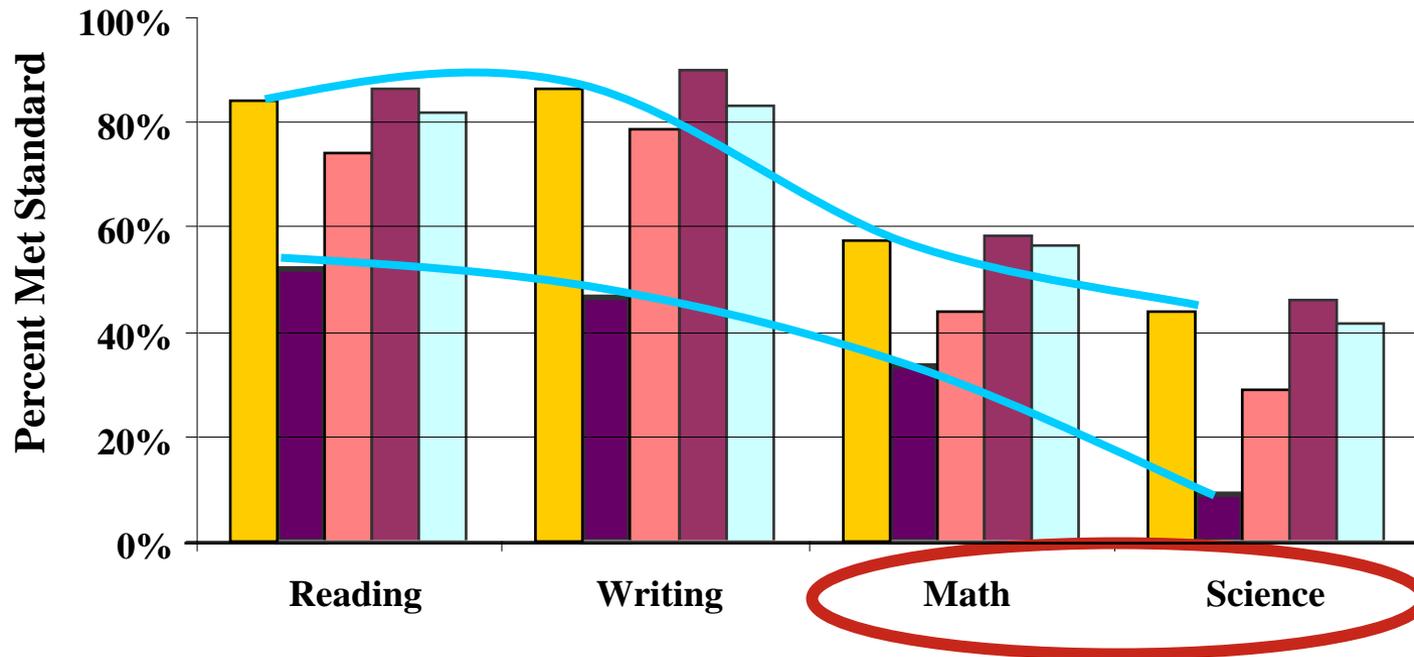
Research Findings on Asian American Students: *Hidden Achievement Gaps*

- **English Language Learning (ELL) Students:** Underserved and undersupported; low achievement rates; stigmatized
- **Filipino and Southeast Asian Americans:** Low achievement rates, inhospitable school climate, peer antagonism, being left out of classroom and curriculum, mental health issues, dropouts, pushouts, kickouts
- **Math and Science Challenges:** Many AA students are doing poorly here
- **Early Learning:** Increase access to ensure academic progress, especially for the most disadvantaged Asian American ethnic groups
- **College Access and Enrollment:** Ethnic group participation varies widely in 2 and 4 yr institutions; tracking; lack of information

Asian American Students by ELL, FRPL, Gender: 10th Grade WASL Performance

■ 10th Grade All Asian ■ ELL ■ Free/Reduced ■ Female ■ Male

Source: 2007/08 OSPI WASL Data



Asian American ELL Students At Risk

■ Underserved and Under-supported

- **40%** of all AA students in WA are Non Native English Speakers (33,022).
- But only **35%** of them are in TBIP (11,676).

■ Academic Challenges

- ELL Classes – Lower than Mainstream Grade Level
- Math and Science – Double burden (language + content)
- Less prepared for WASL – Mainstream Standards

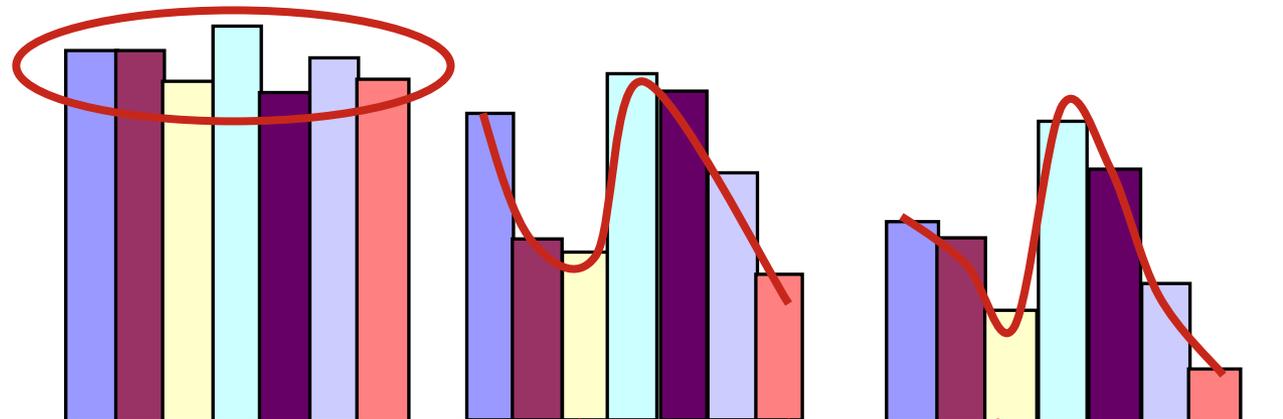
■ ELL Stigma

- “Dummies” ; “Treat me like a child”; “Speak with accent”

Filipino and SE Asian American Students At Risk

10th Grade WASL Performance Seattle Public Schools, 2007–2008

Source: 2007 District Report, Seattle Public Schools



	READING	MATH	SCIENCE
Chinese	84.4%	70.1%	44.7%
East Indian	84.2%	41.2%	41.2%
Filipino	77.2%	38.2%	22.1%
Japanese	89.8%	78.7%	66.7%
Korean	75.0%	75.0%	56.3%
Vietnamese	83.0%	56.1%	31.1%
Southeast	78.1%	33.3%	10.5%

Filipino and Southeast Asian Students at Risk: “Feeling Like No One Cares”

■ Unsupportive School Climate:

- a) Model Minority Stereotyping
- b) Pedagogy and Curriculum Issues – “being left out”
- c) Peer Group Antagonism -bullying and racial violence
- d) Mental Health Issues – depression, suicide
- e) Dropout/Push out/Kick outs – Gang involvement

■ Family Issues:

- a) Pressure on youth to succeed
- b) Unavailable; Unable to advise/support
- c) Lack of information about U.S. schools/culture

RECOMMENDATIONS - Best Practices: Supporting As Am Students at Risk

- Adopt a Data Collection, Research, and Evaluation Plan.
- Create a Seamless Pipeline Pre-K Through Higher Education.
- Broaden and Enhance School Measurements and Accountability.
- Foster Culturally Responsive Approaches and Practices.
- Address Teacher Quality and Effectiveness.
- Engage Asian American Families in Schools.
- Strengthen School-Community Partnerships.

Lessons for Addressing Health Disparities

- High poverty rates of specific Asian American ethnic groups, especially Southeast Asian groups, contribute to health disparities.
- Limited English proficiency is a barrier to accessing health care.
- Asian American small business owners often lack health insurance for selves and children.
- Pressures on Asian American students to succeed contributes to mental health issues.
- Immigrant households are in need of linguistic and cultural translators in negotiating U.S. health care.