



## WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

### ♦ **Model Minority Stereotype**

When Asian Americans are mistakenly viewed as all being academically successful they receive little assistance in schools.

### ♦ **Economic, Linguistic and Cultural Challenges**

Many students live in low income and limited English proficient households. Families are often unfamiliar with their rights, U.S. culture and educational systems, such as how schools function and what is expected of students and parents.

### ♦ **Demands Placed Upon Immigrant Children**

Asian American students often bear major responsibilities to help their families to the detriment of their schooling, health, and personal development.

### ♦ **Unwelcoming School Environment**

Asian American students become disengaged when their learning needs are ignored and their histories and cultures are omitted from the curriculum.

### ♦ **Racial Violence and Mental Health Issues**

Asian American students experience racial violence, bullying from peers and acute pressure from teachers and parents to meet their expectations. Such challenges may cause severe distress that impacts on their schooling and yet are often overlooked by schools.

## HOW CAN WE SUPPORT ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS?

### **Be Culturally Responsive**

- Understand the unique characteristics and learning needs of ethnic groups within the Asian American community.
- Avoid stereotyping and view students as individuals with a range of abilities and interests.
- Incorporate Asian American history and cultures into school curriculum.
- Provide English Language Learners with meaningful and appropriate programs and services.
- Provide opportunities for all school personnel to enhance their cultural competency.

### **Enhance School-Parent Engagement**

- Understand Asian American families' needs and interests.
- Ensure that programs and services are available and home language sensitive (e.g., newsletters, report cards, interpreters for parent-teacher conferences, Asian American teachers/counselors).
- Utilize the expertise and insights of Asian American teachers and related school personnel in building school-parent relations.

### **Strengthen School-Community Partnerships**

- Encourage students and parents to be involved in school and community activities that will broaden their experiences, foster cross-cultural connections, and further develop their leadership and other skills
- Enhance collaboration among schools, communities and institutions of higher education to assist students in achieving their goals.



## Asian American Students, Families & Communities

*Closing the Achievement Gap in Washington State*

# WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ASIAN AMERICANS?

## IN WASHINGTON (2007)

- Asian Americans comprise 6.6% of the State's population; 8% when mixed race are included.
- Chinese, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Koreans, and Asian Indians are the largest ethnic groups.
- Washington is 7th among States as the home of Asian Americans (429,406).
- 67% of Asian Americans in the State are foreign-born and 13% live in poverty, compared to 10% and 11% for the State as a whole, respectively (U.S. Census 2000).

## IN WASHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS (2007)

- Asian American students are 8% (83,226) of the State's K-12 student population.
- 31% receive Free/Reduced Price Lunch.
- 40% speak a language other than English as their primary language.
- 14% are enrolled in Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP).
- Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese-Cantonese, Tagalog, and Khmer (Cambodian) are the largest language groups.
- Among school districts, Seattle Public Schools serve the largest number of Asian American students (10,311), followed by Bellevue, Kent, Highline, Tacoma, Lake Washington and Federal Way.



## WHO ARE ASIAN AMERICANS?

Asian Americans are persons with ancestry from Asian countries and islands in the Pacific Rim who live in the United States. The category comprises many ethnic groups who possess diverse cultures, histories, and life experiences in the U.S. Some are several generations American-born. Currently, most are recent immigrants.

### Asian American Ethnic Groups (U.S. Census 2000)

Asian Indian	Bangladeshi	Bhutanese	Burmese	Cambodian	Chinese	Filipino	Hmong
Indo Chinese	Iwo Jiman	Japanese	Korean	Laotian	Malaysian	Maldivian	Nepalese
Okinawan	Pakistani	Singaporean	Sri Lankan	Taiwanese	Thai	Vietnamese	Other Asian

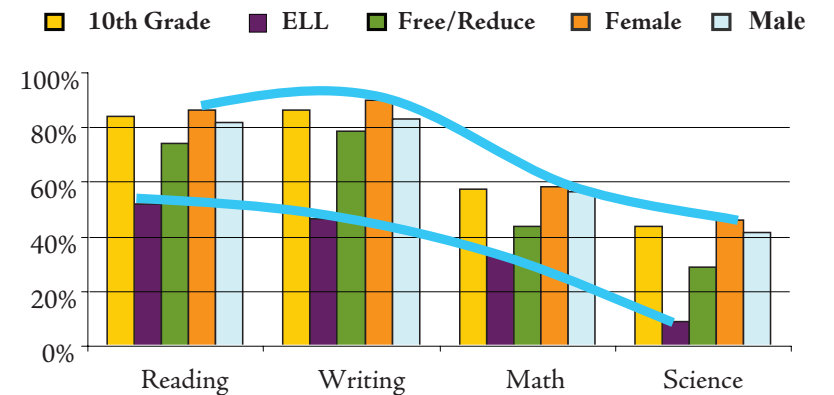


- Language groups show different patterns of concentration; most Vietnamese speakers are enrolled in Seattle Schools, while most Korean speaking students are in Federal Way.

## HOW DO ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS DIFFER IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT?

- Asian American WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning) performance varies by subject area, grade level, and student group.
- Many students are not performing well in math, contrary to a stereotype of all Asian Americans as being good in math.
- English Language Learners are academically at risk across all subjects.
- Girls are performing slightly higher than boys in every subject across grades.

## 10th Grade Asian American WASL Performance, 2007-08



Source: 2007/08 OSPI WASL Data

- There are also differences by ethnic group. Many Filipino and Southeast Asian American students struggle to complete high school.
- Low-income groups, such as Cambodians and Laotians, have a lower rate of attending college than other Asian American ethnic groups.

**On May 12, 2009, Governor Gregoire signed Senate Bill 5973, which incorporates recommendations for closing the achievement gap identified in this and other reports.**

Pamphlet prepared by Jeomja Yeo and Shirley Hune, June 2009. Findings were drawn from S. Hune and D. Takeuchi (2008), *Asian Americans in Washington State: Closing Their Hidden Achievement Gaps*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington. It is available at [www.capaa.wa.gov](http://www.capaa.wa.gov).