

**FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE NO CHILD LEFT
BEHIND ACT**

HEARING
BEFORE A
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SPECIAL HEARING
MARCH 14, 2007—WASHINGTON, DC

Printed for the use of the Committee on Appropriations



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/index.html>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

35-329 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2008

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
Fax: (202) 512-2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

ROBERT C. BYRD, West Virginia, *Chairman*

DANIEL K. INOUE, Hawaii	THAD COCHRAN, Mississippi
PATRICK J. LEAHY, Vermont	TED STEVENS, Alaska
TOM HARKIN, Iowa	ARLEN SPECTER, Pennsylvania
BARBARA A. MIKULSKI, Maryland	PETE V. DOMENICI, New Mexico
HERB KOHL, Wisconsin	CHRISTOPHER S. BOND, Missouri
PATTY MURRAY, Washington	MITCH McCONNELL, Kentucky
BYRON L. DORGAN, North Dakota	RICHARD C. SHELBY, Alabama
DIANNE FEINSTEIN, California	JUDD GREGG, New Hampshire
RICHARD J. DURBIN, Illinois	ROBERT F. BENNETT, Utah
TIM JOHNSON, South Dakota	LARRY CRAIG, Idaho
MARY L. LANDRIEU, Louisiana	KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, Texas
JACK REED, Rhode Island	SAM BROWNBACK, Kansas
FRANK R. LAUTENBERG, New Jersey	WAYNE ALLARD, Colorado
BEN NELSON, Nebraska	LAMAR ALEXANDER, Tennessee

TERRENCE E. SAUVAIN, *Staff Director*
BRUCE EVANS, *Minority Staff Director*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND
EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

TOM HARKIN, Iowa, *Chairman*

DANIEL K. INOUE, Hawaii	ARLEN SPECTER, Pennsylvania
HERB KOHL, Wisconsin	THAD COCHRAN, Mississippi
PATTY MURRAY, Washington	JUDD GREGG, New Hampshire
MARY L. LANDRIEU, Louisiana	LARRY CRAIG, Idaho
RICHARD J. DURBIN, Illinois	KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, Texas
JACK REED, Rhode Island	TED STEVENS, Alaska
FRANK R. LAUTENBERG, New Jersey	RICHARD C. SHELBY, Alabama

Professional Staff

ELLEN MURRAY
ERIK FATEMI
JIM SOURWINE
MARK LAISCH
ADRIENNE HALLETT
LISA BERNHARDT

BETTILOU TAYLOR (*Minority*)

SUDIP SHRIKANT PARIKH (*Minority*)

CANDICE NGO (*Minority*)

Administrative Support

TERI CURTIN
JEFF KRATZ (*Minority*)

CONTENTS

	Page
Opening statement of Senator Tom Harkin	1
No Child Left Behind funding	1
NCLB authorized funding levels versus appropriations	1
Fiscal year 2008 Education budget proposals	2
Adequacy and most effective use of NCLB funding	2
Opening statement of Senator Arlen Specter	2
Fiscal year 2008 Education budget request	3
Education funding	3
Statement of Hon. Margaret Spellings, Secretary of Education, Department of Education	4
No Child Left Behind reauthorization	4
Budget priorities	5
School improvement and teacher incentive programs	5
Promise scholarships and opportunity scholarships	5
Increasing rigor in high schools	5
American competitiveness initiative	6
Prepared statement of Hon. Margaret Spellings	6
NCLB reauthorization	7
Raising the bar in our high schools	7
American competitiveness initiative	8
Expanding support for school improvement	8
Teacher incentive fund	9
New choice proposals	9
Resources for No Child Left Behind	9
Title I funding	10
Shifts in title I funds to LEAs	10
Resources for No Child Left Behind	10
Reading First program	11
State and local curriculum control	11
Response to IG report on Reading First	12
Use of scientifically based curricula	12
Boston Reading First program	12
Response to IG report on Reading First	13
Prepared statement Senator Larry Craig	14
NCLB and local flexibility	14
Privacy and higher education national databases	15
Reading program in Mississippi	16
Title I allocations	17
Prepared statement of Senator Thad Cochran	18
Programs proposed for elimination in fiscal year 2008	18
Native Alaskan and Native Hawaiian program eliminations	19
Congressionally directed funding	20
No Child Left Behind funding	21
21st century community learning centers	22
Response to IG report on Reading First	22
Congressionally directed funding	23
Gulf coast renewal	23
Title I funding increase	24
Foster care children	24
No Child Left Behind funding	25
Flexibility in charting adequate yearly progress	26
Funding for teacher quality and vouchers	27
Charter school funding	27
Physical education—impact on health and learning	27

IV

	Page
Questions submitted by Senator Tom Harkin	29
Achieving No Child Left Behind goals for children with disabilities	29
Other education programs assisting States and LEAs to meet NCLB goals for children with disabilities	29
Technical assistance for State assessment systems development	30
Special education teacher shortages	30
Funding for vocational rehabilitation State grants	31
Vocational rehabilitation State grant program performance measures	31
Rehabilitation Services Administration reorganization	31
Rehabilitation Services Administration's new monitoring system	32
Vocational rehabilitation technical assistance and program improvement	32
Vocational rehabilitation and independent living technical assistance tools	32
Rehabilitation Services Administration monitoring division—full-time equiva- lent employment	33
Career and technical education national programs	33
Career and Technical Education National Activities and Perkins Act reau- thorization	34
Evaluation of the impact of academically focused career and technical edu- cation	34
State scholars program outcomes	35
Fiscal year 2007 research output measures	36
School improvement grants program and scientifically based research	36
Coordinating research agenda with NCLB school improvement require- ments	36
School improvement research funding costs	36
Research studies and year 2014 NCLB goals for reading and math	37
Research goals and research methodology	37
Expediting research studies to meet State and local needs for attaining year 2014 goals	37
What works clearinghouse and research-proven strategies	38
Bridging the gap between practitioners, policymakers, and researchers	38
Commission on No Child Left Behind report recommendation—statewide data system	38
Funding requirement for commission recommendation for State longitudinal data systems	39
National assessment of educational progress	39
12th grade NAEP initiative	39
Communications and outreach staffing levels	39
Office of Communications and Outreach objectives	39
Budget request for communications object class	40
Alcohol Abuse Reduction program	40
Programs and initiatives providing drug and alcohol abuse reduction assist- ance	40
LEA Drug Abuse and School Safety program assistance	40
Safe schools/healthy students drug and violence prevention projects	41
Proposed restructuring of SDFSC State grants program	41
Helping America's youth initiative	41
Safe and drug-free schools and communities State grants	41
Reauthorization proposal for SDFSC State grants	41
Safe and drug-free schools and communities—uniform management and infor- mation reporting system	42
State reporting requirements under the SDFSC Act	42
Youth drug use and other high-risk behaviours surveillance data	42
Consolidated State performance report data collection	43
Development of UMIRS uniform data set on youth drug use and violence	43
Guidance on implementation of uniform management and information report- ing system requirements	43
Data collection for tracking youth drug use and violence	44
Data collection at State and LEA levels	44
State-by-State data collection	44
21st century community learning centers	45
Non-competitive awards	45
Non-competitive grant awards	45
Non-competitive contract awards	45
Questions submitted by Senator Daniel K. Inouye	48
Native Hawaiian education	48

	Page
Program increases supporting educational and cultural needs of Native Hawaiian students	49
Higher education program requests	49
Flexibility to address educational needs of students	50
Native Hawaiian Education program performance measures	50
Performance indicator development for Native Hawaiian education programs	50
Native Hawaiian Education program performance data	50
Impact of Native Hawaiian Education programs	50
Native Hawaiian Education program performance data	51
Native Hawaiian program grants process	51
Reporting the impact of Native Hawaiian Education programs	52
Promising Native Hawaiian Education programs	52
Questions submitted by Senator Herb Kohl	52
Full funding for No Child Left Behind	52
After-school funding—21st century community learning centers	53
Reading First grants—Inspector General's report	53
Alternative assessment funding	53
State data collection	54
Perkins funding	54
Questions submitted by Senator Jack Reed	55
Teacher quality enhancement grants and other programs funding teacher development	55
Teacher Incentive Fund program	56
Improving teacher quality State grants	56
Teacher preparation, induction and professional development programs	56
Funding for improving literacy through the school libraries program	56
Environmental education	57
EPA Environmental Education Grants program	57
Questions submitted by Senator Frank R. Lautenberg	58
Raising achievement levels in high schools	58
Education technology	58
American competitiveness initiative	58
Vouchers	58
Funding for special education	59
Funding the educational needs of students with disabilities	59
Questions submitted by Senator Arlen Specter	59
Mentoring program	59
Mentoring program PART rating	60
Mentoring activities supported with SDFSC National program funds	60
Department of Health and Human Services Mentoring Children of Prisoners program	60
Helping America's youth initiative	61
High School to postsecondary transitional programs as means of addressing youth violence	61
Dropout prevention	61
Childhood obesity and physical education	62
HHS initiative—school health index	62
Title I high school initiative	62
School improvement	63
Teacher incentive fund program	63
Fiscal year 2006 teacher incentive fund program	63
Proposed plans for teacher incentive fund in fiscal years 2007 and 2008	64
Statement of John F. Jennings, president and CEO, Center on Education Policy	64
Prepared statement	67
Major findings on funding	67
General NCLB costs	68
Title I allocations	68
State capacity to implement NCLB	69
Schools in need of improvement	70
Statement of Hon. Gene Wilhoit, executive director, Council of Chief State School officers	71
Prepared statement	73
Longitudinal data systems	74
School improvement grants	75
State assessments	75

VI

	Page
Statement of Deborah Jewell-Sherman, Ph.D., superintendent, Richmond Public Schools	76
Prepared statement	78
Statement of Jane Babcock, superintendent, Keokuk Community School Dis- trict	80
Prepared statement	82
Statement of Robert E. Slavin, Ph.D., director, Center For Research and Reform in Education, Johns Hopkins University	84
Prepared statement	86
Research, development, and NCLB	86
Overall proposal	87
Specific proposals	87
A virtuous cycle of improvement	88

FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2007

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 2:28 p.m., in room SD-124, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Tom Harkin (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Harkin, Kohl, Murray, Landrieu, Reed, Specter, Cochran, Craig, and Stevens.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR TOM HARKIN

Senator HARKIN. Good afternoon. Welcome to today's Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on Federal funding for the No Child Left Behind Act. Welcome, Madam Secretary.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND FUNDING

When I voted for the NCLB 5 years ago, I did so with the understanding that President Bush and the White House would work with Congress to provide schools with the resources they need to implement the law. The administration had negotiated at that time closely with members of Congress, including this Senator, on the authorization levels, since I also serve on the authorizing committee, and I took the President at his word that he would take those levels seriously. Unfortunately, that has not happened.

NCLB AUTHORIZED FUNDING LEVELS VERSUS APPROPRIATIONS

Year after year, the President sends us a budget that comes nowhere close to funding No Child Left Behind at an adequate level. The numbers have gotten almost laughable. The President's fiscal year 2008 budget underfunds NCLB by \$14.8 billion, for a cumulative shortfall from the time the bill was first passed of \$70.9 billion since the enactment of the law. Now, that is the difference between what was in the authorization level and what was actually appropriated. Funding for Title I alone, the cornerstone of the law, would be shortchanged by \$11.1 billion—that is this year—for a cumulative shortfall of \$54.7 billion.

Now again, I understand that authorization levels were estimates. No one knows exactly how much it will cost to enable every child in America to achieve at a proficient level as the law requires.

But it is clear that we in the Federal Government have not done our share. We put new demands on schools and States, but we have not given them the resources they need to meet those demands.

In fact, many districts have actually seen their Title I funding decline since Congress passed No Child Left Behind. In Iowa, for example, more than half of the districts in my State will receive less Title I funding in 2007 than they did 6 years ago in 2001 when the bill was passed. That is just not acceptable.

We should not be requiring the majority of school districts to make huge improvements in student achievement at the same time that we cut their funding. That is an important point as Congress considers reauthorizing the No Child Left Behind Act this year. Accountability is important. I am sure we are all for accountability. But raising student achievement takes more than testing. It takes money. It takes money to hire good teachers, to make them fully qualified, to update the curricula, develop high-quality assessments, and to make all the other improvements that schools need to leave no child behind. Before I vote to reauthorize No Child Left Behind, I am going to insist that it is adequately funded.

FISCAL YEAR 2008 EDUCATION BUDGET PROPOSALS

The President's budget for fiscal year 2008 does provide some bright spots. I applaud the proposal to provide \$500 million to help turn around schools in need of improvement. That funding is long overdue. I also welcome the proposed \$1.1 billion for Title I. Unfortunately, all the money for both those increases would come from eliminating dozens of programs that are of high priority to Congress, programs like education technology, arts in education, school counseling, and Byrd honors scholarships.

Well now, the administration plays this game every year. Madam Secretary, you know we are not going to zero out the Byrd scholarships. That is just not going to happen. The same goes for school counseling. I created that program and I am proud I did and we are simply not going to eliminate it.

ADEQUACY AND MOST EFFECTIVE USE OF NCLB FUNDING

So I have no idea where we will get the \$1.1 billion for Title I without more money than the President has included in his budget. I hope today's hearing will shed some light on these issues. I will be particularly interested in three questions: Has the Federal Government provided enough funding to implement No Child Left Behind adequately? Two, would additional funding help improve student achievement? Three, if additional funding were available for education what would be the most effective ways to appropriate it?

Before I call on you, Madam Secretary, I would like to yield to my friend and our ranking member, Senator Specter.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ARLEN SPECTER

Senator SPECTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

FISCAL YEAR 2008 EDUCATION BUDGET REQUEST

I join Senator Harkin in welcoming you, Madam Secretary. The budget which has been submitted is very problematic. To ask for \$1.5 billion below last year, which does not even take into account the inflationary factor, I think is unrealistic. When you take a look at the jurisdiction of this Subcommittee on Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education, those are enormously important programs for America, and to have a reduction in the budget is just not acceptable.

You and I have talked about this before and we had a conversation yesterday, and I know it is difficult to be an advocate for education in the difficult financial circumstances we find. OMB has a large voice in what happens, but I believe it is necessary to have very, very strong advocacy, and you are in a special position to do it because you have worked with President Bush over such a long period of time. There are a lot of competing demands on the President, but I would urge that you, someone as close to the President as you are, should really pick up the cudgels in an advocacy capacity.

One of the major problems confronting America today is juvenile violence. Philadelphia last year had 407 homicides. I know that problem very well because I was district attorney of Philadelphia for 8 years. We are now looking at programs to try to encourage mentoring. The crime problem is as serious today as it was decades ago when I was district attorney, and a short-term improvement could be obtained if we identify at-risk youth and pair them with mentors to provide some guidance because so many of them come from broken families. No parents at home, parents in jail—extremely difficult.

When we see that the \$48 million mentoring program is cut and the \$4.9 million program for school dropout prevention is cut and \$22.8 million for State grants for incarcerated youth offenders cut, that goes right to the heart of what is probably America's most serious domestic problem, juvenile violence. The job we will have is to try to reallocate the funds.

EDUCATION FUNDING

I guess we can find money. We can take the money from the National Institutes of Health, or we can take the money from the Centers for Disease Control, or we can take the money from mine safety, which we have jurisdiction over, or we can take the money from Head Start. I think we will find the money. Those are the only programs we will have to rob to get the job done.

So, Madam Secretary, when the budget resolution comes up I think there are going to be lots of concerns expressed on both sides of the aisle. On No Child Left Behind, which is the core of what we are looking at here today, I know the goals are difficult. They are said to be unreachable. But I do not think we ought to lower our sights on what is the desired result. If we lower our sights, we are just going to fail to meet the lower goal. So my instinct is to keep the goals lofty and insist on meeting them and not to give in.

I had a little problem and I came to work every day. With enough determination, you can overcome lots of limitations, and

that is what I would suggest we do. When we talk about letting a child move from one school to another, that is a good idea, but there has got to be a good school that the child can move to. So that again is a question of funding.

May the record show that Secretary Spellings has nodded yes to a great many things I have said.

That is one of the approaches we trial lawyers undertake, Madam Secretary. That is, it saves us answering questions. We make assertions, the witness nods, and we say: Stipulation achieved.

As I said to the Secretary yesterday, Mr. Chairman, I cannot stay today. But we will have questions for the record.

We will work with you. We know your passion, your intensity, and your desire to get the objective done. The next time you see President Bush, give him a piece of my mind.

Secretary SPELLINGS. I will do so.

Senator SPECTER. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you, Senator Specter.

If there is ever a profile in courage and grit and determination in overcoming some hardships and getting up every day and doing his duty, Senator Specter fits that profile.

INTRODUCTION OF SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Well, Margaret Spellings has served as U.S. Secretary of Education for 2 years. Before that, during President Bush's first term she served as Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, where she helped craft education policies, including the No Child Left Behind Act. In Texas, Ms. Spellings has worked for 6 years as Governor Bush's senior adviser, with responsibility for developing and implementing the governor's education policy.

Ms. Spellings is the first mother of school-aged children to serve as U.S. Secretary of Education. Very interesting. Well, Madam Secretary, welcome to the subcommittee. Your statement will obviously be made a part of the record in its entirety. If you would just highlight it for us, we would be most appreciative.

STATEMENT OF HON. MARGARET SPELLINGS, SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ACCOMPANIED BY THOMAS SKELLY, DIRECTOR, BUDGET SERVICE

Secretary SPELLINGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the opportunity to come and discuss the President's budget.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND REAUTHORIZATION

As you know, this is a critical time in America's public education. Five years ago, with No Child Left Behind we did make a commitment as a country to have every child learning on grade level by 2014. We shifted our national conversation, not only to ask how much we are spending, but also how well our students are doing. So instead of just focusing on inputs, we are looking at results and data to drive decisionmaking, to allocate resources and to improve education.

Because we are measuring student achievement, we know how far we have come and where we need to improve, not only at a na-

tional level but at the individual student level and on campuses. My recent Department national education report card, or NAEP, shows strong gains in the early grades where we have focused our efforts, more progress in fact with our young readers in the last 5 years than the previous 28 years combined. African American and Hispanic achievement rates are at an all-time high, and those achievement gaps that have plagued us for so long are finally beginning to close.

More than 60,000 schools, more than 70 percent overall, are meeting the goals of No Child Left Behind. It is working and going forward, and in our reauthorization we must preserve the key principles of the law—high standards, accountability, and the goal of every child on grade level by 2014.

BUDGET PRIORITIES

At the same time, of course, we can use the knowledge that we have learned over the last 5 years to strengthen and improve the law, continuing a workable common sense approach that we have developed with States. Now that we have identified the schools that are struggling the most, we must target our resources and personnel accordingly. Now that we have laid the groundwork for reform, we must raise the bar and better prepare all of our students for college and the workforce, and these are the priorities of the President's budget: Improving chronically underperforming schools, and increasing resources and rigor in our high schools, especially in math and science.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND TEACHER INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

First, turning around our lowest performing schools. Preliminary data show that roughly 2,000 schools are chronic underperformers and have been unable to reach standards for 5 or more years. Though many serve our neediest students, they are often staffed by our least experienced teachers. As you say in your statement, our budget provides \$500 million for School Improvement Grants, such as hiring more teachers or, if necessary, reinventing the school as a charter school. We have also included nearly \$200 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund, to attract our most effective teachers to work in high-need schools and reward them for results, an approach that has been shown to help students and schools improve.

PROMISE SCHOLARSHIPS AND OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS

In addition, we offer immediate choices and options for families, including \$250 million in Promise Scholarships and \$50 million in Opportunity Scholarships, for those who want to transfer to better-performing public or private schools or to receive intensive tutoring.

INCREASING RIGOR IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Next, we must increase rigor in our high schools, where every year about 1 million students drop out and only about half of our African American and Hispanic students graduate on time. A recent report by my Department shows that even as high school grades have risen, student skill levels have actually declined in re-

cent years, a troubling fact when we know that 90 percent of our fastest-growing jobs now require a postsecondary education. That is why we have increased high school funding dramatically while protecting resources for younger students.

AMERICAN COMPETITIVENESS INITIATIVE

In total, we would provide nearly \$14 billion in Title I funding for schools serving low-income students, a 59 percent increase since 2001. We have also included a total of \$365 million in new funding for the Academic Competitiveness Initiative, to strengthen math, science and rigor through the K–12 pipeline because these are the skills students need to succeed in today’s knowledge economy.

As you know, there is a growing consensus around how to improve our schools, and I am sure you read the recent reports by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Center for American Progress, and the Aspen Institute. From parents to business leaders to the civil rights community, people across our country agree we must address inequalities within the system and we must better prepare all of our students for college and the work force.

This year’s budget requires us to make tough choices and I recognize, as appropriators, you have a very tough job ahead of you. As 9 percent investors in K–12 education, our role at the Federal level is limited. But we can make a real difference for students by targeting resources strategically. We all agree that education is a top priority for our country’s future and we all agree that we must produce a balanced budget.

PREPARED STATEMENT

Bill Gates recently said talent in this country is not the problem; the issue is patient will. I believe we have the will and I look forward to working with you to ensure that our students have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

Thank you, Senator, and I would be happy to answer any questions you have.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARGARET SPELLINGS

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the President’s 2008 budget for education. Let me begin by saying that I think we are experiencing an unprecedented era of change and ferment in American education. There is a broad consensus on the importance of education for America’s future in our increasingly competitive global economy, a new entrepreneurial spirit in our education system that is most evident in the growing numbers of charter schools, and a strong commitment to ensuring that all students not only graduate from high school, but graduate with real skills that they can put to use either at college or in the workforce.

Much of this change is driven by two factors: the strong accountability of No Child Left Behind, under which the Nation has made a commitment to a high-quality education for all children, regardless of their background; and the demand for a highly educated, talented workforce to ensure our economic competitiveness. The President’s 2008 budget request for education is driven largely by these same two factors.

President Bush is requesting \$56 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Education in fiscal year 2008. As you know, we prepared our request before Congress completed action on 2007 appropriations for the Department of Education, and at that time our 2008 discretionary total was the same as the 2007 Continuing Resolution level—CR level. Our budget reflects both the discipline required to meet the President’s goal of eliminating the Federal deficit by 2012 and his determination to target Federal education dollars on activities that show the

greatest promise of helping all students reach the proficiency goals of No Child Left Behind.

To fulfill this commitment to funding what works, our 2008 request would terminate support for a significant number of programs that have achieved their original purpose, duplicate other programs, are narrowly focused, or are unable to demonstrate effectiveness. We also are proposing to reduce funding for several other programs in favor of increases for higher priority activities. This combination of terminations and reductions would make available approximately \$3.3 billion for the administration's priorities.

NCLB REAUTHORIZATION

Our top priority for 2008 is reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act—NCLB—or, more accurately, reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as reauthorized 5 years ago by NCLB. In January, the administration released “Building on Results: A Blueprint for Strengthening the No Child Left Behind Act”, which describes our principles and priorities for reauthorizing NCLB. We now are drafting detailed proposals for consideration by Congress that would put those principles and priorities into place.

Our goal for reauthorization is to retain the strong accountability of the original No Child Left Behind Act, with its emphasis on annual assessment for all students, disaggregating assessment results by student subgroups, and 100 percent proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2014. In addition, our reauthorization proposal would build on this foundation by:

- Strengthening efforts to close achievement gaps, both by giving educators additional tools and resources to turn around low-performing schools and by providing new options to the parents of students in such schools;
- Giving States greater flexibility to measure student progress, improve assessment, and target improvement resources;
- Improving high school performance by expanding assessment, promoting rigorous and advanced coursework, and providing more resources to support reforms;
- Helping teachers to close achievement gaps by supporting intensive aid for struggling students, research-based instruction to improve learning in mathematics, and new incentives and rewards for teachers who work in low-achieving, high-poverty schools.

I have been pleased to see a lot of common ground in the early discussions, reports, and recommendations on the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, including the need to focus more attention on the high school level, the importance of improving math and science instruction, and greater flexibility and incentives to assign our best teachers to our most challenging schools. President Bush is personally committed to a successful reauthorization of NCLB, and I have seen strong evidence of that same commitment from key members of both Houses of the Congress. Our 2008 budget request was developed in concert with our reauthorization proposal to help move the debate forward in key areas.

RAISING THE BAR IN OUR HIGH SCHOOLS

The first key area is improving the performance of America's high schools. This has been a consistent theme of our last three budget requests, and the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind provides a new opportunity to finally make some real progress on the issue of high school reform. The recent release of the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results for 12th-graders in reading only confirmed what we have long known: our high schools are not making the grade in the national effort to ensure that all students are proficient in core academic subjects. The average reading score for high school seniors in 2005 was lower than the score in 1992, and the percentage of 12th-graders scoring “Proficient” or better on the NAEP reading assessment has now decreased from 40 percent in 1992 to 35 percent in 2005. I know the NAEP definition of “Proficient” differs from the State definitions used for No Child Left Behind accountability purposes, but the NAEP data are suggestive of the nationwide gap that must be closed to reach NCLB proficiency goals.

We think one way to close this gap is a relatively obvious one: give high schools their share of Title I funding. Currently, our high schools enroll about 20 percent of poor students, but receive only 10 percent of Title I allocations. To help correct this resource imbalance, our NCLB reauthorization proposal would change local allocation rules to require each school district to ensure that Title I allocations to its high schools roughly match the share of the district's poor students enrolled by those schools.

Since we don't want this new policy to come at the expense of elementary and middle schools currently receiving Title I funds, our \$13.9 billion request for Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies is intended to minimize any shifting of resources from elementary to secondary schools under the new allocation rules.

In addition to increased Title I funding for high schools, our reauthorization proposal would expand assessment at the high school level to encourage greater rigor in high school course-taking and to help make sure all high school graduates are prepared for postsecondary education or competitive employment in the global economy. The 2008 request would provide \$412 million in State Assessment Grant funding that, in addition to supporting continued implementation of annual assessments in reading, math, and science in earlier grades, would help pay for new assessments in reading and math at two additional high school years, including an 11th-grade assessment of college readiness in each subject.

AMERICAN COMPETITIVENESS INITIATIVE

Another key to increasing the rigor of instruction at the high school level is the President's American Competitiveness Initiative, or ACI, which is focused on improving math and science instruction both by ensuring that students in the early grades master the basics they need to succeed in critical high school subjects and by strengthening coursework in our high schools. The budget request provides a total of \$365 million in new funding for the ACI, including \$250 million for the elementary and middle school components of Math Now, which would encourage the use of research-based instruction to improve math achievement. We also are asking for a \$90 million increase for the Advanced Placement program to train more teachers and expand the number of high schools offering AP and IB courses in math, science, and critical foreign languages. And we are seeking \$25 million to create an Adjunct Teacher Corps, which would encourage experienced individuals from scientific and technical professions to teach high school courses, especially in high-poverty schools.

Increasing the number of Americans who speak foreign languages also is essential to ensuring competitiveness in the global economy, and to national security in the global war on terrorism. For this reason, the 2008 request would provide \$35 million as the Department's contribution to the President's multi-agency National Security Language Initiative. The core of the Department's effort in this area is \$24 million for a new Advancing America Through Foreign Language Partnerships program, which would support fully articulated language programs from kindergarten through graduate school aimed at significantly increasing the number of Americans fluent in languages critical to national security.

In addition to the ACI, we are seeking \$100 million for the Striving Readers program, which helps raise high school achievement by promoting research-based methods for improving the skills of teenage students who are reading below grade level.

EXPANDING SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

A major focus of our NCLB reauthorization proposal is strengthening the school improvement process. An estimated 20 percent of Title I schools currently are identified for improvement, with a growing number of those now entering the corrective action and restructuring stages of improvement, under which school districts are required to make fundamental reforms in instruction, staffing, and school governance to turn around chronic low-performance.

No Child Left Behind encourages a comprehensive, broad-based approach to school improvement, including technical assistance from States and school districts, the adoption of research-based improvement strategies, more effective teaching, and the provision of choice options for students and their parents.

A critical factor in turning around low-performing schools is strong support from States, which by law are required to establish statewide systems of technical assistance and support for local improvement. The 2008 request would help build State capacity to support school improvement by providing \$500 million in Title I School Improvement Grants, which would be reauthorized to permit States to retain up to 50 percent of their allocations under this program for State-level improvement activities, such as technical support in areas like analyzing test results, revising budgets, professional development, and making available school support teams. States would be required to subgrant the remaining funds to school districts to support local LEA and school improvement activities.

I was pleased to see that Congress responded to the President's 2007 request in this area by providing \$125 million for School Improvement Grants in the final 2007 CR. We are moving ahead quickly in planning for the effective use of these new

funds, and we will be prepared to scale up State and local improvement activities in 2008.

Our reauthorization proposal for School Improvement Grants also would permit the Secretary to retain up to 1 percent of appropriated funds to support efforts to identify and disseminate proven, research-based school improvement strategies. This proposal reflects the administration's strong conviction that we must not only invest in education, but also be careful to invest in what works.

Another key to successful school improvement efforts is a new emphasis on incentives for talented and effective teachers to work in challenging school environments. Several recent reports have confirmed the tendency of districts to assign their most experienced and highly qualified teachers to their lowest-poverty, highest-achieving schools, while lower-performing, higher-poverty schools tend to be served by inexperienced and unqualified teachers. Our reauthorization proposal would attack this problem from two angles. First, in the case of schools identified for restructuring that are undergoing fundamental reforms in governance and staffing, our proposal would give superintendents and other school leaders greater freedom to reassign teachers to best meet the needs of schools working to improve student achievement.

TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND

Second, our budget request would provide \$199 million to significantly expand the Teacher Incentive Fund and encourage more school districts and States to develop and implement innovative performance-based compensation systems. These systems would reward teachers and principals for raising student achievement and for taking positions in high-need schools, making an essential and valuable contribution to meeting the school improvement goals of NCLB.

NEW CHOICE PROPOSALS

We recognize, however, that school improvement takes time, and we firmly believe—especially in the case of chronically low-performing schools that have missed proficiency targets for many years—that students and parents should not have to wait for their schools to improve. Students attending such schools should have the opportunity to transfer to a better school, whether it is a private school or a public school in another district. To help create such opportunities, our 2008 request includes two new choice proposals that would expand options for students and parents at low-performing schools.

The first is \$250 million for Promise Scholarships, which in combination with other Federal education funds would provide scholarships of about \$4,000 that would allow students at schools undergoing restructuring to transfer to a better public or private school. Parents also could use Promise Scholarships to obtain intensive supplemental educational services—SES—for their children in lieu of transferring to another school.

Second, our \$50 million proposal for Opportunity Scholarships is intended to stimulate State and local choice initiatives, including those modeled after the DC Opportunity Scholarships program. This proposal would either pay the costs of attending a private school selected by eligible students and their parents or provide \$3,000 to pay for intensive SES.

CONCLUSION

These highlights of our 2008 request demonstrate our commitment to targeting limited Federal resources where they can leverage the most change and bring about meaningful improvement in our education system. I look forward to what I expect will be a vigorous debate this year as we work together on both the 2008 appropriation for the Department of Education and the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind.

I will be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

RESOURCES FOR NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Senator HARKIN. Thank you very much, Madam Secretary.

Well, I also think the patient will also translates into coming up with the resources that are needed. Earlier I spoke in my opening statement about what is happening in Iowa, where more than half the school districts will receive less Title I money this fiscal year than they got before the law was passed. People in these districts

cannot understand why the Federal Government would ask them to do more than ever under No Child Left Behind with less money.

I just do not know what to say other than, if we are going to put higher demands on schools should we not help give them the resources to do the job? I do not see that in your budget request, that we are going to be able to do that.

TITLE I FUNDING

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, as I said, Title I has increased—funding is up 59 percent since the President took office. Interestingly, I think it is also important that we have moved the Federal share of education spending upward in that period of time, and actually Federal increases have outpaced State increases. We have a 39 percent increase in Federal spending over that period of time compared to about a 22 percent increase in State resources.

SHIFTS IN TITLE I FUNDS TO LEAS

With respect to the Title I formula that you mentioned, with some school districts in your State losing resources, the formulas in the bill provide that the money follows the child. So communities that are growing, large, fast-growing communities, have seen more rapid increases in funding, while school districts that are declining in population may have seen less.

Senator HARKIN. That defines Iowa.

RESOURCES FOR NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Let me just ask you about this, about the increase in funding. As I look back over the years, almost all of that increase in funding took place in 2 years, fiscal year 2002 and fiscal year 2003. Since then, No Child Left Behind funding has been basically flat. Here are the figures: No Child Left Behind was funded at \$23.8 billion in 2003 and \$23.6 billion in 2007.

I do not think that is much to really brag about. But I just show, most of the increase took place in the first 2 years. Furthermore, I might add, I was here during those years and it was not the administration's budget, it was Congress that did that. Congress added the money to boost that up in those early years beyond the administration's budget request, and we are the ones—and I say this on both sides of the aisle—that demanded that we put more money into this program.

In 2002, the President asked for \$19.1 billion for No Child Left Behind, but Congress demanded more and we put in \$22.2 billion. That was \$3.1 billion above the President's request. In 2003, the President's budget proposed to cut No Child Left Behind funding. Congress put in a \$1.6 billion increase. So again, when I hear about all these, the amount of increase, 59 percent and all that kind of stuff, the fact is that took place in the first couple of years and since that time it has been relatively flat.

Would you agree or not?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Yes, sir, I would agree that the significant increases came in the early years, and obviously we faced many, many challenges as a Nation in that period of time since that have strained resources. You know, we also fully understand that the

President proposes and you dispose, and at the end of the day the President signed and was supportive of the investments that were made in education over those years.

Senator HARKIN. Well, again, there is money. We do spend money here. So it is prioritizing. Now, it seems to me if we are going to meet these challenges of the future and really do this through No Child Left Behind, that seems to me to be one of the major priorities we have in this country. So I know we have had other demands on money since then with 9/11 and the Iraq war and everything else, but nonetheless we do spend other money here. It would seem to me that if this is going to be a priority we ought to make it a priority, and I have not seen that.

That is what I hear from my school districts. Again, as I divine this, as I try to get into it, first of all I hear the complaints from teachers and school boards and things like that about No Child Left Behind. But the more I dig into it, the more I find out it is just really a matter of resources more than anything else. Now, there is some concern about the frequency of the testing and whether or not frequency of testing really is a good measure, that type of thing. But overall it is more the resources. If there needs to be remedial math and remedial courses, it is the money for it. If they need to have highly qualified teachers, it is the money for it, and they simply are not getting it.

READING FIRST PROGRAM

Let me just move to one other thing that has sort of been hanging over us for some time here. Obviously, reading. Reading is one of the parts of No Child Left Behind. One of the largest programs is Reading First. Over the past 5 years, Congress has appropriated more than \$5 billion for this program. So I was disturbed by several recent reports from the Inspector General that the Department mismanaged the program, that it steered school contracts to publishers that were favored and away from others, and ignored Federal laws on maintaining local and State control of school curricula.

After the first IG report, Madam Secretary, you said that these were, "individual mistakes," by Department officials, and you noted that these events occurred before you became Secretary. However, Michael Petrilli, who worked in the Department during the period covered by the IG report, wrote that you micromanaged—this is a quote—"micromanaged the implementation of Reading First from her West Wing office," end quote, where you were President Bush's domestic policy advisor. Petrilli also wrote that you were, "the leading cheerleader for an aggressive approach," whatever that means.

Also, Education Week newspaper has uncovered numerous e-mails between you and Reid Lyon, one of the key advisers for the program, regarding Reading First activities.

STATE AND LOCAL CURRICULUM CONTROL

Madam Secretary, again this has to do with spending a lot of money. That is what this committee is about. We have this IG's report. I am concerned about it, concerned that in No Child Left Behind we insisted that the Federal Government would not dictate to local school districts and State schools what they had to teach, what their curricula was. That was insisted on, putting it in there.

In Reading First, what we saw happen was the Department of Education or you as the domestic policy advisor basically telling some schools what they had to follow in terms of Reading First. Is that so or am I missing something here, Madam Secretary?

RESPONSE TO IG REPORT ON READING FIRST

Secretary SPELLINGS. No, sir, that particular aspect is not so. Let me address your concerns. First of all, obviously I was as disturbed and probably more so as you are about the Inspector General's report and that is why I adopted every single one of the recommendations that he made to me and have acted on those. In fact, I am about to provide on the House side, and I am sure you would be interested as well, a specific action plan of what we have done with respect to oversight of that grant program and every other grant program of the Department of Education.

We made personnel changes within the Department of Education. The officials who were implicated in the Inspector General report are no longer at the Department. I was the domestic policy advisor at the time, with the responsibility to oversee more than a dozen departments and agencies and activities, and obviously I was not micromanaging that grant program or any other grant program of the thousands and thousands that are run by the domestic agencies.

USE OF SCIENTIFICALLY BASED CURRICULA

With respect to Dr. Lyon, he was the lead Federal Government researcher at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development under NIH at the time. The statute does provide that these funds, the nearly more than tripling of funds that were provided, be used for reading instruction based on a scientifically based approach. That research, which had been funded over a period of 14 years or more, conclusively answered much of the dispute about how we teach young children to read.

There were not then, nor are there ever, specific requirements about particular curriculum products or approaches. But the law did require that the funds that were expended on reading had to meet scientifically based research principles. Secretary Paige at the time posted a letter early on in the administration and made crystal clear that there was not a specific program or product that was endorsed by the Department. That has been true since.

BOSTON READING FIRST PROGRAM

Senator HARKIN. Well, Madam Secretary, this still continues to bedevil us, because I think the law was very clear and we have, according to the IG's report, instances of where schools, I believe it was in Boston, were doing a certain reading program that was approved. These were approved, peer-reviewed programs. The Reading First director called a State official to say he had concerns about some of these reading programs that four districts were using. All these programs had gone through the appropriate, as I said, peer review approval process. Nevertheless, the State official conveyed that concern to the districts.

The three that dropped those programs continued to get Reading First funding. The one that stuck with this program had its Reading First funding taken away, even though it was an approved program. This is what bothers us. I mean, the clear signal was you better do what the Department or the White House says or you are not going to get your funding.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, with respect to the particular issues about Boston, all I can say is that there was a framework about what constituted scientifically based reading instruction, which included obviously multiple aspects, and some school districts met those with one approach, some had multiple approaches woven together. As you said, there were peer review processes. I do not know the particular aspects of that specific situation, but—

Senator HARKIN. I wish you would look at it, because it is very disturbing about the Boston situation.

RESPONSE TO IG REPORT ON READING FIRST

Secretary SPELLINGS. I will tell you that, and I think it is important, and particularly in times of scarce resources, that Reading First is working for students. I would certainly not want us to leave the impression that, while there is certainly room for improvement in oversight and the management of this program, that it isn't. I have embraced, as I said, every single one of the IG's recommendations. I am hugely concerned about the credibility of the Department, but I also know that more kids are being taught to read. This is a major investment in reading instruction and I would hate to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Senator HARKIN. Well, I do too. I just say that in looking at this, we had—obviously, these things come to light when complaints come in to the Congress and that is why we asked GAO or the IG's office to take a look at it, because we do not really know all these things and we have to rely upon their investigative arm to do so. When this came back, it was very, very disturbing to see the heavy hand of the Federal Government coming in and saying, no, you have got to do this, especially when it involves a lot of money. This is a lot of money and it is money to private contractors, so if one private contractor or somebody is getting a lot of money going his or her way and taking it away from others, it raises all kinds of questions about who is talking to whom and who is getting the benefits and that kind of thing.

That is why we really have to be very careful about it. I am happy to hear that you have implemented all of the suggestions of the IG's office, and hopefully that is just a chapter in the past and it will not happen again.

Secretary SPELLINGS. We both hope that, believe me.

Senator HARKIN. Thanks, Madam Secretary.

I yield to Senator Craig, who I guess was here first.

Senator Craig.

Senator CRAIG. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, again welcome to the committee.

Let me ask unanimous consent that my opening statement become a part of the committee record.

Senator HARKIN. Sure.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT SENATOR LARRY CRAIG

Secretary Spellings, I appreciate you coming today to testify before this subcommittee regarding education funding and the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind. This hearing will give all of us critical insights as to how No Child Left Behind has functioned over the past five years, and what changes need to be made in order to ensure that American children will receive the best education possible and enable them to succeed in the global market.

I have long been a proponent of a limited Federal Government, and this is especially true when it comes to education. It is presumptuous to say that the Federal Government can provide a one-size-fits-all solution to education, and because of that, we need to make sure that States and local education agencies ultimately are able to decide what is best for education.

This year we will have the opportunity to revisit No Child Left Behind and improve it. I am confident that the administration will work closely with us to ensure that we continue to move our Nation's education system forward and make it stronger.

I also support the President's American Competitiveness Initiative, which places an emphasis on improving math and science learning for our students. Last year, I joined several of my colleagues to introduce the PACE-Energy Act, legislation that would increase math and science education through the Department of Energy. This bill received widespread support and I look forward to continuing this work to make American students more competitive in the global community.

As you know, Idaho has a large number of rural schools. It has always been a concern of mine that if the Federal Government became too involved in local education, the rural schools would suffer the most. As we consider No Child Left Behind this year, I will be working very hard to ensure that rural school districts are not unfairly punished by No Child Left Behind regulations that are unfair to the real conditions on the ground.

Madame Secretary, the Congress will also be looking at higher education later on this year. Last year, I was troubled with by a program proposed by the Commission on the Future of Higher Education that would create a National Student Database. Currently, around 40 States already maintain their own secure database without Federal involvement. Having been involved in the massive identity theft at the Department of Veterans' Affairs, I have serious concerns about your department compiling large amounts of personal and financial data to be kept within the Department of Education.

Again, Secretary Spellings, I am pleased to see you here again before this Subcommittee, and I look forward to hearing your testimony.

NCLB AND LOCAL FLEXIBILITY

Senator CRAIG. This hearing today was in large part to be focused on the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind and how we work on that and its dynamics and its future. Madam Secretary, the frustrations that I would want to express to you today—and it is something that in part resources solve, but also program solves—an effort to create a Federal program where one size fits all—this weekend I was at a gathering in a small community in my State not far from where I grew up, chatting with a high school senior. I said: How many in your graduating class this year? She smiled and said: Well, it is a fairly big class, Senator; it is 17. Riggins, Idaho.

Not far from there, at least by Idaho distances, 200 miles, 220 miles, is one of the larger schools in the country today, over 2,000 students in the high school, a rapidly growing area, breaking themselves up into academies, being very dynamic in how they look at themselves. I had walked into that school and took a tour of it a year ago, a beautiful new school that has already outgrown itself and it is 2 years old.

I thought, oh my goodness, students must get lost here. But they are not getting lost. There is a certain amount of individuality there created by the academy concept that probably certainly is not

as great in Riggins, Idaho, where there are 17 in the high school graduating class. But there it becomes very obvious to me that one size cannot possibly fit all and that in most instances the quality of a rural high school education, while different than an urban high school education, approaches it and must be allowed to approach it in different ways.

Most of my educators today, principals, superintendents, and educators, are less critical of No Child Left Behind than they obviously were a few years ago. They see it working. They still do not see the flexibility that is oftentimes necessary or the measurement of indices or indices that measure in a way that do not do that.

What kind of flexibilities can we see in reauthorization recommended from your position versus what we might do here?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Thank you, Senator. I will be glad to answer that. I completely agree, one size does not fit all. States have established their own assessment systems, their own standards, their own sample sizes, and so on and so forth. The President is specifically calling for some flexibility around calculating what is known in the trade as a growth model. I have granted, over the last 2 years, waivers for five States to begin to experiment, now that we have annual assessment data—it would have been impossible to do 5 years ago when that was frequently not the case—for us to chart the progress of individual students over time, so long as we stay true to what I call the bright line principles. But I think certainly there is some prospect that that could be a very valid way of measuring progress and certainly one that the President supports.

Senator CRAIG. Well, I will look forward to looking at some of those proposals. While I think small schools are more the anomaly today than the reality, as a graduate of a high school in which my class—I was 1 of 10—I find that my concern about being able to sustain small schools is very valuable for the participation and quality of education.

PRIVACY AND HIGHER EDUCATION NATIONAL DATABASES

Last question, Mr. Chairman. The Congress will also be looking at higher education later on this year, Madam Secretary. Last year I was troubled by a program proposed by the Commission on the Future of Higher Education that would create a national student database. Currently around 40 States already maintain their own secure database without Federal involvement. Now, you are looking at a Senator who has weathered two database breaches at the VA as chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee here in the Senate of some magnitude and substantial expense on the part of the Federal Government and great consternation on the part of America's veterans, when it was possible, although, thank goodness, it has not happened, that their social security numbers, their wives' social security numbers or spouses' and on and on became available outside that realm.

I have serious concerns about your Department compiling large amounts of personal and financial data to be kept within the Department of Education, especially when States are apparently doing it with some degree of adequacy on their own. And I am asking wherein does the value of this lie? In fact, I suggested at a time

of a VA data breach, thank goodness it was not the student loan program, because there you would have got three social security numbers instead of one or two.

Yet the sense of security in managing these databases becomes I think increasingly important on one side. The other side is sometimes we just like to assemble them for purposes of measurement and knowing where we are not or where we are, and we love to talk about statistical analysis. I am wondering how valuable it is at certain times when in fact a little extra work simply compiles that which is already out there when it is necessary to use, instead of in one large base environment.

Can you respond to those concerns?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Yes, sir, I would be glad to. You are right, my commission did recommend that. While we do have 40 State data systems, they are isolated—sort of cul de sacs. As consumers shop for higher education and look for value and look for productivity and look for output and completion rates and so forth, there is power in additional consumer information that would allow students to compare those things about a State school in your State versus a State school in my State and the like. That is why the President has asked for \$25 million as a pilot project to begin to see if there is any promise at the State level of beginning to understand how those data might interact.

I obviously am very concerned about matters of privacy and so forth. We have large databases at the Department of Education and, happily, have had sound integrity for the most part around those programs. But I also know that, as we collect data through our integrated postsecondary education data system that we obtain a lot about first-time, full-time, non-transfer degree-seeking students, but they are fewer and fewer students within our higher education population. So the existing data do not allow us to know very much and be very smart about either providing consumers the information they need to make selections or to inform policy about how we invest resources around higher education.

So he has called for a \$25 million pilot program to start to think about, whether this is an area that we ought to be looking into with greater intensity.

Senator CRAIG. Okay, thank you.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you, Senator Craig. I thought it was very enlightening to now learn that you were in the top 10 of your graduating class.

Senator CRAIG. That is a valid statement, Mr. Chairman.

Senator HARKIN. Senator Cochran.

Senator COCHRAN. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Madam Secretary, welcome to the hearing. We appreciate your service and hard work as Secretary of Education.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Thank you.

READING PROGRAM IN MISSISSIPPI

Senator COCHRAN. I'm listening to the discussion particularly about reading programs and I could not help but think about my State of Mississippi and the good fortune we have in Jim Barksdale, who is a very generous benefactor for a statewide read-

ing program. I know you probably have met him and know of the work that is being done with privately funded activities that are based at the University of Mississippi, but are truly statewide. There are pilot efforts ongoing in places like Okolona, Mississippi, under the direction of Jim's brother, Claiborne Barksdale, who is a former education legislative assistant and legislative director on my staff.

I am told that they are doing some marvelous things and work is under way that is very promising, and I wonder if it would be appropriate for the Department of Education to look closely at some of the things they are trying there and assessing the worth of the new programs and whether or not this could be a model for a nationwide effort?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Yes, Senator, we are very familiar with that. It is a model and they, as you said, basically have a statewide endeavor that is really improving reading instruction in Mississippi in big cities and small towns as well. So we are well familiar with it, and I will look and see what kind of best practices we might model and share with other States and communities.

Senator COCHRAN. My dear mother was the Title I coordinator for mathematics instruction in County, Mississippi, where I was going to high school at the time. Actually, I was in college when Title I was created. But I did learn a lot about her enthusiasm for the coordination of countywide or districtwide instruction under the auspices of someone who is well trained and talented and committed and works hard in an academic area. I just happen to know more about mathematics programs than anything else.

TITLE I ALLOCATIONS

I notice that there is a suggestion that some are saying they need more funds for Title I type instruction and supervision in the elementary grades; others express a need in the high school grades. I say that because I understand the President is proposing moving some of the funds that are now allocated to elementary schools to high schools and there are some elementary educators who are worried about this. What is going on? Is there a new national emphasis on either one or the other, high school or elementary, getting the benefit of the Title I program?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Senator, currently the vast majority of Title I resources go to our elementary schools, somewhat less to our middle schools, and virtually none to high schools. That is why the President believes, as we have heard from the business community and others about the new currencies of more competency and proficiency in high school, that new investments that we make in Title I, our largest program as you rightly said, be focused on investments in high school. We know that so many of our African American and Hispanic students drop out, that there is the need for more rigor and more relevance, more intervening programs like Striving Readers and various things like that that need to come to our high schools, and there is emerging consensus around that.

PREPARED STATEMENT

So the President believes new investments ought to be targeted and pointed at some activities in high school, which frankly have been somewhat ignored.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask that my statement be made a part of the record.

Senator HARKIN. Without objection.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR THAD COCHRAN

WELCOME REMARKS TO SECRETARY SPELLINGS

Welcome, Secretary Spellings. Thank you for your tremendous efforts on behalf of our schools' recovery from hurricane Katrina. You were swift to ease regulations and provide advice to school administrators, and when Congress provided funds, you and your staff quickly put in place the mechanisms to get the funds to the States and to the schools, both K-12 and our higher education schools. The subsequent visits by you, Under Secretaries, and your staff have helped to boost the morale of teachers and administrators and has given them the opportunity to show you the progress they have made. Your continued interest in the well being of our schools and students is very much appreciated.

We appreciate the emphasis in the fiscal year 2008 budget proposal on high school students. Mine is one of those States with alarming drop out rates. This fact perplexes parents as well as education leaders. Emphasis on programs that will assist high schools with this problem and create an early learning environment that will reduce the likelihood of high school drop out will help many other parts of our society, including a well prepared work force, better parenting, and reduced criminal behavior.

We look forward to the opportunity today to discuss some of the President's new ideas.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HARKIN. Senator Stevens.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Spellings, I am sorry I was not here when you made your statement. I have read it, though. I am impressed with your support of the concept of No Child Left Behind, but could we have an agreement that in order to be fair all children have to be at the starting line if we are going to judge whether they have been left behind? There are some that are not there at the starting line to begin with.

Secretary SPELLINGS. I would agree with that.

PROGRAMS PROPOSED FOR ELIMINATION IN FISCAL YEAR 2008

Senator STEVENS. I find it sad that this budget eliminates all of the programs that we have started in the past, like the Alaska Native Education Equity Act, the Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions of Higher Education Program, the Education Through Cultural and Historical Organizations, which is called ECHO, and the Physical Education Program which was named after Carol White.

They have been in the budget for a series of years. I wonder if you could tell me why they were all eliminated?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, Senator, as I know you know, this budget presents a series of tough choices, including the ones that

you name. As I said before you got here, the President certainly understands that we propose and you dispose. I think one of the philosophical things that the President believes in, and it certainly has been part of increases in Title I, is that we stipulate the goals, the outcomes, grade level achievement in 2014, and those sorts of things, and provide broad latitude, consolidate resources in larger programs, and allow local school districts to make decisions about the types of needs that they have.

NATIVE ALASKAN AND NATIVE HAWAIIAN PROGRAM ELIMINATIONS

Senator STEVENS. Of course, that is a nice offer, but with the recent statement by Mr. Portman on the absolute abolition of earmarks, how would we ever get that money back into the budget to continue what has been going on now for at least 12 years? All of those programs have been very successful. I hope you will come up to Alaska and you will go to Hawaii and take a look, but we have enormous problems dealing with Native children who come in from the villages and want to fulfill the educational program required by No Child Left Behind. That was the reason we created some of these programs long before No Child Left Behind.

But I really—what are you doing in other areas where they have 10 and 15, 20 percent of minority students that do not speak English, that many of them have come from really impoverished circumstances? What do you do there?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Those students are supported through Title I, and certainly there is no impediment, obviously, that Title I resources be used around the—

Senator STEVENS. Do you have a Title I office in Alaska?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Do we specifically have a Title I office in Alaska? I am sure there is one in the State Department of Education there.

Senator STEVENS. I do not remember one.

Secretary SPELLINGS. I mean, I am sure we do not have a Federal Department of Education office in Alaska, but I am sure the State office manages and oversees Title I for the State of Alaska.

Senator STEVENS. Well, we do have a State department of education and we run our educational system on local school districts. But I do not think that your Department even knows the situation with regard to the higher education programs we are dealing with. These organizations, these institutions of higher education, for instance, are sort of open universities in various small villages and cities in both Alaska and Hawaii, many of whom are a thousand miles from the office of the State department of education.

We created a Federal program to help them work together and we have united them through the concepts of tele-education, tying them into the University of Alaska and the University of Hawaii.

I tell you, I look at what has been done and I just, I cannot believe that such a meat axe would be placed on the education budget for Alaska and Hawaii. I am very serious. It worries me greatly to represent a place that is not understood apparently by this administration and they are refusing to accept the judgments made by the past administrations and Congresses of programs that would work and do work and have brought our children to the point where they can meet the needs of No Child Left Behind.

I do hope you will come to Alaska.

Secretary SPELLINGS. I do too.

Senator STEVENS. I do not know yet what we are going to do, but the Senators from Alaska and Hawaii are going to have to meet and figure it out. Every single program that we have had in the past for education under this bill has been eliminated by the budget. I do not think that has happened to any other State.

I do think that we are going to have to invent something that can escape the earmark process and get back to the point where we can fulfill the needs of these children. This budget cuts them off in midstream. We have children that are in those institutions of higher education, some of whom go on and successfully go to higher education in other States, but they are way out away from our universities.

You know how far it is from Anchorage to Adak?

Secretary SPELLINGS. A long way.

Senator STEVENS. 2,000 miles. You know how far it is from Anchorage to Point Barrow? 1,200 miles. That is like from here to Denver. Your people just whacked these programs. I cannot remember ever being this disturbed with the Department of Education as I am today.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED FUNDING

Senator HARKIN. If I might just add, I think Senator Stevens has given another example of why there is a role for congressionally directed funding.

Senator STEVENS. I hope there is.

Senator HARKIN. There is. The Constitution of the United States gives us that role and, quite frankly, those of us who represent different States see different needs. We are able to use congressionally directed funding to test out theories. Some work, some do not, but then to focus where they are needed. Sometimes broad departmental maneuvers cannot do that, and that is why there is a role for congressionally directed funding in a lot of areas.

Senator Kohl.

Senator KOHL. Thank you, Senator.

I want to, if I may, just echo what Senator Harkin said. I wanted to echo what Senator Harkin said. Back in Wisconsin, of course, I get around a lot and I have worked hard to get as much as I can in congressionally mandated spending, which is less than 1 percent of our budget. You know, the Constitution does call for Congress' role, as you know, in determining how much money we spend and where we spend it. It seems to me when we have at this level of Government 1 percent of the Federal budget to chew over to try and use in our various States in the most precise and effective way, and if we can have that subject to total transparency so that there is no chicanery and no involvement in trying to direct spending to satisfy lobbyists or campaign contributors, but simply to address real needs that we understand in our districts and in our State that cannot be understood necessarily at the Federal level by people who reside in different buildings around the city, if we can do that back at the State level with less than 1 percent of the Federal budget, it seems to me to demagogue that issue and to try and sug-

gest that that money is being corrupted and spent for the most part unwisely, whereas all the money in a President's budget, be it a Democratic or Republican President, is being spent wisely, in contrast to congressionally mandated spending, I do not think that holds water, and I think we do our country a disservice.

I know that back in my State, if all of the congressionally mandated spending that I have been able to do over my term were eliminated, there would be so many unhappy people for so many good causes—education, health care, and environment, after-school programs, all the things that we really spend money on carefully and wisely. If we eliminated that and simply said to the President, as I said, regardless of party, we will work off your budget, we will not suggest any spending, we will not be involved in recognizing needs in our States and in our districts, we will walk away from that and just leave it to the Federal budget coming out of the White House, our country would be a lesser place. I honestly believe that. We would have less satisfied constituents. We would be less able to address the real needs in our various States and districts.

While I do not see your head nodding yes or no, I will sort of take that as a qualified yes.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND FUNDING

Having said that, I just want to address a couple things that I am sure you have heard about. In my State of Wisconsin, the lack of funding, adequate funding, for No Child Left Behind affects every district. In Sun Prairie, two Title I math teachers were let go. In Waukesha, they have had to cut back on writing classes and in Green Bay, support for art and music education has fallen.

The Sun Prairie School District, Madam Secretary, received 6 percent of their budget from the Federal Government. However, they spend 30 percent of their budget on meeting No Child Left Behind mandates. Sun Prairie is not alone in Wisconsin or across the country. Underfunding of No Child Left Behind forces our local taxpayers and our school districts to make up the difference. Taxpayers feel pressures to raise local property taxes. Districts are forced to cut vital programs and students are left behind.

So how would you respond here? Perhaps you have already. There are many, many concerns, if not outright complaints, around Wisconsin, around the country, with respect to the requirements of No Child Left Behind and the lack of funds to meet those requirements.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, I think I would say a couple things to your school folks, Senator. One is that Title I funding is up 59 percent since the passage of that law. Special Education funding is up more than 65 percent since 2001. Federal investments actually have outpaced State increases in education funding by nearly two to one, about a 39 percent increase in Federal spending over that time compared to about 22 percent increase in State funds.

So I would answer the resource question. Obviously, there are issues around policy matters that you are hearing from your folks as well. The President has proposed a series of ideas around building on No Child Left Behind that recognize some new flexibility, some new ways to chart growth for progress over time, ways to

look at highly effective teaching as opposed to just input-driven systems, around highly qualified teachers. So I think there is a nexus between the policy discussions as well as the resource levels that I think will come together this year as we look at the reauthorization.

Senator KOHL. You do not agree—and I respect your point of view, but you do not agree with the position many of us have regarding the mandates of No Child Left Behind not being funded? That is not a—

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, there is really one mandate per se in this law and that is annual assessment in grades 3 through 8 in reading and math. We have spent about \$2 billion specifically for that mandate, fully funded at the Federal level. But as a 9 percent investor in education, I do not think we will ever bear the full cost of meeting the requirements of grade-level proficiency by 2014. I do not think that was ever envisioned when No Child Left Behind was enacted. We are a minority investor in education in this country and I suspect will remain so.

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

Senator KOHL. Quickly, 21st Century Community Learning Centers have, as you know, been flat-funded at \$981 million. As a result, many programs have had to be discontinued, as I am sure you are aware. It has happened in my city and in my State. Those programs, many of them are real after-school programs that have such a positive impact on young people's lives and I know you care about that deeply. But there is no question that we have had to eliminate many of those programs for lack of funding.

Do you have a response, some way that we can get that program restored?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, I think I would say two things. One is that many of those needs are being met by virtue of the supplemental services or extra tutoring help that comes out of implementing No Child Left Behind and many of those same students are being served by the additional help that is provided through that route, which is not to say that we should not support after-school programs as they exist in the 21st Century program as well.

Senator KOHL. Can I have 1 more minute? One more, quickly.

RESPONSE TO IG REPORT ON READING FIRST

In Madison—I sent a letter to your office regarding Reading First grants. As you are aware, a recent internal audit of the Department's Reading First program cited significant mismanagement of the program. In 2004, Madison Metropolitan School District declined to continue to participate in the program. Madison's curriculum was working, but because it did not adopt your Department's recommended curriculum the district has lost over \$2 million in Federal funds as a result.

Can you tell us how you plan to address this report and, moreover, what is the status of the efforts to reinstate Madison's funds?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Yes, sir. Senator Harkin and I had an exchange about this. With respect to the Inspector General report, I have adopted every single one of the recommendations that he made to me, and I will be glad to share with the committee the sta-

tus of each one of those actions. It pertains not only to the management of Reading First, but to really every grant program in the Department of Education, because, believe me, I take this very seriously. Personnel changes have been made, et cetera.

But I would also say that the No Child Left Behind statute requires that—while there are obviously processes, peer review processes, and so forth—that scientifically based, researched programs are funded by this program. Our Government, through the National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development, funded a year long research program that conclusively ended some of the debate about how we teach young children to read. So it was not only about just programs that work. It was about particular elements and aspects that had to exist in a program, and that was the process of implementing Reading First, however flawed it might have been.

With respect to doing that, Secretary Paige, who was at the helm at the time, sent letters and made clear that there were no prescriptive or specific programs that could or could not be allowed or paid for, so long as they met the requirement for scientifically based research programs. So the actual specifics of that program and where they fell off the mark with respect to implementing a scientifically based research program I do not happen to know off the top of my head, but I certainly will investigate.

Senator KOHL. Thank you.

Thank you for your forbearance, Mr. Chairman.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you, Senator Kohl.

Senator Landrieu.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED FUNDING

Good afternoon, Ms. Secretary, Madam Secretary. I would like to associate myself with the remarks of Senator Kohl, my colleague from Wisconsin, relative to his defense of congressionally directed spending, which is a significant part of the role of Congress, in that the people elect us, send us here, to help focus on their priorities, and we do that through not just speeches and meetings that we have, but they are reflected in the budgets, particularly through the Appropriations committee members. But I think that has been well said, so I would like to just go on.

GULF COAST RENEWAL

One, let me begin by thanking you for your attention to our particular situation in Louisiana and the gulf coast. You have been a very active Secretary on our behalf, willing to listen, to learn, to visit. I have said that publicly before, but I want to say it again. I really appreciate the effort that you and your staff have given.

In that regard, are you familiar with the bill that Senator Kennedy has introduced, along with myself and Senator Reid and several Members of the House, called the Renewal Act for 2007? That is specifically focused to the gulf coast communities that were devastated both in Mississippi and Louisiana, to help us try to recruit, Madam Secretary, some of our teachers back, some additional good teachers to our region, and to help us stand up our schools, because

it is virtually impossible to build cities, parishes, or counties without schools.

Have you had a chance to look at it and could you make just a brief comment about your review of it?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Yes, I am somewhat familiar with it, Senator. Let me say that, to the extent that it is consistent with some of the things that the President has called for as he has asked for \$199 million for what he is calling the Teacher Incentive Fund, which is to reward our very best people to go into our most challenging educational environments, I think there are definitely some similarities. But I am not specifically familiar with every aspect and with the resource levels. But I think there are some consistencies between the two proposals, clearly.

Senator LANDRIEU. I will follow up with you and your staff on this, but it is a very important initiative in this Congress in the Democratic leadership, and we have Republican support hopefully as well, to move this through so that we can get our schools back up and running.

TITLE I FUNDING INCREASE

Number two, on Title I, I am happy to see the increases. You know one of the successes of No Child Left Behind and the effort to create it initially was to refocus Title I moneys on the students that most needed the help, so it would become true to its original mission, which is to give the bulk of Federal funding to the school districts that needed the most help, as opposed to equally disbursed, because otherwise the inequities that naturally exist between wealthier counties and poorer counties or wealthier parishes and poorer parishes would never be closed.

Title I is the title that tries to do that. So for every dollar invested in Title I, it helps us to close the dream gap, as I call it, between the counties that have a lot of resources and where the kids have a lot of big dreams, and the counties and parishes that have very limited dreams because the resources are very limited.

So while I am pleased to see an increase, I am going to fight harder for even a greater increase in Title I dollars and the flexibility to use them well. So that when you look out in America, regardless of whether you are born in the poorest county in Louisiana or Mississippi or Arkansas or Tennessee or whether you are in the wealthiest county in Connecticut or New Jersey, you have a chance, a real chance. The only way you have a chance is if you go to a school where you are getting almost an equal amount of money being spent on you. You cannot have \$4,000 in one case and \$15,000 in another and think a child that is getting a \$4,000 education has the same chance as a child getting a \$15,000 education.

When we shortchange Title I, we undercut our fundamental commitment to equal opportunity in this country. So while 8 percent is better than no percent, it is not good enough, and I am going to be working on that with the chairman.

FOSTER CARE CHILDREN

Finally, let me say—this is brought to me by my other advocacy on the role of the Coalition on Adoption and Foster Care. Mr. Chairman, we have 800,000 foster care children. By virtue of that

definition, they have no parents because their parental rights are either on the way to be terminated, probably will be terminated. Their parents do not have custody. The custody—we have custody of them, the government has custody of them.

So I am wondering if we should try to evaluate their learning as a category, foster care children. And it would not, I do not think, cost that much more. We are evaluating everyone. But if you would consider that, so we could judge the children that are under our care, 500,000 to 800,000 children, we could get reports on how they are doing as a subgroup relative to other children; it might be helpful and I wanted to suggest that.

I will save the rest of my comments and questions for my second round. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you very much, Senator Landrieu.
Senator Murray.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND FUNDING

Senator MURRAY. Well, thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing. Obviously, funding for No Child Left Behind is a very hot topic at home and I share the frustration that you have already heard from this committee on both sides of the aisle. I have held a number of roundtables around my State over the past year in Yakima and Vancouver and Anacordas and had parents and students and principals and administrators all come and talk to us about their experiences with No Child Left Behind. Funding is the number one issue.

They are working harder than ever. They are trying desperately to meet the goals of No Child Left Behind, and I think it does not do them a favor to say, well, it is only a small percentage of your funding. It is a huge impact on their funding if they do not meet the goals of this, and they are all working very hard to do that.

I want to ask you what every one of them has asked me every place I have gone, and that is why has the President not fully funded No Child Left Behind?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, Senator, as I have said, funding for No Child Left Behind is up significantly, Title I, in particular, is up 59 percent.

Senator MURRAY. Well, that was in the first couple of years, when we were in the majority. But since then we have not had it funded and in fact this year once again we are not seeing adequate funding for it, not the levels that were authorized with the bill. You remember—well, when we negotiated that bill there were two promises: We will put in accountability and we will put in funding. We have never met the funding.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, as I have said, funding is up and, while in the early days, the first 2 years, there were very, very significant increases, I think the times that were before us because of Hurricane Katrina, and the war, and 9/11, among other things, have made some very tough choices for all of us.

Senator MURRAY. Well, the way it sounds to me is we are making this law try to work, but you continually do not fund it. How do you expect me to do my job? How do you say that to an educator who is working 12 hours a day, 40 kids in their classroom, working

really hard to meet it, and they just feel left behind by this administration?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, I would give them that answer. I would also say that I think that the policy that is before us now, with more information, more data around kids and their needs, has allowed us to be a lot smarter and more precise about the resources we are spending.

Senator MURRAY. Well, they are feeling it out there and the anxiety is huge. As Democrats, we are going to put together a budget that tries to meet that better. But it is very frustrating to not have that request come from you at your Department, where you are the top of education. Believe me, the people I am talking to are at the other end of it. It is very frustrating. You need to know, it is a very hot topic out there.

FLEXIBILITY IN CHARTING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

The other thing I get asked all the time is with these 37 cells and if you fail in one of those cells you are considered a failure. What do you tell educators who think that the AYP measurement should be adjusted so that one problem does not leave parents thinking that their entire school is failing?

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, I tell them two things. One, I tell them about the President's proposal about perfection or tweaks that we need to look at as we reauthorize No Child Left Behind, that we might find ways through a growth model. I have given five States a waiver to begin to experiment with charting progress over time, to determine if those might be more accurate and more precise ways to look at progress.

I also tell them—

Senator MURRAY. So are you recommending changes in how those, how AYP is achieved?

Secretary SPELLINGS. We are suggesting that, as well as a status model, that this might be a State decision, actually. I would not necessarily mandate that every State must use a growth model, but that that could be a way—

Senator MURRAY. So you will allow States some flexibility in that?

Secretary SPELLINGS. With respect to charting progress, yes, we have called for that in the administration.

The other thing that I think is important, and we have all said this, a more nuanced system of accountability I think is certainly worthy of discussion, and that is that there are very many schools that are within range—you mentioned one specific example—versus those who are chronically underperforming for 5 years or more, and that we have sort of a pass-fail system in No Child Left Behind and we could be more nuanced about it now that we are 5 years into implementing this law and have so much more data.

But as you know, we passed the very best law we could 5 years ago with the limited—

Senator MURRAY. With the promise of funding.

Secretary SPELLINGS [continuing]. Amount of information.

Senator MURRAY. That is where the rub has really come in, and I think you are going to hear that more and more.

FUNDING FOR TEACHER QUALITY AND VOUCHERS

Since I just have a few seconds left, you mentioned to Senator Landrieu the increased funding for the Teacher Incentive Fund to implement merit pay, as a response to her, and you did that by cutting \$100 million from the Improving Teacher Quality State Grant program, which helps our teachers raise student achievement by professional development and mentoring. That is what we do not understand in your budget, is putting money, \$300 million, into a voucher program and \$100 million into improving teacher quality and taking it out of the funding for other parts of this bill that will allow our students and our teachers and our schools to be able to meet the requirements of this law.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Well, I think to the extent that one half of the \$200 million increase would come from Title II, I think there is a lot of promising practice around the country and that some of the most strategic and best use of those resources, those Title II resources, may very well be around paying our very best teachers for doing the most challenging work, and that is why this budget includes a proposal to do that.

Senator MURRAY. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would just say you cannot rob Peter and try and pay Paul in the form of a voucher program and expect our schools to do less with what they are already working so hard on.

I thank you for the hearing.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Chairman, could I speak to—could I have 30 seconds?

Senator HARKIN. I just want to respond to the voucher thing. Especially when the schools that the kids are going to with vouchers do not have to meet all the requirements of the public schools.

Senator MURRAY. That is right.

CHARTER SCHOOL FUNDING

Senator LANDRIEU. Can I just say, just one other follow-up. I agree with the vouchers, as I have been an outspoken opponent of them unless they are used in very targeted situations. But I am a supporter of public charter schools that can add some I think needed “cooperatition”—I do not like to use the word “competition”; it is cooperatition—and entrepreneurship. But that level is funded as flat as well.

I wish that we could try to stay consistent because some school districts are finding a lot of success in doing a more decentralized, more entrepreneurial, more site-based help with their public school system. So I hope that we can focus some additional effort in that direction. As you know, that is the direction we are taking in standing up a new New Orleans school system and it has been getting very good reviews from a wide breadth of the community.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Absolutely.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION—IMPACT ON HEALTH AND LEARNING

Senator HARKIN. Madam Secretary, before you leave, I just want to make one other point, and I made it to you in person before in the past. I think there is one thing we are really drastically missing from all your endeavors, from ours too. I do not blame the ad-

ministration; Congress, too. That is that in Leaving no Child Left Behind, we ought to think about also their health and Wellbeing. It is not enough just to say we are going to make sure these kids know how to read and understand math and science. But as you know, as well as I do, obesity is a problem in our schools. Diabetes is happening earlier and earlier. We are building elementary schools in America today without a playground. Kids are not getting any exercise.

You might say, well, they can do it after school and stuff. Well, it is a different age. When I was young, of course we went out and we played basketball and stickball and a few other things. But now they all sit and play their computer games. You cannot change that.

I just hope that we start a new endeavor in this country to really focus on physical exercise for every child in school in America. We have got some great examples of that at the Grundy Center, Iowa, where they have physical exercise for every kid. Even kids with disabilities have to exercise and it is a part of the curriculum, and it is working well. Kids study better, and they learn better when they are able to have that kind of exercise.

It just seems to me that we are just brushing that aside. Of course, it does not help when you ask that we cut out the Carol White PEP program that was in the budget. That was cut out. That is what that goes for.

But what I hear constantly from my schools on No Child Left Behind is when the crunch comes on funding the first person to go is the art teacher and the phys ed teacher, or the music teacher, that type thing. Those are the first ones to go.

It seems to me that these all have an appropriate place in our schools, but I especially focus on physical exercise. Our kids are not getting it. They need to have time in school for exercise, for recess or whatever you want to call it, to be able to exercise. We ought to be thinking creatively about how we can encourage schools to have physical exercise programs that are part of their curriculum, like the school I mentioned in Grundy Center, Iowa, which you really ought to take a look at. It is phenomenal. They are getting people from all over the country coming to visit.

Secretary SPELLINGS. I am familiar with it, yes.

Senator HARKIN. Rich Shupeck. They get people from all over the country coming to look at what they have done there at that school.

They have got good data now on what is happening with these kids as they go through school. Their parents are informed. But it just seems to me, we cannot continue to just ignore that any longer. I hope you will take a look at it.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Senator, I will. And I am happy to report that it does seem that we have reversed the trend and that more and more States are now restoring once again required physical education as part of the curriculum. That was, as you know, out of favor for a while and it is now making a comeback, I am happy to report.

Senator HARKIN. We should be backing them up. We should be backing them up.

Secretary SPELLINGS. I will certainly look at the Grundy Center data.

Senator HARKIN. They have a great program.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Thank you.

Senator HARKIN. Well, Madam Secretary, thank you very much.

Secretary SPELLINGS. Thank you very much.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

Senator HARKIN. I am appreciative of your time. You have been very generous with that. Thank you for being here. Hopefully, if there are any follow-up questions we can submit them for the record. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the Department for response subsequent to the hearing:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TOM HARKIN

ACHIEVING NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND GOALS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Question. Your budget includes a new measure for Special Education Grants to States based on the requirements in No Child Left Behind to get all students to a proficient or higher achievement level by 2014. However, according to your budget documents, the percentage of special education students at proficient or advanced levels was 27.8 percentage points lower in reading and 24.9 percentage points lower in math than for all students in 2005. How will school districts achieve the target identified in your budget for 2008 with the \$291,000,000 cut proposed in the President's budget?

Answer. The President's budget request for fiscal year 2008 includes \$10.492 billion for Special Education Grants to States, the same amount that was available for fiscal year 2007 under the short-term continuing resolution that was in effect at the time the request was made and on which the budget was based. After the President transmitted the budget request to Congress, Congress increased funding for this program under the year-long continuing resolution, which was enacted on February 15, 2007.

In the 6 years between 2001 and 2007, the appropriations for the Special Education Grants to States program have grown by \$4.44 billion, or 70 percent. The large increase in Special Education Grants to States funding was driven in part by four unprecedented back-to-back \$1 billion increases included in the President's budget requests.

OTHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS ASSISTING STATES AND LEAS TO MEET NCLB GOALS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

While IDEA funds provide critical support to help States and local school districts meet the educational needs of children with disabilities, the administration's 2008 budget request for substantial funding increases under ESEA programs would target resources where they are most needed, including activities that would provide substantial benefits to children with disabilities.

For example, under the reauthorized School Improvement Grants program, for which the administration has requested \$500 million in new funding, States would be required to target funding on addressing the needs of schools and local educational agencies that have been identified for improvement under NCLB. We know that many schools and districts fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) because they have not adequately addressed the educational needs of students with disabilities. According to the National Assessment of Title I: Interim Report to Congress, during the 2003–2004 academic year, approximately 37 percent of all schools for which AYP was calculated for students with disabilities missed AYP for this subgroup. The increase requested for the Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies program of more than \$1 billion would also directly benefit children with disabilities, both in Schoolwide programs serving all students in participating schools and in Targeted Assistance programs serving low-achieving students, including low-achieving students with disabilities.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR STATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Question. Specifically, what actions will you take to help States develop or redesign their assessment systems to ensure that they meet the requirements of NCLB and IDEA?

Answer. On April 4, 2007, the Department announced that it will provide \$21.1 million in grant funds for technical assistance as States develop new alternate assessments: \$7.6 million from the Grants for Enhanced Assessment Instruments program and \$13.5 million under the IDEA General Supervision Enhancement Grants program.

In addition, States have many existing Federal resources at their disposal to help them develop high-quality State assessments. The \$400 million appropriated for fiscal year 2007 for formula grants under the State Assessments program will assist States in paying the costs of developing standards and assessments, and the President has requested another \$400 million for this program for fiscal year 2008.

States can also reserve about 1 percent of their grants under the Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies program for administrative expenses, including paying the costs of developing assessments. The fiscal year 2007 appropriation for this program is approximately \$12.8 billion and the President's fiscal year 2008 request is \$13.9 billion.

With regard specifically to students with disabilities, under the Special Education Grants to States program appropriation for fiscal year 2007 and the President's request for 2008, the States may set aside in each year about \$1 billion for a variety of State-level activities including the development of assessments for children with disabilities.

Federal technical assistance resources are also available through comprehensive regional and content technical assistance centers that help States implement NCLB for all children. One of the content centers, the Center on Assessment and Accountability, is mandated to focus on providing assistance on the implementation of valid, standards-based testing and large-scale assessment programs especially for students with limited English proficiency and special education students. The Department also supports the National Technical Assistance Center on Assessment for Children with Disabilities, which specifically targets students with disabilities.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER SHORTAGES

Question. Please describe how the fiscal year 2008 budget will address the documented special education teacher shortage.

Answer. Recent studies suggest that there are multiple dimensions to the ongoing special education teacher shortage. For example, special education teacher turnover rates, student enrollment increases over time, overall teacher quality, and teacher training program graduation rates each affect the special education teacher shortage. The fiscal year 2008 budget addresses these key dimensions through multiple IDEA programs, including Personnel Preparation and State Personnel Development. Within the Personnel Preparation program, for example, approximately 90 percent of program funds support training and professional development scholarship grants to Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs). Such awards are targeted to improve both the quality and quantity of training for special education teachers and related services personnel. This program also currently funds several projects that promote teacher retention through the establishment of activities that have been shown to reduce attrition rates among special educators in the first years of their teaching careers. For example, mentoring programs aid in the retention of beginning special educators, a group that studies have shown to be particularly prone to attrition.

It is worth mentioning that, for many years, one of the primary goals of Federal programs that support special education training has been to alleviate shortages by increasing the supply of special education teachers. However, except in certain isolated areas such as awards to train leadership personnel and personnel serving children with low-incidence disabilities, there is little evidence that these investments have resulted in measurable increases to the overall supply of special education teachers and related services personnel. For this reason, the fiscal year 2008 budget addresses the special education teacher shortage primarily by concentrating scholarship grant support in those areas where States and other investors have limited capacity and incentive to invest (e.g., low-incidence and leadership personnel training programs).

FUNDING FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION STATE GRANTS

Question. How will State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies meet the needs of the approximately 45,000 individuals on State VR agency waiting lists with the proposal in the fiscal year 2008 for level funding of the VR State grants program?

Answer. The Rehabilitation Act recognizes that States may not be able to serve all individuals who are eligible to receive services under the VR program. Each State's Plan must include an assurance that services can be provided to all eligible individuals in their State, or if it is unable to provide the full range of services to all eligible individuals, the State Plan must show the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services and assure that the individuals with the most significant disabilities will be selected first. Eligible individuals who are unable to be served are placed on a waiting list for services.

Analyses of State agency waiting list data demonstrate that it is difficult to use such data in determining national needs. In fiscal year 2006, half of the 80 State VR agencies indicated in their State Plans that they would be unable to serve all eligible individuals and submitted their "order of selection," including 62 percent or 35 of the 56 general and combined State VR agencies and 20 percent or 5 of the 24 VR agencies for the blind. However, fiscal year 2006 data reported by State agencies on the RSA-113 Caseload Report show that only 46 percent or 26 of the 56 general and combined agencies and 8 percent or 2 of the 24 agencies for the blind had individuals on a waiting list at the end of fiscal year 2006. The data also show that the number of individuals on a waiting list varies considerably among State VR agencies operating under an order of selection. In fact, over 25 percent of the 45,326 individuals on the waiting lists of general and combined agencies at the end of fiscal year 2006 were from one State agency and 4 State agencies accounted for almost three-quarters of the individuals on waiting lists. At the end of fiscal year 2006, only two agencies for the blind reported having any individuals on a waiting list, with a total of 7 individuals.

In addition, VR State Grant funds are distributed by a formula based on the relative population and per capita income (PCI) of the State. Changes in the State's relative PCI (updated every 2 years) can have a significant effect on the amount of funds the State receives. As a result, when funds are allocated under the formula, there are some States that may receive an increase, no increase, or a decrease in funds compared to the previous year even with an increase in the program's appropriation. Since the VR needs of the State are not a factor in the formula, a State that can serve all eligible individuals may get an increase in its allocation, while a State agency operating under an order of selection with a waiting list may receive a decrease in funds.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION STATE GRANT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Question. What would the impact of this proposal be on the program's performance measures?

Answer. We do not expect the proposal to have an impact on the program's performance measures because performance on the VR indicators is not tied to the number of individuals served by a State VR agency. Rather, the performance indicators are designed to measure the outcome of the services provided to VR consumers who have exited the program. For example, key measures include the percent of State VR agencies that assist at least 55.8 percent of individuals who receive services to achieve employment outcomes and the percentage of State VR agencies for which at least 80 percent of the individuals achieving competitive employment have significant disabilities.

REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION REORGANIZATION

Question. The Department initiated a reorganization of the Rehabilitation Services Administration's monitoring, technical assistance, fiscal management and program implementation functions last year. The stated reason for this was that it would improve outcomes in all of these areas. Please explain how the new system is working compared to the stated goals for the reorganization.

Answer. The Department's goal is to continue to make Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) a high performing agency that contributes significantly to improving the employment status of individuals with disabilities and enhances their ability to live as independently as possible. The reorganization has helped to improve accountability, fiscal management, monitoring, and technical assistance, and to focus on customer service. The reorganization has also enabled RSA to provide consistent policy guidance, increase the number of RSA staff who carry out on-site

monitoring activities, and systematically integrate the VR and independent living programs in the review process.

Fiscal year 2006 was a year of transition during which RSA developed a new, more effective monitoring protocol, undertook a number of innovative technical assistance initiatives, and eliminated a significant backlog of monitoring reports. RSA has eliminated the backlog of 75 fiscal year 2003, fiscal year 2004, and fiscal year 2005 monitoring reports that accumulated over a 2-year period. The former RSA regional offices developed and issued 7 of the 80 section 107 monitoring reports that were based on reviews conducted between fiscal year 2004 and fiscal year 2005 and had not issued 2 reports from reviews that were conducted in fiscal year 2003. In addition, RSA has reviewed and approved all 74 Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) and 10 Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) required by the fiscal year 2003, fiscal year 2004, and fiscal year 2005 section 107 monitoring reports. Using a collaborative model, RSA and State VR agencies jointly developed the CAPs and PIPs, including criteria to determine if the corrective actions and program improvements are promoting compliance and improving performance. Eighteen CAPs and one PIP have been closed because they have been successfully implemented, and the remaining CAPs and PIP are making satisfactory progress towards closure.

REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION'S NEW MONITORING SYSTEM

RSA's new monitoring system uses a collaborative performance-based model. Monitoring efforts focus on identifying the variables contributing to an agency's performance and working with the State agency to positively affect those variables. RSA, State agencies, and stakeholders work collaboratively to develop strategies to improve the quality and quantity of program outcomes and work together to successfully implement those strategies. RSA has achieved greater consistency in the monitoring process by convening regular meetings of staff who lead the State reviews to share information about their reviews, discuss policy issues that have been identified during reviews, and identify common technical assistance needs.

RSA is scheduled to monitor State agencies once every 3 years and reviews of 23 agencies in 17 States are currently underway in fiscal year 2007. One or more program staff from each of the State Monitoring and Program Improvement Division's five functional units make up the review teams that carry out the monitoring process. As a result of the reorganization, a minimum of five RSA program staff participate on each review, compared to one or two, as a rule, before the reorganization. The reviews, which began in the fall of 2006, are to be completed in July 2007 and the monitoring reports are scheduled to be available to the agency and the public by mid-August 2007. Upon the conclusion of the reviews, RSA will conduct an evaluation of the new monitoring process. RSA has prepared a survey instrument that will be provided to all partners and stakeholders who have been involved in the review process.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Question. Are State Vocational Rehabilitation systems better served with high-quality technical assistance, consistent on-site monitoring and discretionary grant competitions aligned with issues identified for program improvement?

Answer. Yes. In addition to implementing the new monitoring process, RSA has instituted a number of innovative and effective technical assistance (TA) practices designed to assist States to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their service delivery systems and produce high quality employment and independent living outcomes. A number of steps have been taken to increase access to performance data, promote the sharing of effective practices among State agencies, improve the quality of State plans, and provide technical assistance and training to better enable State Rehabilitation Councils (SRCs) and Independent Living Councils (ILCs) to fulfill their responsibilities.

To increase access and use of performance data by stakeholders and partners, RSA issued Annual Review Reports (ARRs) in November 2006 on all 80 State VR agencies that presented information about the agencies' performance and published the reports on RSA's Management Information System (MIS) (<http://rsadev.net/rsamis/>). RSA has also expanded access to data collections in its MIS and is providing its partners and stakeholders with training and technical assistance on how to use the information system and conduct ad hoc queries to analyze data.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND INDEPENDENT LIVING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TOOLS

RSA has streamlined the format of the VR and IL State plans and provided technical assistance to State agencies through a series of national teleconferences to assist agencies to use the new format. In addition, RSA has provided feedback to each

State agency recommending improvements in its State plan to improve strategic planning on the part of the agencies. RSA also plans to develop a model comprehensive State needs assessment to assist VR agencies to systematically identify appropriate State annual goals and priorities for inclusion in their State Plan. Examples of some of the innovative technical assistance tools RSA is developing include:

- A web-based Dissemination And Technical Assistance Resource (DATAR) that will provide broad access to a wide variety of vocational rehabilitation and independent living program resources including a searchable database that will include all of RSA policy guidance on a wide range of VR and IL topics.
- Monthly TA “webinars” on a wide range of programmatic and fiscal topics that will be accessible to all of RSA’s stakeholders and partners.
- A web-based tutorial for new and current SRC members that will enable them to thoroughly understand the obligations of the SRC and assist them to fulfill those obligations.

RSA has developed a new Fiscal Review Guide that outlines the process that staff follow when conducting the on-site portion of the fiscal review process. The on-site visit of a State agency is a part of RSA’s on-going collaborative review of the fiscal management of the programs. The primary purposes of the review process are identifying technical assistance needs of the VR agency and providing the assistance needed to enable the agency to improve their performance in carrying out the fiscal requirements of the Rehabilitation Act and its implementing regulations.

Finally, RSA is systematically using the results of its monitoring and State plan review processes to identify priorities for its discretionary grant programs. For example, RSA staff are working to ensure that the areas of technical assistance that are identified from this year’s State reviews inform the priorities that are established for the Training program. In addition, the Strategic Performance Plan for the VR State Grants program that is currently under development will include strategies to assist RSA in implementing a more coordinated and targeted approach in the use of its discretionary grant resources to address program needs.

REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION MONITORING DIVISION—FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYMENT

Question. How many FTEs do you have currently in the Monitoring Division; how does that compare to the number of FTEs carrying out this function in fiscal year 2005 and fiscal year 2006? Is this Division fully staffed at its authorized staffing level; have you let any of your new hires; if so, how many and why?

Answer. There are currently 38 FTEs in the Monitoring Division. Prior to the RSA reorganization, both headquarters and regional office employees carried out monitoring activities among other duties. As a result, it is difficult to accurately attribute a specific allocation of FTEs to this function prior to the reorganization. The original reorganization plan anticipated a staffing level of 42 FTEs for the Monitoring Division. In October of 2005, when the RSA reorganization went into effect, the Monitoring Division had 31 staff. Since that time 23 persons have been hired. However, we continue to operate below our anticipated level of FTEs because of retirements and other staff changes. In addition, RSA has also released some individuals during their probationary period, the final phase of the examination process of Federal employment. Two employees were removed because they did not fully demonstrate their qualifications for continued employment.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION NATIONAL PROGRAMS

Question. Please provide an updated distribution of planned spending of funds available under the career and technical education national programs in fiscal year 2007.

Answer. The Department is still developing plans for fiscal year 2007 funds under this program; these funds are not available to the Department for obligation until July 1, 2007. Our preliminary plan for the \$10 million available for Career and Technical Education National Activities (under the Department’s Operating Plan for the fiscal year 2007 Continuing Resolution) would provide support for the following efforts:

Strengthening Accountability and Data Quality

Improving Program Performance—\$800,000

Research, Analysis, and Technical Assistance

National Center for Research and Technical Assistance—\$4,500,000

Expanding Options for Achievement and Transition

Promoting Rigorous Programs of Study—\$1,000,000

Strengthening High School/Community College Partnerships in Math and Science—\$700,000

Program Evaluation

National Assessment of Career and Technical Education—\$2,000,000

An Evaluation of the Impact of Academically Focused Career and Technical Education—\$1,000,000

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION NATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PERKINS ACT
REAUTHORIZATION

Question. How will the funds provided in fiscal year 2007 and requested for fiscal year 2008 be used to address the requirements of the Perkins Act reauthorization?

Answer. Fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008 funding for Career and Technical Education (CTE) National Activities will support efforts to improve program accountability, enhance our research and knowledge base of strategies to improve program quality, strengthen the academic and technical content of CTE programs and pathways for students to college and careers, and assess the effectiveness of the implementation and impact of the requirements of the new Perkins Act. Most of the efforts supported with fiscal year 2007 funds represent multi-year activities, requiring multi-year commitments, and will need continued support with fiscal year 2008 funds. A more detailed description of categories listed above follows.

Strengthening Accountability and Data Quality reflects continuing support to improve and strengthen States' accountability systems through small-group and individualized technical assistance, data quality institutes, and technological support. These efforts will focus on strengthening those systems in order to address the new elements under the new Perkins Act, including the requirement for States to have valid and reliable measurement approaches for the core indicators of performance. (It is likely that every State will have to change its measurement approaches for one or more of their indicators.) We anticipate that States will need support, in particular, to implement new requirements that each State link its Perkins academic attainment measure to its NCLB assessments, include in its system two new measures on secondary completion (GED attainment and high school graduation rate as defined under NCLB), and use, to the extent possible, industry-recognized technical skill assessments as a measure of students' technical skill proficiency. We will work with the States to improve their definitions and measures for their core indicators and to help ensure that the data is valid and reliable.

The new Perkins Act requires the establishment of a national research center. Our efforts in Research, Analysis, and Technical Assistance will be anchored by a new research, dissemination and technical assistance center for CTE. The Department is currently consulting with the States and leadership in the field on how to structure the competition for this Center, and expects to make the award by September 30.

Fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008 funds will be used to support efforts in Expanding Options for Achievement and Transition to help States and local educational institutions develop the rigorous "programs of study" that the Perkins Act requires them to adopt. Programs of study are defined as coherent sequences of non-duplicative CTE courses that progress from the secondary to the postsecondary level, include rigorous and challenging academic content along with career and technical content, and lead to an industry-recognized credential or certificate at the postsecondary level or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Program Evaluation activities supported by fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008 funds will focus on two efforts. First, the Perkins Act requires the Secretary to provide for an independent evaluation and assessment of the implementation of the new law and of the career and technical education programs under the Act. Resources will be needed from fiscal year 2006–2009 national activities funds to support the new national assessment. The Department has begun a process of identifying current and potentially available data sources that could help to inform the new assessment.

EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF ACADEMICALLY FOCUSED CAREER AND TECHNICAL
EDUCATION

Second, fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008 funds will also support an evaluation of the impact of academically focused career and technical education. Previous Perkins Acts promoted activities that encouraged the integration of academic and vocational education as viable instructional approaches that could successfully engage students and help to raise the academic achievement of students in career and technical education courses. The current Perkins Act continues this thrust through an

emphasis on programs of study and the alignment of rigorous technical content with challenging academic standards. The Department is currently supporting the selection and early development of interventions that infuse advanced math, including algebra, into programs such as Automotive Service Technology. Fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008 funds would help support an impact evaluation to test the efficacy of these interventions in raising students' math scores and increasing their overall achievement. Findings from this evaluation will help to identify the critical elements of high-quality, integrated instruction and the degree to which such integrated content increases student achievement in career and technical education.

STATE SCHOLARS PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Question. Also, please describe the specific outcomes achieved to date under the Department's State Scholars initiative.

Answer. The State Scholars Initiative is achieving significant outcomes in four legislatively defined impact areas: growth, policy change, sustainability, and data collection.

Growth.—The State Scholars Initiative Network has 24 members and continues to grow: 14 States joined in 2003–2004 (Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Washington); 10 States joined in 2006 (Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming) and 13 States have expressed interest in joining the network in the last year (District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin).

Policy Change.—States are using the State Scholars Initiative core course of study to support the development of statewide rigorous high school default curricula. Eight States have passed a statewide default curriculum. Six of them are State Scholars Initiative States: Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Dakota. In addition, as a result of the State Scholars Initiative, policymakers in Kentucky, Michigan, and Oklahoma have enacted statewide curriculum.

Sustainability.—The number of participating schools is rapidly growing as some State Scholars Initiative States moved beyond the pilot phase to multi-district, or in some cases, statewide implementation. Findings from the "Evaluation Report for State Scholars Initiative: October 1, 2005–November 30, 2006," first-year State Scholars Initiative State evaluation report suggests "[A] conservative estimate based on known quantities from 19 of the 24 State Scholars Initiative States is that there were approximately 800 schools participating in the network at the end of November 2006; this number is much larger than the estimated 200 schools participating in October 2005." (Page 8). Further, by December 2006, 23 percent of the student population from the initial 14 States participated in the initiative.

The Department, through the Initiative, has engaged the business community in high school redesign. Participation of business partners has increased from 367 in December 2005 to 904 in November 2006, less than a year later. Shelly Esque, Director of Public Affairs at Intel Corporation, says, "At Intel we strongly believe that education is the key to a knowledge-based economy, innovation, and the future. The State Scholars Initiative is providing the venue for getting critical messages such as this out to tens of thousands of Arizona students, their parents, and teachers. Communities and individuals who wish to take advantage of the ever-increasing demand for skilled and professional labor are empowered by the call for more math and science and are supporting and celebrating students' successes."

Data.—The State Scholar Initiative is a national leader in collecting data on student course-taking that will improve our understanding of how to support rigor in our Nation's high schools. As the State Scholars Initiative State evaluation report concludes: "[T]he national State Scholars Initiative is at the forefront of encouraging States to consider student data and use that will be of paramount importance for informed decision making." (Page 26). The Initiative provides States and participating school districts the opportunity to better access and use student course-taking data to support rigor in high schools. A recent study (America's High School Graduates: Results from the 2005 NAEP High School Transcript Study, February 2007) highlights the need to both build an academic foundation of rigorous courses and to develop an understanding of competency in each course. The Initiative contributes importantly to this discussion by outlining a strong option for schools to follow, the State Scholars Initiative Core Course of Study. Through the Initiative and other national efforts, we are learning about the various policies and processes needed to achieve truly rigorous academic coursework.

FISCAL YEAR 2007 RESEARCH OUTPUT MEASURES

Question. Please provide updated tables for fiscal year 2007 program output measures that lacked information in the fiscal year 2008 Congressional Justification.

Answer. The funding devoted to research on a particular topic in any year depends on the quality of the applications received that year to address the topic. The quality of applications is determined by scientific peer review. In fiscal year 2007, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is holding two rounds of competition for research grants. Grants for the first round of competition have already been made. Grants for the second round will be made by June 30, 2007. At that time, IES will be happy to provide the Committee with an updated program output measures table, showing the amount of fiscal year 2007 funds devoted to each research topic.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM AND SCIENTIFICALLY BASED RESEARCH

Question. Last year, Congress provided \$125,000,000 for the NCLB school improvement grant program begun by Congress in the fiscal year 2007 bill based upon the increasingly urgent need for solutions for low performing schools not making adequate yearly progress. The fiscal year 2008 budget requests \$500,000,000 for this grant program. What specific plans do you have for using scientifically based research in this school improvement effort in fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2008?

Answer. The Department is still working on plans for implementing the new Title I School Improvement Grants program, but a key goal will be to require States, in the application process, to explain how they will incorporate principles and practices drawn from scientifically based research into their support for local school improvement efforts. In addition, local educational agency applications for funding will be required to address the use of research-based school improvement principles.

COORDINATING RESEARCH AGENDA WITH NCLB SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Question. How will you coordinate your research agenda with State and local school improvements requirements in No Child Left Behind?

Answer. The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) actively solicits and incorporates advice from Federal, State, and local school officials in the development of its research agenda. IES seeks advice through several formal mechanisms and has conducted two formal surveys of policymakers and practitioners to determine their needs for research. The long-term research priorities of IES were posted for public comment and revised in light of that comment. The National Board for Education Sciences solicited testimony on research needs from individuals representing chief State school officers, large urban districts, and public education advocacy organizations. That testimony and the advice of the Board are reflected in the IES research plans.

Members of my staff and I meet regularly with the chair of the National Board for Education Sciences and the Director of IES to exchange views with respect to IES research and dissemination to inform State and local improvement efforts under NCLB. At my request, IES developed a new dissemination product, Practice Guides, which provides a better way of distilling research findings to deal with systemic problems in school improvement. The first Practice Guide, on English learners, will be published shortly. Others will follow on topics such as struggling adolescent readers and turning around low-performing schools.

With the assistance Michael Casserly of the Council of the Great City Schools, IES has established the Urban Education Research Task Force to advise specifically on research activities to support school improvement efforts in the Nation's largest school districts. IES is also working collaboratively with the National Council of State Legislators to enhance the use of research findings in State legislative actions. IES's long-term research priorities, which drive all of its programs and activities, are focused on raising achievement in the core academic areas for children who are at-risk of underachievement because of poverty, race/ethnicity, limited English proficiency, disability, and family circumstance. Through all of these mechanisms, the Department ensures that the entirety of IES activities support school improvement.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH FUNDING COSTS

Question. Will grants under the IES research agenda be of sufficient size to enable developers and researchers to do high-quality development and evaluation within a reasonable time period that meet these State and local needs?

Answer. The IES research and dissemination appropriation is sufficient to support typical grant applications from developers and researchers. Substantially higher levels of funding would be necessary to initiate large-scale Manhattan Project-type efforts to solve systemic and connected problems in school improvement and education

reform. For example, it could cost as much as \$200 million annually over 3 years if the best researchers and developers in the Nation were funded, on a crash basis, to create a coherent mathematics curriculum from 1st grade through algebra, to develop assessments aligned with that curriculum, to generate ancillary instructional materials and software tools, to create and implement teacher training and development opportunities connected to the curriculum, and to evaluate the approach in several large districts. That seems like a lot, but it is less on an annual basis than the school budget of a single mid-sized city.

RESEARCH STUDIES AND YEAR 2014 NCLB GOALS FOR READING AND MATH

Question. The No Child Left Behind Act requires that all groups be proficient in reading and math by 2014. However, most of your current research projects using randomized field trials take up to 5 years to complete. Are there ways to speed up the process and conduct studies that address the most urgent and pressing needs at the State and local levels?

Answer. Although randomized field trials have received a lot of attention recently, IES is not limited to randomized field trials and randomized field trials are not appropriate for most of IES' current research projects. Applicants for research funding apply to conduct research on a topic such as mathematics education under any one of five goals: Goal One—identify existing programs, practices, and policies that may have an impact on student outcomes and the factors that may mediate or moderate the effects of these programs, practices, and policies; Goal Two—develop programs, practices, and policies that are theoretically and empirically based and obtain preliminary (pilot) data on the relationship (association) between implementation of the program, practice, or policy and the intended education outcomes; Goal Three—establish the efficacy of fully developed programs, practices, or policies that either have evidence of a positive correlation between implementation of the intervention and education outcomes or are widely used but have not been rigorously evaluated; Goal Four—provide evidence on the effectiveness of programs, practices, and policies implemented at scale; and Goal Five—develop or validate data and measurement systems and tools.

RESEARCH GOALS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

While there is not a one-to-one relationship between each goal and a particular research methodology, there are strong associations. Goal 1 typically involves explorations of large databases of educational data with statistical tools to identify and model relationships between important inputs and outputs. For example, researchers might use longitudinal administrative data from North Carolina to examine relationships between teacher certification and student academic growth. Goal 2 supports the development of new programs, interventions, and practices. The typical methodology is the so-called design experiment, which involves cycles of testing the prototype on users to obtain feedback to support further refinement of the product. Goal 5 uses psychometric methods to develop and refine measurement and assessment tools. Only Goals 3 and 4 involve determining the causal impact of programs and practices on student or teacher outcomes. The preferred methodology for research conducted under these two goals is a randomized field trial.

In 2006 the National Center for Education Research funded 8 grants under Goals 3 and 4 and 24 grants under Goals 1, 2, and 5 in its topical research competitions on Policy, High School Reform, Cognition, Math & Science, Reading & Writing, and Teacher Quality. Thus, only 25 percent of the funded grants were for projects for which the methodology of choice is a randomized field trial.

EXPEDITING RESEARCH STUDIES TO MEET STATE AND LOCAL NEEDS FOR ATTAINING YEAR 2014 GOALS

One of the most important methodologies that expedite studies that address the most urgent and pressing needs at the State and local levels is statistical analyses of value-added (or student gain) data in State administrative databases. Not only does IES fund such work under Goal 1 in its regular research competitions, it has funded the National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER) to mine administrative data to determine how State and local policies, especially teacher policies, governance policies, and accountability policies, affect teachers (e.g., who teaches what students) and students (e.g., academic achievement and attainment). IES is also actively involved in increasing the capacity to support such work through its Statewide Data Systems grants to States. These grants are to establish or enhance State longitudinal databases that will support research. Finally, a major activity under the Regional Educational Laboratories program is so-called fast turnaround projects. These projects address pressing needs

within the regions served by the Labs and are to be completed within one-year. Sixty of these projects are underway, as described at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/>.

WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE AND RESEARCH-PROVEN STRATEGIES

Question. How will you ensure that information provided to educators and practitioners through the What Works Clearinghouse and other IES products and services is useful and helpful to educators in need of research-proven strategies for improving student performance?

Answer. IES regularly seeks input from educators and practitioners on What Works Clearinghouse activities and other products and services. For example, the WWC established the What Works Network, whose members include educators, policymakers, researchers, technical assistance providers, program and product vendors, community leaders, parents, and journalists. Network members participate in the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) meetings and forums by sharing their knowledge and expertise that helps shape the services and products of the WWC, ensuring that the processes and products of the What Works Clearinghouse meet the needs of the education community. The WWC also surveys users of the WWC website on the usefulness and usability of the site.

Feedback from Network members, web-based survey respondents, and others has resulted in several notable improvements in WWC presentation of findings over the last year. For example, the WWC has substantially shortened its reports, added an “improvement index” to help users understand the size of the effect produced by an intervention, produced a graphical display of the effectiveness ratings for all interventions reviewed within a particular topic, (e.g., see <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/Topic.asp?tid=13&ReturnPage=default.asp>), and created an “intervention finder” to make it easier for users to identify interventions that meet their interests (see <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/InterventionFinder.asp>).

One indicator of the success of the WWC is that traffic to the website is increasing dramatically. According to Webtrends, page views on the WWC website have doubled in the last year and now exceed 1 million views per month.

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PRACTITIONERS, POLICYMAKERS, AND RESEARCHERS

Question. What role can IES play in helping bridge the gap that exists between practitioners, policymakers, and researchers; are there specific activities funded or carried out by IES that address this issue in fiscal year 2007 or proposed for funding in fiscal year 2008?

Answer. IES is working with the Council of the Great City Schools to bring together researchers and practitioners around school reform in large urban districts: In addition to the Urban Education Research Task Force, IES has funded the Council to establish fellowships for senior researchers to be placed in and work directly with individual school districts. IES is working with the National Council of State Legislators to enhance the use of research findings in State legislative actions by hosting seminars on topics of legislative interest that bring together leading researchers and members of State legislatures that are focusing on education issues. The Regional Labs have a specific statutory role in bridging researchers and practitioners. IES is engaged in a concerted effort with its Lab partners to bring higher quality evidence to bear on regional education issues.

COMMISSION ON NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND REPORT RECOMMENDATION—STATEWIDE DATA SYSTEM

Question. The Commission on No Child Left Behind Report on No Child Left Behind recommended requiring all States to design and implement a high-quality longitudinal data system, with common data elements, within 4 years of the enactment of a reauthorized NCLB, and the Federal Government should provide formula grants to assist States in their development and implementation. How much progress has been made with funds appropriated through fiscal year 2007 in addressing the recommendation of the Commission report?

Answer. In November, 2005, the Department awarded the first Statewide data system grants to 14 States. These States are now approaching the half-way point in their grants and are, overall, making good progress toward developing systems that will meet the needs of No Child Left Behind. (Detailed information on each State’s activities is available at <http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/index.asp>.) Fiscal year 2007 funds will be used for continuation costs of those awards and for new awards to successful applicants to the 2007 competition, which closed on March 15, 2007. Even with the addition of the 2007 awards, we anticipate that fewer than 20

States will have received assistance to design and implement longitudinal data systems.

FUNDING REQUIREMENT FOR COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FOR STATE LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEMS

Question. How much additional funding would be required in fiscal year 2008 to meet the recommendation in the Commission report?

Answer. The Commission recommended that the Federal Government provide an additional \$100 million a year for 4 years to help States develop longitudinal data systems. As explained earlier, the Department has made grants to 14 States and will be making additional awards in 2007. If all the applications submitted in 2007 were found to be fundable by the peer reviewers, we would need as much as \$180 million to fully fund all of the grants over their 3-year life. Our remaining 2007 funds, after paying continuation costs for existing grants coupled with our 2008 request of \$49.152 million, would cover only \$69.917 million of those costs.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

Question. The budget requests an additional \$22,500,000 to allow the Department to begin work on essential activities for implementing in 2009 State-level assessments at the 12th grade level. What activities would be funded by this requested increase?

Answer. The additional \$22.5 million for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in fiscal year 2008 will pay for activities such as developing assessment items and assessment materials, sampling and recruitment of schools for both the field-test in 2008 and the assessment in 2009, and for the field-test data collection.

12TH GRADE NAEP INITIATIVE

Question. What is the total cost of the 12th grade NAEP initiative and what is the range of options being considered for implementing this new policy?

Answer. The total cost for one administration of 12th grade NAEP reading and math assessments at the State level will be \$45 million. In addition to \$22.5 million in 2008, we will need \$22.5 million in 2009 for administering the assessment and collecting the data in 2009, scoring and data preparation, analyzing the data, and reporting and disseminating the results. For the 12th grade reading and math assessments to be conducted every other year, as is the case for the 4th and 8th grade assessments, \$22.5 million will be needed every year.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH STAFFING LEVELS

Question. Budget documents supporting the fiscal year 2008 budget request indicate that staffing for communications and outreach will remain level at approximately 137 FTEs, and you will spend almost \$17 million on communications expenditures in fiscal year 2008, an increase of more than 8 percent. Please explain the need for 140 FTEs in this office, instead of utilizing these staff in grants monitoring and other program administration capacities. How do you explain an increase of 8 percent in communications expenditures in a Department budget that proposes a reduction in spending? How do you evaluate whether these activities are effectively meeting their stated objectives?

Answer. The Department of Education's budget request deals with two separate types of communications, and they will be addressed separately.

For 2008, the President has requested a full-time equivalent staff level of 137 for the Office of Communications and Outreach, the same level as actual 2006 staffing and the 2007 budgeted level. The Office of Communications and Outreach is responsible for overall leadership for the Department in its communications and outreach activities that are designed to engage the general public as well as a wide variety of education, community, business, parent, academic, student, and other groups, including the media, intergovernmental and interagency organizations, and public advocacy groups in the President's and the Secretary's education agenda. The Office manages the President's Education Awards, Presidential Scholars, Blue Ribbon Schools programs, staffs the 1-800-USA-LEARN information number, and distributes the Department's Helping Your Child series of publications.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH OBJECTIVES

The Department uses a number of different measures to determine whether the Office's activities are meeting stated objectives. One example of such a measure is

the waiting time on hold before a 1-800-USA-Learn call is answered, and the length of time it takes to answer callers' questions.

The Department reviews staffing throughout the organization yearly as budgets are developed to ensure the balance needed to best achieve the Department's objectives and be able to respond to its various constituencies. The Office of Communications and Outreach deals with those aspects of the Department's work that deal broadly with the public in general. Other offices have a narrower focus, dealing primarily with grantees or contractors. The Department tries to maintain flexibility in its staffing, and often makes small adjustments among its offices throughout the year as specific needs arise.

BUDGET REQUEST FOR COMMUNICATIONS OBJECT CLASS

The other aspect of communications within the Department is that shown under the communications object class in the budget request. For 2008, the President's budget request for the communications object class for the Department of Education is \$16,827,000, an 8 percent increase over the 2007 level of \$15,533,000. This amount is to cover spending for all Department accounts for communication and utilities, including all local and long-distance telephone charges, BlackBerry usage, Government-issued cell phones, and utility charges from GSA. \$14,417,000 of this amount, or 86 percent, belongs to the Department's central telecommunications account.

The increase is due to an increase in the cost for dedicated circuits?the infrastructure that supports email, Internet, and voice communications. Costs are expected to increase because of increased bandwidth demand, due in part to the Department's recent migration to a new financial system designed to enhance financial management.

ALCOHOL ABUSE REDUCTION PROGRAM

Question. I understand that the individual grantees from the Alcohol Abuse Reduction program have all submitted final reports to the Department, many of which show impressive outcomes in delaying first use of alcohol and reducing underage drinking. Has the Department compiled this information into a report on the outcomes achieved by this program; if so, please provide it to this Committee, and if not, why not?

Answer. The Alcohol Abuse Reduction program received its first appropriation in fiscal year 2002, at which time the Department held its first competition for 3-year grants under the program. Those grants had initial project periods from October 1, 2002 through September 30, 2005, and most received a 1-year no-cost extension of their project period through September 30, 2006. Grantee final reports were not due until 90 days after that, or December 31, 2006. In the short time since then the Department has not compiled the performance information from those reports. For the next (2004) and subsequent cohort of grants, the projects are still underway and final reports are not due, at the earliest, until October 31, 2007.

PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES PROVIDING DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE REDUCTION ASSISTANCE

Question. In addition, I understand that many Alcohol Abuse Reduction grantees' final reports also showed reductions among other drug use, in addition to reducing underage drinking as a result of their programs. Given these results, why would this program be recommended for elimination?

Answer. Again, the Department is still reviewing the data recently received from the first cohort of grants, so we are not in any position to confirm that the program is producing reductions in alcohol consumption or in the use of other drugs.

No funding is requested for the program because it is duplicative of other Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) programs for which funds are requested in 2008, and because programs to reduce alcohol abuse in secondary schools can also be paid for with State and local resources.

LEA DRUG ABUSE AND SCHOOL SAFETY PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

For example, the 2008 request for SDFSC National Programs includes \$59 million for grant assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) to support the implementation of drug prevention or school safety programs that research has demonstrated to be effective in reducing youth drug use or violence; and for implementation and scientifically based evaluation of additional approaches that show promise of effectiveness. LEAs can use those funds to address or focus on alcohol prevention.

SAFE SCHOOLS/HEALTHY STUDENTS DRUG AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECTS

In addition, the 2008 request for SDFSC National Programs includes \$79.2 million for grants to LEAs for comprehensive, community-wide “Safe Schools/Healthy Students” alcohol, tobacco, and other drug and violence prevention projects that are coordinated with local law enforcement and also include mental health preventive and treatment services.

PROPOSED RESTRUCTURING OF SDFSC STATE GRANTS PROGRAM

Also, the 2008 budget includes \$100 million for a proposed restructured SDFSC State Grants program under which the Department would allocate funds by formula to SEAs, which would use the funds to provide school districts support for the implementation of effective models that, to the extent possible, reflect scientifically based research, for the creation of safe, healthy, and secure schools. Such activities could include financial assistance to enhance drug and violence prevention resources available in areas that serve large numbers of low-income children, are sparsely populated, can demonstrate a significant need as a result of high rates of drug and alcohol abuse or violence, or have other special needs so that they can develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive drug, alcohol, or violence prevention programs and activities that are coordinated with other school and community-based services and programs and that foster a safe and drug-free learning environment that supports academic achievement. Our expectation is that States and communities would use these funds to address issues of underage drinking and alcohol abuse.

HELPING AMERICA’S YOUTH INITIATIVE

Finally, aside from direct support for programs, under the leadership of the First Lady, the administration has launched Helping America’s Youth, a nationwide effort to raise awareness about the challenges facing our youth, particularly at-risk boys, and to motivate caring adults to connect with youth in three key areas: family, school, and community. The Helping America’s Youth effort is highlighting programs, including alcohol prevention programs that are effectively helping America’s young people to make better choices that lead to healthier, more successful lives.

SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES STATE GRANTS

Question. The recommendations in the President’s fiscal year 2008 budget requests to cut the State Grants portion of the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) program by \$255 million would leave most of America’s schools and K–12 students with no substance abuse and violence prevention and intervention services. With drug use on the decline, and recent incidents of violence in schools, isn’t this the wrong time to drastically reduce the only nationwide prevention program that provides America’s school aged youth with drug and violence prevention programming?

Answer. Unfortunately the current SDFSC State Grant program is unable to demonstrate that it is achieving its mission. A 2002 “PART” (Program Assessment Rating Tool) review rated the current program as “Ineffective,” primarily because the structure of the program is fundamentally flawed and the program was unable to demonstrate effectiveness in reducing youth alcohol and drug use and violence. A second PART review, conducted in 2006, rated the program as “Results Not Demonstrated.” Although the 2006 review determined that the outcomes of the program are undetermined (and, thus, the Results Not Demonstrated rating), it found that the structure of the SDFSC State Grant program is still flawed, spreading funding too broadly to support quality interventions and failing to target those schools and communities in greatest need of assistance. SDFSC State Grants provides more than half of all school districts with allocations of less than \$10,000, amounts typically too small to mount comprehensive and effective drug prevention and school safety programs.

REAUTHORIZATION PROPOSAL FOR SDFSC STATE GRANTS

The administration is responding to these findings with a reauthorization proposal under which the Department would allocate SDFSC State Grant funds by formula to State educational agencies (SEAs), which would use the funds to provide school districts within their State support for the implementation of effective models that, to the extent possible, reflect scientifically based research on the creation of safe, healthy, and secure schools. Such activities could include, for example, provision of training, technical and financial assistance, and local capacity building to school districts to support their efforts to deter student drug use, and to prepare for, prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from crises arising from violent or

traumatic events or natural disasters, and to restore the learning environment in the event of a crisis or emergency. The budget request also includes \$224.2 million under SDFSC National Programs, the vast majority of which the Department would award competitively to local school districts for research-based activities designed to prevent student drug use and violence, or to support local emergency management planning efforts. These are not the only funds available to local educational agencies (LEAs) for drug prevention programming—State, local and private resources complement these Federal funds.

SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES—UNIFORM MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION REPORTING SYSTEM

Question. Congress included data and information reporting requirements in the SDFSC Act specifically intended to result in the development and implementation of a Uniform Management Information and Reporting System (UMIRS) which would be the basis for (1) data-driven local and State decision making and evaluation under the Principles of Effectiveness; and (2) reporting comparable information from the States to the Department of Education. The Department has not yet issued guidance on how States are supposed to build and implement the type of UMIRS system intended by Congress to fix issues associated with demonstrating the SDFSC program's effectiveness. However, as required by law, States have already developed their own unique UMIRS data collection system. Unfortunately, because no data related to UMIRS has been collected by the Department, it is impossible to determine the level of comparability between and among State data sets. Why has this system not been developed or implemented at the Department; what plans does the Department have to implement this system? How does the Department intend to comply with the requirements of H.R. 1 for a UMIRS?

Answer. Section 4116(a)(2)(B) of the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, States that the Department is to collect data from the States, as part of their biennial report under the SDFSC program, related to incidence and prevalence, age of onset, perception of health risk, and perception of social disapproval of drug use and violence by youth in schools and communities. As you may know, however, section 9303 of the ESEA authorizes consolidated reporting to replace separate individual annual reports for the programs (including SDFSC State Grants) that the Department determines a State may include in its consolidated State annual report. Section 9303(a) expressly States that consolidated reporting is authorized "to simplify reporting requirements and reduce reporting burdens." The consolidated report replaces separate reports that States, in the past, prepared and submitted under individual formula programs, thereby reducing State burden and permitting policy makers to gain a broader perspective on Federal programs.

STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE SDFSC ACT

In order to decide how to simplify reporting pertaining to SDFSC Act, the Department's goal was to select the smallest possible data set that would permit us to assess the extent to which States are meeting their established targets to prevent youth drug use and violence. As part of the consolidated report, we have thus required States to submit information about their self-identified performance measures and progress toward achieving their performance targets related to drug and violence prevention; data on out-of-school suspensions and expulsions by school type (elementary, middle/junior high, or high school) for alcohol or drug-related offenses, or for fighting or weapons possession; and narrative information concerning efforts to inform parents of, and include parents in, violence and drug prevention efforts.

We did not ask States to report to us incidence and prevalence data because of the availability of data from high-quality, repeated cross-sectional studies assessing drug use conducted by the Department of Health and Human Services, including the National Household Survey on Drug Youth and Health, the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, and the Monitoring the Future Survey. Additionally, the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) also provides data about prevalence of some measures of violent behavior.

YOUTH DRUG USE AND OTHER HIGH-RISK BEHAVIOURS SURVEILLANCE DATA

These surveys all provide data collected from nationally representative samples about youth drug use and, in the case of YRBSS, other high-risk behaviors associated with youth morbidity and mortality. We should note, however, that those data are surveillance data, as are the data identified in the statute. As such, they cannot be used to determine whether or not a cause-and-effect relationship exists between a specific intervention or program and student behavior. Instead, the data provide

a snapshot in time about the behaviors of a nationally representative sample of students.

States, as well, collect surveillance data about youth drug use and violence using a variety of instruments and collection protocols. For example, data are collected at different intervals and at different grade levels and, in some cases, using a sample that is not representative of all the students in the State. As a result, we are not able to aggregate the data in order to provide a national picture of progress in preventing youth drug use and violence. For these reasons, we elected not to impose burden on States to report these data, since more rigorously collected data representing students nationally are readily available.

In addition, we did not ask States to report on age of onset, perception of health risk, and perception of social disapproval of drug use for reasons similar to those described regarding incidence and prevalence data. Data concerning perceived health risk and social disapproval are available from the Monitoring the Future data set, and the National Household Survey on Drug Use and Health collects and reports data about age at initiation of drug use.

CONSOLIDATED STATE PERFORMANCE REPORT DATA COLLECTION

Through the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR), we have collected data from the States using the authority provided by the Congress in section 9303 of the ESEA. The States submitted these data for the 2003–2004 school year in April 2005 and data for the 2004–2005 school year in April 2006. States are currently submitting data to the Department for the 2005–2006 school year.

For the 2003–2004 and 2004–2005 school years, we believe that we can verify submitted data, resolve questions about State submissions, develop State profiles for those elements currently included in the CSPR, and transmit a report to Congress later this fiscal year. We also plan to incorporate in these profiles information from other, related data collections, including those providing data about implementation of the Gun-Free Schools Act and the Unsafe School Choice Option provisions. Data collected via the CSPR are based on State-determined definitions of data elements, so the data available will not be comparable across States. Generally, the State performance report elements contained in section 4116 align with the UMIRS requirements and, in an effort to minimize the additional burden on States, while still providing the requested information to Congress, we plan to expand, beginning with the 2008–2009 school year, the number of data elements requested of States under the CSPR (or another mechanism) by capitalizing on State efforts to collect and report UMIRS data.

DEVELOPMENT OF UMIRS UNIFORM DATA SET ON YOUTH DRUG USE AND VIOLENCE

The UMIRS provisions require each State to develop a system to collect and publicly report identified core information about youth drug use and violence, as well as drug and violence prevention programs within the State. In order to enhance the comparability of data collected by the States in responding to the UMIRS requirements (and, in turn, increase the comparability of data submitted in response to the State performance report requirement), we are working with the States to establish a uniform data set that can be adopted by the States. We have met with all of the States to solicit their input about the uniform data set, have shared a draft data set with the States and collected their feedback, and will be finalizing materials and rolling out the data set in the next few months. The project also includes a variety of technical assistance activities to support States in their efforts to implement the uniform data set.

As indicated previously, we plan to add additional elements to the CSPR that will be selected from those required by the UMIRS provisions. These elements will employ data definitions and collection protocols developed jointly with States as part of the uniform data set project. This approach should limit additional reporting burden for the States, since it will capitalize on data already being collected in response to UMIRS requirements. While we intend to collect as much data as possible via the web-based CSPR, some data elements may need to be collected in separate collections, using more conventional methods.

GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIFORM MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION REPORTING SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Question. Does the Department have any plans to issue guidance to the States on how to build and implement the kind of UMIRS system intended by Congress; if not, why not, and if so, please explain in detail, with dates, what these plans will include.

Answer. In January, 2004, the Department issued non-regulatory guidance to the States concerning the SDFSC State Grants program, and included some guidance concerning implementation of the UMIRS requirements. In the fall, we plan to provide additional information to the States about a uniform data set that includes the elements included in the UMIRS provisions. At that time, we also plan to conduct a series of regional meetings to review and discuss the uniform data set with State officials who are charged with implementing the SDFSC State Grants program and its UMIRS requirements. The Department will also be working to identify technical assistance needs of States as they consider implementation of the uniform data set, as well as best practices related to data collection and the use of data to manage and administer youth drug and violence prevention programs.

DATA COLLECTION FOR TRACKING YOUTH DRUG USE AND VIOLENCE

Question. The core data set required in Title IV for States to collect and report on includes: incidence and prevalence, age of onset, perception of health risk and perception of social disapproval of drugs and violence by youth in schools and communities. It is purposefully identical to the data sets collected in national surveys such as Monitoring the Future because this data is universally accepted for tracking youth drug use and attitudes over time, at every level from local to national. The majority of States and LEAs currently collect data at the State and local level based upon these core data elements. Given that national surveys cannot demonstrate the effectiveness of a local program, why is the Department suggesting that the data from surveys such as Monitoring the Future be used as a proxy measure for the success of the SDFSC program?

Answer. Surveillance data—whether collected at the national, State, or local level—cannot demonstrate the effectiveness of a local drug or violence prevention program. Those data provide a snapshot of the extent to which students are using illegal drugs or engaging in violent behavior at a single point in time, but they cannot be used to determine whether, or to what extent, prevention programs and activities affect youth behavior with regard to drug use and violence.

We initially identified data from surveys of nationally representative samples of students as a proxy measure for the success of prevention programs and activities being implemented with SDFSC State Grants program funds, because the vast majority of school districts across the Nation receive program funds and use those funds to support drug and violence prevention programming. However as a result of the initial PART review, we concluded that adding measures that addressed the quality of programming decisions being made by SDFSC State Grants program recipients would produce a stronger basis on which to examine the effectiveness of the SDFSC State Grants program.

DATA COLLECTION AT STATE AND LEA LEVELS

Question. Why has no effort been made by the Department, to date, to collect this data that is currently and readily available from SEAs and LEAs?

Answer. While virtually all States do collect information about the prevalence of youth drug use and violence, those data are not comparable across States, and some significant questions exist about the methods used to collect and report data at the State and local levels. For example, some States are not able to produce a sufficient respondent response rate in order to produce representative data. While we acknowledge that these data can be very important to policy-makers and program managers at the State or local level, the data cannot be aggregated to produce a national snapshot of the status of our efforts to reduce youth drug use and violent behavior. Instead, we chose to rely on the results of surveys conducted with nationally representative samples of students. These survey results have fewer methodological problems than similar data collected by the States and localities, and produce the national picture that we cannot generate by aggregating noncomparable data from the States. Moreover, States do not collect data on the quality of the programming being carried out by recipients of SDFSC funds.

STATE-BY-STATE DATA COLLECTION

Question. What specific plans does the Department have to collect this data from SEAs and LEAs and to report on this data to Congress as required by Title IV, Part A, section 4116?

Answer. We are exploring mechanisms for collecting State-level prevalence and other related data directly from the States in the future. Because the data will not be comparable, we will continue to report the data on a State-by-State basis, rather than as aggregated information.

Currently, the Department's activities designed to improve data collection efforts and reduce duplication and overlap among data collections are focused on data that are available electronically from State or local level administrative records. The burden associated with collecting and reporting prevalence and other related data specific to individual LEAs is immense, and is not justified, especially since UMIRS does not require school-building or even LEA-level prevalence data.

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

Question. The Department's fiscal year 2008 congressional justification estimates the number of students served under this program as 1,282,000 in fiscal year 2006, fiscal year 2007, and fiscal year 2008. How was this figure derived and what confidence do you have in the number? Are 21st CCLC programs subject to inflationary cost increases, and if so, and the funding remains constant between fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2008, shouldn't the number of students served show a decline?

Answer. Data on participation in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program are based on grantee records and reporting. The estimates for fiscal years 2006 through 2008 were generated based on the actual participation data from fiscal year 2005, the last year for which the Department had grantee attendance information at the time that the budget documents were printed. The figures are the best estimates available on the number of children participating in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program across the country. The data currently available to the Department do not indicate that a slight reduction in constant-dollar funding results in fewer children being served.

NON-COMPETITIVE AWARDS

Question. For fiscal year 2006, please identify for each Department program the number of grants, contracts or other funding arrangements that were made through means other than a competitive process and the associated dollar value of those awards. For these noncompetitive awards, please provide the justification supporting the decision not to utilize a competitive process.

NON-COMPETITIVE GRANT AWARDS

Answer. The Department made non-competitive grant awards to all earmarked entities identified in program authorization statutes or in the 2006 appropriations. It did not make additional non-competitive awards in 2006.

The Department did award nine new unsolicited awards in fiscal year 2006. However, unsolicited proposals are reviewed by external peer reviewers following established procedures. Six of the nine awards were made by the Institute of Education Sciences, which announces unsolicited grant opportunities on its website at <http://ies.ed.gov/funding/>. The IES unsolicited grant program allows investigators in the field to propose projects of their choosing, as opposed to applying to competitions on announced topics. The remaining three awards were made by other offices, and went to the National Institute of Building Sciences to operate the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, Portland State University to support additional data collection and analysis for the Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning, and Reach Out and Read to support its early literacy program.

NON-COMPETITIVE CONTRACT AWARDS

In fiscal year 2006, \$25,205,836 or 1.79 percent of the Department's contract obligations, which totaled approximately \$1.407 billion for both new contract awards and modifications to existing contracts, were made using other than full and open competition. Since 2000, there has not been much change in the Department's reliance on other than full and open competition.

The Department has identified five separate reasons that contracts were not competed in fiscal year 2006. The following chart provides a list of contracts not fully and openly competed for fiscal year 2006, separated by "reason not competed."

FISCAL YEAR 2006 NON-COMPETITIVE ACTION SUMMARY

Reason not competed	No. of actions	Amount	Percent of total dollars
UNIQUE SOURCE	2	\$750,000.00	2.98
FOLLOW-ON DELIVERY ORDER FOLLOWING COMPETITIVE INITIAL ORDER ...	8	6,138,284.85	24.35
AUTHORIZED BY STATUTE—SBA 8(a) PROGRAM	15	5,708,683.63	22.65
ONLY ONE SOURCE—NOT STATE EDUCATION AGENCY	17	5,824,579.70	23.11

FISCAL YEAR 2006 NON-COMPETITIVE ACTION SUMMARY—Continued

Reason not competed	No. of actions	Amount	Percent of total dollars
ONLY ONE SOURCE—STATE EDUCATION AGENCY	52	6,784,288.00	26.92
TOTAL	94	25,205,836.18	1.79

The Department uses other than full and open competition when a unique source exists.

REASON NOT COMPETED—UNIQUE SOURCE

Contract No.	Vendor name	Fiscal year 2006 obligations
ED06C00105	NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES	\$250,000.00
ED05C00039	MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (3594)	500,000.00
Total Fiscal Year 2006 Obligations for Unique Source		50,000.00

The Department uses other than full and open competition when awarding follow-on delivery orders under an initial contract that was competed.

REASON NOT COMPETED—FOLLOW-ON DELIVERY ORDER FOLLOWING COMPETITIVE INITIAL AWARD

Contract No.	Vendor name	Fiscal year 2006 obligations
ED04C00013/0015	GRANT THORNTON LLP	\$2,945,967.85
ED04C00130/0011	NCS PEARSON INCORPORATED	647,587.00
ED06D00255	MICROSTRATEGY INCORPORATED	314,856.00
ED05P00506	ACQUISITION SOLUTIONS INC.	325,000.00
ED06D00196	GARTNER, INC.	124,650.00
ED04GS0004/0006	LOW + ASSOCIATES INCORPORATED	500,126.00
ED05D00099/0004	SPECTRUM SYSTEMS INCORPORATED	281,882.00
ED06C00107/0002	PEROT SYSTEMS GOVERNMENT SERVICES INCORPORATED (8756)	998,216.00
Total fiscal year 2006 Obligations for Follow-On Delivery Orders		6,138,284.85

The Department uses other than full and open competition when it is authorized by statute, for example, under section 8(a) of the Small Business Act. One purpose of the Small Business Act is to encourage and develop small businesses by insuring that a fair proportion of the total purchases and contracts or subcontracts for property and services for the Government be placed with small business enterprises.

REASON NOT COMPETED—AUTHORIZED BY STATUTE—SBA 8(A) PROGRAM

Contract No.	Vendor name	Fiscal year 2006 obligations
ED04C00011	ONPOINT CONSULTING INCORPORATED	\$291,000.00
ED04C00134/0005	ENDEAVOR SYSTEMS INCORPORATED	960,000.00
ED04C00134/0010	ENDEAVOR SYSTEMS INCORPORATED	250,000.00
ED04C00134/0012	ENDEAVOR SYSTEMS INCORPORATED	215,581.68
ED04C00135	WINDWALKER CORPORATION	435,847.71
ED05C00002/0006	2020 COMPANY LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY	296,313.00
ED05C00059	METRO MAIL SERVICES INCORPORATED	676,290.00
ED05C00064	GRANATO COUNSELING SERVICES INCORPORATED	300,000.00
ED05D00078	VISIONARY INTEGRATION PROFESSIONALS INCORPORATED	583,915.00
ED06C00013	RCW COMMUNICATION DESIGN INCORPORATED	118,523.24
ED06C00089/0001	I T PROFESSIONALS INCORPORATED	419,300.00
ED06C00111	COMMAND DECISIONS SYSTEMS AND SOLUTIONS INCORPORATED	338,909.00
ED06C00115	COMMAND DECISIONS SYSTEMS AND SOLUTIONS INCORPORATED	173,012.00
ED06C00127	KAUFFMAN AND ASSOCIATES INCORPORATED (0375)	149,992.00
ED06C00037	KEVIN J SHIN	500,000.00

REASON NOT COMPETED—AUTHORIZED BY STATUTE—SBA 8(A) PROGRAM—Continued

Contract No.	Vendor name	Fiscal year 2006 obligations
	Total Fiscal Year 2006 Obligations for Authorized by Statute—SBA 8(a) Program	5,708,683.63

The Department uses other than full and open competition when only one source will meet the Department's requirement, for example, for support and maintenance of specific software from the software developer or for parking in a building occupied by Department employees.

REASON NOT COMPETED—ONLY ONE SOURCE (OTHER)

Contract No.	Vendor name	Fiscal year 2006 obligations
ED02C00025	STICHTING IEA SECRETARIAAT NEDERLAND	\$1,000,000.00
ED04C00145	STICHTING IEA SECRETARIAAT NEDERLAND	500,313.00
ED06C00101	UCF HOTEL VENTURE	250,000.00
ED06C00103	PARBALL CORPORATION	400,000.00
ED06C00112	HYATT CORPORATION (DEL) (9660)	310,000.00
ED06C00038	NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON UNITED STATES CHINA RELATIONS	270,352.00
ED06P00954	GRETCH KEN INDUSTRIES INCORPORATED	205,773.56
ED02C00004	830 FIRST STREET LLC	202,403.97
ED04C00163	JBG/POTOMAC SOUTH LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY	345,607.44
ED06C00033	BERBEE INFORMATION NETWORKS CORPORATION	135,000.00
ED06C00113	C S AND M ASSOCIATES	270,000.00
ED06D00241	CENTECH GROUP INC	286,850.00
ED06P00775	INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION	208,444.25
ED06P00778	INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION	388,192.00
ED02P01086	DTI ASSOCIATES INC	219,888.00
ED04P00491	SILENT PARTNER SECURITY	499,308.00
ED06P00339	HEWLETT PACKARD COMPANY (3067)	332,447.48
	Total Fiscal Year 2006 Obligations for Only One Source—Other	5,824,579.70

Finally, the majority of the Department's sole source contracts are to State Education Agencies in support of Public Law 107-279, section 157 for participation in the National Cooperative Education Statistics System. The purpose of the system is to produce and maintain comparable and uniform educational information and data. State Education Agencies are the only sources capable of obtaining the necessary information from local school districts. The contract amounts include Assessment funds to pay for State education agency activities in support of the administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

REASON NOT COMPETED—ONLY ONE SOURCE: STATE EDUCATION AGENCY

Contract No.	Vendor name	Fiscal year 2006 obligations
ED03C00030	EDUCATION ARIZONA DEPT OF	\$139,445.00
ED03C00035	COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	132,608.00
ED03C00037	EDUCATION CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF	166,265.00
ED03C00038	EDUCATION, DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF	162,490.00
ED03C00039	EDUCATION, IDAHO STATE DEPARTMENT OF	113,978.00
ED03C00040	EDUCATION KANSAS DEPT OF	177,714.00
ED03C00041	ADMINISTRATION, LOUISIANA DIVISION OF	99,535.00
ED03C00042	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MASSACHUSETTS	131,851.00
ED03C00043	EDUCATION MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF	129,917.00
ED03C00044	EDUCATION MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF	101,649.00
ED03C00045	PUBLIC INSTRUCTION MONTANA OFFICE OF	107,337.00
ED03C00046	EDUCATION NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF	104,070.00
ED03C00047	EDUCATION NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF	152,792.00
ED03C00050	NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION	88,226.00
ED03C00051	EDUCATION (265) OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF	207,498.00
ED03C00052	RHODE ISLAND DEPT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION	206,424.00

REASON NOT COMPETED—ONLY ONE SOURCE: STATE EDUCATION AGENCY—Continued

Contract No.	Vendor name	Fiscal year 2006 obligations
ED03C00053	SOUTH CAROLINA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	107,413.00
ED03C00055	UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION	196,248.00
ED03C00056	EDUCATION VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF	127,574.00
ED03C00057	PUBLIC INSTRUCTION WASHINGTON SUPERINTENDENT OF (1112)	134,384.00
ED03C00058	WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	122,028.00
ED03C00059	PUBLIC INSTRUCTION WISCONSIN DEPT OF	256,096.00
ED03C00060	WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	128,621.00
ED03C00061	EDUCATION ALABAMA DEPT OF	136,209.00
ED03C00062	EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF	119,595.00
ED03C00063	EDUCATION, ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF	95,446.00
ED03C00064	EDUCATION, GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF	145,141.00
ED03C00065	EDUCATION, HAWAII DEPT OF	168,147.00
ED03C00066	ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF	105,995.00
ED03C00067	EDUCATION NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF	125,413.00
ED03C00068	NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION	104,903.00
ED03C00069	PENNSYLVANIA STATE DEPT OF EDUCATION	132,752.00
ED03C00070	EDUCATION, ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF	155,410.00
ED03C00071	KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (0439)	121,146.00
ED03C00072	ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES MAINE DEPARTMENT OF	104,173.00
ED03C00073	MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	98,989.00
ED03C00074	EDUCATION MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF	146,653.00
ED03C00075	EDUCATION NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF	129,656.00
ED03C00076	EDUCATION NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF	125,023.00
ED03C00077	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OHIO (4820)	141,522.00
ED03C00078	EDUCATION OREGON DEPARTMENT OF	112,600.00
ED03C00079	SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	93,122.00
ED03C00080	TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY	130,583.00
ED03C00084	DEPT OF EDUCATION CALIFORNIA (8051)	137,626.00
ED03C00085	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BOARD OF EDUCATION	118,050.00
ED03C00086	EDUCATION FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF (3914)	115,026.00
ED03C00087	EDUCATION, INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF	80,096.00
ED03C00088	SECRETARY OF STATE IOWA (4571)	204,809.00
ED03C00089	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OF PUERTO RICO	87,803.00
ED03C00091	EDUCATION TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF	108,313.00
ED03C00092	EDUCATION VERMONT DEPT OF	134,924.00
ED03C00097	NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	11,000.00
	Total Fiscal Year 2006 Obligations for Only One Source—State Education Agency	6,784,288.00

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE

NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION

Question. Your proposed budget for 2008 eliminates funding for the Native Hawaiian Education Act. In arriving at this conclusion, what is your view of statistics which indicate that Native Hawaiian students: (1) lag behind statewide averages by approximately 10 percentile points in reading and math; (2) are more likely to be referred to special education classes at a rate of one in five compared with a referral rate of 1 in 10 for non-Hawaiians; (3) are the least likely to graduate from high school than any other ethnic group; (4) enroll in college at substantially reduced rates than other ethnic groups in Hawaii; (5) are underrepresented in the University of Hawaii college system; (6) are least likely of any ethnic group to graduate in 6 years while enrolled at the University of Hawaii; and (7) are statistically underrepresented in professional fields requiring advanced degrees? Furthermore, how does the Department of Education plan to address the disparities illustrated by these statistics?

Answer. The administration recognizes that significant achievement gaps exist between Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian students and recognizes the importance of ensuring that Native Hawaiian students receive appropriate educational services to enable them to achieve high academic standards. However, the President's fiscal year 2008 budget is consistent with the administration's policy of eliminating nar-

row categorical programs in order to provide significant increases for more flexible State grant programs that support comprehensive reforms to improve educational opportunities for all students, including Native Hawaiians.

PROGRAM INCREASES SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL NEEDS OF NATIVE
HAWAIIAN STUDENTS

School districts that seek to implement programs and services tailored to the educational and cultural needs of Native Hawaiian students will be able to use funds provided under other programs, such as Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Title II Improving Teacher Quality State Grants, and Special Education State Grants.

The fiscal year 2008 budget would increase funding for Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies by approximately \$1 billion, to \$13.9 billion; much of this increase directed toward high schools that serve large numbers of low-income students. The budget would also provide \$500 million in new funding for Title I School Improvement Grants. These grants would provide additional resources to States to build their capacity to provide support to schools identified for improvement. We believe these programs will have a significant impact on Native Hawaiian students, since many of those students attend schools that receive Title I funds. Native Hawaiian students will also benefit from support provided through the Special Education State Grants program because more than one-third of Native Hawaiian students who attend public school in Hawaii receive special education services.

In addition to the recommended increase for Title I, the budget would provide significant increases for several K–12 education programs that are designed to help all students meet challenging State standards in reading and mathematics. For example, the fiscal year 2008 budget request includes \$100 million (a \$68 million increase) for the Striving Readers program, to make it possible for many more middle school students who read below grade level to receive interventions designed to pull them up to grade. The budget would also provide \$250 million to initiate the Math Now program, which would support scientifically based mathematics instruction in elementary and middle schools, particularly those with concentrations of students from low-income families. Additionally, the President' 2008 budget requests a \$90 million increase for the Advanced Placement program to provide a new emphasis on training teachers and expanding opportunities in for students, in high-poverty schools, to enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in mathematics, science, and critical foreign languages.

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM REQUESTS

The administration is also proposing substantial investments in the area of higher education to ensure that a college education remains accessible and affordable to all students, including Native Hawaiians. The budget requests more than \$828 million for the Federal TRIO Programs and more than \$300 million for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Education Programs (GEAR UP) to provide educational outreach and support services to help low-income students prepare for and pursue postsecondary education. The administration is also targeting limited Federal resources to students most affected by increases in college tuition by requesting over \$90 billion in new grants, loans, and work-study assistance to help millions of student and their families pay for college. The budget would provide more than \$15 billion for the Pell Grant program in fiscal year 2008 and would raise the maximum Federal Pell Grant to \$4,600 in 2008 and over the next 5 years would raise the maximum to \$5,400 in 2012. By increasing the maximum Pell Grant award, we would ensure that low- and middle-income students—including part-time and older students—have the resources to pay all tuition and fees at an average public community or technical college, and 75 percent of the tuition at an average public 4-year institution. This concentrated increase in Pell Grants, which is considered the most effective, broadly available Federal aid program, will benefit significant numbers of Native Hawaiian students.

Further, the fiscal year 2008 budget provides approximately \$1.2 billion for the Academic Competitiveness (ACG) and National SMART Grants programs. The ACG program, enacted in 2006, provides need-based grants to low-income first- and second-year undergraduates who complete a rigorous high school curriculum, while, the National SMART Grants program provides need-based awards to low-income, high-achieving college juniors and seniors majoring in math, science, technology, engineering, and critical foreign languages.

FLEXIBILITY TO ADDRESS EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS

The administration believes that by concentrating our Federal education dollars into priority programs, we are providing States and school districts with both the needed resources and the flexibility to direct those resources to where they are most needed in meeting the educational needs of their students.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Question. The Native Hawaiian Education Act intends to provide culturally appropriate education to Native Hawaiian students through the provision of programs aligned with the purpose and intent of the Native Hawaiian Education Act. What are the indicators used by the U.S. Department of Education to measure those programs funded under the Native Hawaiian Education Act?

Answer. The Department has established three performance measures for the Native Hawaiian Education program authorized under Title VII of the ESEA. The measures are:

- The percentage of teachers involved with professional development activities that address the unique educational needs of program participants.
- The percentage of Native Hawaiian children participating in early education programs who improve on measures of school readiness and literacy.
- The percentage of students participating in the program who meet or exceed proficiency standards in mathematics, science, or reading.

The Department collects data on these measures through the annual performance reports submitted by grantees.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT FOR NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Question. How does the U.S. Department of Education assure that measurement indicators selected are consistent with the purposes for which the Native Hawaiian Education Act was created?

Answer. The Department based its development of the performance indicators for the Native Hawaiian Education program on an analysis of the program's purpose, priorities, and authorized activities and of how those align with the overall priorities and purpose of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

The specific areas addressed by the performance indicators were selected based on a review of grantee activities and goals to determine common features. The review showed that grantees were implementing projects concentrated in a number of topic areas, including early childhood, teacher professional development, and math and science education. Drawing on that information, the Department developed three indicators (described above) to track program performance on activities authorized under the statute.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE DATA

Question. What does the aggregate data show about the impact of this program in meeting the needs for which the Native Hawaiian Education Act was created?

Answer. Recent performance data, self-reported by grantees, show slight improvement in two key areas—professional development and school readiness. However, data on the percentage of students participating in Native Hawaiian Education programs who meet or exceed proficiency in mathematics, science, or reading show a decline. With limited data pooled across a small number of projects, these changes do not imply causality.

These annual program performance data are available on the Department's website under the Education for Native Hawaiians program webpage [<http://www.ed.gov/programs/nathawaiian/performance.html>].

IMPACT OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Question. Specifically, based on your administration of this competitive Native Hawaiian Education Act grant program and your receipt of the data and reports generated by grantees under the Act, what is your assessment of the impact of these Native Hawaiian education grants on an annual and an aggregate basis:

- In advancing and promoting the use of the Hawaiian language in instruction?
- In increasing early education opportunities for Native Hawaiian children?
- In increasing fluency and proficiency in math, science, and reading for Native Hawaiian children?
- In increasing employment by Native Hawaiians in fields and disciplines where Native Hawaiians are underrepresented?
- In reducing those education factors causing a disproportionate amount of Native Hawaiian students to be deemed to be “at risk”?

- In reducing the number of Native Hawaiian students who do not advance to the next grade level, who drop out of school, or who do not graduate from high school on a timely basis?
- In increasing the creation, availability, and use of curriculum aligned to the culture of Native Hawaiian students and in training teachers to use and understand this curriculum?
- In increasing the self-esteem of Native Hawaiian students and stemming cultural loss?

NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM PERFORMANCE DATA

Answer. The Native Hawaiian Education Act (NHEA) places responsibility for formally collecting and assessing data on projects serving Native Hawaiians, including those funded under this program, with the Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEA, section 7204). The Department works closely with the Council to provide annual grantee reports and performance information. Since the Council is responsible, by statute, for all data collection and project evaluation, the Department has not conducted a formal evaluation of the Education for Native Hawaiians program. However, the Department has posted program performance plans and data on its website under the Education for Native Hawaiians program webpage [<http://www.ed.gov/programs/nathawaiian/performance.html>].

With approximately 52 grants, the program supports a broad range of activities that address the educational and training needs of small-targeted populations on various islands and in schools. The diversity and small scale of the projects makes it extremely difficult to assess the program's impact in specific areas, as you have requested. At this time, neither the Department nor the Council has conducted this type of detailed program analysis or computed a formal scientific evaluation of the program.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN PROGRAM GRANTS PROCESS

Question. How does the Department assure that those grants selected for funding are grants, which best meet the needs of the Native Hawaiian community? Do you engage in a community process to understand which grants are best aligned to meet the needs of the Native Hawaiian community? Please describe this process and the work you have accomplished in this regard.

Answer. The Education for Native Hawaiians program uses a competitive process, as required by the Department's discretionary grant policy, to select grant recipients. This process involves an independent panel of experts in Native Hawaiian issues, who review, discuss, and score applications depending on how well the proposals address the published selection criteria and the program's statutory purpose. Based on these written reviews and scores, the project office ranks the applications followed by a final review to ensure that the projects selected for funding are those that address the selection criteria and that will provide needed services for Native Hawaiian students, as authorized in the statute.

The Department's program office engages with the Native Hawaiian community through its ongoing work with the Native Hawaiian Education Council. Together, the Department and the Council identify communities with high need and try to engage potential applicants that have not been applying for funds under the Education for Native Hawaiians program. The Department has also conducted multiple application workshops in Hawaii, where program staff have met with organizations to increase their awareness of the program, its purpose, and the broadened eligibility criteria under NCLB as well as provide guidance on the application process. As a result of these workshops and the direct engagement with the Hawaiian community, the Department has received increased numbers of applications from organizations that had not previously applied for program funds.

Question. How is it that you assure that those grants selected by the U.S. Department of Education for funding are grants which do not duplicate existing funding available or present in the Native Hawaiian community? Please describe this process and the work you have accomplished in this regard.

Answer. The Native Hawaiian Education Act (NHEA) does not prohibit grantees from developing projects that have similar goals or serve similar populations as existing projects. The NHEA does contain, however, a supplement-not-supplant provision that prohibits the use of Federal funds in place of existing local or State funds. Under the current statute, a grantee is allowed to use Federal grant funds to expand existing programs, by adding participants or services, so long as the funding streams are maintained as separate and distinct. The program office monitors all funded projects on a regular basis to ensure that grantees are following Federal reg-

ulations and guidelines and also meeting the objectives proposed in the project application.

REPORTING THE IMPACT OF NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Question. Have you reported the aggregate data you have collected about the impact of the Native Hawaiian Education Act grant funded program to the Native Hawaiian community?

Answer. As discussed previously, the Native Hawaiian Education Council is responsible for collecting, assessing, and reporting data on projects serving Native Hawaiians, including those funded under this program. The Department works closely with the Council to provide information about applicants and funded projects, including annual grantee reports and related performance information. The Council is also required to provide Congress with an assessment of federally funded education projects that serve Native Hawaiians.

PROMISING NATIVE HAWAIIAN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Question. Based on your analysis, what programs are most promising and what programs are least promising? What is your understanding of the "best practices" gleaned from your review of all of these past funded grants under the Native Hawaiian Education Act? Please indicate the work you have performed, including the steps you have taken to inform and educate the broader community about those things you have learned from funding and evaluating these programs.

Answer. The Department's program office has conducted an informal review of the annual grantee progress reports and found that a majority of grantees are successful in developing, assisting, or expanding programs that provide supplemental services and address the educational needs of targeted Native Hawaiian populations on the various islands. Because these grants support small programs that address a diverse range of educational issues, it is difficult to assess overall program impact.

Several programs, however, have developed noteworthy programs that serve diverse segments of the Hawaiian community, including the University of Hawaii's projects for Hawaiian Language Teaching and Curriculum, the Aha Punana Leo project for support of Hawaiian Medium Teachers, and the Partners in Development projects that address issues of early childhood, school readiness, and parental care by grandparents. In addition, the Pacific American Foundation, through its teacher training programs, has developed a cultural curriculum that the Hawaii Department of Education has adopted. The dissemination of information on these innovative projects is accomplished through the Native Hawaiian Education Council and its work with various island councils and local organizations.

Further, the Council's numerous reports and recommendations provide guidance on the effective use of educational resources and highlight programs that hold promise for advancing Native Hawaiian education.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR HERB KOHL

FULL FUNDING FOR NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Question. The lack of adequate funding for NCLB affects every school district in Wisconsin. In Sun Prairie, two Title I math teachers were let go. In Waukesha, they have had to cut back on writing classes. And in Green Bay, support for art and music education has fallen. The Sun Prairie School District receives 6 percent of their budget from the Federal Government; however, they spend 30 percent of their budget on meeting NCLB mandates. Sun Prairie is not alone. Underfunding NCLB forces our local taxpayers and school districts to make up the difference. Taxpayers feel pressures to raise local property taxes, districts are forced to cut vital programs, and students are left behind. How would you respond to Sun Prairie and the other districts faced with this inequity?

Answer. No Child Left Behind was never intended to serve as a primary funding vehicle for education, but to leverage more effective use of the more than 90 percent of funds for elementary and secondary education that are provided by State and local governments. As you know, President Bush and the Congress provided significant increases in funding for NCLB program, particularly during the early years of implementation, though the share of these increases received by local school districts varies widely according to their eligibility under the various program formulas.

On average, I believe that we have done a good job of increasing funds for new requirements in such areas as the development and implementation of State assessments, paying for public school choice and supplemental educational services, and

school improvement. That said, I am sure that some districts, and their supporting taxpayers, face difficult choices in deciding how to best allocate resources to ensure that all students are achieving on grade level. However, these are the kind of choices that parents, educators, and local government officials have struggled with for decades, and a real benefit of NCLB is that it gives them solid data and new improvement tools to help reach our common goal of a high-quality education for every child.

AFTER-SCHOOL FUNDING—21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

Question. As you know, funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers has been flat funded at \$981 million. Many school districts, including Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), have been forced to shut down programs and deny children services. As a result, many at risk youth have no opportunities for academic enrichment or a safe place to go after school. Last year, MPS sought funds to keep their summer program open. With a little over \$1 million, over 6,000 students at 33 sites would receive additional academic support they need during the summer months, nutritious meals on a daily basis, and exposure to enriching activities and caring adults, all which support student learning and health. There is no “new” Community Learning Centers funding and there hasn’t been in 2 years. Where in this budget has your Department accounted for the closing of this program?

Answer. The Department distributes 21st Century Community Learning Centers funds to States using a formula, and each State holds competitions to award grants to programs within the statute’s parameters. Several States have chosen to make large grant commitments in one fiscal year, using their subsequent years’ funding on continuation grants to fully-fund programs over a 3 to 5 year period. The Department does not direct States on how to administer the program so long as the State is adhering to statutory requirements, such as giving competitive priority to applicants that propose to serve students who attend schools in need of improvement under Title I.

READING FIRST GRANTS—INSPECTOR GENERAL’S REPORT

Question. Last year, I sent a letter to your office regarding Reading First Grants. As you are aware, a recent internal audit of the Department’s Reading First program cited significant mismanagement of the program. The report questions the program’s credibility and implies the Department may have broken the law by interfering in the curriculum decisions made by schools, thereby failing to follow proper grant review procedures.

In 2004, Madison Metropolitan School District declined to continue to participate in the program, citing overly rigid requirements and reservations about the Reading First approval process. Madison’s curriculum was working, but because it did not adopt your Department’s recommended curriculum—a curriculum that has been called into question by your own Inspector General—the District has lost over \$2 million in Federal funds as a result. Reading First is a \$1 billion program. How do you plan on addressing this report, and moreover what is the status of efforts to reinstate Madison’s funds?

Answer. The Department continues to fully implement all of the Inspector General’s recommendations relating the Reading First program. The Department has had conversations both with the Madison Metropolitan School District and the State of Wisconsin regarding Madison’s participation in the Reading First program. The Department will issue a statement on the matter in the coming weeks.

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT FUNDING

Question. Under the current framework of the NCLB law, States are required to develop high-quality State assessment systems, including assessments for students with severe disabilities and English language learners. However, the funding provided under NCLB for State assessments is not sufficient to cover the cost of these alternative assessments.

In Wisconsin, for example, it will cost the State \$2 million to develop an alternative assessment for 6,000 students with severe disabilities, or about 1.3 percent of the State’s population of students with disabilities. How does the administration expect States to pay for these costs associated directly with the alternative assessment mandates of NCLB?

Answer. On April 4, 2007, the Department announced that it will provide \$21.1 million in grant funds for technical assistance as States develop new alternate assessments: \$7.6 million from the Grants for Enhanced Assessment Instruments program and 13.5 million under the IDEA General Supervision Enhancement Grants program.

In addition, States have many existing Federal resources at their disposal to help them develop high-quality State assessments. The \$400 million appropriated for fiscal year 2007 for the State Assessment Grants will provide formula grants to States to pay the costs of developing standards and assessments, and the President has requested another \$400 million for this program for fiscal year 2008.

States can also reserve about 1 percent of their grants under Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies program for administrative expenses, including paying the costs of developing assessments. The fiscal year 2007 appropriation for this program is approximately \$12.8 billion and the President's fiscal year 2008 request is \$13.9 billion.

With regard to specifically to students with disabilities, under the Special Education Grants to States program appropriation for fiscal year 2007 and the President's request for 2008, the States may set aside in each year about \$1 billion for a variety of State-level activities including the development of assessments of children with disabilities.

Federal technical assistance resources are also available through comprehensive regional and content technical assistance centers that help States implement NCLB for all children. One of the content centers, the Center on Assessment and Accountability, is mandated to focus on providing assistance on the implementation of valid, standards-based testing and large-scale assessment programs especially for students with limited English proficiency and special education students. The Department also supports the National Technical Assistance Center on Assessment for Children with Disabilities, which specifically targets students with disabilities.

STATE DATA COLLECTION

Question. Data collection is a critical component of the NCLB law. There is currently funding available to States through a discretionary competitive grant process to develop longitudinal data systems. My home State of Wisconsin was awarded \$3 million over 3 years for the development of their data system. However, while there is funding available to build these important systems, there is no funding available to States to sustain them, which, in my States, could cost from \$600,000 to \$1 million per year. If data collection is such a vital component of this law, how does the administration expect States to maintain the longitudinal data systems that they create specifically to comply with the Federal law without providing them additional funding?

Answer. We believe that longitudinal data on student academic achievement are an important tool to help States track the progress of individual students in order to enhance overall achievement and close achievement gaps among groups of students. Indeed, longitudinal data can be used not only at the State level, but also at the district, school, classroom, and student level to support decision-making and improvement efforts. The State Assessment Grants program is another source of funds to States under the No Child Left Behind Act that can be used to support testing and reporting functions. The President's 2008 budget requests \$411.6 million for this program for activities that improve the dissemination of information on student achievement including the development of information and reporting systems designed to assist in linking records of student achievement, length of enrollment, and graduation over time. Grants awarded under the Statewide Data Systems program provide additional support to help States design, develop, and implement data systems that allow them to analyze, disaggregate, and use individual student. These grants are not intended to offset the cost of complying with Federal data reporting requirements. States are not required to use longitudinal data systems under the No Child Left Behind law. Nonetheless, these systems will help States meet the reporting requirements more efficiently. They will save States money by automating reporting functions that currently require considerable labor.

PERKINS FUNDING

Question. Over the past 7 years, 97 percent of Wisconsin's high schools have participated in federally funded Carl Perkins Act programs that support career and technical education. This includes over 98 percent of 11th and 12th grade students, as well as secondary special education students in the State. As the result of this investment in career and technical education (CTE) program improvement, 94 percent of Wisconsin students who enroll in a concentration of CTE programming graduate from high school; 90 percent of Wisconsin students who enroll in a concentration of CTE programming realize positive academic and technical skill attainment levels; and 71 percent of Wisconsin students completing high school career and technical education programs pursue postsecondary education. With results like this that are so clearly tied to the NCLB goals of high academic achievement in high

school and beyond, how does the administration justify elimination of this program in its proposed budget?

Answer. The President requested \$600 million for the Career and Technical Education State Grants program. We are not proposing elimination of the program. The administration recognizes that the new Perkins Act incorporates several important changes that strengthen the program's accountability provisions, provide opportunities to improve program performance, and increase emphasis on improving the academic achievement of career and technical education (CTE) students, a purpose that is aligned with the objectives of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Funding the program provides an opportunity to improve the quality of CTE programs so that CTE students can acquire both the rigorous academic and technical skills they need to succeed.

Too few high school graduates have the skills they need to succeed in the workplace or in postsecondary education. To succeed in our economy, all students, even career and technical education students, need to acquire a high level of academic knowledge and skills. For that reason, the administration is also seeking a \$1.2 billion increase for Title I Grants to local educational agencies under NCLB, with a significant portion going to high schools. These additional funds will help improve academic achievement and graduation rates for at-risk high school students, many of whom are CTE students.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JACK REED

TEACHER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANTS AND OTHER PROGRAMS FUNDING TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Question. There is a rising consensus that the most significant factor in raising student achievement is the quality of the teacher. However, the President's fiscal year 2008 budget proposal eliminates funding for the Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants (Title II of HEA) that effectively prepares teachers for the classroom, and decreases funding for Improving Teacher Quality Grants (Title II of NCLB) that provide teachers with enhanced professional development. The administration is underfunding the most significant piece of the achievement puzzle—what is the reasoning behind these cuts?

Answer. For fiscal year 2008, the administration is requesting no funding for the Teacher Quality Enhancement program because it is duplicative of other Federal teacher quality programs. In addition, because of the progress that school districts are making in ensuring that all core academic classes are taught by highly qualified teachers, the administration is proposing a modest decrease of 3 percent in funding for the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program in order to shift those funds (\$100 million) to the Teacher Incentive Fund program.

The administration is requesting no funding for Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants in fiscal year 2008 because State and local entities may already use funds they receive under a number of other Department programs, including the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program, the Transition to Teaching program, and the Teacher Incentive Fund, to carry out the kinds of activities supported through the Teacher Quality Enhancement program. The administration believes that the resources previously used to support the Teacher Quality Enhancement program should be shifted to higher-priority programs and initiatives that have greater potential to be effective in improving teacher quality.

All of the activities allowable under the Teacher Quality Enhancement program can be carried out under other existing programs. For example, the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program focuses on preparing, training, and recruiting high-quality teachers. Under that program, States may use funds to reform teacher and principal certification/licensing requirements, support alternative routes to State certification, support teacher and principal recruitment and retention initiatives, and initiate innovative strategies to improve teacher quality.

Additionally, under Improving Teacher Quality State Grants, States are required to award subgrants, on a competitive basis, to partnerships that are structured similarly to the partnerships funded under the Teacher Quality Enhancement program and consist of at least one institution of higher education, one high-need local educational agency, and one other entity. Partnerships may receive funds to support new teacher and principal recruitment and retention initiatives as well as to support a broad range of innovations to improve teacher quality, including teacher and principal mentoring, teacher testing, reforming tenure systems, merit pay, signing bonuses and other financial incentives, and pay differentiation initiatives. The Transition to Teaching program is intended to help mitigate the shortage of qualified li-

censed or certified teachers in many of our Nation's schools by, among other things, encouraging the development and expansion of alternative routes to certification. The program provides funds to States, local educational authorities, and partnerships to support efforts to recruit, train, and place high-quality teachers in high-need schools and school districts. The Teacher Incentive Fund provides States and local educational agencies with resources to reward teachers for increasing student achievement and for teaching in the most challenging schools and to employ performance-based compensation strategies for improving teacher quality. These three programs are better designed to provide the services currently funded by the Teacher Quality Enhancement program.

TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND PROGRAM

For fiscal year 2008, the administration is requesting approximately \$2.8 billion for the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program, \$100 million less than the 2007 level. The administration proposes to move this \$100 million to the Teacher Incentive Fund program, in order to support additional State and local initiatives to introduce performance-based teacher and principal compensation systems and provide incentives for the most effective teachers to serve in the most challenging schools. Because most teachers are now considered to be highly qualified, it is appropriate to shift a portion of funds to the Teacher Incentive Fund in order to encourage these important reforms in compensation practices.

IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY STATE GRANTS

The budget would continue provision of a significant amount of funding for Improving Teacher Quality State Grants. Using the resources available through this program, States and LEAs can implement high-quality recruitment, professional development, and induction programs and other strategies to ensure that our Nation's schools are staffed with fully qualified teachers who are prepared to help all children succeed academically. The requested funds will help maintain the momentum for ensuring that all children are taught by teachers who have expertise in the subjects they teach and the skills needed to teach effectively.

TEACHER PREPARATION, INDUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Question. What is the Department doing to ensure that teachers are prepared to teach before entering the classroom, receive strong mentoring and induction in their first years of teaching, and continuous and intensive professional development?

Answer. Spending on programs designed to improve teacher quality surpasses \$3.4 billion in fiscal year 2007 and the administration is requesting more than \$3.5 billion for programs relating to improving teacher quality in fiscal year 2008. These programs include Improving Teacher Quality State Grants (\$2.8 billion in fiscal year 2008), Mathematics and Science Partnerships (\$182.1 million), Troops-to-Teachers (\$14.6 million), Transition to Teaching (\$44.5 million), Teaching of Traditional American History (\$50 million), Special Education Personnel Preparation (\$89.7 million), and Language Acquisition Grants for Professional Development. All of these programs focus on teacher preparation, teacher induction, or professional development, or a combination of the three.

In addition to programs dedicated to improving teacher quality, the Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies programs has an important professional development component. The Department estimates that the professional development set-aside in Title I will increase from \$624.1 million in 2007 to \$688.3 million in 2008 under the President's request.

FUNDING FOR IMPROVING LITERACY THROUGH THE SCHOOL LIBRARIES PROGRAM

Question. Multiple studies have affirmed a clear link between academic achievement and the quality of school libraries. Based on analysis from the first year of funding for the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries program, 95 percent of funded districts reported increases in their reading scores. The Department's own November 2005 evaluation found the program to be a success. Moreover, the program is competitive so that of the 520 districts that applied for funding in fiscal year 2006, only 78 were funded, and overall eight States and the District of Columbia have yet to see any funding during the 5 years of the program's existence. Given how successful the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries program is and how many districts are vying for such a limited pool of funding, can you explain why the administration's budget request once again only provides level funding for this program?

Answer. The Department's request recognizes the strategic role that school libraries can play in making information available to all students, training students and teachers about how to obtain and make use of information, and increasing access for low-income students to technology and information. The program also supports a central goal of the administration and of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001—enabling all children to read well.

Although the administration supports the program's goals, we have been concerned in the past about the quality of applications that we receive. In recent years, we have awarded grants to those applications that received a score of approximately 85 (out of 100) or above in the peer review in order to ensure that only the most competitive projects receive grants. Because we do not want to award grants to applicants that score less than approximately 85, we believe that continued funding of \$19.5 million is about right.

Based on our experiences over the past 5 years, the Department has implemented some changes to the application to improve the quality of projects this year. First, we are placing a greater emphasis on the quality of applicants' management plan, granting more points to projects that can demonstrate greater community support for the project's planned activities. Second, we have added a competitive preference that allows applicants to receive an additional five points if they can provide evidence that the project supports a school or district academic improvement plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Question. Our Nation is increasingly beset by environmental challenges—global warming, deteriorating air and water quality—that present threats to human health, economical development, biological diversity, and national security. Our basic life-support system is increasingly at risk, and we're passing this legacy on to our children—who will need to understand how our environment and economy impact each other to be adequately prepared for the workforce. How can current efforts to educate K–12 students about environmental sciences and to connect students to outdoor laboratories/nature be improved, and how can the Department of Education, through NCLB in particular, be a leader in driving our Nation's schools to teach students the importance of environmental science?

Answer. Although the Department does not currently administer an environmental education program, the Mathematics and Science Partnerships (MSP) and Improving Teacher Quality State Grants (Title II) programs provide support that grantees can focus on environmental education. Both programs are sufficiently flexible that grantees could use program funds for curriculum development (MSP) or professional development (MSP and Title II) in environmental education.

The Mathematics and Science Partnerships program supports State and local efforts to improve students' academic achievement in mathematics and science by promoting strong teaching skills for elementary and secondary school teachers, including integrating teaching methods based on scientifically based research and technology into the curriculum. Grantees may also use program funds to develop more rigorous mathematics and science curricula that are aligned with challenging State and local content standards; establish distance learning programs for mathematics and science teachers; and recruit individuals with mathematics, science, and engineering majors into the teaching profession through the use of signing and performance incentives, stipends, and scholarships. The administration is requesting \$182.1 million for this program in fiscal year 2008.

The President has requested almost \$2.8 billion in 2008 for the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program, which provides funds to States and school districts to develop and support a high-quality teaching force through activities that are grounded in scientifically based research. The program gives States and school districts a flexible source of funding with which to meet their particular needs in strengthening the skills and knowledge of teachers and administrators to enable them to improve student achievement in the core academic subjects, including science.

EPA ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has an Environmental Education Grants program, which supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to help people make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. Annual funding for the program ranges between \$2 million and \$3 million. The EPA, and not the Department of Education, has for a long time had the lead Federal role in supporting environmental education. The EPA's efforts draw on that agency's expertise in environmental issues. We have seen no need to change this allocation of responsibilities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG

RAISING ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Question. The President's No Child Left Behind reauthorization proposal focuses its increase in funding on expanding the act to high schools. Why would you expand the program to high schools when we know that elementary and middle schools still do not have adequate funding to implement the current standards?

Answer. We have never agreed with the argument that current funding levels are not sufficient to successfully implement No Child Left Behind. The accountability system created by NCLB was intended to leverage better and more effective use of all education funding from Federal, State, and local sources, and I believe it is doing exactly that in States and districts and schools across the Nation. We are seeing improved achievement, based on both State assessment results and the National Assessment of Educational Progress, but most of that improvement is concentrated in the early grades. For this reason, we believe it is appropriate to target new resources to the high school grades, where achievement levels have stagnated and where businesses are demanding improved performance to ensure our competitiveness in the global economy.

EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY

Question. Technology is critical for students to remain competitive in the global market place. In fact, I think we will see a huge increase in distance learning on the Internet in the coming years. How do you square the increasing role of technology in learning with the President's proposal to eliminate funding for Education Technology State Grants?

Answer. The President's 2008 budget request would eliminate funding for the Educational Technology State Grant program based on evidence that schools today offer a greater level of technology infrastructure than just a few years ago, and that there is no longer a significant need for a State formula grant program focused specifically on (and limited to) the integration of technology into schools and classrooms. States and school districts that seek to support activities designed to utilize technology to improve instruction and student learning can use funds provided under other Federal programs, such as Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies and Title II Improving Teacher Quality State Grants.

AMERICAN COMPETITIVENESS INITIATIVE

A key priority of the President's fiscal year 2008 budget is to ensure continued progress in preparing students academically to compete in a global, technology-based economy. The fiscal year 2008 budget, through the American Competitiveness Initiative and through other programs, focuses on keeping our students and our workforce competitive for the 21st century. In that context, the budget includes \$365 million in new funding to support a critical new focus on improving student achievement in math and science from the early grades through high school. Besides math and science education, a key to ensuring America's economic competitiveness is improving the performance of our high schools, and the budget includes approximately a \$1 billion increase that would distribute Title I funds more equitably to the high school level, strengthen assessment and accountability in high schools, and encourage more effective restructuring of chronically low-performing schools. Because the challenges facing the Nation's secondary schools vary between and within States, these additional resources will allow LEAs to choose their own programs and approaches for the interventions to be implemented in eligible Title I high schools, including, for example, approaches emphasizing the integration of technology into the curriculum.

VOUCHERS

Question. The President's budget proposes funding to allow students to attend private schools under a voucher program. However, these private schools would not have to meet the same standards as public schools. Why should private schools be allowed the use of public funds while they are exempt from the same standards as public schools?

Answer. The two proposals, Opportunity Scholarships and Promise Scholarships, would empower parents to determine which schools or supplemental service providers can best meet their child's needs. While schools that are identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring implement reform efforts, students attending these persistently low-performing schools must have the opportunity to pursue other educational opportunities. Because the current choice options available

to students in restructuring schools tend to be so limited, it is appropriate, indeed essential, to make expanded opportunities available, including private schools and out-of-district public schools, as well as enhanced supplemental services, and to ensure that low-income students have the resources to take advantage of those options.

While private schools are not subject to the same standards as public schools, they are publicly accountable in that they are likely to lose enrollment if they do not do a good job educating children. Research on the existing private-school choice programs in Milwaukee, Cleveland, and Florida indicates that these types of programs can be successful. All of them have been well received by low-income parents concerned about their children being “trapped” in failing schools.

FUNDING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Question. New Jersey ranks third in the Nation for the number of children designated with disabilities. How can school districts meet the needs of special education students and No Child Left Behind requirements when the President's budget decreases funding for special education?

Answer. In the 6 years between 2001 and 2007, the appropriations for the Special Education Grants to States program have grown by \$4.44 billion, or 70 percent. The large increase in Special Education Grants to States funding was driven in part by four unprecedented back-to-back \$1 billion increases included in the President's budget requests. The request for 2008 would have provided level funding from fiscal year 2007 based on the continuing resolution in place at the time the President's request was made for 2008.

While Special Education funds provided under the IDEA provide critical support to help States and local school districts meet the educational needs of children with disabilities, the administration's 2008 budget request for substantial funding increases under ESEA programs would target resources where they are most needed, including activities that would provide substantial benefits to children with disabilities.

FUNDING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

For example, under the reauthorized School Improvement Grants program, for which the administration has requested \$500 million in new funding, States would be required to target funding on addressing the needs of schools and local educational agencies that have been identified for improvement under NCLB. We know that many schools and districts fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) because they have not adequately addressed the educational needs of students with disabilities. According to the National Assessment of Title I: Interim Report to Congress, during the 2003–2004 academic year, approximately 37 percent of all schools for which AYP was calculated for students with disabilities missed AYP for this subgroup. The increase requested for the Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies program of more than \$1 billion would also directly benefit children with disabilities, both in Schoolwide programs serving all students in participating schools and in Targeted Assistance programs serving low-achieving students, including low-achieving students with disabilities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ARLEN SPECTER

MENTORING PROGRAM

Question. Madame Secretary, the statistics on youth violence are staggering. Philadelphia has the fifth highest homicide rate of all major U.S. cities, and juveniles account for 38.5 percent of all arrests in Philadelphia County. Mentoring programs are one way to address some of the aspects of youth violence. Children who have mentors are more likely to earn higher grades, are less likely to miss school and initiate the use of drugs and alcohol. Your budget proposes to eliminate the \$48.8 million for mentoring. Can you tell me why you eliminated this program?

Answer. The budget request includes no funding for the Mentoring program because mentoring programs, and other activities to prevent young people from becoming involved in criminal and delinquent behavior, can be supported with grant funds local educational agencies (LEAs) would receive under the 2008 budget request for Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) State Grants and National Programs, and by other sources of funds. The administration endorses local efforts to implement mentoring programs, but does not believe a Federal program narrowly targeted on that area is needed. States and localities should have the flexibility to

select mentoring or other approaches to dealing with youth development and youth violence issues.

MENTORING PROGRAM PART RATING

Question. Was the Mentoring Program ineffective?

Answer. No, we have not determined that the program is ineffective. The Mentoring program was among the programs assessed in 2006 by the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART). The program received a rating of "Results Not Demonstrated," which is the rating we give a program when we do not yet have sufficient information to determine its effectiveness.

In 2005, the Department launched a 4-year evaluation to assess the impact of school-based mentoring programs supported with SDFSC National Programs grant funds. Using the 2005 cohort of grantees, under which students were randomly assigned either to participate or not participate in a mentoring program, the evaluation will address whether students enrolled in mentoring programs are less likely to engage in risky and dangerous behaviors and whether their academic performance is higher than that of students not enrolled in mentoring programs. The evaluation will also examine the relative effectiveness of different aspects of school-based mentoring. The evaluation is expected to be completed in 2008.

MENTORING ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED WITH SDFSC NATIONAL PROGRAM FUNDS

Question. Are there other programs in your budget that are better suited for mentoring children?

Answer. The 2008 request for SDFSC National Programs includes \$59 million for grant assistance to LEAs to support the implementation of drug prevention or school safety programs, which may include mentoring programs, that research has demonstrated to be effective in reducing youth drug use or violence; and for implementation and scientifically based evaluation of additional approaches that show promise of effectiveness. For example, LEAs could use those funds to target younger students, thereby helping to prevent them from engaging in violent behavior or alcohol or drug use, which are often precursors to delinquency.

In addition, the 2008 request for SDFSC National Programs includes \$79.2 million for grants to LEAs for comprehensive, community-wide "Safe Schools/Healthy Students" drug and violence prevention projects that are coordinated with local law enforcement and also include mental health preventive and treatment services. These Safe Schools/Healthy Students projects also focus on prevention and early intervention services for youth.

We also support activities to design and implement character education activities in elementary and secondary schools. Our request for SDFSC National Programs includes \$24.2 million for character education activities. These programs have been found to reduce many of the risk factors that lead to delinquency, truancy, and drug use.

The 2008 budget includes \$100 million for a proposed restructured SDFSC State Grant program under which the Department would allocate funds by formula to SEAs, which would use the funds to provide school districts within their State support for the implementation of effective models that, to the extent possible, reflect scientifically based research, for the creation of safe, healthy, and secure schools. Such activities could include financial assistance to enhance drug and violence prevention resources available in areas that serve large numbers of low-income children, are sparsely populated, can demonstrate a significant need as a result of high rates of drug and alcohol abuse or violence, or have other special needs so that they can develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive drug, alcohol, or violence prevention programs and activities, which may include mentoring, that are coordinated with other school and community-based services and programs and that foster a safe and drug-free learning environment that supports academic achievement.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES MENTORING CHILDREN OF PRISONERS PROGRAM

Furthermore, the 2008 budget request for the Department of Health and Human Services includes \$50 million for the Mentoring Children of Prisoners program, which aims to establish and maintain relationships between children at high risk of future incarceration, because one or both parents of their parents is incarcerated, and adult mentors to help them succeed in school and life.

HELPING AMERICA'S YOUTH INITIATIVE

Finally, aside from direct support for programs, under the leadership of the First Lady, the administration has launched Helping America's Youth, a nationwide effort to raise awareness about the challenges facing our youth, particularly at-risk boys, and to motivate caring adults to connect with youth in three key areas: family, school, and community. The Helping America's Youth effort is highlighting programs that are effectively helping America's young people to make better choices that lead to healthier, more successful lives.

HIGH SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMS AS MEANS OF ADDRESSING YOUTH VIOLENCE

Question. On February 19, 2007, Senator Casey and I held a hearing in Philadelphia to hear the views of experts on the best ways to address the youth violence problem. Paul Vallas, Chief Financial Officer the School District of Philadelphia, stated that "linking high school to college" through programs like dual enrollment and early college, which guarantees high school seniors a college education, is being implemented in the Philadelphia schools to keep kids interested and in school. Mr. Vallas also stated that guaranteeing children employment opportunities through work-study programs is another incentive to keep kids in school. What are your views on these programs?

Answer. One of the cornerstones of my Action Plan for Higher Education is accessibility, not only in financial terms, but also in terms of improving high school education and experiences so that students are able to transition into postsecondary education and succeed there. I believe that programs that encourage students to finish high school and link high school to college are important and hold great promise. Our Academic Competitiveness grants are an example of a program that links high school and postsecondary education by addressing both the need for financial resources to go to college and academic preparation in high school to make the transition into postsecondary education. The Academic Competitiveness program provides additional financial aid to college students who have taken a rigorous academic high school program, thereby encouraging high school students to choose the right high school courses and plan for college.

DROPOUT PREVENTION

Question. Last March, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation issued a report "The Silent Epidemic—Perspectives of High School Dropouts"—The report published findings from interviews with U.S. high school dropouts to better understand why they dropped out and preventive measures to keep them in school. The report recommended the following: Better early warning systems to identify students at risk for dropping out and to ensure support is given—such as tutoring, mentoring, summer school; a balance of raising test scores and graduation rates, so that schools don't have the unintended incentive of raising test scores by pushing out those students not performing well on tests. Madame Secretary, the Department's proposed budget eliminates funding for programs such as smaller learning communities, dropout prevention and parent information centers. Why are you eliminating programs that are designed to keep children in school?

Answer. As you point out above, it is important that schools identify students at risk for dropping out early on and work to meet their needs before they think about leaving school. But the programs you mention most likely have little to no impact on the dropout problem and, in some cases, do not even address it. (Parent Information and Resource Centers, for instance, provide most of their services to parents of young children and have not made dropout prevention a priority.) In addition, No Child Left Behind, at the high school level, has the mission of both raising student achievement and graduation rates. High schools and LEAs are held accountable for meeting the targets set by States for improving graduation rates and reducing dropout rates. Thus, we do not believe there is any incentive for States to push students to drop out of high school.

While the Dropout Prevention program is the only program labeled as such to combat the problem, we have no evidence to show that it is an effective approach to the problem. The small investment, just \$4.8 million, combined with no evidence of the program's effectiveness, led us to redistribute those resources to Title I where a \$1 billion increase has a much greater likelihood of having an impact on the dropout problem. The majority of those funds would go to high schools and the types of activities that high schools would carry out are likely to address the dropout problem.

CHILDHOOD OBESITY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Question. Since 1994, the number of obese and overweight children in the United States has more than doubled and now stands at 17.1 percent of children ages 2 to 19. Obesity carries with it many health and social consequences that often continue into adulthood. Implementing prevention programs and treatment for youngsters is important to controlling the obesity epidemic. One of the programs with proven success is the Carol M. White Physical Education Program, funded at \$72.6 million last year. Instead of asking for new applications, your website States that you received enough high-quality applications that you decided to use the unfunded applications from fiscal year 2006 to make new awards in fiscal year 2007. Given the quality of the applications and the obvious need for such a program, why did you zero out this program in fiscal year 2008?

Answer. The Department's budget does not include funding for the Carol M. White Physical Education program because the effectiveness of the program is unknown, and because the 2008 budget request for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) includes funding for a more promising approach to school wellness.

The Physical Education program was among the programs assessed in 2005 by the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART). The program received a rating of "Results Not Demonstrated." While the program has an overall strong purpose and design, and is managed well, it has weaknesses and deficiencies with regard to demonstrating results. Although a Results Not Demonstrated rating does not mean that a program is ineffective (it, instead, means that we cannot yet determine its effectiveness) there is, as yet, no evidence that the program is making a difference in terms of youth physical activity, reduction in obesity, or other desired outcomes.

HHS INITIATIVE—SCHOOL HEALTH INDEX

Question. Your budget States that you will devote \$17 million within the HHS request for grants to schools that have completed physical education and nutrition assessments as part of the school health index. What does that mean?

Answer. The administration's 2008 budget request for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) includes \$17.3 million to support an initiative to be implemented at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that will aim to create a national culture of wellness designed to help individuals take responsibility for personal health through such actions as regular physical activity, healthy eating, and injury prevention.

The HHS initiative will be built on a single school health assessment tool, the School Health Index (SHI). Local schools will use the SHI to assess health programs and policies and compare them to rigorous standards. Based on assessment results, schools will work to develop Action Plans that will identify the research-tested strategies they will implement across a broad range of areas, including physical education, health education, school lunch and breakfast programs, beverages and snack foods sold at schools, recess, intramural sports programs and after school programs. Schools will be able to apply to their State educational agency for a School Culture of Wellness Grant funded by the CDC that will be used to help implement tested tools that address the school wellness improvements identified in Action Plans. HHS estimates that more than 3,600 such grants will be awarded, reaching more than three million youngster and their families. Technical assistance and training activities will complement the grant program and also assist schools that do not receive grants.

TITLE I HIGH SCHOOL INITIATIVE

Question. Your budget proposes to start a new \$1.2 billion Title I high school initiative to support rigorous instruction and coursework that will improve graduation rates and prepare students for college or work. While I applaud the goal of preparing students for college and work, I am concerned that your budget proposes all of the Title I increase be devoted to starting the high school program. Do you feel that the current funding for Title I in the elementary grades is sufficient?

Answer. Yes, we do believe that the evidence we have, from both State assessments and the National Assessment of Educational Progress, shows that we are on the right track in the early grades and that the accountability system created by No Child Left Behind, combined with existing funding levels, is helping to move all students to grade-level proficiency.

Question. Why start a new program when there is much criticism that the currently authorized programs are underfunded?

Answer. That criticism started almost from the day the President signed NCLB into law—despite the very large increase in funding that Congress provided for the first year of implementation—and we believe claims about underfunding NCLB are both inaccurate and, truth be told, something of a smokescreen for disagreement with the goals of the law. Many of the same folks complaining about funding also claim that it is unrealistic to expect all students to perform on grade level. We disagree on both counts.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Question. Your budget justifications say that over 10,000 schools are in need of improvement. Knowing that the need is so significant, the Congress provided the start for a School Improvement program with \$125 million in fiscal year 2007. With so many schools in need of corrective action, improvement, or restructuring, does your budget provide enough money to help States and localities meet the requirements in NCLB?

Answer. We believe that our proposed increase to \$500 million for Title I School Improvement Grants in fiscal year 2008, combined with the roughly equal amount already available for school improvement under the section 1003(a) 4-percent reservation, will be adequate to meet the expected demand for improvement resources over the next 2 years. I would add, however, that how those funds are spent will be important, and our reauthorization proposal, which would help build State capacity to support local improvement efforts and bring a new emphasis on research-based improvement practices, is integral to our funding request.

TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND PROGRAM

Question. Your budget asks for \$199 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund. This is double the amount in the fiscal year 2006 budget, and I understand almost all of the money from fiscal year 2006 wasn't spent until fiscal year 2007. Would you tell us how the \$199 million would be used and how the program works?

Answer. The goals of the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program are to improve student achievement by increasing teacher and principal effectiveness; reform teacher and principal compensation systems so that teachers and principals are rewarded for gains in student achievement; increase the number of effective teachers teaching low-income, minority, and disadvantaged students in hard-to-staff subjects; and create sustainable performance-based compensation systems. The program provides grants to encourage school districts and States to develop and implement innovative ways to provide financial incentives for teachers and principals who raise student achievement and close the achievement gap in some of our Nation's highest-need schools.

Local educational agencies (LEAs), including charter schools that are LEAs; States; or partnerships of: (1) an LEA, a State, or both and (2) at least one non-profit organization are eligible for competitive grants to develop and implement performance-based compensation systems for public school teachers and principals in high-need areas. These systems must be based on measures of gains in student achievement, in addition to other factors, for teachers and principals in high-need schools.

Each applicant must demonstrate a significant investment in, and ensure the sustainability of, its project by committing to pay for an increasing share of the total cost of the project, for each year of the grant, with State, local, or other non-Federal funds.

The Department reserves 5 percent of funds for technical assistance, training, peer review of applications, program outreach, and evaluation activities.

FISCAL YEAR 2006 TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND PROGRAM

The Department received \$99 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund program in fiscal year 2006. The period of availability for the grants portion of the appropriation lasts from July 2006 through September 2007.

Because TIF is a new program and the Department anticipated that it would take applicants some time to develop their projects and write their applications, the Department did not plan to award the first round of grants until the fall of 2006. The Department awarded 16 grants, for about \$42 million, in October and November 2006. These applications all received scores of 85 or higher during the peer review.

In order to ensure that only the highest-quality grants received funding, the Department did not award grants to applications that reviewers scored lower than 85. The Department decided to hold a second competition this spring to allow unsuccessful applicants to improve their proposals, if they chose, and to allow applicants

who may not have felt ready to apply in the first round the opportunity to have more time to develop high-quality applications for the second round.

The Department conducted technical assistance workshops and conference calls for potential applicants to learn more about the application process and the program. The application deadline has now passed for the second round, and the Department expects to award approximately \$43 million in grants in June. The Department will use remaining grant funds (approximately \$9 million) to cover early fiscal year 2008 continuation costs until Congress passes the fiscal year 2008 appropriation. (Remaining funds from the 5 percent set-aside were for technical assistance, evaluation, and peer review; these funds were available on an annual basis and are no longer available.)

PROPOSED PLANS FOR TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND IN FISCAL YEARS 2007 AND 2008

The Department received \$200,000 for the program in fiscal year 2007, which we will use to cover the costs of the second-round peer review. In fiscal year 2008, the administration has requested that TIF funds be available on an annual, rather than forward-funded, basis to ensure that there is not a lapse in funding for existing grantees. The Department would use approximately half of the funds for the second year of activities for grants first awarded with 2006 funds and the remaining amount for new awards.

INTRODUCTION OF SECOND PANEL WITNESSES

Senator HARKIN. Let us call our second panel: John Jennings, Gene Wilhoit, Deborah Jewell-Sherman, Jane Babcock, and Robert Slavin.

We will start in the order which I mentioned, first of all, and then just go on down the line. First of all, John F. Jennings founded the Center on Education Policy in January 1995, serves as its president and CEO, from 1967 to 1994 served as the subcommittee staff director and general counsel for the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor. In these positions he was involved in nearly every major education debate held at the national level. He holds an A.B. from Loyola and a J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law.

Mr. Jennings, welcome to the committee. With you as with all of the rest, your statements will be made a part of the record in their entirety. If you could just take 5 minutes to sum it up we would sure appreciate it.

STATEMENT OF JOHN F. JENNINGS, PRESIDENT AND CEO, CENTER ON EDUCATION POLICY

Mr. JENNINGS. Thank you, Senator.

Senator HARKIN. Mr. Jennings.

Mr. JENNINGS. I am very glad to be here. I watched your career and accomplishments on the Senate Labor Committee for many years and I am glad to be appearing before you in your other role on the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Jack Jennings and I am the President of the Center on Education Policy, and I appreciate this opportunity to talk about funding for the No Child Left Behind Act. The Center on Education Policy is an independent center that monitors school reform. We receive all our funding from charitable foundations. We have no membership. We have no particular bias. Our only objective is to monitor school reforms that are meant to improve public schools.

One of the major programs we look at is the No Child Left Behind Act. Since 2002, in monitoring that program we have issued four comprehensive reports, as well as more than 20 specialized reports. Today I would like to summarize our findings dealing with

funding based on survey information from all 50 States, from a national sample of 300 school districts, and this is the same type of sample the U.S. Department of Education uses for its studies. In fact, we are using the same contractor that the U.S. Department of Education has used for its work because we want objective information to be able to show the effects of No Child Left Behind.

After reviewing the act for 5 years, these are our four major conclusions as regards funding. First, for the last 2 years 80 percent of the school districts in this nationally representative sample have reported that they are absorbing costs to carry out No Child Left Behind that they are not being reimbursed for by the Federal Government. These costs deal with testing, they deal with administering the tutoring provisions, the public school choice provisions, upgrading the quality of teachers, providing remedial services to students, providing professional development to teachers—a wide range of costs, and many of these are not being reimbursed by the Federal Government.

My second point is that for the current school year about two-thirds of the school districts in the country have received a smaller grant than last year or a frozen grant under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, due to the appropriations for 2005–2006 which were frozen, slightly decreased appropriations, and certain factors in the law. In fact, this percentage may be even higher depending on how much money States reserve for school improvement out of a percentage set-aside that they can reserve money for under the law.

So what we are asking is school districts to do much more under No Child Left Behind while we are giving the vast majority of school districts less money or at best the same amount of money. This does not make sense to school districts. This is at a time when the Federal Government has shifted from a role it used to have, Senator, that you will remember well, where the Federal Government used to provide special services for at-risk children, mostly disabled and disadvantaged children, and that would be about 25 percent of the student enrollment. Today the Federal Government is requiring that all schools, every public school regardless of whether it receives any Federal money, regardless of the percentage of poor children in that school, that every school in the country test its children, release the test results, and be ranked, have teachers that are fully qualified in basic academic subjects.

This is a vastly expanded Federal role in education and yet the Federal Government is only providing 8 to 9 percent of the cost of education. So the expansion of the Federal role has not been met with an expansion of funding this role in education.

The third point we would make is that last school year 34 States reported that they received inadequate Federal funds to carry out their general responsibilities under the No Child Left Behind Act, and inadequate staffing was the basic reason for this. This is a crucial matter because the State departments of education are the key link in trying to carry out this type of reform. They are the agencies that promulgate the standards. They are the agencies that have the testing programs, that are supposed to provide assistance to schools in need of improvement. And yet they do not have adequate staffing to carry out these duties. We would urge special at-

tention being paid to the role of the State departments of education.

Our last point is that in the last 2 school years nearly two-thirds of the States reported that they were receiving insufficient Federal funds to carry out their NCLB-imposed duties of assisting schools that are in need of improvement. Under No Child Left Behind, as you know, schools after 2 years are put on a State watch list and then they are progressively subject to sanctions if they receive Federal money. There are going to be more and more of these schools.

Last year, in California there was a doubling of the number of schools that are in restructuring under No Child Left Behind. They have more than 700 schools now that have to be restructured. Yet State departments of education and local school districts are not receiving the funds that they need in order to implement these types of changes.

Based on our findings, we recommend four courses of action. First, we recommend that the appropriations under the Title I program be very substantially increased. Title I is the core program for all school districts in the country and it is the program on which all these new Federal requirements have been based. Title I funding is totally inadequate in order to carry out the vastly expanded duties that are being imposed on local school districts.

Second, we recommend a rejection of the Bush administration's proposal that new funding under Title I be tied to new duties. The administration is saying that they are proposing \$1 billion in new funding for Title I. This funding is earmarked for an expansion of testing in high schools and for programs in high schools. This will not relieve the burden on local school districts, on school districts that are trying to carry out what they have been told to do for 5 years. This will leave them with frozen money or with less money. So we urge a rejection of the administration's proposal in that regard.

Third, we urge support for State departments of education. As I have already said, they are the key elements in this scheme. They are inadequately supported. In fact, over the last 10 years Federal aid to education has gradually withdrawn support from State departments of education, and they need to be buttressed if we are to carry out—if they are to carry out their duties under No Child Left Behind.

Last, we recommend an increase in funding for the school improvement program under Title I. This is the program that is earmarked for those schools that are in need of improvement as identified under No Child Left Behind. That program needs to be much better funded than it is currently being funded.

PREPARED STATEMENT

In conclusion, we recommend that the Congress recognize that the Federal role in education is vastly expanded. School districts throughout the country are being asked to do much more by the Federal Government than they have ever been asked to do before and they are trying. They are trying a hard as they can. But the Federal Government has to provide them with the tools to comply with the law in order to raise student achievement.

So we would recommend a very substantial increase in Federal aid to education. Thank you.
[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN F. JENNINGS

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about this important issue.

SUMMARY

The Center on Education Policy is an independent national advocate for improved public schools that monitors school reform policies to determine their effects. In this role, CEP has followed the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act since 2002, issuing four comprehensive annual reports and more than 20 specialized reports.

Today, I will summarize our findings dealing with funding, based on survey information from all 50 States and a national sample of 300 school districts, and from our analysis of the effects of prior appropriations. After studying NCLB for 5 years, we've reached four findings about funding:

- For the last 2 school years, 80 percent of the school districts in our nationally representative sample have reported that they are absorbing costs to carry out NCLB for which they are not being reimbursed by the Federal Government.
- For this current school year, about two-thirds of the school districts in the Nation have received a smaller grant than last year or a frozen grant for Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, due to flat appropriations for 2005–2006 and certain factors in the law. The share of districts with declining or flat funding may be even greater than two-thirds because of the way the State set-aside for school improvement is applied. This means that most school districts are receiving less or the same funding even as they are being asked to do more than ever under NCLB.
- Last school year, 34 States reported receiving inadequate Federal funds to carry out their general responsibilities under NCLB. Insufficient staffing is a major problem for State departments of education, since their responsibilities have multiplied greatly under NCLB.
- In the last 2 school years, nearly two-thirds of the States reported receiving insufficient Federal funds to carry out the NCLB-imposed duty of assisting schools identified for improvement.

Based on these findings from our studies, we recommend that the Congress take the following steps:

1. Increase the appropriations for programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, especially Title I, since NCLB demands so much from school districts and States while the Federal contribution to education covers only 8 to 9 percent of total costs.
2. Reject the Bush administration's recommendation to tie additional funding to additional duties, since State officials and local educators point out that they don't have enough funds currently to carry out the duties already imposed on them by NCLB.
3. Support State departments of education with increased resources since they are the key bodies charged with developing standards, assessments, accountability programs, and teacher quality standards, among other duties.
4. Increase funding for school improvement under section 1003(g) of Title I. States face serious challenges in assisting the growing number of schools that have been identified for improvement. Extra funding for this section will help States meet this challenge and provide schools with the resources they need to bring about change.

MAJOR FINDINGS ON FUNDING

Since 2002, the Center on Education Policy has monitored the State and local implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act by surveying all 50 State departments of education, surveying a nationally representative sample of school districts, conducting case studies of 38 school districts and their schools, reviewing in depth three States' efforts to restructure schools identified for NCLB improvement, and generally studying Federal, State, and local actions. Our work has resulted in four comprehensive annual reports and more than 20 specialized reports, including new reports on restructuring schools in California and State oversight of supplemental service providers. The Center is totally independent, with no membership and with all our funding provided by charitable foundations.

Most of our reporting on NCLB relates to issues other than funding. Some of the areas we have studied include whether student academic achievement has in-

creased, how many schools have been identified for improvement, how States have changed their NCLB accountability plans, what kinds of instructional and curricular changes NCLB has spurred, and what effects NCLB is having on teacher quality. We have also looked at the issue of adequate funding for NCLB—in fact, it comes up often when we ask about other aspects of NCLB. Today, I will limit my remarks to our findings about funding, but I urge you to consider our other findings as well.

GENERAL NCLB COSTS

In 2004 and 2005, CEP asked local school districts if there were costs associated with implementing NCLB that were not supported by Federal funds. Eighty percent of the districts in our 2005 survey responded that there were unreimbursed costs, about the same proportion of districts as in 2004. In 2005, greater proportions of small districts than very large districts reported that there were costs associated with NCLB not covered by Federal funds. Districts listed a variety of unsupported costs. Many mentioned the costs of professional development and training for teachers and paraprofessionals to meet the NCLB qualifications requirements. Several others reported that they had to hire staff to support instruction and assessment. Many districts said that some NCLB administrative costs were not covered by Federal funds or that Federal dollars were not sufficient to cover the costs of NCLB-required interventions, such as implementing public school choice or providing remediation services for students performing below grade level. A comment from one district characterized the situation many are facing:

It's taking more administrative funds to do all the reporting, gathering, and analyzing of data. It's costing us money . . . For teachers, we have to have more staff development, so we have to hire eight more substitutes. Also, (there are) not enough funds to cover teachers who aren't highly qualified. We have to pull from one pocket to fill another.

Several CEP case study districts also contended that funding for NCLB is inadequate to cover their implementation costs. Several small districts, including Orleans, Vermont, and Romulus Central Schools in upstate New York, noted that Federal funds have not fully offset such costs as administering and scoring tests in additional grades, training and tracking the qualifications of teachers, and establishing data systems. Last school year, tiny Hermitage R-IV School District in Missouri had to divert funds from other activities to cover the extra costs of scoring 16 State-mandated tests in grades assessed for NCLB versus the 6 tests administered in past years.

Officials in many case study districts also felt that the mandatory set-asides in NCLB for choice, supplementary services, and professional development hampered their ability to effectively implement the law. To comply with these set-asides, both Grant Joint Union High School District in California and Berkeley County in South Carolina had to reduce Title I allocations to individual schools, leaving schools with fewer resources to implement needed instructional changes.

TITLE I ALLOCATIONS

Comments from our surveys show that having adequate funding to carry out NCLB is considered a serious challenge by local school districts. To better understand this challenge, we must look at how much the Federal Government has appropriated for Title I, the principal program in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and what has happened with Title I allocations to school districts. But first, it's necessary to understand how NCLB has changed the Federal role in education.

From the 1960's through the 1990's, the Federal Government focused on "at risk" students. Most Federal aid to education provided extra services for disadvantaged and disabled students. Beginning in 1994 with legislation adopted under President Clinton, and culminating in 2002 with the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act, this Federal role has been broadened. Now, the Federal Government affects all public schools in the country, regardless of whether they receive any Federal aid and regardless of how many "at risk" students they have. Public school students must be tested in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school. States must release test scores for every school and for a variety of racial, ethnic, economic, and other subgroups within each school. A determination must be made about whether every school has made adequate yearly progress. All public schools need to have "highly qualified" teachers in core academic subjects. Schools receiving Federal Title I aid are subject to further requirements, including sanctions if inadequate percentages of their students achieve at the proficient level on State tests.

This expanded Federal role in education is one reason why local educators have complained about having too few funds, even when Title I and certain other Federal

programs received a significant boost in appropriations for fiscal years 2002 and 2003. The Federal role in education has expanded from affecting about 25 percent of students who were “at risk” to affecting all students, while the Federal share of total revenues for elementary and secondary education has reached only about 8 to 9 percent, even with those earlier funding increases.

In this expanded role, the No Child Left Behind Act imposes sanctions on schools that receive Title I funds if the percentage of their students reaching proficiency falls short of State benchmarks for 2 consecutive years. To carry out these sanctions—public school choice and then supplemental educational services—school districts must set aside 20 percent of their Title I grants. If a school district has not received additional funds—and most have not, as I describe below—then the district must take these funds from teacher salaries and other current services to set them aside for the sanctions. This is a second reason why educators complain about inadequate funds for NCLB.

A third reason is that many school districts have received less or the same amount of Title I money since NCLB was enacted, despite increases in appropriations for fiscal years 2002 through 2005. This is due to two factors: (1) changes made by NCLB to the Title I allocation formulas, which directed all the new money to a smaller subset of districts with the highest concentrations of low-income children, and (2) annual updates in the census counts of poor children, which cause year-to-year shifts in funding. In addition, even some high poverty districts did not receive the full increases they anticipated because of the process used to fund schools identified for improvement under NCLB.

To make matters worse, Federal funding for Title I and other key NCLB programs was cut in fiscal year 2006 for the first time since NCLB was enacted. We analyzed Title I allocations for fiscal year 2006—the funds being used by school districts in the current school year, 2006–2007. We found that compared with their allocations for school year 2005–2006, at least 62 percent of the Nation’s school districts lost funding for school year 2006–2007 or received the same amount. At most, 38 percent of school districts received any increase, and this proportion may actually be smaller because of the State school improvement set-aside discussed below. These cuts and freezes are attributable to the Title I formula factors mentioned above, aggravated by a lower appropriation.

Last year, in his fiscal year 2007 budget request, the President recommended shrinking Federal education spending further, by about 3 percent. As you know, earlier this year the Congress rejected the President’s recommendation and instead appropriated an additional \$125 million for basic grants under Title I. These funds have not yet been allocated by the U.S. Department of Education, but we do not expect a major shift in the pattern described above for the upcoming school year.

In light of the expanded Federal role in education, this subcommittee should consider substantially increasing appropriations for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by NCLB, especially for the Title I program. The subcommittee may also want to work with the authorizing committee to find a way to provide some increased funding for the large majority of school districts. All districts are affected by the demands of NCLB, and these demands are accelerating as States push to ensure that 100 percent of students achieve proficiency by 2014.

STATE CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT NCLB

Today, the Center on Education Policy issued a report on one aspect of NCLB—State administration of the provisions affecting supplemental educational service providers. These providers supply tutoring for low-income students who attend Title I schools in their second year of improvement and beyond. Providers include profit-making companies, non-profit groups, and school districts. States are charged by the law with evaluating the effectiveness of these services. Our report, which is based on survey information from 49 States in fall 2006, shows that 38 States are not significantly overseeing whether those providers are effectively raising test scores for students receiving these services. The main reason for this lack of monitoring is inadequate funding to provide staff for this task.

State education agencies are a key link in the standards-based reform movement embodied in the No Child Left Behind Act. These agencies establish the State’s academic standards, the State assessment program, the system to determine accountability for local school districts, the criteria for determining teacher quality, data systems for reporting all this information, and assistance to help schools to improve after they have failed to make adequate progress under NCLB. Yet, States have told us that they lack the capacity to carry out their major responsibilities under NCLB, as illustrated in our supplemental services report.

Our fall 2006 survey of all 50 State education agencies asked about the degree to which inadequate Federal funds challenged their capacity to implement various aspects of No Child Left Behind. Twenty-three States reported that the lack of Federal funds challenged “to a great extent” their capacity to provide technical assistance to districts with schools in the various phases of improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. Another 18 States said the lack of funding posed a “moderate” challenge to their capacity to carry out this requirement. A lack of Federal funds also challenged States’ capacity to develop the language proficiency assessments required by NCLB for English language learners. Twenty-one States reported that insufficient Federal funding affected their capacity to develop these assessments “to a great extent,” and 18 States said a lack of funds affected this capacity “moderately.” The inadequacy of Federal funds is also affecting States’ ability to monitor the activities of districts with schools in improvement and to monitor supplemental educational service providers. This is a serious problem when the agencies charged with carrying out NCLB in each State show such shortages of personnel.

Our survey also revealed an interesting paradox: While States’ capacity to carry out their responsibility under NCLB is hampered by inadequate Federal funding, local school districts turn to State education agencies far more often than they turn to other entities for help in implementing NCLB. In CEP’s survey of districts conducted in 2005–2006, 98 percent of Title I school districts received assistance in implementing NCLB from their State education agencies, and 75 percent reported that this assistance was helpful or very helpful. All other agencies and organizations ranked lower both in terms of the percentage of districts that reported receiving assistance and their level of satisfaction with this assistance.

For these reasons, we recommend an increase in Federal funding for State departments of education. One possible source of funding would be Title VI, Part A, Subpart 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which had provided aid to State agencies in the past but has not been recently funded.

SCHOOLS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

On February 28, CEP released a report on schools in California that are involved in restructuring under NCLB. Restructuring, the final stage of NCLB accountability, begins after a school has fallen short of State targets for student proficiency for 5 consecutive years. As a first step, schools in restructuring must develop a plan to dramatically revamp the school. The number of California schools in restructuring nearly doubled in 2006–2007 over the year before, and now constitutes 8 percent of the State’s schools. For several reasons, California is ahead of many other States in identifying schools for restructuring, but other States will soon follow.

State departments of education under NCLB must provide assistance to all restructuring schools, as well as to other schools “in need of improvement,” the earlier accountability stages of NCLB. To carry out these school improvement responsibilities, a State must reserve up to 4 percent of the sum of the Title I, Part A allocations to its school districts; however, before a State can set aside these funds, each school district in the State must be held to its previous year’s allocation level. According to our analysis of Title I allocations for school year 2006–2007, \$508 million was supposed to be available for this school improvement, but instead only \$308 million was available—a shortfall of 40 percent—because funds had to be used to hold school districts harmless.

An additional route to provide funds for school improvement is through funding section 1003(g) of Title I. This is a separate authorization that is not affected by the local “hold-harmless.” For fiscal year 2007, President Bush requested \$200 million for this purpose, and the continuing resolution appropriated \$125 million. This was the first appropriation provided for this section since it was put in the law in 2002.

This first-time appropriation is a good start, but with so many schools now on State lists of schools in need of improvement, and with more schools moving into the restructuring stage, it is important to increase this appropriation. States can reserve 5 percent of the section 1003(g) sums for State-level activities and the remainder must be sent to local school districts as grants to assist schools. This does not solve the problem of the 4 percent set-aside, which is a matter for the authorizing committee, but it will help.

CONCLUSION

The No Child Left Behind Act has greatly expanded the Federal role in elementary and secondary education without a comparable increase in Federal funding of education. Additional appropriations are necessary to maintain support for the Act and to help educators to meet its goals. This is a message that State officials and

local educators have asked us to send on to the Congress as they struggle with implementing NCLB.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you very much, Mr. Jennings. Now we will turn to Gene Wilhoit, who assumed his role as executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers in November 2006, having spent his entire professional career serving education at the local, State, and national levels. Mr. Wilhoit began his career as a social studies teacher in Ohio and Indiana. From 1994 to 2006 he led two State education agencies, as director of the Arkansas Department of Education and as deputy commissioner and commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Education.

Mr. Wilhoit, welcome to the committee.

STATEMENT OF HON. GENE WILHOIT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

Mr. WILHOIT. Senator Harkin, thank you so much. It is a pleasure to be with you today and to talk about where we go with No Child Left Behind.

As you noted in that introduction, I have been in two States over the last 13 years as chief State school officer. During that time a lot of things have changed. Over those 13 years we have seen a major transformation of education. That radical transformation has taken us from loosely coupled systems to a standards-based system that is in place in virtually every State in the country.

Now, what we have going in the States right now out of the very serious effort is that virtually every State has an accountability system that did not exist before, student standards that did not exist, data systems that did not exist 13 years ago. We now have criteria for highly qualified teachers. We have consequences and rewards for school districts that are achieving. We have intervention strategies in place for school districts that are not. We are devoting resources of the State education agency to provide assistance.

So this is a very different environment for State education agencies and we are pleased to make some comments to you about that role. There are people out there that hope that No Child Left Behind will go away. I think serious educators do not agree with that and in fact to a greater extent many of them believe that we ought to hold on to these ideals that are in No Child Left Behind. Those lofty goals are really our promise to every child in this country.

So it is not a matter of doing the right thing. It is a matter of doing the things right. My comments today are around those issues.

As you look at reauthorization, we think that there ought to be a commitment to build on the successes that we can acknowledge, but at the same time we are going to need to look very directly and confront and correct some of the problems that exist. I will say to you that our organization has offered some very specific suggestions about how we might redesign the approach of No Child Left Behind that is on record in Congress, and each of those methods of redesign are going to need financial support.

We have got to invest in what we are about to do in the next 5 years, because this will take us to 2012. We will be so close to that 2014 target that has been set. So it is critical that we begin to think about adequate funding that will make this law successful

across this country. We have got to make sure that, in addition to what we have that I just mentioned on the table, we are going to have two additional concerns pressing us in the next few years. These underperforming schools are increasing. As Jack noted earlier, the need to address very directly the needs of children inside schools, to meet those individual needs, to identify their problems and correct those problems really deserves a greater resource allocation than what we have right now.

So as we move ahead and you begin to look at reinvestment, we think that we have got to maintain the momentum that we have set in place, but in order to do it it is going to take some continued attention. Because the States are the linchpins of implementation of No Child Left Behind, all of this is flowing. We sit between the Congress and those school districts that are working very hard out there. We think there are programs that need to be funded.

We agree that those foundational programs need dramatically more money in them than we have right now. That is Title I; it is also the programs for special needs, children with disabilities, and those other kinds of programs that set the groundwork.

But beyond that, I would like to use some of my short time to say there are three specific programs that we think, if funded, could make a dramatic difference. They are not high cost programs in terms of the overall Federal budget.

First of all, this issue of longitudinal data systems. We request that you provide \$100 million for this important high-quality longitudinal data system development in States. This is different than what Senator Craig was talking about earlier. This is not a top-down data collection system at the Federal level. This is a bottom-up situation in the States. We at this point need to put in place and are putting in place data systems that collect information across the State, that report that information back to the schools that use it in a way that provides value added to the local school districts.

We also in that process are looking at a number of situations that require upgrading of those data systems in order for us to make the kind of value decisions that we need.

I was commissioner of education in Kentucky, as you mentioned. I received one of the 14 Federal grants. The problem with those—and it helped us dramatically. But the problem with those grants is that they were competitive. Every State needs that kind of assistance. With that partnership with the Federal Government, it would help.

Additionally, we are working in a State collaborative to develop a data quality campaign with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation you probably heard about. This is a statewide effort. It is receiving a lot of support across the States. It includes the development of a center for State education data. This kind of a system, where we can collect all of our federally required data, where we can report those data back to the States in a way that takes a lot of the burden away, this utility could be used as a reporting mechanism for the States.

Second, we would ask you that you give us some consideration to school improvement grants. We know that at this point we are going to have at least a growing number, as was indicated earlier,

of schools that will be identified for improvement. That list has grown. There are over 10,000 schools across the country right now that are in need of State assistance. That list is going to grow over the next few years. Your support in 2007 would help us tremendously in that area.

Finally, this issue of State assessments. We appreciate the work that has been made in this area, but again this is not completed. This is an area where we are going to have to advance State assessments in the next few years. We are—for example, the State I just came from, only \$1 out of \$8 in that whole arena to develop these highly qualified systems is in place. Again, we are asking that the Congress come forward with some assistance.

PREPARED STATEMENT

These three programs, you add them up, \$100 million on the first, \$500 million and \$500 million on the other two, it really is about \$400 million. That is a lot of money, but in the whole scheme of things it could leverage this whole system. We could find that kind of money to make this a real development program in this country.

Again, I appreciate the time with the committee and would appreciate any conversations later.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GENE WILHOIT

Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Specter, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to testify today about the funding levels needed to properly implement the No Child Left Behind Act. My name is Gene Wilhoit. I am the Executive Director of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and served, until November 2006, as the Commissioner of Education in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

CCSSO is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of the public officials who lead departments of elementary and secondary education in the States, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. Over the last few years, our members have been immersed in the transformation to standards-based education and have assumed the primary responsibility to transform the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) from policy on paper to practice in classrooms over the last 5 years, including leading the effort to develop State content and student performance standards, State assessments, State accountability systems, State data reporting systems, State systems of rewards and consequences for underperforming schools, State teacher quality requirements, and more.

Today, we are at a vital crossroads in education. In this (the 21st) century's increasingly global economy and diverse society, education has never been more important—morally, democratically, and economically—to the success of every child and our Nation as a whole. Ours is a great challenge, to transform an education system that was created for the agricultural and industrial ages and in many ways still resembles the system our ancestors created for a simpler and very different time. For more than a decade, States have aggressively pursued the path of standards-based reform—putting in place the core foundations of more rigorous standards, robust assessment systems, accountability for schools and districts, and comprehensive data collection and reporting. To date, we have not seen the kind of dramatic returns in student achievement that we must see. Why is that? I believe that it is because we have yet to complete the theory of standards-based reform, at least on a national scale. It would be a grave mistake to abandon the solid groundwork that is just now beginning to show results. To see the kind of dramatic transformation we need in education, we must invest and finish what we have started, with continuous efforts to not only strengthen standards, improve assessments, enhance data quality, improve teacher performance, and so forth, but also with new investments to assist and intervene in underperforming schools, provide each student with a range of options and interventions to meet his/her individual needs, and

break down barriers between K–12 and higher education. Nothing is more important to the future of our Nation and our world, and the Nation’s chief State school officers are committed to this work. But it will take investments at all levels.

The No Child Left Behind Act is part of this story. When Congress enacted NCLB in 2001, State education reform efforts were uneven. Five years later, through strong State and local leadership, NCLB’s core foundational reforms are widely in place. This incredible transformation, however, came at a sizable, and ongoing, cost to States at a time when many State budgets are strained and when staff within State education agencies has been reduced. As you know, significant State investments were needed to make up the difference between NCLB’s requirements and authorized funding levels and actual Federal support to implement the law. As a long-time chief State school officer in both Kentucky and Arkansas, and as someone who has worked in education at the Federal level, I know the primary role that States and districts play in education funding, and I know the common difference between Federal authorizations and Federal appropriations. But we have to ask ourselves: If we agree that education is among the single most important investments we can make to secure the long-term future of individuals and our Nation in the 21st century, why would we tolerate every year a known and significant difference between what we judge it will take to implement our Federal education policies and what we are willing to pay for them? Thanks to State initiatives and to NCLB, we now have systems of accountability and transparency across our Nation’s public schools. Now is the time to invest in those systems, even as we continuously improve them, so that we can move from “no child left behind” to every child a graduate, prepared for higher education, workforce, and citizenship.

To maintain the momentum achieved since the passage of NCLB, increased Federal investments are needed in many areas, particularly as States seek to build upon NCLB’s reforms and promote greater innovation and action. The NCLB reauthorization process offers Congress an opportunity to examine the law’s overall funding requirements and to help ensure that the next stage of standards-based reform shifts from the law’s current focus on prescriptive compliance requirements to a dynamic law focused on providing real incentives for innovative State and local models—along with fair and meaningful accountability for results.

Between now and the time you reauthorize the law, however, there are several immediate investments that Congress can make to ensure that States, districts, and schools have the resources they need to successfully implement the law. These investments include increased funding for Title I, Part A; Title V, Part A; Teacher Professional Development; and Education Technology State Grants. CCSSO sent a letter this morning—March 14—to House and Senate appropriators making the case for our fiscal year 2008 appropriations priorities as you craft your respective bills for mark-up this spring. Our appropriations letter was submitted along with my written testimony.

In addition to these priorities, I would like to use my time this afternoon to focus on three specific programs that—if adequately funded—are capable of making a major impact on student achievement in a short period of time. If they are not adequately supported, I fear we will negatively impact the progress we have made. The first priority is the statewide data systems grant, which currently supports competitive awards to State education agencies to foster the design, development, and implementation of longitudinal data systems. The second is the school improvement grants program, which helps States provide assistance to districts and schools identified for improvement. The third is the State assessments program, which provides formula grants to States to help pay for the cost of developing the standards and assessments required by NCLB.

LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEMS

CCSSO respectfully requests that you provide \$100 million to implement high-quality longitudinal data systems in every State by 2009 and to develop a Center for State Education Data. To move reform ahead, all States must have real-time capacity to collect, report, and effectively use information, to standardize reporting to the Federal Government and to work with districts and schools to strengthen data quality and better use data in teaching and learning. While I was Commissioner of Education in Kentucky, we were privileged to receive one of the 14 competitive data systems grants, and with the Federal resources, we were able to leverage the State investments to improve our collection system, enhance our ability to track individual student progress, provide teachers with powerful technology-based tools to assist student learning and enhance our reporting system. Every State should have a similar partnership with the Federal government. Unfortunately, current funding levels are insufficient to ensure a rapid national build-out of these systems, and without

further investments, educators and policymakers will continue to lack the vital information needed to most effectively modify policies and practices to improve student achievement.

CCSSO has been working closely with its members, with other national organizations participating in the Data Quality Campaign, with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and with the U.S. Department of Education in an effort to expand States' data capabilities, including the development of a Center for State Education Data. This effort would help strengthen State data and reporting systems (including through funding for State data coordinators); provide a one-stop collection, repository, and dissemination utility that will collect all federally required data as well as additional educationally appropriate data; store such data for Federal and State reporting requirements; and disseminate such data as required and/or requested by Federal agencies or research entities—with the overall goal of improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps. Additional Federal support would provide a critical boost to this important effort to give educators one of the tools they most need to succeed.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

CCSSO respectfully requests that you provide at least \$500 million for Title I school improvement grants (section 1003(g)). During the past year, many new schools and districts have been “identified for improvement” under the accountability requirements of NCLB. As we move forward with implementation, more schools and districts will be identified as not making adequate yearly progress. Struggling schools and districts must have access to sound technical assistance and additional resources before they fall further behind. NCLB correctly requires States to offer such assistance and authorizes the Secretary of Education to award grants to States for school improvement activities at the district and State levels. Congress, for the first time, provided \$125 million for the program through the fiscal year 2007 continuing resolution, but additional resources are needed to serve the 10,214 schools identified for improvement in 2006–2007. Your support for school improvement funding for fiscal year 2007 is deeply appreciated and must continue for fiscal year 2008 if States are going to successfully turn around these struggling districts and schools.

STATE ASSESSMENTS

CCSSO respectfully requests that you allocate at least \$500 million for development and implementation of the State assessments required by NCLB. As you know, valid and reliable testing and accountability systems are vital components of the Act. Significant, ongoing resources are needed to ensure that States can properly design, improve, and implement high quality assessments across the board. Recent Federal appropriations, however, have covered only a portion of the funding needed to satisfy NCLB's testing requirements. For example, in Kentucky the Federal allocation for State assessments is \$6.1 million. However, we are spending over \$50 million in State resources. The Federal resources have allowed us to fill in the previously untested 3–8 grades and to bring our State program into compliance with NCLB. As we move forward, we know that we will need to provide quick turnaround documents to teachers and administrators to help them address student needs, enhance professional development, build better assessments that truly reflect what students know and are able to do, and develop better ways to measure learning for English language learners and students with disabilities. Most of these costs will be assumed by states, but Federal resources will be critical to this work. The time has come to rectify this shortfall.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to continuing these discussions as the fiscal year 2008 appropriations (and NCLB reauthorization) process moves forward. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have about my testimony.

Senator HARKIN. \$400 million?

Mr. WILHOIT. Well, if you subtract from that \$1.1 billion the amount of money that is in the current budget submitted by the Department, we are about \$400 million apart from being able to fund those programs. It is about \$416 million precisely. We can find—

Senator HARKIN. My quick calculation is that is about a day and a half in Iraq.

Mr. WILHOIT. Yes. Is in the choice program right there.

Senator HARKIN. Next we go to Dr. Deborah Jewell-Sherman, who has served as Superintendent of Richmond Public Schools since 2002, received her doctorate degree from Harvard University, Undergraduate degree from NYU, master's degrees from King College and Harvard University. Dr. Jewell-Sherman began her tenure in Richmond as associate superintendent for instruction after serving as an educational leader in New York, New Jersey, and Fairfax County, Hampton, and Virginia Beach in Virginia.

Dr. Jewell-Sherman, welcome to the committee.

STATEMENT OF DEBORAH JEWELL-SHERMAN, Ph.D., SUPERINTENDENT, RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. JEWELL-SHERMAN. Thank you, Chairman Harkin. It is my pleasure to be here this afternoon to represent Richmond Public School Board, my RPS colleagues, and most importantly our 25,000 students. I thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding funding for NCLB and its impact on our schools and our students.

As you stated, the law was signed in 2002, which was the year that I began my superintendency, and in preparing this testimony the coincidence was inescapable to me. NCLB is focused primarily on disadvantaged and minority students, and of the 25,000 students in Richmond that I daily serve 70 percent qualify for free or reduced lunch, 89 percent are African American, 19 percent are students with disabilities, and our Hispanic English language learners are the fastest growing segment of our population. A significant number of our students come from single parent homes and reside in low income housing.

We all know that No Child Left Behind demands accountability for student academic progress and requires specialized efforts to turn around low performing schools. I was very pleased that in 1998 in our State of Virginia the standards of learning assessments were implemented, and they focus on four core areas. That process began holding all of our schools accountable for accreditation. 70 percent of the students had to pass each of those areas.

Initially in Richmond only two of our schools earned full accreditation. By 2002 that number reached ten and the board hired me to accelerate that process. I am pleased to report that in 2003 we more than doubled the number of accredited schools from 10 to 23 of our 51. We went to 39 in 2004, 45 in 2005, and 44 in 2006.

Regarding the Federal benchmark of adequate yearly progress, our students have shown a similar pattern of progress. In 2003, 12 or 23 percent of our schools made AYP; in 2004 27 or 53 percent; in 2005 41 or 82 percent; and last year 40 or 78 percent of our schools.

Having one of our schools, Jeb Stuart, named a 2006 National Blue Ribbon School was a very proud moment for our district. However, this type of progress does not happen by accident, nor does it happen overnight. It takes commitment and leadership on the part of our board and central office, and certainly the commitment and dedication of principals, teachers, and all other school staff. And most importantly, it takes hard work.

We instituted major changes in instructional strategies, programs and practices and supported the implementation of these

initiatives at the school and classroom level. I have listed a number of these strategies in my written testimony.

Mr. Chairman, these types of instructional reforms also take money. The district was the beneficiary of a substantial infusion of Federal education funds that initially accompanied No Child Left Behind. These funds helped us in virtually all of our instructional initiatives, particularly in implementing intervention models for identified low-performing schools, supporting tiered classroom strategies with additional materials for underperforming students, supporting better in-service teacher training, deploying outside educational consultants, and providing classroom level coaching and mentoring. Concentrating improvements on classroom level implementation and support has been the key to our success, with our stellar teachers as our primary asset.

Richmond's regular Title I formula allocations increased during my first 3 years as superintendent by \$1.5 million, \$1 million, and \$1.5 million respectively from 2002 to 2004. In 2002 our Title II allocation jumped by \$1.9 million. Our school improvement funding began at \$1.6 million and climbed to \$1.8 million in 2003. These funds helped us underwrite our systemwide transformation.

As the second lowest performing district in Virginia, Richmond was one of the first to receive targeted assistance from our governor and we are very appreciative of that. We are also appreciative of the fact that on a pro bono basis we had on-site assistance from school district educators from the Council of the Greater City Schools.

Unfortunately, the infusion of NCLB funding early in my tenure has now dropped off, and that has been spoken about at length. In the past year our regular Title I allocation declined by nearly \$800,000. Our NCLB school improvement allocation from the State has also declined sharply, from a high of \$1.8 million to \$650,000 this school year.

In Richmond I worry every day whether we can sustain and expand the academic progress that our teachers and administrators have worked so hard to achieve and that our community deserves. Our annual student mobility rate averages 40 percent. Our increasing limited English proficient population and our teacher turnover rate of approximately 9 percent means that each year will present a new set of students and a new set of challenges in virtually every school.

Therefore I respectfully recommend that the committee consider a sustained and predictable increase in Title I formula funding for school districts that by statute will be allocated broadly to schools with the largest concentrations of disadvantaged students. I would encourage the same approach of sustained and predictable increases for other key programs, such as Title II, III, and IDEA. The current NCLB 4 percent set-aside for specially focused school improvement grants from the States seems to strike the right balance.

PREPARED STATEMENT

We are proud of our progress. We are pleased that colleagues from other Virginia communities come to Richmond the find out

how to address the achievement gap. Sustaining that progress, however, is a daily challenge.

I appreciate, Chairman Harkin, the opportunity to discuss this matter with you further and for the opportunity to testify today.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. DEBORAH JEWELL-SHERMAN

Good morning Chairman Harkin, Senator Specter, and members of the Committee. I am Deborah Jewell-Sherman, superintendent of Richmond City Public Schools in Richmond, Virginia. I represent the School Board and 25,000 students. Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding funding for No Child Left Behind Act and its impact on our schools and our students.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed into law on January 8, 2002 and began implementation in school year 2002–2003. My first year as superintendent of the Richmond Public Schools was in 2002 as well. In preparing this testimony, the coincidence was inescapable.

No Child Left Behind is focused primarily on disadvantaged and minority children. Of the 25,000 Richmond students whom we serve, nearly 70 percent qualify for free or reduced price lunch, 89 percent are African American, 19 percent are students with disabilities, and our Hispanic English language learners are the fastest growing segment of our population. And, a significant number of our students come from single-parent homes and reside in low-income housing.

No Child Left Behind demands accountability for student academic progress and requires specialized efforts to turn around low-performing schools. The State of Virginia implemented its Standards of Learning in four core subjects and began holding schools accountable for an accreditation standard of 70 percent of students passing these State assessments. Initially, only two of Richmond's schools earned full accreditation. By 2002 that number reached 10 schools. The Richmond School Board hired me to accelerate that school improvement process. In 2003, we more than doubled the number of accredited schools from 10 to 23 of our 51 schools. We went to 39 in 2004, 45 in 2005, and 44 in 2006. In meeting the Federal NCLB benchmark, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), our students have shown a similar pattern of progress. In 2003, 12 or 23 percent of our schools made AYP; in 2004, 27 or 53 percent schools; in 2005, 41 or 82 percent and in 2006, 40 or 78 percent of our schools.

This type of progress does not happen by accident, nor does it happen overnight. It takes commitment and leadership on the part of the School Board and central administration and an expectation and a focus on student academic success on the part of our principals, teachers and all other school staff. It also takes hard work. We instituted major changes in instructional strategies, programs and practices, and supported the implementation of these initiatives at the school and classroom level, including:

- Developing a district-wide curriculum, and instituting research-based programs;
- Aligning the curriculum to State academic standards and State assessments;
- Adopting a managed instructional theory of action;
- Creating district-wide instructional models and interventions;
- Reducing site-based decision-making, and prohibited competing and non-aligned programs, textbooks, and other materials;
- Developing a reservoir of instructional tools for classroom teachers, including lesson plans for each academic standard, pacing guides, sample activities, sample assessment, and technology integration;
- Developing benchmark and other formative assessments to augment the annual State assessment data in order to guide central office, principal-level, and classroom-level instructional decisions;
- Deploying central office resources and academic coaches to schools and classrooms to support curriculum implementation, school improvement planning, and differentiated instruction;
- Redesigning professional development to support implementation of these system-wide reforms as well as improve staff morale and professional interaction;
- Initiating systematic monitoring of instructional implementation with an internal accountability system of yearly targets and professional feedback, and a Balanced Scorecard to ensure transparent tracking of processes and outcomes.

Mr. Chairman, these types of instructional reforms also take money. The district was the beneficiary of the substantial infusion of Federal education funds that initially accompanied the No Child Left Behind Act. These funds helped us in virtually all of our instructional initiatives, particularly in implementing intervention models for identified low-performing schools, supporting tiered classroom strategies with ad-

ditional materials for under-performing students, supporting better in-service teacher training, deploying outside educational consultants, and providing classroom-level coaching and mentoring. Concentrating improvement efforts on classroom-level implementation and support has been the key to our success with our teachers as our primary asset.

Richmond's regular Title I formula allocations increased during my first 3 years as superintendent by \$1.5 million, \$1 million, and \$1.5 million respectively from 2002 to 2004. In 2002, our Title II allocation jumped by \$1.9 million. Our School Improvement funding began at \$1.6 million, and climbed to \$1.8 million in 2003–2004. These funds helped underwrite our system-wide transformation.

As the second lowest performing district in Virginia, Richmond was one of the first districts targeted for help under Governor Mark Warner's Partnership for Achieving Successful Schools (PASS). At the same time, Richmond was the beneficiary of "pro bono" on-site assistance from nearly a dozen of the best instructional, special education, and Federal program managers among the Great City Schools. Actually, a portion of the costs of these site visits, instructional and management reviews, and formal recommendations from these top urban educators were underwritten by Federal funding from Secretary Rod Paige. In fact, the instructional improvement and reform plan that Richmond designed with our urban colleagues was adopted by the State of Virginia and the Richmond Public Schools in a formal memorandum of understanding.

Unfortunately, the infusion of NCLB funding early in my tenure as superintendent has now dropped off. In the past year Richmond's regular Title I allocation declined by nearly \$800,000. School level Title I allocations have dropped by some 10 percent. Our NCLB school improvement allocation from the State has also declined sharply, from a high of \$1.8 million to \$650,000 this year. Our Title II allocation has not increased for 4 consecutive years. Our Federal educational technology grants and our safe and drug free schools grants have declined by 35 percent and 33 percent respectively. Moreover, Richmond's IDEA funding declined for the first time in anyone's recollection this school year 2006–2007.

Speaking from a national perspective, the majority of the Nation's school districts have had their ESEA Title I allocations frozen or cut for Federal fiscal years 2004, 2005, and 2006. The 2007 district level Title I allocations have yet to be issued, so there is uncertainty about whether a similar pattern of freezes and cuts will occur for a fourth consecutive school year. Nationally, schools and school districts are in desperate need of additional Title I funding to meet the increasing NCLB performance requirements, to address mandated NCLB expenditures, to retain highly qualified teachers, and most importantly, to make significant progress in closing student achievement gaps.

In Richmond, I worry every day whether we can sustain and expand the academic progress that our teachers and administrators have worked so hard to achieve and that our community deserves. School success in 1 year does not guarantee success in upcoming years. Our annual student mobility rate of averages 40 percent, our increasing limited English proficient population, and our teacher turnover rate of approximately 9 percent means that each year will present a new set of students and a new set of challenges in virtually every school. Developing building-level and classroom-level capacity is an on-going process, especially with teachers and principals leaving for higher pay and less intense environments.

I am concerned that focusing major investments on a limited number of under-performing schools can divert attention and resources away from other schools that face identical challenges and are on the brink of some of the same problems. As Richmond superintendent, I have benefited from a substantial infusion of supplemental funds, and have struggled to adjust to a substantial decline in that funding. In hindsight, I believe that sustained and predictable increases in funding for school districts, rather than a large boost in funding for particular schools followed by the inevitable decline, are more beneficial for coherent planning and implementation of instructional reforms.

Therefore, I respectfully recommend that the Committee consider a sustained and predictable increase in Title I formula funding for school districts that—by statute—will be allocated broadly to schools with the largest concentrations of disadvantaged students. I would encourage the same approach of sustained and predictable increases for other key programs such Title II, Title III, and IDEA. The current NCLB 4 percent set-aside for specially-focused School Improvement Grants from the State seems to strike the proper balance of systematic investment through Title I formula grants and focused assistance for certain failing schools. With a low-income rate of 70 percent, some of our 44 fully accredited schools could easily join our remaining under-performing schools if attention, support, and resources are not properly balanced.

We are proud of our progress. We are pleased that colleagues from other Virginia communities, including suburban communities, are coming to Richmond to talk with us about how to address the achievement gaps of low-income and minority students. Sustaining that progress is a daily challenge. I am particularly appreciative to Chairman Harkin, Senator Specter, and your colleagues for stemming the tide of the education budget cuts of recent years and hopefully getting the Nation back to investing in education.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you very much, Dr. Jewell-Sherman.

Next, welcome, Jane Babcock. Ms. Babcock has served as superintendent of the Keokuk, Iowa, Community School District since 1999. She began her career in education as an elementary school teacher in northwest Iowa. She originally came to Keokuk as an elementary principal, then became curriculum director and assistant superintendent.

Ms. Babcock, welcome to the committee.

STATEMENT OF JANE BABCOCK, SUPERINTENDENT, KEOKUK COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ms. BABCOCK. Thank you. I am so honored to be here to represent my State and the educational team of Iowa during this subcommittee session.

As you know, Iowans—I am from the Midwest—we always have to begin with a story. I do not have a fishing story. That is what my dad might tell. But I am going to start with a story. I have a picture. We talk about students who are at risk.

Senator HARKIN. You might turn it so that camera sees it.

Ms. BABCOCK. Okay.

You will see five children there. These children are all adopted. They live in a single parent home. Two of these children have a Chinese cultural background. The other three came from the foster care system. They are 7, 9, 9, 11, 16. Did I name five? Yes.

These children have all participated in the programs that we have talked about today and that I have listed in my statement. You need to know I am usually a person who speaks from a little card like this, so I am trying to follow what I have written.

The 16 year old participates in the Success Center, which is a program that was funded through State funding and a combination of Federal. It is at the high school. It is provided after school for tutoring. The four youngest children attend Kid Zone, which is a before-school, after-school program funded by the 21st century grant, which originally started with Federal and State funds. In addition, my one son, who is 9, has participated in Title I in the years that he has been with me, which is about 2 years.

You might guess this is a family of a single parent person who is very busy, has lots of meetings, and they are mine. So when I talk about this topic you need to understand that when I went to Keokuk 17 years ago I was going to go and stay a year. Keokuk has a wonderful spirit. It is the southeast—they call it, what, the Florida of Iowa.

It is a place where we boast of a historical perspective related to the Civil War and we have a wondrous river of beauty. We are diverse in heritage and cultural background. We serve 2,319 K–12 students. It is located in the most southeast point of the State and we represent an economic spectrum from poverty to prosperous.

You will find, I believe, we used to have the third highest tax rate in the State, which of course is not a popular place to be. I believe now we are at tenth. We are one of those places where just raising the levy to provide services is not something we can do in our community without an economic decline, a loss of business.

We are a place where the diversity is important to us. We embrace it. We have about 10 percent minority. We have one building that has 90 percent poverty. The average for my seven buildings, which is the K-12, is 54 percent of free and reduced.

With any diverse community, we have a unique set of student community needs. Utilizing the NCLB philosophy and policy, we strive for educational excellence for everybody who goes there. While doing our best to meet those needs, we still have ended up on the infamous schools in need of improvement list. I also have a school that ended up on the President's blue ribbon list. Ah, so we see a real dichotomy.

We have all of our people working hard. We work. We have our middle school on for reading and math this year and our high school on for reading and math and the district for the graduation rate. I say to you, you know what, this does not represent my district, this does not tell about my working staff, it does not tell about all the strategies that we do. There is not enough money or time for us to do everything we need to do to serve all of our kids of diversity.

When you talk about Ruby Pain and all the different things we need to do, we are doing them. I could go through and in my testimony you will see all the things that we are doing.

If you have seen the Register, Senator Harkin, you will see that I have the highest dropout rate. Okay, which has been highly publicized. There are many reasons for that. Twenty-seven of those students have gotten their GEDs. That does not count. The students have gone on and finished in 5 years are not included in there.

So it is an unusual year. I can go through and list the other years where our graduation rate is much higher, but it does not matter. This year I am in the news for graduation rate. As you know, superintendents are often in the news, but it is not necessarily the way I would like to be there.

As far as our allocation, I am a high poverty district. I think if you look only 4.6 percent of the Iowa elementary and secondary schools are really receiving Federal funding. You will find in my district that in 2001 I received \$485,000. Now I am down to \$471,000 or less in that allocation.

I serve K-3 students in Title I. Ten years ago you would have seen me probably serving all K-5 students. It has been many, many years since any of our middle school students had Title I services and I can find no record of high school students receiving Title I funds in my district.

One of the things that I think is really important for us to remember is that we are working—we have started in the elementary and that had happened in our district before No Child Left Behind, or "NCLB." But you know, and it is moving through, and we are seeing progress. But do not forget the middle school. Do not forget those middle school kids who have all of these needs, too. Yes,

our high schools are in the news and we know we have to do things differently and we are working on resiliency, all of those important pieces. But the middle school kids need that, too.

Are we working hard? Yes. Do we want all kids to be successful? You bet. Do we search for outside resources? You know how people say, get out there and find some more funds. We in the last 10 years, the assistant superintendent in my district and her team have secured more than \$10 million in grant funds for our district. Thank you, Senator Harkin; some of them were the construction grant funds that you provided us. Is it enough? No, obviously it is not.

Have they made a difference? Yes. I have a brand new middle school. I have an alternative school that is new. In our community they passed the one-cent sale, the local option. 6 months later they passed a bond election. I do not think you will find anywhere else that has happened. But the bottom line is it is not enough.

We analyze our data. We look for gaps. We base all of our instruction on local standards and benchmarks. We work on the core curriculum, but we have also got to remember that we have those social and emotional skills to work on also.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I have listed for you also in the testimony some of the other things that we are doing. So what I guess I would ask for you to do today is remember that when we want to show the families we care about them that we need to remember before-school, after-school, I serve 300 kids a day. After this year, unless I find some additional funding, that will go away. That is my tutor program. That is it. That is what does it.

So thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JANE BABCOCK

It is my honor to represent my State and the educational team of Iowa during this Senate session. As No Child Left Behind progresses, we all continue to learn together. The focus for each of us . . . is the educational success for the students of our country.

I am the Superintendent of the Keokuk Community School District. Our community boasts of a historical perspective grounded in the Civil War and wondrous river beauty. Diverse in heritage and cultural background, we serve 2,319 K-12 students. The community, located in the most southeast point of the State, represents an economic spectrum ranging from poverty to prosperous.

The levels of building poverty average 54 percent with a high of 90 percent and above. With diversity comes a unique set of student and community needs. Utilizing the NCLB philosophy and policy, we strive for educational excellence for all. While doing our best to meet students and staff needs, we still find ourselves on the infamous "list" for Middle School reading and math, High School reading and math, and finally as a District for our graduation rate.

We are a district receiving Title I funding. In the last 6 years, Title funding has decreased for more than half of the districts in Iowa. For my district, the 2001 allocation of \$485,000 was reduced to a \$471,000 allocation by 2007. Utilization of the funding has been focused on teaching specialized reading strategies to the elementary students of our district. Currently, needy K-3 students are identified and served twenty minutes a day. A decade ago, you would have observed K-5 students receiving these services. It has been many, many years since Middle School students have received Title I services. And there are no records documenting Title I funding utilized at the High School Level.

Are we working hard? Yes! Do we want all kids to learn and be successful community members! Yes! Do we search for outside resources? Yes! In the last 10 years,

Dr. Lora Wolff, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Technology, has secured more than \$10 million in grant funding. Is it enough? No? Have the additional funds made a difference? Yes? But we need more resources!

Let's talk about the data we are analyzing now:

- Accelerated Reader (K–12);
- Accelerated Math (K–8);
- Early Literacy Testing;
- STAR Testing;
- Iowa Test of Basic Skills/Iowa Tests of Educational Development; and
- Basic Reading Inventory

We analyze the data and focus instruction on identified gaps. Curriculum and instruction is based on locally developed standards and benchmarks. We are working to provide our students the core curriculum as well as those social and emotional skills required for survival in our complicated world. Listed below are the district-wide activities you would observe on a visit:

- Sixty minute reading block: K–5;
- Ninety minute reading/language arts block at Middle School level;
- Reading Improvement Class offered to select High School students;
- Success Center: After school Monday–Thursday;
- 7–12 Learning Center providing alternative education programming;
- Kid Zone: Before School/After School program serving over 800 K–5 students;
- Transition Class for 9th Grade;
- High School Resource Officer serving Middle School and High School;
- Collaborative effort to provide citywide Character Education has begun;
- First ninety minutes of each day off limits for any activity not related to reading and math;
- IEP's written based on district standards and benchmarks; and
- Special Education and Regular Education instructors team teaching the core classes.

When discussing ample funding, I would be remiss not to talk a few minutes about our Kid Zone program. In the beginning, the program was funded by State and Federal 21st Century dollars. As the Federal dollars decreased, we had to make hard decisions about what activities to eliminate. Key to this programming are activities directly related to the District standards and benchmarks and grade level curriculum maps. Homework rooms are available for students needing assistance with homework completion and/or skill acquisition. A structured schedule is provided for the average 300 students attending daily. The focus is academics and skill building.

Again, funding was appropriate when the program was initiated. We made a recorded difference in student learning and achievement. Where is the funding to come from now to continue this program? The police department has noted a 40 percent decrease in adolescent crime since the program's inception. Juvenile crime has decreased, student participation in Kid Zone continues to increase! We also see the number of crimes against children declining. Our police chief, Tom Crew, credits the supervision provided by Kid Zone as the source of this decline.

We spoke with a mother recently regarding the possibility of losing Kid Zone and she broke down in tears. She explained that she would never have made it through college after her divorce and would be afraid of losing her current job without the support from Kid Zone. Knowing her child is safe and getting homework done, along with the extra help needed for his disability, reduced a stress she felt she couldn't face alone so that she could be a productive citizen. Providing quality Before School/After School funding allows our low-income and misplaced workers the opportunity to work and complete much needed educational training. We are making a difference for our children and parents!

Why fully fund Title I and other child centered Federal programs? We must do more to assist our students and raise student achievement for all! How about this?

- Smaller class sizes in Middle School and High School;
- Reading specialists at the High School level;
- Tutors available for Middle School and High School students;
- Flexible scheduling at all K–12 levels;
- Summer school programs K–12 for skill building;
- Extended credit recovery programs for 6–12;
- In house psychiatrists and psychologists K–12;
- Safe schools for all students in the USA;
- Extended Before School/After School programs for K–12;
- Equal opportunities for all kids . . . small rural communities rarely qualify for Title I funding; and

—Additional dollars for Professional Development! Don't take my desperately needed Title I funds for Professional Development! Give me the additional funds I need to make all instructors specialized in reading and math strategies!

We are accountable! We are doing our best! We want to give every child the skills they need to achieve in the world in which we live. Don't make districts like mine pick and choose the kids who get the help. Let us truly serve all . . . give us the funding we need . . . and we will no longer need the stringent accountability law . . . we can send each child on an adventure for life! Give us the funding to give each child the tools they need to strike out on their own! We can do it! Show the parents and children of our Nation you care! Fully fund the child centered programs we require to ensure that, indeed, No Child Is Left Behind!

Senator HARKIN. Thank you very much, Ms. Babcock. I have been to that middle school. I visited that.

Now, Robert Slavin, director of the Center for Data-Driven Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University and chairman of the Success for All Foundation. He received his B.A. in psychology from Reed College and his Ph.D. in social relations in 1975 from Johns Hopkins. Dr. Slavin has authored or co-authored more than 200 articles and 20 books on education.

Dr. Slavin, welcome again to the committee.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT E. SLAVIN, Ph.D., DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND REFORM IN EDUCATION, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Dr. SLAVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Harkin. And another thing you should note: I have a wife from Iowa. Just thought you would like to know. Grew up in the mean streets of West Des Moines.

Senator HARKIN. You are even smarter than your curriculum vitae.

Dr. SLAVIN. It is not Keokuk, but—anyway, as you noted in your introduction, we are—we work in many States all around the country trying to help high poverty schools to meet all of the expectations that have been placed on them. In particular, we have a program called Success for All, a reading program, comprehensive school reform program, that is used in about 1,200 schools, elementary and middle schools, in 47 States. We work with district people, with State departments, and really have a lot of experience working up and down the line in different levels of the education process.

My message to you today, though, is on trying to improve the set of tools that are made available to schools to meet the standards of NCLB. I am here to urge that the committee support an immediate investment in research and development to help schools meet the ambitious goals of NCLB, that Congress should provide substantial funding to enable America's best developers and researchers to rapidly develop and rigorously evaluate new programs central to NCLB, in particular programs for Reading First, for supplemental educational services, and for turnaround programs for struggling schools.

My experience is that educators and schools that are not meeting standards want to do better with their kids, but they need more effective tools—training, materials, and so on, based on the best research we know how to do.

Without waiting for the full NCLB reauthorization, Congress could jump-start research and development that would greatly help

these educators to do what they are there to do. Now, you might ask, are not schools already implementing proven programs in each of these areas? The fact is that despite more than 100 mentions of scientifically based research in NCLB, research-proven programs are rarely being implemented in any aspect of NCLB.

Any program can claim to be based on scientifically-based research, but programs that have actually been found to be effective in comparison to control groups are rare. If you applied stringent criterion for evidence of effectiveness today, most people who are aware of the research would say that there are only a couple of programs, our Success for All program and one called Direct Instruction, that would meet that standard, and even those programs were not used on any significant scale in Reading First as turnaround models or in SES.

One reason for this is that no one wants to base policies on just two programs. In essence then, what I am asking you to do is to provide substantial funding to create competitors for Success for All. The rationale for using proven programs I think is very simple: Use what works. Who could be against that? But somehow in education we continue to use what is popular or what is well marketed, not what works. I think that is the most important change we must make.

I would propose that the U.S. Department of Education be given a special fund of \$100 million, although listening to the conversation today I am not asking, clearly not asking for enough—only \$100 million, maybe 5 minutes in Iraq, to use to greatly accelerate research and development of programs for use in NCLB. What I am talking about is having funds used to do the following: First, to fund developers to create and evaluate new approaches in each of those targeted areas.

Second, based on reviews of programs in small-scale evaluations, to select programs in each area that appear particularly promising and fund large-scale randomized evaluations of those programs and also of promising existing programs.

Third, fund nonprofit developers of proven programs to help them create capacity for training, materials production, and so on, so that they can scale up their programs rapidly.

Fourth, disseminate information about effective programs and provide incentives for schools to adopt them.

Grants for these purposes must be large enough to enable developers and researchers to do high-quality development and evaluation within a reasonable time period. R&D in education is not cheap. Let me just give you an example. In the previous administration we had a grant to develop a comprehensive reform program for middle schools. We did it. The evaluations came back, found the program to be very effective. But it cost \$12 million.

IES today is giving grants for development that have a maximum of \$500,000 a year. At that rate, it would have taken us 24 years to develop our middle school model.

Others also support the need for substantial funding for R&D to solve the problems of NCLB. The recently released Aspen Institute “Beyond NCLB” report proposes doubling IES funding for research and development, and we agree. But we would just add that this

new funding should focus on innovative programs for struggling schools.

America's greatest asset in the world economy is its capacity for innovation, development, and research, its entrepreneurial skills in taking good ideas to scale. However, these assets have rarely been applied in the field of education. A targeted funding program like the one I am proposing could help make American educational programs the standard of excellence in the world and help millions of children to reach levels of academic success that have never before been achieved at scale.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I look forward very much to your questions and there is of course more detail in my written testimony. Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT E. SLAVIN

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak with you today about the need for accelerated development and evaluation of programs critical to No Child Left Behind.

First, I should introduce myself. I direct the Center for Data-Driven Reform in Education (CDDRE) at Johns Hopkins University, funded by IES to develop and evaluate district-wide strategies for helping schools meet their State standards. I am also Chairman of the Success for All Foundation, a non-profit organization that develops and evaluates programs for high-poverty schools, from pre-K to high school. Our flagship Success for All program is used in about 1200 elementary and middle schools in 47 States. Success for All has been successfully evaluated in more than 50 experiments, thirty of which were done by third parties. Most recently, a national randomized evaluation led by Geoffrey Borman at the University of Wisconsin once again found positive effects of Success for All on elementary reading achievement.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, AND NCLB

My message to you today is straightforward. NCLB needs immediate investment in research and development. It should include substantial funding to enable America's best developers and researchers to rapidly develop and rigorously evaluate new programs central to NCLB, specifically, programs for Reading First, Supplemental Educational Services, and turnaround programs for schools. Educators in struggling schools want to do better with their kids, but they need more effective tools. Without waiting for the full NCLB reauthorization, you could jumpstart research and development that would greatly help these educators.

Aren't schools already implementing proven programs in each of these areas? Despite more than 100 mentions of "scientifically based research" in NCLB, research-proven programs are rarely being implemented in any aspect of NCLB. One reason for this is that there are too few programs with strong evidence of effectiveness. If you applied a stringent criterion for evidence of effectiveness today, it is widely recognized that only two programs would qualify: Our Success for All program and another program called Direct Instruction. Even these programs were not used at any significant scale in Reading First, as turnaround models, or in SES, but one reason for this is that no one wanted to base policies on only two programs.

In essence, then, I'm here to ask you to provide substantial funding to create competitors for Success for All.

Why am I arguing for more competitors? My commitment, and that of my colleagues at Johns Hopkins University and the Success for All Foundation, is to evidence-based reform in education. We believe that education will not truly advance in this country until educators implement programs and practices with strong evidence of effectiveness, which means that they have been compared to randomly assigned or matched control groups on valid measures of achievement. Only when evidence of effectiveness, not salesmanship, becomes the basis for educators' decisions about the programs they use with students will education begin the cycle of constant improvement through research and development that has made American medicine, agriculture, and technology the best.

The rationale for evidence-based reform is simple. Use what works. Who could be against that? Yet in education, we continue to use what is popular or what is well-marketed, not what works. This must change.

No Child Left Behind already contains provisions and rhetoric that favor evidence-based reform. Its accountability provisions create motivation to use effective programs, and its focus on programs to assist schools in meeting standards, such as Reading First, SES, and turnaround programs for struggling schools, all create mechanisms for increasing the use of research-proven programs, especially in schools not meeting their State standards. Yet in practice, research-proven programs have played very little role in NCLB. To change this, two things are needed: Revisions in the legislation to more clearly focus educators on proven programs, and creation and evaluation of many more programs. It is the second of these that is my focus today.

Aren't the Institute for Education Sciences (IES) and other agencies already developing and evaluating programs that could be used in NCLB? IES has in fact funded a variety of research and development projects on many topics and grade levels, and this research is identifying some programs and practices that could add to the set of research-proven programs for NCLB. But IES is underfunded, and spread too thin across all subjects and grade levels to produce rapid change targeted to the programs urgently needed in Reading First, SES, and turnaround programs. A few months ago I saw a New York Times article bemoaning cuts in NSF funding of \$400 million. An NSF spokesman was trying to dispel the idea that \$400 million is "decimal dust." Yet this "decimal dust" is 2½ times the IES budget for research and development.

IES should continue its broader focus on all aspects of research and development in education, but alongside this effort there is an immediate need to rapidly develop and evaluate programs for the critical areas of NCLB that help schools meet AYP.

OVERALL PROPOSAL

I propose that the U.S. Department of Education be given a special fund of \$100 million to use to greatly accelerate research and development of programs for use in NCLB. These funds would be used as follows.

1. Fund developers to create and evaluate new approaches in each of the targeted areas, plus others (such as mathematics) that become targets in the reauthorized NCLB.

2. Based on reviews of programs and small-scale evaluations, select programs in each area that appear particularly promising. Fund large-scale randomized evaluations of these programs.

3. Fund researchers to carry out large-scale, randomized evaluations of existing programs.

4. Fund non-profit developers of proven programs to help them create capacity for training, materials production, and so on, so they can scale up their programs rapidly.

5. Disseminate information about effective programs and provide incentives for schools to adopt them.

Grants for these purposes must be large enough to enable developers and researchers to do high-quality development and evaluation within a reasonable time period. Research and development in education is not cheap. As one example, in the previous administration we had a 5-year grant to develop a comprehensive school reform model for middle schools. We did it, and two large-scale studies have found it to be effective. But it cost \$12 million. IES development and formative evaluation grants today have a maximum of \$500,000 per year. At this rate, it would have taken 24 years to develop and evaluate our middle school program.

Others see the need for substantial funding for research and development. The recently released and highly regarded Aspen Institute's "Beyond NCLB" report recommends doubling IES funding for research and development. We agree, but would add that this new funding should focus on innovative programs for struggling schools.

SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

For each of the focus areas of NCLB, the current situations and needs are different.

1. *Reading First.*—Reading First focuses on core reading programs in grades K–3. There are only two programs widely acknowledged to have strong evidence of effectiveness in this area: Success for All and Direct Instruction. An earlier version of a textbook called Open Court also has two studies showing its effectiveness, but the current version has not been evaluated. The National Reading Panel identified

research-based principles of practice in early reading, but there is little work going on today to develop entire new programs that incorporate those principles.

There is a need for rapid, well-funded development and evaluation of new approaches to early reading. For example, our own research on embedding video in reading lessons found surprisingly large benefits, and research on the use of video from the PSB show *Between the Lions* suggests great promise for this strategy. Now research on other technology applications, on teaching of metacognitive skills, on cooperative learning, on assessment, and on professional development, all create new possibilities in early reading. The best reading programs we have today were developed 20 to 40 years ago. We can do much better today.

2. Turnaround Programs.—Under NCLB, schools failing to meet their adequate yearly progress goals are subject to escalating sanctions, depending on how long the school has not met AYP. An array of solutions are suggested, including adopting a comprehensive school reform model, but a survey of schools in corrective action found that the great majority were not using any of the listed solutions. Instead, most such schools are given advice from “distinguished educators” sent by their State departments of education, but then try to muddle through, hoping for better results next time. Currently, States are expected to use 4 percent of their Title I funds to help struggling schools, and both the President and Senator Kennedy have proposed an additional \$500 million fund for this purpose. But how should States and districts use these funds most effectively to turn around struggling schools?

The base of research on effective programs is stronger than in other areas. The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center (CSRQ) at AIR did reviews of comprehensive school reform programs, and found fifteen elementary and secondary models that met their “moderate” level of evidence or better. Yet only two, Success for All and Direct Instruction, met their more stringent “moderately strong” criteria, and many of the providers of comprehensive school reform models no longer have capacity to scale up their operations because the cutoff of CSR funding in 2004 greatly curtailed their operations. In this area, there is a need to strengthen the most promising of the CSR models capable of working with difficult, high-poverty schools, to carry out additional high-quality research on their outcomes, and to develop or refine new approaches able to operate effectively in the NCLB environment.

3. Supplemental Educational Services (SES).—SES has been one of the most controversial provisions of NCLB, but the controversy has focused on which organizations and teachers can provide SES services and on increasing student participation rates. Little if any attention has been paid to the quality or evidence base of the programs students are receiving.

The purpose of SES is to provide remedial instruction to individual students who are performing below grade level in reading or math. Currently, the focus is on after-school programs, but there is no reason that interventions could not take place during the school day or during the summer. However, there are few research-proven programs for any of these purposes.

There is a need to develop and evaluate programs for small-group remedial interventions in reading and math for all grades. Promising programs may use technology, video, innovative teaching practices, or other means, but all will be held to a common standard of evidence. Programs are most likely to be adapted from existing core programs or technology programs, but all types of programs should be encouraged and evaluated for potential use in SES.

A VIRTUOUS CYCLE OF IMPROVEMENT

The funding programs I have suggested would lead to the rapid creation, evaluation, and scale-up of a broad range of programs for schools struggling to meet NCLB accountability requirements. It would also create a virtuous cycle of improvement. As more proven programs become available, Federal, State, and local governments are likely to encourage schools to use them, confident in their effectiveness. This will encourage for-profit companies and others to invest in their own R&D, as they perceive that the marketplace demands evidence of effectiveness. Once the large publishing, software, and professional development companies are competing on evidence of effectiveness, not just salesmanship, educational programs will enter a cycle of improvement like that which characterizes other fields that respect evidence of effectiveness, such as medicine, agriculture, and technology.

America’s greatest asset in the world economy is its capacity for innovation, development, and research, and its entrepreneurial skills in taking good ideas to scale. These assets have rarely been applied in the field of education, however. A targeted funding program like the one proposed here could jump-start a process that could make American educational programs the standard of excellence in the world, and

to help millions of children reach levels of academic success never before achieved at scale.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you, Dr. Slavin. Since you were last, I will start with you first.

Dr. SLAVIN. All right.

Senator HARKIN. You are one of the main people whose concerns about Reading First led to the IG's investigation, which we have followed very closely. In your opinion what harm was done to the program by the Department's mismanagement.

Dr. SLAVIN. Boy, that is a longer question than I can answer. But let me give you the short version. Essentially what happened is that the concept that the program was going to be based on evidence of effectiveness was thrown out and instead there was—the program was permeated with cronyism and, frankly, corruption, in which individuals who had financial interests in certain programs or had political interests in certain programs promoted those programs inside the Department of Education, to the expense of others that had much better evidence and that had equal capacity to work at scale.

I think it—so I still support the program. I think that it should be continued. But it absolutely has to be cleaned up.

Senator HARKIN. You mean the Reading First program?

Dr. SLAVIN. Sorry, Reading First program. Needs to be cleaned up and focused on programs with strong evidence of effectiveness, where strong evidence of effectiveness is defined by set, well-defined standards rather than by whatever somebody in the dark of night thinks they can get away with.

Senator HARKIN. Well, I am very disturbed by this whole thing, and the more we looked at it the more there is just an odor about it that I do not like. But we are continuing to keep a look out on it.

Title I funding includes the 4 percent set-aside for funding that is intended to help schools get off the needs improvement list. Tell me how, in your opinion, how schools have been using that money? Have they been using it on strategies that we know to work? Is there something we can do to ensure it is spent more wisely?

Dr. SLAVIN. Yes. I think it has not been very well used. We work in our Center for Data-Driven Reform in Education, we work with a number of State departments of education and many districts of various sizes, and what we find the 4 percent money primarily being used for is sending distinguished educators or teams out to go look at schools and give advice to schools and so on, and that is not a bad thing. Oftentimes the distinguished educators are doing very—working very hard and very capable.

But what does not exist is the opportunity for the schools to then take that advice and do something about it, and particularly to do something about it that has strong evidence of effectiveness behind it. I would like to see the 4 percent money and the \$500 million that various folks are talking about for this purpose as well applied to help schools consider a range of solutions, all of which have strong evidence of effectiveness, all of which come along with strong professional development, good materials, and so on, that would be known to make a difference and make a difference in a short period of time with these struggling schools.

Senator HARKIN. I will think about that.

Jane Babcock. Again, everyone says we need more money, but obviously it is not coming from the Federal Government right now. Talking about Keokuk, you mentioned kind of briefly that you went out and obviously did some ingenious things to find some funding. I assume that is not something that is going to continue year after year. How would the residents of Keokuk feel if they raised their property taxes again?

Ms. BABCOCK. They would be very unhappy. You need to know, the educational system is very important to Keokuk. We have been supported in many, many ways. But at this time in our history raising the property tax would not be a go.

Senator HARKIN. The reason I ask that, because obviously I know Keokuk well.

Ms. BABCOCK. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. Even though it is a great city and everything, there is a high proportion of elderly in Keokuk.

Ms. BABCOCK. Exactly.

Senator HARKIN. They are living on fixed incomes. They may have a house, they may have a property, but they just cannot pay more property taxes.

Ms. BABCOCK. No. We are cognizant of that fact. So when we look every year annually, our goal is to hold our levy steady, which we did last year, and our goal is to do that again. So then what you need to do is you have to look at other places or other ways to do that. You know, we use the at-risk funds.

But some of the things that we need now, like for instance that would not maybe be mentioned, we could use a psychologist in our schools. I mean, we have kids who are coming with big needs. We need guidance counselors, we need psychologists to be there to help us, and psychiatrists, to help us with those kids. We do not have the funds to do it.

Senator HARKIN. I am glad you brought that up. For all of you people who are thinkers in this area, I dare say when all of you went to school, you had a classroom and you had a teacher. That has sort of been imbued in our minds since the first classrooms. You had a class and a teacher, and the teacher taught a subject and you learned that.

Well, of course when I went to school the teacher taught everything, in a country school. But nonetheless, it was a teacher and students. I am wondering if that is not outmoded now. I am wondering if maybe we need more than a teacher in the classroom. We need a teacher that is highly qualified in the subject area, but because we made the decision—well, actually it was a court case of Pennsylvania that led to IDEA and that said that every child with a disability has to get an adequate appropriate education, public education.

So based on that, we have IDEA and of course my bill, the Americans With Disabilities Act, and others. But so now we have in school kids with disabilities that we never had before. When I was in school, they were sent across the State to some institution or they just were not sent to school, period. And if you had kids that maybe were not visibly disabled, but had emotional problems, hyperactive problems, they got kicked out. They did not go to school

and they went to work on the farm or they went to work at some low-paying job and that was it. They just got kicked out.

But again, we have said no, we want to keep kids in school and we want to work with these kids and leave no child behind. So I am thinking that maybe what we ought to be thinking about is not only get a teacher in every classroom, but what you just said, a child psychologist, someone that is trained, highly trained in knowing the psychology of children and kids and can work with kids with emotional problems or behavioral problems, that type of thing, that also needs to be there.

The reason I bring that up is because I got some money for a program in Des Moines a long time ago, a long time ago, 80s. It is called Smoother Sailing and it was getting school counselors in elementary school, trained school counselors, not just someone standing there, but someone who actually had a degree in that and was well trained in that and had a degree in child psychology.

Over the years that we funded that—and they still are doing it locally—behavior problems went down, truancy problems went down, grades went up, number of fights on the playground went down. These were counselors that would actually go out to the home with these kids, visit with the parents, be there when the kids were there in the school. The goal was to reduce to, I think, one in every—I forget—one in every 500 kids or something like that a counselor. Now it is like one in every 5,000 or something like that. I may be off a little bit, but not too much.

So I am just wondering. I just throw that out. Maybe we ought to rethink this and we ought to think, you know, it is not only highly qualified teachers, but we need someone else if we are going to have a system of education that actually leaves no child behind.

Ms. BABCOCK. I think one of the things that has happened over time is that we have more moms working.

Senator HARKIN. We do, sure.

Ms. BABCOCK. We have more single parent homes, and in addition, if you think about our middle schools and high schools, we have large class sizes there.

Senator HARKIN. Huge.

Ms. BABCOCK. We talk about wanting them to get everything they can from their education, but yet it is okay for us to have over 30 in an English class. It really is not okay. But those of us who sit at the budget table, it is difficult when we get to that point, because we know our high schools cost more to operate and there are not the funds to make those class sizes smaller.

Senator HARKIN. Dr. Sherman, in your testimony you highlighted that in 2003 23 percent of your schools made AYP. In 2006 78 percent of your schools did. Now, the standard for making adequate yearly progress will continue to get harder until the goal is met in 2014. How do you see the future for your schools there in meeting that?

Dr. JEWELL-SHERMAN. That is precisely the challenge, Senator. We have to make that benchmark each year, and the reward for the success that we have demonstrated in most instances is to reduce the funding. There is no inoculation that we give students in the elementary grades or when they first start school that is going to sustain them throughout their education.

The same strategies that we put in place to help our students excel, we need to demonstrate each year. Yet, as we have improved our funding has gone down dramatically. That is the concern that we desperately have.

I was at an elementary school the other day, and when we went to school when the dismissal bell rang children left and teachers left shortly thereafter. Well, when the dismissal bell rang this day it was as if they were going into the second shift. That is because the intervention strategies in place in that school and in most of our schools are in the morning, during the day, after school, and Saturday. The only day we are not open is on Sunday.

In order for us to work with students that come with the dramatic needs that have been stated by my colleagues, we have to spend the funds to make the difference. They do not come to us at the starting gate on par. We refused to remain the second lowest performing school district in the Commonwealth of Virginia or anywhere, and we will find a way to do it. But when the funds are cut it makes it extremely hard, and I am not sure how we are going to do it.

Senator HARKIN. Mr. Wilhoit, tell me again, why is it so important to collect this longitudinal data that you talked about? What is that all about?

Mr. WILHOIT. Can I go back to just the comments of Dr. Sherman? She is struggling so hard to make sense out of the education process. We have got to know where students are at this point, so we have got to have quality assessments that could be used in the classroom. We are measuring at the end of the year right now, but those summative assessments really have very limited benefit to a teacher in the classroom.

If we have some data systems in place that are dynamic, where the real benefit of that knowledge that is coming out of student learning is there for the classroom and for the teacher, that teacher then and that principal and that school and that superintendent have a lot of information that they need to make services available to them. So the benefit first is with the school district.

Second, at the State level we need comprehensive data across the districts in order to make some sense out of what is going on, to begin to target resources, to begin to look at innovation and occurrences that are going to be important for State implementation.

It is also important that we begin to collect some data across this country that is fairly consistent. It would be much better to collect that from the State level and extract that data than to try to create a giant collection system at one level. We think through a cooperative kind of effort we can develop this kind of a system at a reasonable cost, with less burden on States, and provide much greater information to the local level.

Senator HARKIN. It seems to me what I am getting out of that is that we need a data system that gives teachers and principals kind of real-time data.

Mr. WILHOIT. Real time.

Senator HARKIN. Going through the year, not just at the end of the year type thing.

Mr. WILHOIT. One of the down sides of what we are seeing in No Child Left Behind right now is that people are beginning to gear their activities toward that single test—

Senator HARKIN. Yes, sure.

Mr. WILHOIT [continuing]. At the end of the year. In fact, in many places they are distorting the education process to get the results on that single test, that summative assessment. The real value of assessment is done by teachers in classrooms and by principals in the building and working with parents and feeding information back to them. So why not build these data systems at the State level and provide that kind of direct information to them, and then a byproduct of that is the information coming out of the system, but not develop a system that is simply devoted to simply collecting information at a single point in time at the end of the year, and turning that around 5 or 6 months later when the students have moved on to the next grade level and the teachers are moved on to a different instructional pattern.

Unless we get to a point where we have real-time information gathered on students, professionals making decisions about what to do about that information, either accelerating learning for those students or giving another student some more time with a different instructional program and then making further adjustments, then we are not going to get to the lofty goals that we are talking about.

Senator HARKIN. One last question, Mr. Jennings, about your surveys. You know, it all just comes down, everything I hear, whether we are going to do data collecting or remediation or whatever it might be, it comes down, it takes money. So have your surveys in any way indicated the capacity of State and local school districts to meet this requirement of the funding? I have heard about all this money, but has your survey shown anything about what their capacity is to meet this?

Mr. JENNINGS. Well, you have different capacities among different school districts. What we find is that most school districts say that they do not have the capacity to help all their schools in need of improvement. Most of the States say that they do not have the full capacity to help schools in need of improvement. So what we are doing with this law is that we are asking schools to do much more than they have ever done before, and it is probably good for the country that we are asking them to do that, but we are not giving them the tools in order to achieve these ends. So we are putting the demands on without the assistance.

I will go back to an earlier point. Before we only dealt with at-risk children with extra services. Today we are dealing with all children and we are putting demands on schools for all children. You know, once a State accepts No Child Left Behind money, and all 50 States have accepted this money, they bind all school districts within their States to these requirements. So that means you can have a school district that receives no Title 1 money at all and yet they have to test, they have to reveal the test score, they have to upgrade the quality of their teachers. They have to do a lot of things, without a dollar of Federal money.

So we have changed the way the Federal Government is trying to improve education so that we are requiring something of everybody regardless of the level of funding. Yet our funding is still

geared to the old way, which is that we only give money to school districts based on poverty. Now with No Child Left Behind there is a provision that the new money only goes to a subset of those school districts that have the highest percentages of poverty. So we wind up with demanding something more from everybody and not giving them the assistance. That is where you get the resistance.

If school people felt that the Federal Government was asking more, but also helping them, you would not get this degree of resistance to Federal demands for improvements in education.

Senator HARKIN. Where does it say in the Constitution of the United States that education is to be paid for by property taxes? Anybody know where that is located in the Constitution of the United States?

Mr. JENNINGS. Obviously, nowhere.

Senator HARKIN. Nowhere, of course. I have talked about this many times. People wonder why is that the system of education in this country. Well, it just sort of grew up that way. When our early colonists wanted to have a free public education, we did not have income taxes. We had some excise taxes and property taxes. That was the source of it. So that built up through the 18th, 19th, 20th century, and the Federal Government did not do anything in education.

The first time the Federal Government ever got involved in education was in 1862 with the Morrill Act, and that was for higher education, land grant colleges. It was to teach young people out in the hinterlands how to be agriculturalists and mechanics, A&M. That is where our A&M schools came from.

The next time the Federal Government did anything about education was about 100 years later and that was the GI Bill after World War II, again directed toward higher education. Then there was a program in the 1950s, the Eisenhower program. Again, that was a loan program for college students. So I went to college on the National Defense Student Loan Program.

So now we come up into the 1960s. Up until that time the Federal Government had never done anything about elementary or secondary education. So then we passed ESEA and the Higher Education Act in the Johnson administration. Not much happened. ESEA again focused on helping schools with disadvantaged students, a slice like that. Then of course we had the Education of Handicapped Children Act, which later morphed into the IDEA, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

So we have had a very short history in this country of funding from the Federal Government for elementary and secondary education. What, maybe, oh, at the most 25 years, 30 at the most. Then we made all these promises with IDEA that we would pay 40 percent of the additional cost, and we are now at about 16 percent and going backwards.

But more and more we have recognized, I think, that education in this country is a national problem. I have often said that the genius behind the American system of education is its diversity, local control. I have been to these countries that tout their educational systems. It is top-down. Everybody studies the same thing. Oh, sure, they put out some good math students, but the heck with everybody else, and all those math students come here to go to grad-

uate school. It is a top-down, regimented, that does not allow for creativity, which is what marks us as different.

That has been the genius of our schools. The failure of our schools is how we pay for them. We pay for them with property taxes. What opened my eyes on this was 20—let me think about this. This is 2007—22, 23 years ago with Jonathan Kozol's book, "Savage Inequalities." Finally, after reading that book the scales sort of fell from my eyes and I said: Of course, you have got a poor area with low income and low property taxes, you have poor schools. You have high income, you have got great schools.

But why should it be in this country that the quality of a kid's education should depend on where you are born? That makes no sense. We have obvious examples of kids born in poverty who have become Nobel Prize winners, so that should not be a determinant factor. But it is still today a determinant factor. Where you live decides a lot in what your education is like.

So I just think that we have got to get over this hurdle. We have got to understand our national responsibilities. And we can do that. We can provide the funding necessary for schools, for education, for teacher improvement. We can do all that. We can collect the data. We can do all that and still provide for local schools to experiment, to have their own control over what they teach.

That is why I got so upset over that Reading First program. Here they are coming in telling them, here is what you have got to do. So we can still have that, that sort of creativity out there, and still have Federal funding.

But it all comes back to money. As I have often said, if you want education on the cheap you will get cheap education. And that is just what will happen.

Mr. JENNINGS. Senator, can I add two points?

Senator HARKIN. Yes, Mr. Jennings.

Mr. JENNINGS. On school finance, one of the principles is that the level of funding—the higher the level of government providing the funding, the fairer the level of funding. So that if you rely on the local school district to report its taxes, you are going to have great inequities between school districts because of the different property bases.

Senator HARKIN. That is right.

Mr. JENNINGS. If you have a higher percentage of the money that comes from a State government because they have broader taxing authority, you are going to have a fairer distribution of money among school districts. The Federal Government has the broadest taxing authority. So if you rely more on the Federal Government for funding of education, eventually you will have even fairer types of funding.

So we have to move away from this reliance on property taxes to State funding and national funding of education if we want equitable funding.

The other point is for years since I have worked in this area I have heard folks say, business people, politicians: Well, there will be more money for education provided when there is more accountability. Well, today you will not find an educator in the country who will tell you that the accountability is not coming from No

Child Left Behind. So the accountability is there, but the money is not there.

So it seems time for the Congress and the administration to own up to its responsibility to provide the money, and what we heard earlier today from the Secretary: Well, we only provide 8, 9 percent of the money and we cannot provide any more. That is not the answer. The answer is if the Federal Government wants all this the Federal Government has to help to pay for it.

Senator HARKIN. Absolutely. I could not agree more, and that is what we are trying to get about, and that is to rejiggle this crazy budget that we have, that is sent down to us, and to try to get adequate—no, not adequate; I would not say adequate. We have to get a big increase in education. Not adequate. That is not the right word. We need to have funding of education that would match exactly what we want to get out of it.

As I said at the beginning, teachers I talk to, the ones that I hear that are really griping about No Child Left Behind, it is not that they do not want to do it. They cannot do it. They are frustrated. Look at how many teachers we are losing in the first or second year.

CONCLUSION OF HEARING

Well, anyway, I did not mean to go on like that. But thank you all very much for your lifetimes of work in education and for being here today and providing some very valuable insight and information to this committee.

[Whereupon, at 4:47 p.m., Wednesday, March 14, the hearing was concluded, and the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

○