



**Preliminary Analysis:
Data Match between the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Los Angeles
Department of Children and Family Services
April 27, 2005**

For the last few months, researchers and analysts from the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) have been working hard to overcome many of the systematic barriers that prevent information sharing between schools and child welfare agencies, organizations that share daily responsibility for the quality of life of thousands of our county's most vulnerable children and youth. Under the leadership of the County's new Education Coordination Council, with the tenacity and persistence of a group of talented technical advisors, we have been able to resolve many of the technical and information systems problems that have heretofore limited access to aggregate information about the educational performance of children enrolled in LAUSD who are also involved with DCFS.

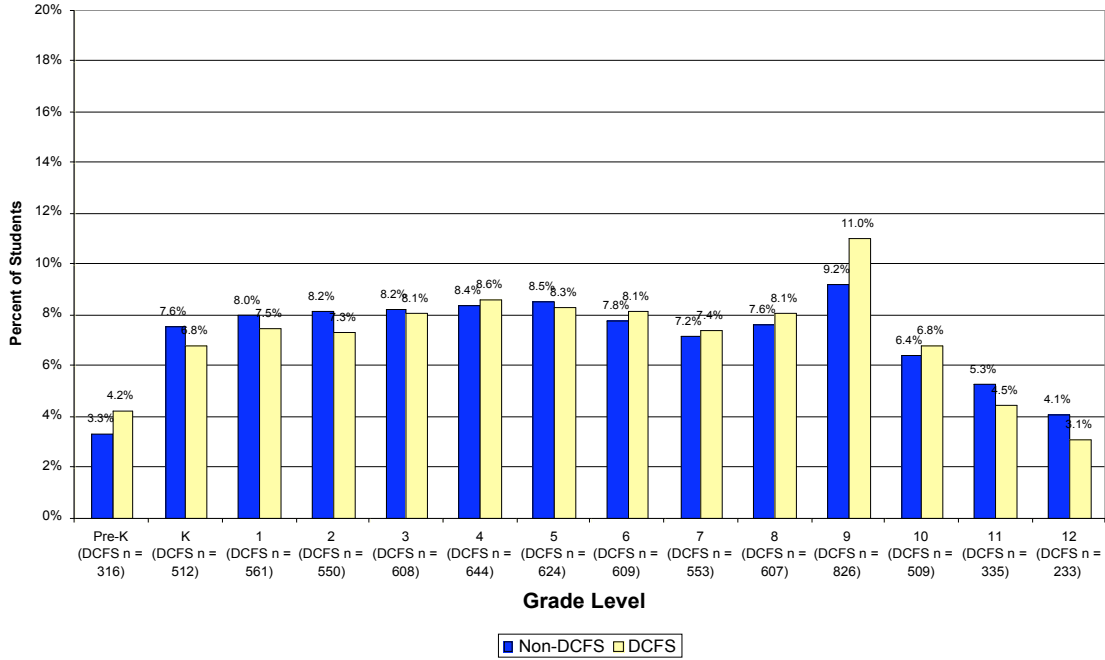
As a result of the matching process performed on the DCFS active caseload as of January 2005 with the LAUSD 2003-2004 Enrollment File, there were 7,487 matched DCFS supervised children who were either in out-of-home placement (foster care) or living at home with their families. Demographic and achievement data for these DCFS children are reflected in the following charts. For technical reasons associated with the matching process, and slight differences in the time periods covered, this number underestimates the actual number of DCFS children enrolled LAUSD. It does, however, provide first-time data on the educational performance of a significant sample of DCFS children compared to the performance of other LAUSD students.

Of the 7,487 DCFS students identified in the LAUSD database, the numbers were fairly evenly distributed by grade level. (See Chart 1). The percentage of 9th graders in DCFS were slightly higher than the percentage of all 9th graders. Chart 2 reflects the disproportionate representation of African American children in the child welfare system; almost 43% of the DCFS students were African American compared with 11% of other students. American Indian children are also over-represented, but the numbers in this sample are too small to allow full analysis of their educational performance. Chart 3 shows that DCFS students are more likely to have a language classification of English Only.

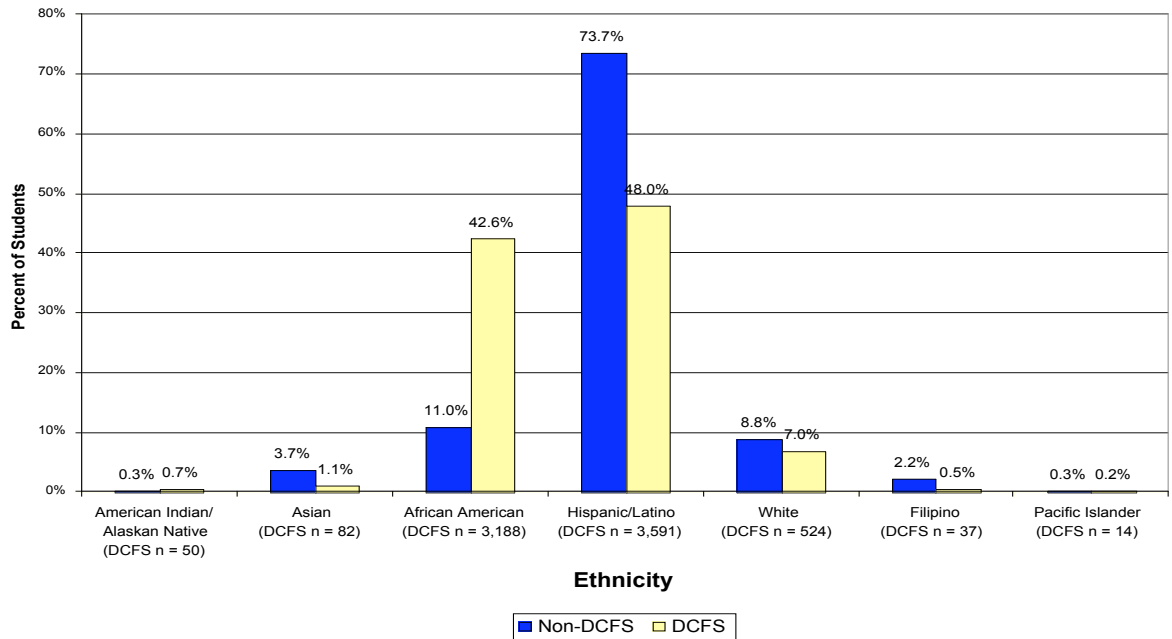
This initial analysis demonstrates what members of the Education Coordination Council and other child advocates in Los Angeles County have suspected for some time children in the child welfare system are not doing as well as other students in our public schools.

The findings show that 28% of DCFS students have been identified as requiring special education versus about 11% of non-DCFS students. (See Chart 4). Almost three times as many DCFS students were suspended in 2003-04 (16% versus 6%). (See Chart 5). Both English language and math scores on the California Standards Test for DCFS students were worse than those for other students. (See Chart 6).

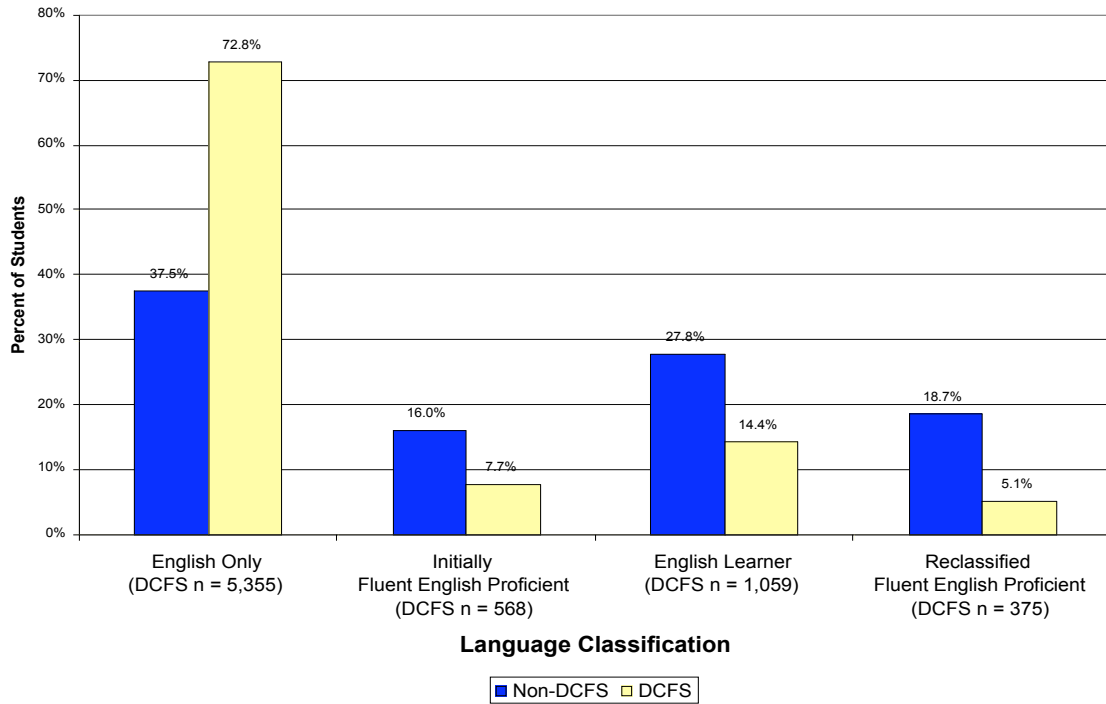
**Chart 1: Los Angeles Unified School District
Percentage of Students by Grade Level and DCFS Status
Fall 2004**



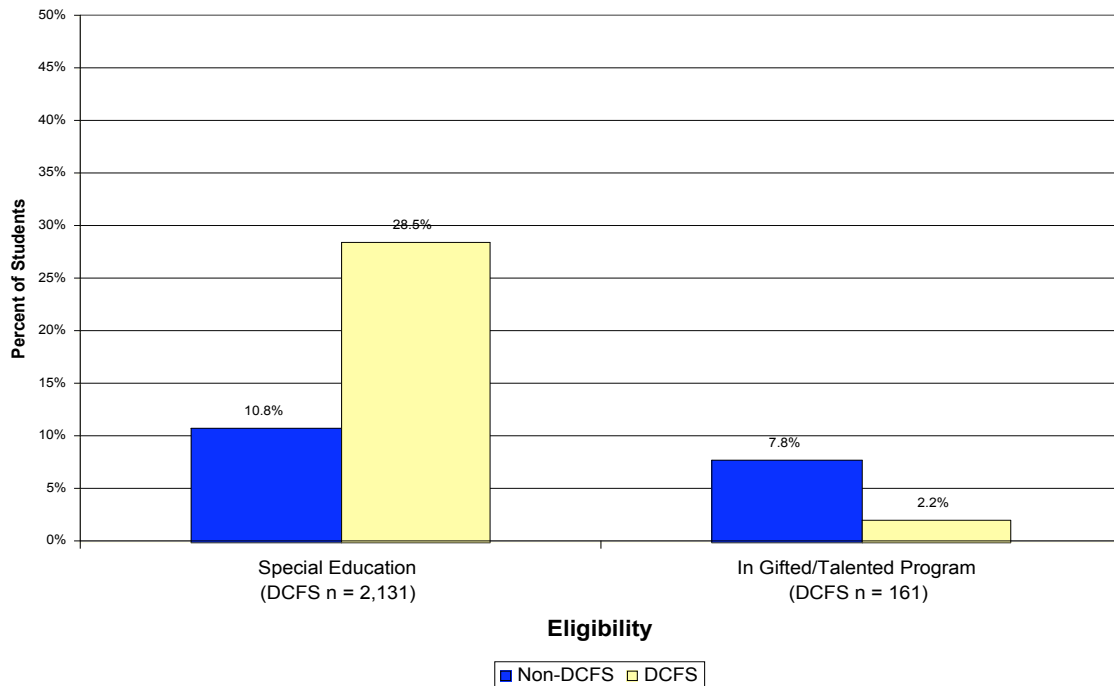
**Chart 2: Los Angeles Unified School District
Percentage of Students by Ethnicity and DCFS Status
Fall 2004**



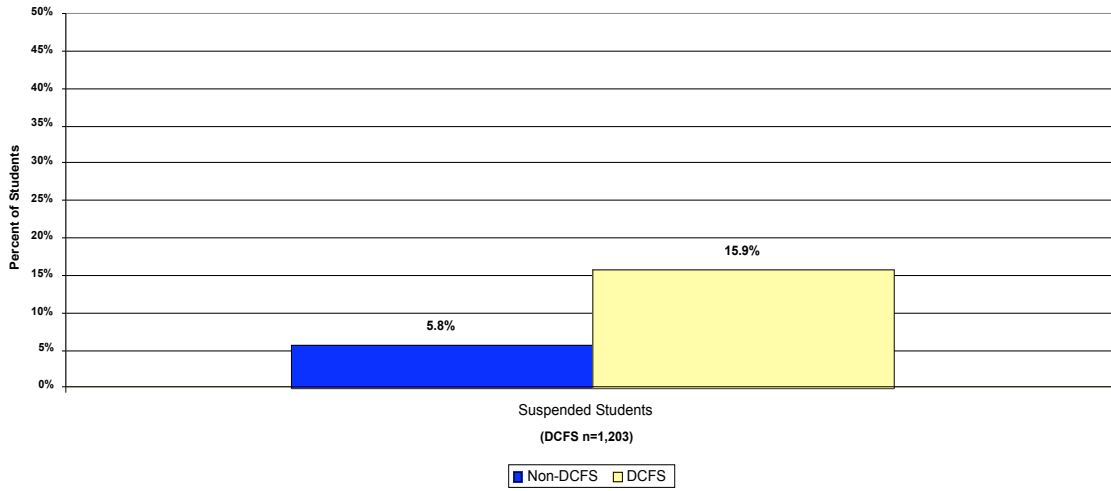
**Chart 3: Los Angeles Unified School District
Percentage of Students by Language Classification and DCFS Status
Fall 2004**



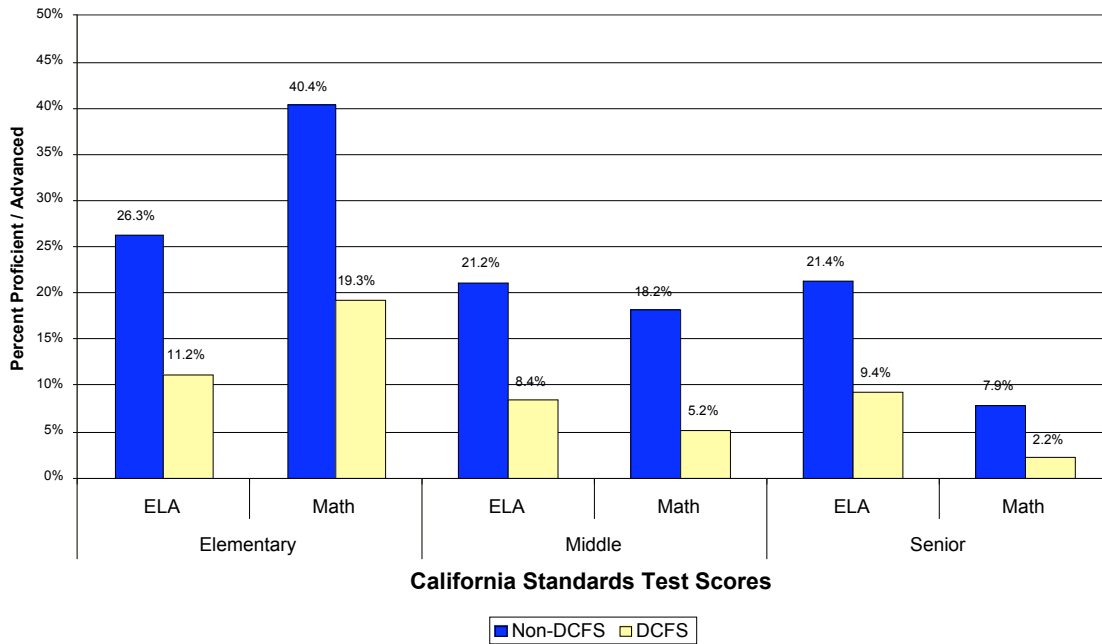
**Chart 4: Los Angeles Unified School District
Percentage of Students by Program Eligibility and DCFS Status
Fall 2004**



**Chart 5: Los Angeles Unified School District
Percentage of Students Suspended by Program Eligibility and DCFS Status
Year End 2004**



**Chart 6: Los Angeles Unified School District
Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced by DCFS Status
Spring 2004, English Language Arts and Math**



This report is the first of a series that the ECC hopes to produce in partnership with school districts throughout the county. It is our hope that such data will help point out gaps in the current systems, guiding shared efforts to improve educational outcomes for child welfare and probation youth throughout the county.

Although the aggregate data included in this report may seem a small step to many people who are not familiar with the many organizational barriers to sharing information across agencies, even this step would not have been completed without the support and participation of all of the following people. We thank them for their help and continuing support.

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