

The Condition of Minority Access and Participation in Arizona: 2005

Executive Summary

Arizona works to comply with a range of federal and state mandates, including the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the *Flores Consent Order* (2000), Proposition 203, The Safe and Drug Free Schools Program, and the State Safety Program. Children with limited English, African American children, and Native American children continue to trail their Anglo and Asian American counterparts on all available achievement indicators. The state's delays in adequately funding the education of English language learners only serve to further exacerbate these gaps in achievement. State dropout data report the percentage of dropouts for each subgroup, but it fails to reveal the motive or rationale for the students' actions. With these limited data, minority access and participation can be assessed, but neither explained nor resolved.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) identify, document, and when appropriate, replicate conditions that contribute to student achievement and discourage students from dropping out of school.
- Universities and schools foster, and the state support, partnerships based on best practices.
- The state focus resources on underachieving schools.
- ADE employ a combination of well-researched and cutting-edge strategies as part of a comprehensive, long-term plan that improves student achievement.