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FEDERAL

Education

LEGISLATION

Enacted

IN 1994

An Evaluation
of Implementation
and Impact



U.S. Department of Education

U.S. Department of Education

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FEDERAL EDUCATION LEGISLATION

ENACTED IN 1994:

An Evaluation of Implementation and Impact

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FOREWORD

This report is mandated by Title XIV, Section 14701 of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Improving America's Schools Act), which requires the Secretary of Education to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and review of federal assistance to states in their efforts to reform their educational systems through legislation passed in 1994. The report was to summarize changes to existing federal education programs contained in the 1994 ESEA legislation as well as the then-new initiatives Goals 2000: Educate America Act, and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994. Because of the scope of its legislative mandate, the report does not address programs established by other important education-related legislation such as the Higher Education Act and the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.

The law requires the Secretary of Education to summarize and analyze the overall effects of the 1994 legislative changes and developments. Specifically, the law requires the Secretary to consider effects on school readiness, improvement in student outcomes, school-to-work relationships, schools' adoption of higher standards for curricula and teacher training, assessment practices, and student populations that have traditionally benefited from federal assistance.

Title XIV of ESEA also requires the Secretary to appoint an Independent Review Panel of distinguished researchers and educators to review the plans for the evaluation of the relevant programs, to advise the Secretary on the progress of the evaluation, and to comment on the final report. This report is being submitted to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the U.S. House of Representatives and to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources of the U.S. Senate.

This report has been prepared pursuant to that legislative mandate. The information contained in it is based on the best available national data, and on numerous evaluations undertaken specifically for this report. It has been informed by the advice of the Independent Review Panel, through meetings held since the inception of the project. The members of the Independent Review Panel are listed on the inside front cover of this report.

This report has two companion reports, *Promising Results, Continuing Challenges: the Final Report of the National Assessment of Title I*, by the U.S. Department of Education; and *Measured Progress: An Evaluation of the Impact of Federal Education Legislation Enacted in 1994*, by the Independent Review Panel on the Evaluation of Federal Education Legislation. *Promising Results, Continuing Challenges*, written by the Department of Education, provides an intensive examination of the Title I program. *Measured Programs* offers a non-governmental expert perspective on federal support for elementary and secondary education focused on Title I.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The education legislation passed in 1994—the Improving America’s School Act which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, and the School to Work Opportunities Act—reflects the Federal government’s traditional role in helping all students, particularly those at risk of school failure, to reach challenging standards and in supporting state and local efforts to provide students with a high quality education. In FY99, Congress appropriated more than \$14 billion for programs authorized under the 1994 legislation.

What Was Accomplished in the 1994 Legislation?

The 1994 legislation fundamentally changed the direction of federal education programs. Federal programs shifted to stimulate and support state standards-driven reform. The idea that all children can succeed to high standards replaced the notion that a remedial education was good enough for some children. Flexibility increased and federal program integration with the regular education program improved. A new policy framework designed to propel the country toward reaching the National Education goals informed the development of ESEA, Goals 2000, and the School to Work Act:

- High standards for all children—with the elements of education aligned, so that everything is working together to help all students reach those standards;
- A focus on teaching and learning;
- Flexibility to stimulate local school-based and district initiatives, coupled with responsibility and accountability for student performance; and
- Links among schools, parents, and communities.

Principles for the Federal Role

In elementary and secondary education, the federal government works with states, school systems and communities to support its dual mission of equity and excellence in schooling for all students. Some of its programs are intended to target resources to areas where educational needs are the greatest; others are designed to leverage support for school improvement overall.

Goals 2000 legislation and reauthorization of the ESEA in 1994 introduced a new federal approach built around a framework of state standards-driven reform to promote equity and excellence. It was envisioned that federal resources would help underwrite the development and implementation of challenging state standards for all children. State standards would focus federal, state and local efforts to work in concert on improving teaching and learning. New and reauthorized federal programs would provide support for leadership, resources and assistance to improve schools through professional development of teachers, access to new technology, and resources for a safe climate for learning. Federal programs would provide

flexibility and increase public school choice to stimulate local initiatives. Programs would couple increased flexibility with responsibility for student performance.

The Goals 2000 legislation and ESEA reauthorization intended that federal programs support and stimulate state and local reform efforts, consistent with the national purposes of the programs authorized. Some states were at the forefront of reforming their educational systems and farther advanced than federal programs; others had yet to begin. Federally supported efforts were to help underwrite and be well integrated into the reforms of states and local school districts. Distinctions between federal support and the efforts to which they contributed were blurred. At the same time, the passage of the Government Performance and Results Act in 1994 called for heightened attention to analyzing and reporting on individual program impacts.

Analytic Approach

In reauthorization, Congress mandated a national assessment of Title I and an evaluation of the impact of federal programs on state and local reforms in the reauthorization of ESEA. The Department's Planning and Evaluation Service approached the task of assessing the implementation and impact of the programs legislated in 1994 by grouping programs into the two broad purposes: (1) strengthening the effectiveness and capacity of the elementary and secondary educational system, and (2) improving education for special-need populations. While these twin purposes of excellence and equity are inextricably linked, the Department's evaluations reported separately on the impact of the legislation in building capacity in (1) all federal programs included in ESEA, Goals 2000, and School to Work legislation, and (2) in Title I specifically. This report on the impact of federal education legislation enacted in 1994 includes Title I among the other federal elementary and secondary programs that it treats. The report on Title I, *Promising Results, Continuing Challenges: The Final Report of the National Assessment of Title I* focuses in depth on that program and its components. The two reports are complementary analyses, and both benefited from the guidance of a congressionally mandated Independent Review Panel.

This report looks across the various programs which serve the broad educational priorities set forth in the Department of Education's *Strategic Plan*. The priority areas in which the federal government works with states, districts, and schools are: (1) enabling young children to enter school ready to learn, (2) adopting high and challenging standards for school-age children, (3) securing skilled teachers, a safe and drug-free environment in which to learn, and advanced technology so that students can achieve those standards, and (4) preparing young adults for the world of work. These broad educational priority areas are also reflected in the Department of Education's *Strategic Plan*.

Within these broad priority areas, programs are evaluated in terms of the following three questions:

- How well are federal programs achieving their desired outcomes?
- Are programs being effectively implemented?
- Do programs demonstrate sound performance accountability?

In reviewing the evaluation results, it is important to remember that the federal effort in elementary and secondary education contributes to and is influenced by broader reforms in which it plays a small but strategic part. As has been shown in earlier evaluations, federal programs do not and should not operate in isolation. The state and local investment in education is much larger than that of the federal

government. The 1994 legislation recognized the fundamental responsibility of states and local school systems to provide a quality education to all children, by calling for a partnership in which the federal government contributed resources, leadership, and assistance. For these reasons, it is not possible to disentangle the impact of federal programs from the impact of the state and local reform efforts that the federal programs are designed to support.

Key Findings

Based on available evidence from evaluations of the programs included in the 1994 ESEA Improving America's Schools Act, Goals 2000, and School to Work legislation, this report finds that:

Reform is headed in the right direction, but states are still in the process of implementing reforms.

The rapid development of statewide academic standards is unprecedented in the United States, and awareness of the need to change practice to support standards is strong across states, districts, and schools. Federal programs have been a major force in supporting and stimulating state-based reform. However, implementing standards-driven reform at the school and classroom level is a much more difficult and long-term effort.

States made significant progress in developing content standards, but progress is considerably slower with respect to developing performance standards and aligned assessments. Variability in the rigor of standards is a concern, given the lack of evidence when states have benchmarked standards against outside criteria, including NAEP.

The impact of standards-based reform is only beginning to be seen, as evidenced by the findings presented in various chapters of this report.

How Well Are Students Doing? Are Key Outcomes Improving?

The reforms begun under ESEA, Goals 2000, and the School to Work Act, have begun to produce changes in the nation's classrooms. Data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and two international assessments provide some clear indication that these changes are working in some subject areas.

Overall, our nation's students have made significant progress since the 1994 reauthorization. The percentage of all students performing at or above the basic achievement level has improved for most grade levels in reading and mathematics. However, in comparison with their international counterparts, U.S. students' standing in core subjects declines from among the highest in the world at the 4th grade to among the lowest at the 12th grade. Exhibit 2.1 provides U.S. students' National Report Card on progress in core subjects since 1994 (or in some cases 1992, if that was the most recent assessment).

Exhibit 2.1
National Report Cardⁱ

	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SCORING AT OR ABOVE THE BASIC LEVEL ON THE MOST RECENT NAEP TEST	CHANGE SINCE PREVIOUS NAEP ASSESSMENT*	U.S. PERFORMANCE COMPARED TO INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE ON LATEST ASSESSMENT
4TH GRADE			
1998 READING	62%	⇌	(1992) ABOVE AVERAGE
1996 MATH	64%	↑ (+5%)	(1995) ABOVE AVERAGE
1996 SCIENCE	67%	NA	(1995) ABOVE AVERAGE
8TH GRADE			
1998 READING	74%	↑ (+4%)	(1992) ABOVE AVERAGE
1996 MATH	62%	↑ (+4%)	(1995) BELOW AVERAGE
1996 SCIENCE	61%	NA	(1995) ABOVE AVERAGE
12TH GRADE			
1998 READING	77%	↑ (+2%)	NO DATA
1996 MATH	69%	↑ (+5%)	(1995) BELOW AVERAGE
1996 SCIENCE	57%	NA	(1995) BELOW AVERAGE

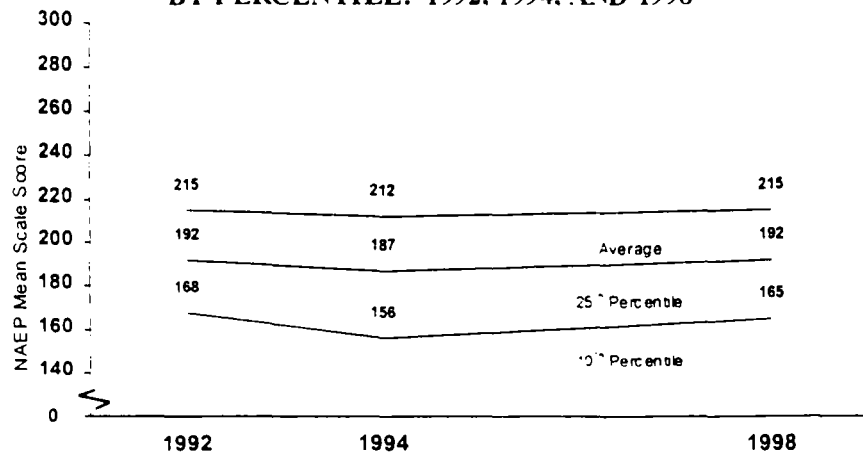
* Only statistically significant differences are reported.

Sources: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Main NAEP), 1996 and 1998; Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS); IEA Reading Literacy Study.

Reading: A long-term view of reading achievement shows that scores on the trend National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have improved slightly over the past two decades for 9- and 13-year olds, and remained stable for 17-year olds. In the short term, the percentage of 4th graders scoring at or above the basic achievement level on main NAEP remained stable between 1994 and 1998, while 8th and 12th graders' scores increased.

In addition to examining scores for all students, it is also important to examine the progress of those students most at risk of school failure, the target population for Title I. Exhibit 2.6 shows that the reading scores of fourth-grade students who scored in the lowest percentiles have improved significantly since 1994, after dropping between 1992 and 1994.

EXHIBIT 2.6
NAEP MAIN READING ASSESSMENT
SCALE SCORES OF PUBLIC FOURTH-GRADERS
BY PERCENTILE: 1992, 1994, AND 1998



High-poverty school = 76% to 100% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Low-poverty school = 0% to 25% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Scale scores are 0-300.

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Main NAEP, 1992-1998). Also see Endnote 3.

Mathematics: A long-term view of mathematics achievement shows that 9, 13, and 17-year olds' scores on the trend NAEP assessment have improved over the past two decades, with 9 year-olds making the largest improvements. In the short term, the percentage of 8th graders scoring at or above the basic achievement level on main NAEP increased between the two most recent assessments (1992 and 1996)

Course-Taking: Students are taking more rigorous courses, and the percentage of high school students taking challenging math and science courses such as geometry, calculus, and chemistry has increased throughout the decade for all racial and ethnic groups. Since 1990, an increasing proportion of 11th and 12th grade students have been taking Advanced Placement courses and successfully passing them.

High School Completion: There has been some small progress in increasing the high school completion rates in the last two decades. The high school completion rate of 18-24 year-olds wavered around 84 percent between 1972 and 1983 and then in 1994 increased to 86 percent where it has remained since.

Drug Use: Drug use is declining but remains a concern. In 1998, after six years of steady increases in the use of illicit drugs, use among secondary school students is down, as shown in Exhibit 2.15.¹¹ This downturn represents the second year of decreases for 8th graders and the first for 10th and 12th graders since their low points early in the decade.

Are Federal Education Programs Helping to Prepare Children for School?

Progress to date. Administered through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Head Start program represents the Federal government's largest investment in early childhood services, serving almost 800,000 children in 1998. Serving about 260,000 preschool-age children, Title I, Part A, is the largest of the Department's early childhood efforts, yet little data exist on the quality of preschool services funded under the program or program performance. Data are available on the progress of the Even Start Family Literacy Program. Evaluations of the Even Start program indicate that this program is enhancing children's language development and readiness for school. Findings from these evaluations include:

Program Indicator: The projects will continue to recruit low-income, disadvantaged families with low literacy levels. The Even Start Family Literacy Program serves economically and educationally disadvantaged families and their children.

Progress to Date: The second national evaluation found that at least 90 percent of families participating in 1996-97 had incomes at or below the federal poverty level. Eighty-five percent of adults who enrolled in 1996-97 had not earned a high school diploma or GED.

Program Indicator: By fall 2001, 60 percent of Even Start children will achieve significant gains on measures of language development and reading readiness.

Progress to Date: In 1995-96, 50 percent of children in the second national evaluation of Even Start achieved moderate to large gains on a test of language development. Children who participate in Even Start for at least one year make more progress on measures of school readiness and language development than normal development would suggest.

Program Indicator: Increasing percentages of parents will show significant improvement on measures of parenting skills, home environment, and expectations for their children.

Progress to Date: Parents also showed moderate gains on a measure of the home environment for literacy, gains not found in a control group of parents in a study of the Comprehensive Child Development Program.

Program Indicator: By fall 2001, half of projects will offer at least 60 hours of adult education per month, 20 hours of parenting education per month, and 65 hours of early childhood education per month.

Progress to Date: On average, Even Start projects have increased the amount of instruction they have offered over time. However, only about 25 percent of projects meet or exceed the Department's performance indicator for the number of service hours offered in the three core instructional components.

Program Indicator: By fall 2001, at least 60 percent of new families will stay in the program for more than one year.

Progress to Date: Of new families entering in 1995-96, 41 percent stayed for more than one year. Almost 5 percent met family-defined goals and 6 percent moved out of the area.

Program Indicator: An increasing percentage of preschool-age homeless children will enroll in preschool programs.

Progress to Date: For the Education of Homeless Children and Youth program, preliminary data from a 1998 study suggest that access to preschool programs among homeless children may be improving.

Options for strengthening the programs.

- **Clarify the objectives of the programs by helping to define school readiness.** Determining whether or not preschool programs are meeting their objectives as well as attempts to hold programs accountable are complicated by the fact that there are no consistent standards on school readiness at the national or state levels. Legislation could help define school readiness.
- **Improve the intensity and retention in Even Start through the use of common indicators.** Although earlier evaluations of Even Start provided evidence that more intense programs led to greater educational gains for children and their parents, few projects offer an amount of service that might be expected to produce large literacy gains for most in need families. Projects face a tradeoff between the number of families they can serve and the intensity of service they can offer to each family. In addition, only 41 percent of families who enrolled in 1995-96 remained in Even Start programs for more than a year (although almost 10 percent of families reported meeting their goals or moving as the reason for their departure). States could be required to assess the intensity of services and efforts to retain families through the use of common indicators.
- **Strengthen accountability by requiring preschool programs to report on a common core set of results-based indicators.** While Even Start's national evaluation provides adequate performance data, it is unclear how the states use performance information to hold projects accountable. States could use the results-based indicators of quality they are required to develop under recent amendments to the program to hold projects accountable. Title I preschool has no performance accountability. More information is needed on the quality and outcomes of preschool programs funded under Title I, Part A. Title I preschool programs could report on the same results-based indicators required of Even Start programs. These could include child-based indicators (such as reading readiness), and where appropriate, adult-based indicators (such as receipt of a high school diploma or GED).

Are Federal Programs Helping States Develop and Implement Standards?

Progress to date. ESEA and Goals 2000 have been essential in spurring standards-based reform in local schools and communities. Almost half of all school districts nationwide and more than 80 percent of poor districts reported that Title I is "driving standards-based reform in the district as a whole." A recent study by the General Accounting Office (GAO) finds that states report that Goals 2000 has been a significant factor in promoting their education reform efforts. States have made substantial progress developing state content standards. Currently, 48 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia have completed the development of state content standards.

- Twenty states and Puerto Rico have completed the development of student performance standards in at least reading, language arts and mathematics.

Program Indicator: Aligned Assessments. By 2000-01, all states will have assessments aligned with content and performance standards for core subjects.

Progress to Date: Fourteen states and Puerto Rico report that they have transitional assessments aligned to state content standards in place.

- Six states have policies that link or align teacher professional development to state content standards and 11 states are developing such policies.

Although there has been significant progress in the development of content standards, a number of states did not meet the 1997-98 deadline for completion of content and performance standards outlined in the 1994 legislation. In many cases, the reason for this delay is that states are developing their performance standards in tandem with their final assessment. Many states are now operating under a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education. All states have adopted a timeline that will produce assessments aligned with content and performance standards by 2000-01.

Options for strengthening the programs. Federal efforts to support standards-based reform need to be strengthened in at least four key areas:

- **Ensure the rigor of state standards.** Independent studies have revealed different and sometimes contradictory findings on the quality and rigor of state standards. Differences in student achievement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and student performance on state assessments suggest wide variation in the challenge of state standards.
- **Ensure alignment of standards and assessments.** States report needing "a great deal" more assistance in the development of aligned assessments and linking those assessments to accountability systems.
- **Include all students, particularly limited-English proficient and special education students in assessments.** Guidelines and criteria for the inclusion of LEP students are inconsistent across and within states.
- **Align all aspects of educational systems with standards.** Standards-based reform requires systemic change including retraining teachers, aligning curriculum and classroom practices with standards, involving families, and developing effective systems of holding schools and districts accountable for performance.

Are Federal Programs Supporting Effective Professional Development for Teachers?

Progress to date. Under the 1994 ESEA reauthorization and Goals 2000, Congress explicitly provided for programs intended to enhance teacher competence. The Eisenhower Program is the largest of these efforts. Professional development is an allowable activity under Titles I, VI, and VII, and varying portions of these funds are used to support professional development. However, little is known about the quality of the professional development activities supported by these programs, or about their outcomes or impact on teacher practice. Effective professional development is critical to helping the nation move toward the full implementation of standards in the classroom.

- A national survey of teachers shows that most do not yet think that they are fully equipped to implement standards. During the 1997-98 school year, only 36 percent of teachers of the core academic subjects said that they felt "very well prepared" to implement state or district standards.

Program Indicator: By 1998, over 50 percent of teachers participating in district-level or higher education Eisenhower-assisted professional development will participate in activities that are aligned with high standards.

Progress to Date: Half of teachers who participated in district-sponsored Eisenhower activities reported that the activities enhanced their ability to teach in ways consistent with state standards and curriculum frameworks.

Program Indicator: By 1998, over 50 percent of a sample of teachers participating in Eisenhower-assisted professional development will show evidence that participation has resulted in an improvement in their knowledge and skills.

Progress to Date: About two-thirds reported that those activities enhanced their knowledge and skills in instructional methods, and half reported that participation deepened their knowledge in mathematics and science. Now that the initial indicator goal has been met, future program activities could help teachers further deepen their knowledge and skills.

- The Eisenhower activities sponsored by institutions of higher education (IHEs) and non-profit organizations (NPOs) are producing results comparable to exemplary professional development programs. Seventy-five percent of the participants in the Eisenhower activities sponsored by IHEs and NPOs reported that the activities deepened their content knowledge in mathematics and science.
- The goal of providing extended, in-depth learning for teachers as part of district-provided Eisenhower professional development has not yet been achieved. Results are more positive for professional development provided by institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations.
- Eisenhower professional development activities are not especially targeted on teachers from high-poverty schools.

- The 1994 reauthorization required states to develop performance indicators for professional development. Thus far, only 30 states have done so for the Eisenhower program. The quality of these indicators is uneven.

Options for strengthening the programs. Federal efforts to improve the quality of our nation's teachers could consider the following options:

- **Emphasize professional development that focuses on subject matter content and how to teach it.** This professional development could be provided in extended, intensive, collaborative, active learning opportunities.
- **Federal professional development programs could place a much greater emphasis on serving teachers who work in high-poverty schools** and teachers who would not necessarily volunteer to participate in professional development.
- **Strengthen state and local performance indicator reporting systems through technical assistance and increased resources.** The requirement that states and districts develop indicators has resulted in more and higher quality indicators than other federal programs, but these indicators are still uneven.
- **Grantees could be required to use performance indicator data from their programs for both continuous improvement and accountability.**

Is the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Supporting Effective School Drug and Violence Prevention?

Progress to date. The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Program is the primary source of federal funds to support school-based education to prevent drug use and violence. Annual surveys show that drug use among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders is declining after rising steadily in the early 1990's. Drug use in schools remains much lower than use in other locations.

Program Indicator: By 2001: rates of annual alcohol use in schools will decline to 4% for 8th graders and 7% for 10th and 12th graders and rates of annual marijuana use in school for the same time period will decline to 3%, 9% and 7% for 8th, 10th, and 12th graders.

Progress to Date: In 1996, annual alcohol use rates at school were 6% for 8th graders, 9% for 10th graders, and 8% for 12th graders. In 1996, rates of annual marijuana use at school were 6% for 8th graders, 11% for 10th graders, and 10% for 12th graders (for 8th and 10th graders, rates include other drugs in addition to marijuana).

- Crime in schools has also declined in recent years, and the rate of students experiencing serious violent crime remains much lower in schools than out of school.

Program Indicator: By 2001, the proportion of high school students in a physical fight on school property will decrease to 12% and the annual rate of students aged 12 to 18 who report experiencing serious violent crime, in schools or going to and from school, will decrease to 8 per 1,000.

Progress to Date: In 1995, 16% of high school students were in a fight on school property; in 1995, 11 per 1,000 students aged 12 to 18 reported experiencing serious violent crime in school or to and from school.

- Progress under the Safe and Drug Free Communities and Schools Act has been harder to measure. A review of state goals and objectives for the program found that these goals were sometimes poorly articulated or they lacked a data source or methodology for assessing outcomes.
- The Department recently established Principles of Effectiveness for the program that require districts to establish measurable goals and objectives, implement research-based programs, and evaluate programs regularly. An evaluation of state and local implementation of these principles will be completed in the spring of 1999.
- To target a greater percentage of program funds on high-quality programs in areas of significant need, the Department will expand National Programs activities in Fiscal Year 1999 by investing more than \$95 million in competitive grants designed to meet that goal. In this way, the Department seeks to focus limited resources on high-quality programs and enlarge the available pool of strategies of demonstrated effectiveness.

Options for strengthening the programs. Federal policy makers might consider balancing the flexibility of the SDFSCA with accountability for implementing strong programs and accountability for results.

- **Incorporate the Principles of Effectiveness.** This would require grant recipients to use research-based prevention approaches, engage in coordinated, comprehensive planning, and use evaluation data for program planning and development.
- **Explore ways to target funds more effectively.** This would support high-need areas and high-quality programming.
- **Encourage states and districts to move towards outcomes-based performance measurement** and improved performance reporting.
- **Increase coordination within states** between the SEA and Governors' programs.

Is Federal Support Strengthening Access to and Use of Technology to Support Learning?

Progress to date. Access to modern computers and the Internet is growing rapidly. The ratio of students to modern multimedia computers in the nation's classrooms was cut by almost half between 1997 and 1998.

Program Indicator: The ratio of students per modern multimedia computer in public schools will improve to five students per modern multimedia computer by the year 2000.

Progress to Date: The ratio of students per modern multimedia computer fell from 21:1 in 1997 to 14:1 in 1998.

- More than half of all public school classrooms have access to the Internet, compared with almost none in 1994.

Program Indicator: The percentage of public school instructional rooms connected to the Information Superhighway will increase from 14% in 1996 to 25% in 1998, and higher percentages thereafter.

Progress to Date: In 1994, 4 percent of public school classrooms had Internet access, compared with 51 percent in 1995.

- The "digital divide" between students in high- and low-poverty schools has been nearly eliminated in terms of access to instructional computers. Gaps remain in classroom access to modern multimedia computers, Internet access, and in access outside of school. For example, 76 percent of households earning over \$75,000,000 in 1997 owned a computer, compared with less than 17 percent of households earning less than \$20,000. However, these gaps are closing.
- Federal funds paid for a quarter of all computers received by schools last year. Federal funds paid for half of all new computers in high-poverty schools, and they paid for more computers in high-poverty schools than in low-poverty schools.
- Districts report that long-term district plans, such as the education technology plans required by the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, are important factors in influencing their educational technology activities.
- States and subgrantees vary widely in their allocation of the Technology Literacy Challenge Funds to high-need areas. Star Schools and Technology Innovation Challenge Grant programs are demonstrating effective uses of educational technology, but are not providing a clear focus for federal leadership in developing the knowledge base.
- Many states and other grantees have not devoted sufficient effort to evaluating the effectiveness of their programs. They also collect very different data, making it difficult to monitor performance and impact across districts and sites.

Options for strengthening the programs. Since the pioneering creation of the Star Schools program to provide national leadership in educational technology a decade ago, the context for federal policy in educational technology has changed in fundamental ways. This includes rapidly growing and widespread access to computers and the emergence of the Internet, the E-rate and a growing understanding of how these technologies can be used to improve teaching and learning. The following options could help ensure that this investment in technology works to increase equity and excellence in our nation's schools:

- **Focus the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund on professional development.** Given the rapid rate of growth in computers, overall, increasing access through education programs is no longer as important as strengthening teachers' ability to effectively use these technologies for improved teaching and learning.
- **Target Technology Literacy Challenge Fund resources** to ensure that, in combination with state and local resources, high poverty and high need schools receive adequate resources to effectively use educational technology.

- **Clarify the purposes of the Technology Innovation Challenge Grants** as to whether it is simply a funding source for educational technology, or is focused on developing the knowledge base and demonstrating strategies for effective use of educational technology. With the tremendous growth in technology access, the Department could launch rigorous evaluations of strategies that could optimize technology's potential to improve teaching and learning.
- **Adopt a uniform set of core performance indicators** in the legislation for states to use in preparing their technology performance reports for the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, the Technology Innovation Challenge Grants, Star Schools and other relevant programs.

Are Federal Programs Contributing to Greater Choice in Public Schools?

Progress to date. The federal government has promoted public school choice primarily by supporting the development and expansion of charter schools and magnet schools. On balance, both the PCSP and the MSAP support the public school choice standards described in the report.

Charter Schools:

- The Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP) has supported nearly three-fourths of the roughly 1,100 charter schools currently operating, and an even larger proportion of charter schools in the planning stages. PCSP funds represent about 6 percent of the total costs incurred by these schools.

Program Indicator: By the year 2002, there will be 3,000 charter schools in operation around the nation.

Progress to Date: In 1998, there were 1,100 charter schools in operation.

- There are 31 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico that received grants in 1998.

Program Indicator: By the year 2000, 40 states will have charter schools legislation.

Progress to Date: As of January of 1999, there were 34 states (plus DC and Puerto Rico) that have charter school authorizing legislation.

- A lack of access to start-up funds continues to be the largest single barrier to the successful implementation of charter schools.
- Charter schools serve a demographic profile of students similar to those in public schools, although national averages mask significant state-by-state variability.
- It is too early to tell if student achievement is improving in charter schools, both because the research base is limited and the schools are young. State and district-level evaluations are another source of information about the achievement of students enrolled in charter schools, but so far, preliminary conclusions are mixed. These evaluations of the impact of charter schools on student

achievement reveal the difficulties in collecting uniform, comparable student achievement data across schools.

Magnet Schools:

- A 1996 evaluation found that about half of districts that received 1991-93 grants met their desegregation targets. Progress in achieving desegregation objectives is still unknown for the 1998 grantees; however, preliminary data shows that these grantees have a greater ability to specify their desegregation objectives than the 1991-93 grantees.

Program Indicator: Targeted schools will *eliminate, reduce, or prevent* minority group isolation according to the desegregation objective they set for themselves.

Progress to Date: A comprehensive evaluation of the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) is currently underway, which will obtain information about the four MSAP purposes: reduce minority group isolation; contribute to systemic reform; offer innovative educational programs; and improve student performance.

Options for strengthening the programs.

Charter Schools:

While the 1998 reauthorization of the PCSP did address such important issues as flexibility and accountability, there are still several ways the PCSP can be strengthened through administrative means.

- **Increase federal PCSP support for states that target disadvantaged students.** While the PCSP does currently consider how states target educationally disadvantaged students when determining the grant awards, the PCSP may want to direct more funds to those states.
- **Ensure that charter schools receive equitable and sufficient funds.** A logical federal role may be to direct PCSP funds to those states that ensure that charter schools receive funding that is comparable to other public schools in the district or state.

Magnet Schools

Although information on the effectiveness of the MSAP is limited, the information in this report suggests several options for federal policy makers:

- **Clarify the kind of diversity the MSAP should address.** Clarification is needed about if and how the purpose of the MSAP could be expanded to include reducing isolation of students from different ethnic and economic backgrounds (in addition to different racial backgrounds) in order to adapt to the context within which magnet schools are operating.
- **Improve the targeting of MSAP funds.** Consider a district's level or degree of minority group isolation as a selection criteria for MSAP grants.
- **Clarify Congressional intent regarding the MSAP statute** in regards to whether the MSAP should impact districtwide desegregation, in addition to impacting individual magnet schools.

- **Clarify the role of innovative programs.** Congress may wish to consider ending this authority or using it as a research and development set-aside in which the new approaches to promoting diversity can be designed, evaluated, and emulated when appropriate.
- **Implement an information management system that could provide data regarding the overall progress of the MSAP grantees.** The MSAP should consider developing a system that could aggregate the progress reports of grantees and provide data on the Program as a whole.

Is the School-To-Work Opportunities Act Helping Graduates Leave School Ready to Begin Careers or to Continue Their Studies?

Progress to date. The School to Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) provided venture capital to states and localities to help underwrite the initial costs of planning and establishing statewide systems for helping young people make more effective transitions between high school and careers or further education. To promote local experimentation, Congress gave states and localities significant discretion to design and implement school-to-work systems. The law was designed to end in 2001.

There is little existing research on the long-term effects of federal school-to-work programs. There is, however, a growing body of evidence of some positive early results.

- Participation in well-designed STW programs appears to increase students' academic focus and motivation. Studies have found that students in quality STW programs enroll in more college prep courses than their peers in the general curriculum, particularly in advanced math and science courses.

Program Indicator: By fall 2000, the percentage of high school graduates from STW systems completing 3 years of math and 3 years of science will increase by 10 percent.

Progress to Date: Baseline data from an independent evaluation found that in 1996, 83 percent of high school seniors graduating from school-to-work systems completed 3 years of math, 73 percent completed 3 years of science, and 69 percent completed three years of math and science.

- An independent evaluation found evidence of increasing collaboration between employers and schools has been a particularly successful aspect of STW implementation. Employer involvement has increased steadily since the Act was passed.
- Participation in school-to-work activities is as common among high school seniors enrolled in college-preparatory curricula as among those who are not.
- Students give high marks to the STW activities, particularly those that afford them workplace experiences and academic classes related to their career goals.
- One study of four programs found an increase in college attendance rates among those students initially identified as "non-college-bound."

- Students in high-quality STW programs enroll in more college prep courses than their peers in the general curriculum.

Options for strengthening the programs. Federal funding for School-to-Work ends in 2001. In the relatively short period since School-to-Work began, however, obstacles to implementing effective STW programs have included: (1) the complexity of the reforms and the limited and short-term nature of federal funding, (2) confusion about the definition of the target population, (3) lack of coordination with academic reforms, and (4) a trade-off between breadth and depth in programs. As the end of federal funding for STW nears, federal policymakers might consider ways to promote and sustain the following promising activities in the reauthorization of ESEA or through other legislative vehicles:

- **Promotion of linkages between the academic standards movement and STW efforts,** through curricula that combine academic rigor with greater relevance to students' future plans
- **Support for professional development** that can help teachers become more adept and comfortable with contextual teaching methods that strengthen the links between school and outside resources and
- **Continued support for community level partnerships** and institutions that connect young people with experiences outside the classroom

Is the Department of Education Providing High-Quality Help and Guidance?

Progress to date. The 1994 legislation authorized four major field-based technical assistance programs, each designed for a slightly different audience and issue area: (1) Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers; (2) Eisenhower Regional Mathematics and Science Consortia; (3) Regional Technology in Education Consortia; and (4) Parent Information and Resource Centers. In addition, Title I established a system of state- and district-level school support teams designed to provide assistance to Title I schools.

- Evaluation and program performance data currently available show that technical assistance providers have reached a significant number of families, schools, and districts in their regions.
- Customer surveys suggest that ED's technical assistance programs are providing valuable services to the field. Most direct recipients of technical assistance services report that they are satisfied with the quality and the usefulness of the assistance.

Program Indicator: At least 80 percent of teachers, and providers of professional development who participate in the Consortia's technical assistance will report improvement in their practice.

Progress to Date: In a national evaluation of the Eisenhower Regional Mathematics and Science Education Consortia, nearly two-thirds of participants in selected professional development activities reported they had incorporated some new behavior into their jobs as a result of what they had learned.

- General surveys of states and district administrators suggest, however, that ED's technical assistance services do not address all customers' needs and purposes and that state and district staff often turn to other, more accessible, sources for help in implementing programs.

Options for strengthening the programs. ED's current technical assistance programs could be integrated into a more coherent system with the following characteristics:

- **Focus the federal technical assistance system on those areas where providers offer unique expertise and where they can add most value.** These areas include: (1) the implementation of federal programs, (2) the development and implementation of performance indicator systems and continuous progress models, and (3) neutral assessment of research-based comprehensive school reform models.
- **Integrate the Comprehensive Centers, Eisenhower Consortia, R*TEC, and PIRCs** into a system of regionally-based comprehensive centers, complemented by national specialty centers.
- **In one or two pilot regions, test a range of options for integrating the Department's technical assistance programs.** These approaches include: (1) Allowing individual technical assistance providers or a consortium of providers to submit a consolidated application to operate the Comprehensive Center, the Eisenhower Consortium, the R*TEC, and the PIRCs that serve the region; (2) Providing some additional funding to support the development of new models for collaboration; and (3) Consolidating existing programs into a single omnibus center providing all services to the entire pilot region.
- **Create an electronic network that would disseminate products and information electronically** on behalf of all federal technical assistance programs. Modeled on, or embedded in, the ERIC system, this electronic network would provide users with access to products and materials developed by all of the Department's technical assistance providers, from a single point of entry.
- **Create a national dissemination system that would promote the adoption of high-quality, research-based comprehensive school reform models.**
- **Deploy federal technical assistance services to complement existing state-level systems.** Federal technical assistance providers would: (1) train state-level technical assistance providers in their particular areas of expertise; (2) train Title I school support teams and support their work with schools; and (3) provide consultation and expertise in evaluation, analysis of student performance data, and continuous improvement.
- **Target direct assistance to schools and districts to those with the highest numbers and percentages of children in poverty, and to areas where state capacity is low.**

Are Federal Laws Promoting Flexibility and Accountability for Results?

Progress to date. States, districts and schools have begun to take advantage of the increased flexibility in the legislation to create learning environments that can help all students reach challenging academic standards. Several sources indicate that more—and probably sufficient—flexibility is now available and being used. Comparisons of Goals 2000 and ESEA Title VI underscore the importance of providing direction for the use of Federal funds in conjunction with flexibility.

- The implementation of federal education programs ranging from Goals 2000 to the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund is being tied to state and local reform efforts: consolidated planning by states and districts is fostering better coordination with federal education programs.
- Relatively few waivers of federal requirements have been requested, even though waivers are available to states and districts through the Department or the Ed-Flex program. This finding suggests that Federal education programs are sufficiently flexible.
- Only three of the programs authorized in 1994 require the use of performance measures for accountability. States have made considerable progress in implementing state content and performance standards required by ESEA Title I, though state accountability systems will remain incomplete until aligned assessments, which are required by 2000-2001, are implemented. In general, accountability in the ESEA remains weak.

Options for strengthening the programs. Although the evidence suggests that significant flexibility is available to and being taken advantage of by educators, the intended exchange of increased flexibility for increased accountability has not yet been fulfilled:

- States and districts need to further develop their capacity for innovation in order to take full advantage of available flexibility. The Department and states should try to insure that the technical assistance needed by schools and districts to develop this capacity is available.
- The establishment of better accountability systems is critical so that progress toward Federal program goals can be measured and inform decision-making at all levels.
- Accountability under Title I remains incomplete due to the transition period – until 2000-01 -- allowed by ESEA Title I for states to fully develop aligned accountability systems. Some states are still in the process of defining adequate yearly progress for districts and schools and variation in definitions across states makes it difficult to hold districts and schools accountable for progress made using federal funds.

Conclusions

The concluding chapter considers the implication of the findings drawn from the preceding chapters according to the three organizing principles used throughout the report:

- How well are federal programs achieving their desired outcomes?
- Are programs being effectively implemented with respect to such issues as targeting to the populations who need it most, delivery of high-quality services, and coordination of services across programs?
- Do programs demonstrate sound performance accountability?

Implication of Findings on How Well Programs are Achieving their Desired Outcomes.

- Continue to support and accelerate the pace of standards-driven reform that states and local school districts are implementing. The findings suggest that standards-driven reform should be given a chance to fully take hold while the nation continues to assess progress in student performance. At the same time, the pace of reform must accelerate if significant reductions in the achievement gap are to be realized for those students most at risk of school failure.
- Reorient program implementation to focus more on results. Many ESEA programs are demonstrating improvements in certain performance areas consistent with standards-driven reform, but continued improvements in performance are required if federal programs are to contribute to greater results.
- Clarify current program objectives. Some programs lack clarity of purpose concerning the expected outcomes of program resources which hinders their ability to effectively focus on achieving clear outcomes.

Implication of Findings for the Quality of Program Implementation

- **Improve effective targeting of federal resources.** The federal government has an historic responsibility to help ensure adequate educational opportunities to students in highest- poverty communities and schools and racial/ethnic population groups. Title I is the major program to reach these communities and populations, but a case can be made for other programs to also give priority to the neediest populations.

Options for Consideration

- Clarify provisions to target federal programs within states to the neediest populations, including high-poverty schools. Decide whether to give states discretion over program participation with appropriate performance accountability and reporting, or, instead, to target funds on federal priority populations.
- Call on states to report publicly on how they distribute federal funds to schools serving high concentrations of low income and other federally targeted students.
- Offer “Catch-up Consolidated Grants” focused on performance in high poverty schools.
- **Effectively implement federal program services.** Programs that are not applying the best knowledge of promising and effective practices to their own projects are wasting taxpayer monies and short-changing participants. While we have seen some clear progress in improving the quality of ESEA services, serious implementation weaknesses remain.

Options for Consideration

- Adopt “Principles of Effectiveness” as an explicit legislative provision across all major federally-funded programs. This could help focus limited resources on high-quality programs and enlarge the available pool of strategies of demonstrated effectiveness

- Introduce competitive awards. To the degree that recipients of federal funds are assured automatic funding based solely on need, the incentives for high project quality are diminished. Competitive awards based on projects coming forth with proposals and judgements made on the basis of quality could enhance competition and the chances of obtaining better quality proposals. To help ensure that competitively-awarded funds reach high-need areas, funds might also be set aside for separate competitions for high-need areas, or contingency funding of projects in which continuations depend upon demonstrated progress.
- **Modernize the System of Technical Assistance.** Although the 1994 ESEA reauthorization consolidated some technical assistance authorities, the seamless network of support initially envisioned has yet to develop. Federal assistance providers often remain isolated from each other and from the direct delivery of technical assistance by state or locally funded providers. However, new tools such as the internet have been developed which could make such a network possible.

Options for Consideration

- Support an integrated national electronic education network. A federally supported network would serve as an electronic resource center for sound education information. Specialty area clearinghouses, built around a state-of-the-art ERIC system, could support the provision of information electronically. The network could provide schools and school systems with productivity-enhancing tools. The network might also make it easier for the collaboration and information sharing that now happens within state electronic systems among universities, school administrators, teachers, and parents to occur nationally and regionally.
- Better integrate the Comprehensive Centers, the Eisenhower Consortia, and the R*TECS into a seamless system of regionally based comprehensive centers, complemented by national specialty centers linked to state and community providers. Reauthorization would emphasize that federal technical assistance centers emphasize "training the trainer" models and work through state or local assistance collaboratives rather than directly provide assistance themselves. Further, the Comprehensive Centers should focus directly on issues of federal program implementation, including performance measurement to support continuous progress, a core program component which is universally weak among most programs. Specialty Centers, designed to disseminate research-based instructional materials and reform models in priority areas such as mathematics and science, reading, and the uses of technology in instruction, would work nationally, including electronically, with one to two centers serving the entire country on a topical area.
- Support "Grants for Evaluating Model Effectiveness." Rigorous independent evaluations of models would provide objective information that would be disseminated through the electronic network and Comprehensive Centers. Competitive awards could be made to support independent testing of model approaches using evaluations that meet rigorous standards of quality.
- **Improve Coordination Across Programs.** Legislation that is acceptable when looked at in isolation may not be optimal when all parts are combined and the aggregate effects are considered. Administrative burden accumulates, and the sheer number of pieces of legislation

may unintentionally diffuse efforts, confuse purposes, and fragment service delivery. Legislation may be improved by clarifying objectives and criteria for effective services.

Options for Consideration

- Programs that provide major support for professional development, including Eisenhower Professional Development, Goals 2000, and Innovative Educational Program Strategies (Title VI-A), all provide relatively broad assistance. In addition, the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund and Title VII professional development programs support professional development in areas of high need.
- Information technology programs, including four major elementary and secondary programs (the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, Technology Innovation Challenge Grants, Star Schools and the E-rate) along with seven other smaller authorities all support the expansion of technology in schools.
- Technical assistance is supported through various authorities with different foci, including assistance to parents, technology, math, and science.
- **Strengthen across-program coherence.** A number of programs with different purposes have common program components that would benefit from being made more coherent across programs. Two program components in particular should be reviewed:

Options for Consideration

- Professional development provisions that could be made similar through incorporating common language that is consistent with high-quality practices, including professional development provided through programs, such as Title I and Title VII.
- Parent involvement provisions to incorporate a common set of policies and requirements for schools to develop one single set of parent policies and compacts to cover all ESEA programs with now distinct parent involvement provisions.

Implications of Findings for Encouraging Programs To Demonstrate Sound Performance Accountability: Creating an Integrated Performance and Benchmarking System

Efforts are underway in several program offices of the Department of Education to consolidate data collections and to bring them on-line electronically. In addition, most states already provide the public with information about their public schools in the form of "school profiles," or "report cards," however this information is rarely comparable from state to state. Several states are already developing statewide integrated data collection systems for their administration of federal and state programs, in such a way that schools and districts can compare and benchmark themselves to each other. Many are working toward the goal of a better-integrated performance and benchmarking data system. Such an **Integrated Performance and Benchmarking System** (IPBS) could enhance federal and state efforts by developing a set of mutually-needed core measures and performance indicators and increase the compatibility of the data collection systems. The goals of an IPBS would be to:

- Make federal education data more coherent, timely, and comparable across units and over time.

- Increase the usefulness of federal data to states, districts, and the general public.
- Facilitate the development of annual school, state, and district report cards, which allow comparison and benchmarking between states and districts.
- Reduce the burden of federally required program data collections and surveys.

Options for Consideration

The Department of Education could work together with states and districts on a long-term project to develop an IPBS. Such a system could be developed over the next five years, to replace the currently overlapping and antiquated federal-state education program reporting system by the year 2004. It could:

- Be based on a core set of program performance indicators incorporated in ESEA reauthorization legislation, as well as in state program performance reports.
- Utilize the core set of indicators as a basis for streamlining other duplicative and inconsistent program data collections.
- Facilitate standardization of measures for program performance indicators across states, similar to the Common Core of Data.
- Make possible aggregation across schools, districts, and states, to provide national estimates, as well as comparable benchmarking between sites.
- Use modern electronic reporting methods, by having schools and districts sign on to an Internet site and report the data needed for the performance indicators.
- Include data quality standards for collection, aggregation, and reporting of data.
- Include grants and technical assistance to states to develop or improve their performance data reporting systems to be able to participate in IPBS.
- Be designed to ensure the complete confidentiality of student information.

The IPBS would be designed in partnership with various states and state education organizations, and piloted as a demonstration project in a few partner states, then revised and gradually expanded to all states.

A Final Note

The Department's evaluations of Goals 2000, Title I, and other Elementary and Secondary Education Act programs have shown that federal programs have contributed to the nation's progress in implementing standards-based reform. Many of the key elements for achieving the democratic ideal of excellence and equity for all are just being put in place. Other reform elements need to be strengthened if challenging standards are to reach all classrooms and help all children reach high expectations. Evaluations have

documented how federal programs can stimulate and work in tandem with the best efforts of states and local school systems to improve education for our nation's children and for our future. They have also shown where federal programs, and education in general, must address shortcomings in delivering on the promise of high-quality schooling for all students. Educational improvement is a work in progress and benefits from a careful analysis of its implementation and early impact.

¹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Fourth-Grade Mathematics and Science Achievement in International Context* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Eighth-Grade Mathematics and Science Teaching, Learning, Curriculum, and Achievement in International Context* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996) 18; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Reading Literacy in the United States: Findings from the IEA Reading Literacy Study* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1996 Science Performance Standards, 1996 Math Report Card, 1994 Reading Report Card*.

² University of Michigan, Survey Research Institute, Institute for Social Research, *Monitoring the Future Study* (Ann Arbor, MI: Author, December 1998).

1. OVERVIEW

What Did the 1994 Federal Legislation Seek to Accomplish?

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Goals 2000: Educate America Act, and School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) all stemmed from a new policy framework designed to support the country's efforts to reach the National Education Goals. The Goals were adopted by the President and all 50 governors in 1989. Congress recognized and added to the Goals in 1994 in setting a course for educational improvement. Exhibit 1.1 shows the resulting National Goals.

EXHIBIT 1.1 NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS

1. By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.
2. By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
3. By the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation's modern economy.
4. By the year 2000, the Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.
5. By the year 2000, United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.
6. By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
7. By the year 2000, every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.
8. By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

The three laws addressed in this report all helped realign federal education programs with state and local efforts to reach the National Education Goals. Many states had already made significant strides in implementing reforms designed to improve education for all students, especially those at risk of school failure. The policy framework reflected in all three pieces of legislation was designed to lend greater support to those efforts by:

- Supporting states in setting high standards for all children—with the elements of education aligned, so that they are working in concert to help all students reach those standards.
- Focusing on teaching and learning through upgrading curriculum, accelerating instruction, and providing teachers with professional development to teach to high standards.
- Providing flexibility to stimulate local school-based and district initiatives, coupled with responsibility for student performance, and
- Creating links among schools, parents, and communities.

To ensure that these principles guide federal education programs, the Department of Education has developed a strategic plan that aligns all of its programs with these principles and establishes performance indicators for each program. The plan and performance indicators also respond to the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 that required all government agencies to implement strategic plans. Throughout this report, relevant performance indicators are cited to assist in evaluating program activities.

The key provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Goals 2000, and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, and the chapters in which they are treated in this report, are summarized in Exhibit 1.2:

EXHIBIT 1.2 TREATMENT OF FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THIS REPORT									
REPORT CHAPTERS  FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS 	3--Readiness for School	4--Standards-Based Reform	5--Teacher Training	6--Safe and Drug-Free Schools	7--Technology	8--School Choice	9--School to Work	10--Technical Assistance	11--Flexibility and Accountability
ESEA Title I, Part A—Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies —Supports districts in providing opportunities for students in high-poverty schools to meet the same challenging academic standards as all other students.	X	X	X		X			X	X
ESEA Title I, Part B—Even Start Family Literacy Program —Provides family-centered education programs for low-income parents and their children, from birth through age seven.	X								

EXHIBIT 1.2 (Continued)
TREATMENT OF FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THIS REPORT

REPORT CHAPTERS 	3--Readiness for School	4--Standards-Based Reform	5--Teacher Training	6--Safe and Drug-Free Schools	7--Technology	8--School Choice	9--School to Work	10--Technical Assistance	11--Flexibility and Accountability
FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS 									
ESEA Title II—Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development Program— Provides states with funding to give teachers opportunities to learn more of the content and processes of teaching core subject areas, especially math and science.		X	X						X
ESEA Title III—Technology for Education— Provides funding to encourage innovative uses of technology to support teaching and learning.		X			X			X	X
ESEA Title IV—Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities— Gives states and districts funding to implement comprehensive drug and violence prevention programs in schools and communities.				X					X
ESEA Title V, Part A—Magnet Schools Assistance— Supports programs that promote racial integration in districts with either voluntary or court-ordered desegregation plans.						X			
ESEA Title VI—Innovative Education Programs and Strategies— Allows school districts to use funds to support a broad array of educational reforms.			X						X
ESEA Title VII, Part A—Bilingual Education, Language Enhancement, and Language Acquisition Programs— Provides funds to states, districts, and certain other entities to improve teaching for limited English proficient students and to help students with limited English proficiency learn English and achieve high standards.		X	X						

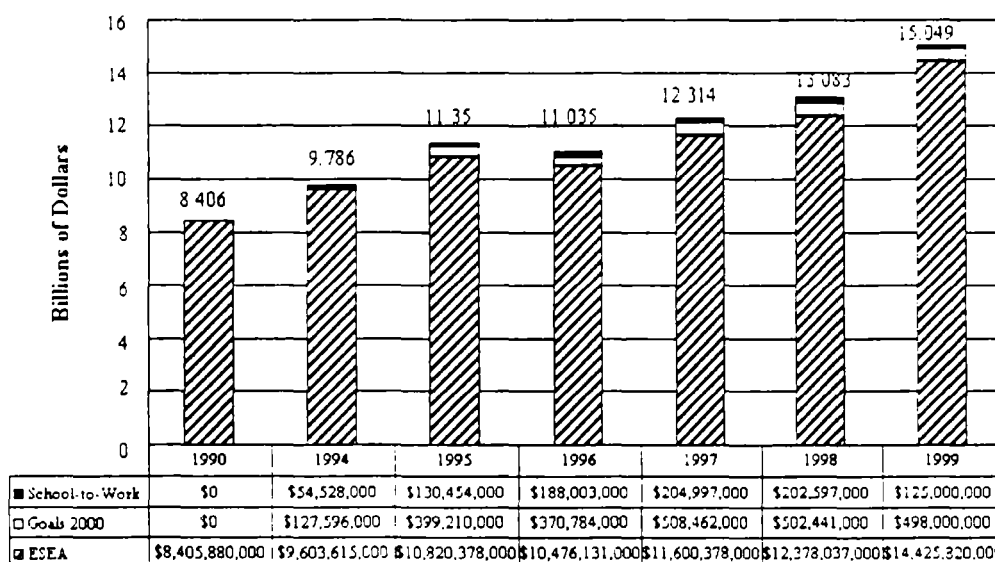
EXHIBIT 1.2 (Continued)
TREATMENT OF FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THIS REPORT

REPORT CHAPTERS 	3--Readiness for School	4--Standards-Based Reform	5--Teacher Training	6--Safe and Drug-Free Schools	7--Technology	8--School Choice	9--School to Work	10--Technical Assistance	11--Flexibility and Accountability
FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS 									
ESEA Title XIII—Support and Assistance Programs to Improve Education —Funds a network of 15 Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers to provide support, training, and assistance to states, tribes, districts, schools and other ESEA grantees.								X	
Goals 2000 Title III—State and Local Systemic Education Improvement —Supports states and districts in developing and implementing systemic, standards-based education reforms focused on raising student achievement.		X	X		X				X
Goals 2000 Title IV—Parental Assistance —Authorizes a Parent Information and Resource Center in every state to enhance parental involvement with schools.								X	
School-to-Work Opportunities Act —Provides grants to states and districts to implement systems that enable students to engage in school- and work-based learning that prepares them for specific careers.							X		X
Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act—Education for Homeless Children and Youth —Gives states funds to help eliminate obstacles that homeless children face in enrolling and succeeding in school.	X								

How Much Money Was Spent?

In FY 1999, Congress appropriated approximately \$15 billion for the programs funded under the three laws covered by this report. Exhibit 1.3 shows that in both constant and current dollars,¹ combined federal funding for ESEA, Goals 2000, and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act has increased in every year but one since 1994, with the greatest single-year increase occurring in 1999. Funding for Goals 2000 increased rapidly in its early years, and has remained relatively stable for the last three years. Funding for the School-to-Work program reached its peak in 1997, and then began a decline that will continue until 2001, when the law is slated to expire. All together, appropriations for programs funded under these three pieces of legislation account for more than 40 percent of the Department of Education's discretionary spending.

EXHIBIT 1.3
FEDERAL FUNDING FOR ESEA, GOALS 2000, AND SCHOOL-TO-WORK
(IN CONSTANT 1999 DOLLARS IN BILLIONS)



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Budget Service.

What Is Unique About the Federal Government's Efforts?

Historically, the federal role in education has been to work with states, school systems, and communities to further its dual mission of:

- Promoting equity by providing additional resources for students at risk of school failure.
- Improving the overall quality of education by strategically targeting funds to induce change.

The standards-based reform framework reflected in both ESEA and Goals 2000 maintains state responsibility and local control of education by supporting states in establishing their own standards for what students should know and be able to do. Because state, local, and private sources account for 94 percent of the total national expenditure on elementary and secondary education, they carry the main responsibility for elementary and secondary education in this country. However, because education is of critical national importance, the federal government is a partner in this nationwide responsibility. The federal programs contained within ESEA, Goals 2000, and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act provide leadership, resources, and assistance in the critical areas of professional development of teachers, access to new technology, and establishment of a safe environment for learning. In exchange for giving states and districts greater flexibility in their use of federal resources, these programs require greater accountability for improving student performance.

The federal government's resources play an important role in stimulating and supporting comprehensive school reform based on high standards for all students. They also provide additional support for students at risk of school failure in high-poverty communities. A recent General Accounting Office (GAO) study found that in 45 states, federal funding is more targeted to poor communities than is state funding. For every \$1 of federal funding supplied per typical student, the average district received an additional \$4.73 in federal funds per poor student, but only an additional \$0.62 of state funds per poor student.² In most states, the combination of these state and federal funds reduced or eliminated the local funding gap between high- and low-poverty districts.

Even as the federal government seeks to influence state and local school reform efforts by, for instance, diminishing funding inequities, it must also recognize that the primary responsibility for those efforts rests with states and local communities. In the 1994 legislation addressed in this report, Congress made it easier for federal programs to support state and local reform efforts, particularly in high-poverty schools, instead of operating as isolated programs. This approach may make it harder to ascertain the specific contribution that federal funds make in improving educational services and outcomes, but by bringing together all federal, state, and local education resources to address the same problems, it should move the country closer to achieving the National Education Goals.

Thus, the effects of federal education policies and programs need to be considered in terms of overall improvement in the nation's schools as well as on their own terms. Among the types of evidence that should be examined to gauge the effects of federal programs are:

- Aggregate effects on outcomes: What are the trends in the core academic outcomes of students in reading and math overall and in highest poverty schools? What are the trends in student drug use and violence? Are students making good personal choices that affect their futures?
- Aggregate effects on service provision: What is the scope of programs serving a particular national priority area, and how well do these programs work together?

What Is and Is Not Included In This Report?

According to its legislative mandate as described in the Foreword, **this report discusses only those programs reauthorized or created in 1994: the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act.** It presents findings from a number of recently completed, previously unpublished studies and evaluations of these programs. It also incorporates performance indicators developed in response to the Government Performance and Results Act to allow readers to track the Department of Education's progress toward meeting the standards it has established for itself and its programs. The National Assessment of Title I, *Promising Results, Continuing Challenges: The Final Report of the National Assessment of Title I* focuses in greater depth on that program and its components. As described in the Foreword, the two reports are complementary analyses, and both benefited from guidance provided by a congressionally mandated Independent Review Panel.

This report does not discuss programs included in the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act or the Educational Research, Development, Dissemination, and Improvement Act. It also does not include discussion of major new elementary and secondary education initiatives adopted in 1998, which are to begin in 1999. Although not discussed in this report, major 1998 initiatives are described briefly in Exhibit 1.4.

EXHIBIT 1.4 MAJOR NEW EDUCATION INITIATIVES ENACTED IN 1998

Class Size Reduction (\$1.2 billion)

These new funds will be used to hire and train approximately 30,000 new teachers in grades K-3, with the long-term goal of reducing class size in the early grades to a nationwide average of 18. Districts will use funds to pay the salaries and benefits of new teachers; a small portion may be used for professional development, testing new teachers, and developing more rigorous tests.

The Reading Excellence Act (\$260 million)

Districts will use funds to provide professional development for teachers; operate tutoring programs before school, after school, on weekends, and during vacations; and to provide family literacy services. More than 500,000 children in grades pre-K to 3 will be served under the Act.

21st Century Community Learning Centers: After-School Programs (\$200 million)

Approximately 1,600 centers will establish or expand school-based after-school programs. The centers will provide academic enrichment and support; extracurricular activities; service learning projects; nutritional and health services; and access to technology for 250,000 children.

GEAR UP (\$120 million)

GEAR UP will award grants to colleges and high-poverty middle schools to increase college-going rates among low-income youth, and grants to states to provide early college awareness activities, improved academic support, information on paying for college, and scholarships.

EXHIBIT 1.4 (Continued)
MAJOR NEW EDUCATION INITIATIVES ENACTED IN 1998

Teacher Quality Enhancement Programs (\$75 million)

These programs include: (1) grants to teacher preparation institutions and local school districts in high-need areas; (2) scholarships and other support to prospective teachers who agree to teach in high-need areas; and (3) grants to states to strengthen recruitment and certification of new high-quality teachers.

How Is This Report Organized?

This report looks across the programs authorized by the 3 pieces of legislation at relevant objectives identified in the Department's *Strategic Plan*. For each Strategic Plan objective, the report provides (1) an introduction to the programs and the 1994 legislative changes; (2) a brief summary of what research has learned about good practice; (3) data from recent evaluations on how well the programs are working; and (4) options for strengthening the program. The questions it seeks to answer are:

- How well are students doing? Are key outcomes improving?
- Are federal education programs helping to prepare children for school?
- Are federal programs helping states develop and implement standards?
- Are federal programs supporting effective professional development for teachers?
- Is the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act supporting effective school drug and violence prevention?
- Is federal support strengthening access to and use of technology to support learning?
- Are federal programs contributing to greater choice in public schools?
- Is the School to Work Opportunities Act helping graduates leave school ready to begin careers or continue their studies?

Next, the report considers the Department's role in helping states and local school districts make the best use of federal resources to improve student performance. It addresses the following two questions:

- Is the Department of Education providing high-quality help and guidance?
- Are federal laws promoting flexibility and accountability for results?

The Conclusions section offers some options for strengthening the federal contribution to education reform.

¹ The following table shows federal education funding in thousands of current dollars.

	1990	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
ESEA	\$6,830,114	\$8,639,131	\$9,663,290	\$9,495,162	\$10,620,080	\$11,523,351	\$13,802,820
Goals 2000	\$0	\$117,000	\$374,870	\$355,000	\$496,000	\$496,000	\$498,000
School-to-Work	\$0	\$50,000	\$122,500	\$180,000	\$199,973	\$200,000	\$125,000
Total	\$6,830,114	\$8,806,131	\$10,160,660	\$10,030,162	\$11,316,053	\$12,219,351	\$14,425,820
Source:	U.S. Department of Education, Budget Service.						

² U.S. General Accounting Office, *School Finance: State and Federal Efforts to Target Poor Students*, GAO/HEHS-98-36, January 1998. 9, 12.

2. HOW WELL ARE STUDENTS DOING? ARE KEY OUTCOMES IMPROVING?

KEY FINDINGS

Overall Progress in Reading and Mathematics

- The percentage of all students performing at or above the basic achievement level has generally improved since 1992 in mathematics and since 1994 in reading.
- Internationally, U.S. students' standing in both reading and mathematics is stronger at the 4th grade than at the 8th and 12th grades.

Reading:

- A long-term view of reading achievement shows that scores on the trend NAEP assessment have improved slightly over the past two decades for 9- and 13-year olds, and remained stable for 17-year olds. In the short term, the percentage of 4th graders scoring at or above the basic achievement level on main NAEP remained stable between 1994 and 1998, while 8th and 12th graders' scores increased.
- For minority students and students attending high-poverty schools, reading achievement has increased significantly over the past two decades. These students have also made significant gains since 1994, but this improvement only brought achievement scores to late 1980's levels.

Mathematics:

- A long-term view of mathematics achievement shows that the scores of 9-, 13- and 17-year olds on the trend NAEP assessment have improved over the past two decades, with 9-year olds making the largest improvements. In the short term, the percentage of 8th graders scoring at or above the basic achievement level on main NAEP increased between the two most recent assessments (1992 and 1996).

Course-Taking

- Students are taking more rigorous courses, and the percentage of high school students taking challenging math and science courses such as geometry, calculus, and chemistry has increased throughout the decade for all racial and ethnic groups. Since 1990, an increasing proportion of 11th and 12th grade students have been taking and passing Advanced Placement courses.

High School Completion

- There has been a small improvement in high school completion rates since 1972. The high school completion rate wavered around 84 percent from 1972 to 1983 and by 1994 had increased to 86 percent where it has remained since.

Drug Use and Violence

- Drug use is declining but remains a concern. In 1998, after six years of steady increases in the use of illicit drugs, use among secondary school students is down. This downturn represents the second year of decreases for 8th graders and the first for 10th and 12th graders since their previous declines early in the decade. Between 1993 and 1996 violence in and on the way to schools has decreased substantially.

Is U.S. education as a whole improving? Are we building a solid foundation of learning for all the nation's children? In particular, are our students reaching challenging academic standards? Are they being prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment? Are our students keeping pace with students in other countries? To answer these questions, this chapter provides an overview of national trends in achievement since 1971, with a particular focus on progress since 1994, the year of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

This chapter presents data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and the International Reading Literacy Study. Two types of NAEP data are presented: *Trend NAEP* which has used the same set of items and tasks since 1971, is used to report long term trends in academic performance of 9- 13-, and 17-year olds. Trend NAEP scores are reported as average scale scores, ranging from 0 to 500 points. The second type of NAEP data, from the *Main NAEP*, consists of items measuring current standards of what 4th, 8th, and 12th grade students should know and be able to do in each subject area. Scores are reported as the percent of students achieving at 3 levels of performance as determined by expert judges in each subject area. In this chapter two levels of performance are reported, basic and proficient.¹

The data presented in this chapter on outcomes should be viewed as indicators of the nation's need to continue the effort to improve education for all children rather than as an evaluation of a fully accomplished reform effort. Many of the provisions of the 1994 legislation have been only partially implemented; indeed some key provisions are not required to be in place until a later date. The results in this chapter focus on changes since 1994, as a measure of progress since the reauthorization. Rather than a final evaluation, these results are a reflection on a change in process, offering an opportunity for mid-course correction as the nation continues to strive toward the goal of improved education for all students.

Are Our Students Achieving to Current Academic Standards in Reading, Mathematics, and Science?

**EXHIBIT 2.1
NATIONAL REPORT CARD²**

	PERCENTAGE OF ALL STUDENTS SCORING AT OR ABOVE THE BASIC LEVEL ON THE MOST RECENT MAIN NAEP TEST	CHANGE SINCE PREVIOUS MAIN NAEP ASSESSMENT [*]	U.S. PERFORMANCE COMPARED TO INTERNATIONAL AVERAGE ON LATEST ASSESSMENT
4TH GRADE			
1998 READING	62%	↔	(1992) ABOVE AVERAGE
1996 MATH	64%	↑ (-5%)	(1995) ABOVE AVERAGE
1996 SCIENCE	67%	NA	(1995) ABOVE AVERAGE
8TH GRADE			
1998 READING	74%	↑ (-4%)	(1992) ABOVE AVERAGE
1996 MATH	62%	↑ (-4%)	(1995) BELOW AVERAGE
1996 SCIENCE	61%	NA	(1995) ABOVE AVERAGE
12TH GRADE			
1998 READING	77%	↑ (-2%)	NO DATA
1996 MATH	69%	↑ (-5%)	(1995) BELOW AVERAGE
1996 SCIENCE	57%	NA	(1995) BELOW AVERAGE

* Only statistically significant differences are reported as changes.

Sources: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Main NAEP), 1996 and 1998; Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS); IEA Reading Literacy Study. Also see Endnote 2.

Our national report card (Exhibit 2.1) shows that since the previous main NAEP assessment, student achievement—as measured by the percentage of all students performing at or above the basic achievement level—has generally improved for most grade levels in reading and mathematics. In reading, the percentage of students scoring at or above the basic achievement level on main NAEP increased since 1994 for 8th and 12th graders, and remained stable for 4th grade students.³ In mathematics, the most recent main NAEP was administered in 1996. Since 1992, the percentage of students scoring at or above the basic level improved for 4th, 8th and 12th grades.⁴

Internationally, U.S. students' standing in reading, mathematics, and science are above average at the 4th grade but below average for students in the 8th and 12th grades.⁵

EXHIBIT 2.2

HOW NAEP TESTS ARE USED TO REPORT PROGRESS

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) consists of two separate tests, the **Trend Assessment** and the **Main Assessment**. They differ in purpose, item content, sample, assessment years, and method of scoring results, and are used in this chapter to answer different questions about student progress.

The **NAEP Trend Assessment** is designed to measure long-term trends in student performance on sets of items that have not changed since NAEP was first conducted in 1969.⁶ The test measures the performance of 9-, 13-, and 17-year old students at the national level. Results are reported as average scores on a scale from zero to 500 points. In this chapter, NAEP trend data for 9-year olds are used to answer the question, **Has student achievement improved over time in reading, mathematics, and science?** The NAEP Trend Assessment is also used to report the performance of students by race/ethnicity and these data are used to answer the questions **Has student achievement improved over time among racial/ethnic groups?** and **How does the performance of minority students compare to white students?**

The **Main NAEP Assessment**, first conducted in 1990, is designed to measure short-term trends in student performance on items reflecting more current curricular content and standards. The test measures the performance of students in grades 4, 8, and 12 at the national level, and at the state level in states that elect to participate in State NAEP. Test scores are reported in two ways, as average scale scores and as the percentage of students achieving at established standards of performance. The standards are determined by expert judges at three levels of achievement: *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*. Each of these measures is used as follows in this chapter:

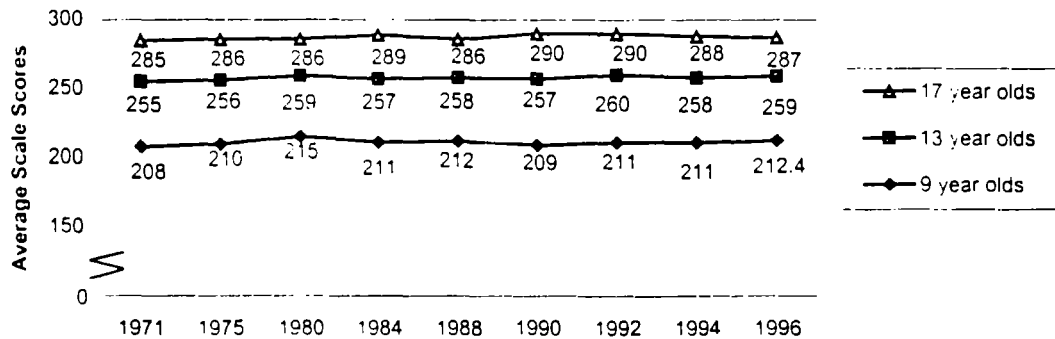
- The average scale scores of lowest achieving students (the bottom 10 and 25 percent of scorers) are used to answer the question, **Has the achievement of the lowest-performing students improved over time?**
- The percentages of students achieving at and above the *Basic* and *Proficient* levels are used to answer the question, **Are students achieving to the academic standards being set for all students across the nation?**

Reading: Long Term Trends

Fourth grade students' reading scores are an important indicator for several reasons. One of the goals in the Department of Education's Strategic Plan is that every child will read independently by the end of 3rd grade. Federal programs such as Title I are also more heavily targeted toward reading in elementary school than in middle school. Therefore, after discussing reading achievement at the 4th, 8th, and 12th grade levels, this report focuses on the 4th grade.

Taking a long-term view, Exhibit 2.3 shows that 9- and 13-year old students' scores on trend NAEP have improved slightly in reading performance over the past two decades⁷, and remained stable for 17-year olds.⁸ During the past decade, performance for all three age levels has remained relatively static. In comparison to their counterparts in other countries, the most recent international comparison of reading, conducted in 1992, shows that U.S. 4th graders scored above the international average.⁹

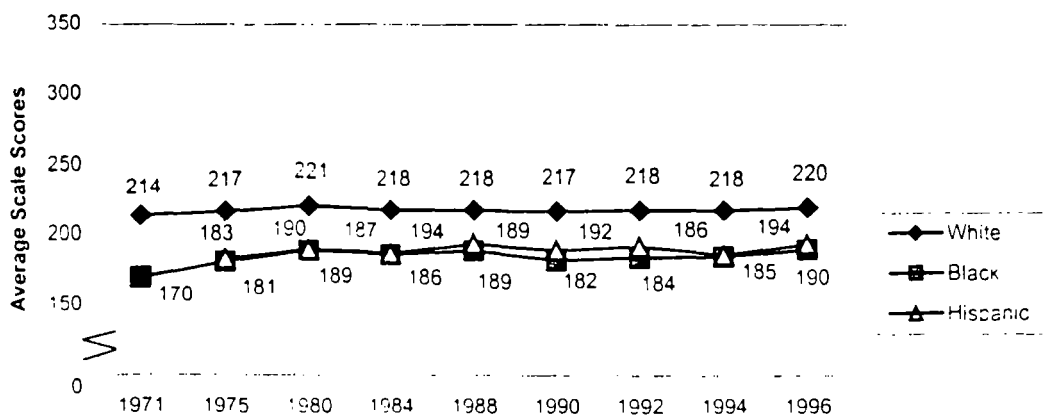
EXHIBIT 2.3
TRENDS IN READING ACHIEVEMENT ON NAEP, 1971-1996



Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Trend NAEP). Also see Endnote 8.

For both minority students and students attending high poverty schools, reading performance on trend NAEP increased over the past two decades. Exhibit 2.4 shows that minority students have also made gains since 1994, but this improvement only helped to regain ground that was lost during the past decade. Despite the gains made at the lowest levels of achievement, large gaps between racial/ethnic groups and income levels remain. Since 1994, the gap in reading performance between 9- year old black and white students narrowed but the gap between white and Hispanic students did not.¹⁰ Results by school poverty and for 13- and 17-year olds followed the same patterns, but are not shown here.

EXHIBIT 2.4
TRENDS IN NAEP READING SCORES FOR 9-YEAR-OLDS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY

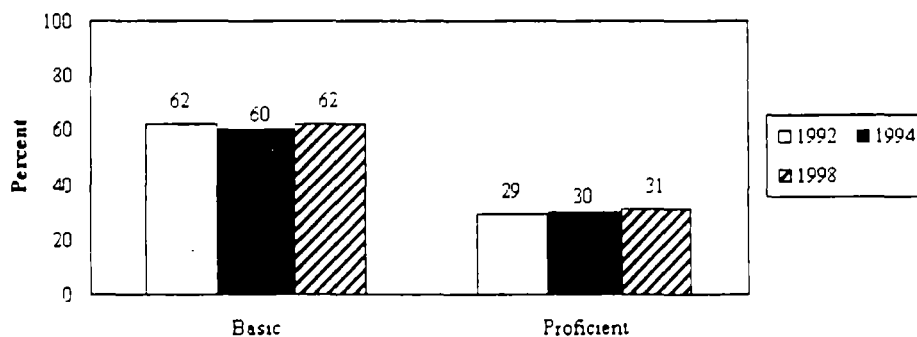


Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Trend NAEP). Also see Endnote 8.

Reading: Recent Trends

The Main NAEP reading assessment measures reading achievement based on more recent reading curriculum and standards, and provides a short term view of changes in performance. The three most recent assessments were administered in 1992, 1994, and 1998. Exhibit 2.5 shows that there have been no significant changes in the percentage of 4th graders scoring at or above either the basic or the proficient level of performance since 1994 or 1992. Exhibit 2.1 summarizes trends for the 8th and 12th grades. At grade 8, the percentage of students who performed at or above the basic level in 1998 increased, compared to 1994 and 1992. At grade 12, the percentage who performed at or above the basic level increased in 1998 compared to 1994, but it remained lower than the 1992 percentage.¹¹

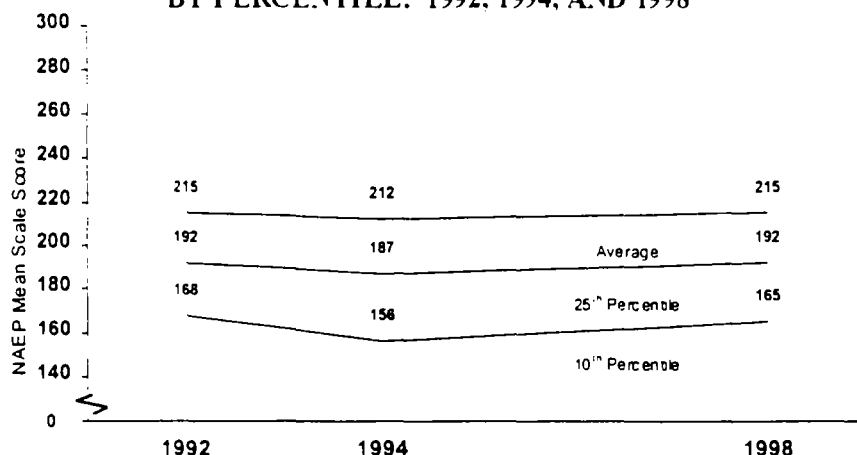
EXHIBIT 2.5
PERCENTAGE OF FOURTH-GRADERS PERFORMING AT OR ABOVE BASIC
AND PROFICIENT LEVELS IN READING ON MAIN NAEP, 1992-1998



Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Main NAEP, 1992, 1994, 1998). Also see Endnote 3.

In addition to examining recent scores for all students, it is also important to examine the progress of those students traditionally most at risk. Exhibit 2.6 shows that students who scored in the lowest percentiles have improved their achievement significantly since 1994, after dropping between 1992 and 1994.

EXHIBIT 2.6
NAEP MAIN READING ASSESSMENT
SCALE SCORES OF PUBLIC FOURTH-GRADERS
BY PERCENTILE: 1992, 1994, AND 1998

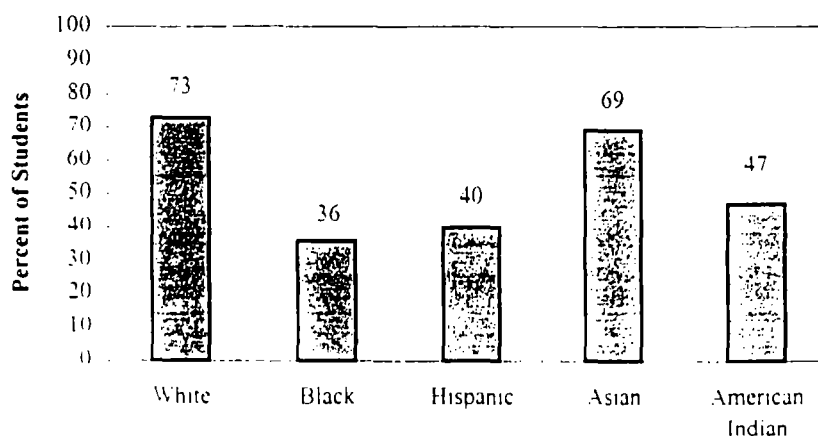


High-poverty school = 76% to 100% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Low-poverty school = 0% to 25% of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Scale scores are 0-500.

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Main NAEP, 1992-1998). Also see Endnote 3.

Results from the 1998 Main NAEP reading assessment reveal significant differences in the percentage of students from different racial/ethnic groups who score at or above the basic level (Exhibit 2.7).¹² White and Asian students are twice as likely as black and Hispanic students to score at or above the basic level. Trends for 13- and 17-year olds are similar, with greater percentages of white and Asian students performing at or above basic than black and Hispanic students.

EXHIBIT 2.7
PERCENTAGE OF FOURTH-GRADERS SCORING AT OR ABOVE BASIC IN READING
ON THE 1998 MAIN NAEP, BY RACE/ETHNICITY

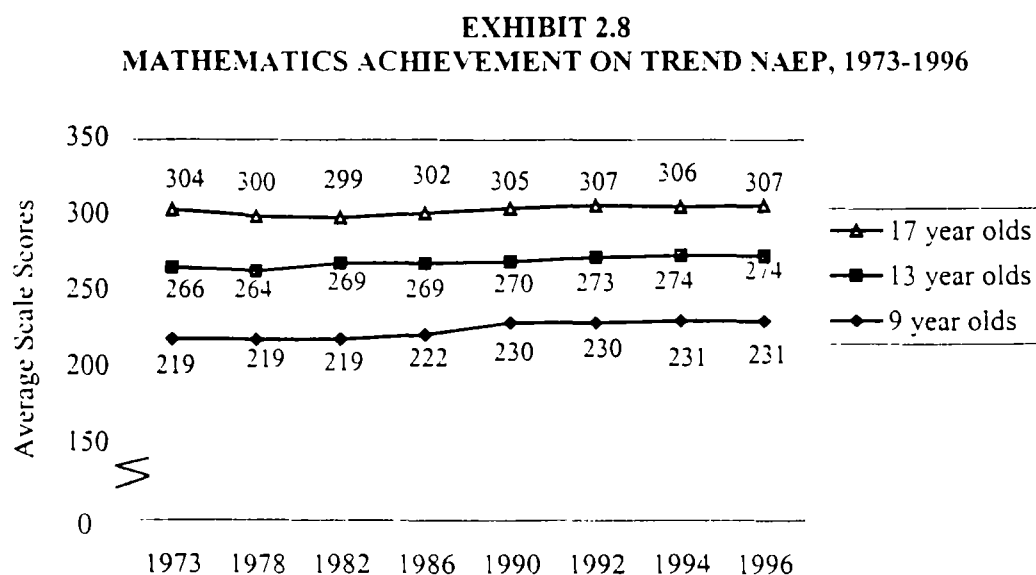


Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (1998 Main NAEP). Also see Endnote 3.

Mathematics: Long-Term Trends

Eighth-grade students' mathematics scores are an important indicator for several reasons. One of the goals of the Department of Education's Strategic Plan is that every 8th grader will master challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry. This is particularly important in light of the above-mentioned U.S. students' scores on the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). We have seen that U.S. students' international standing was above the international average in mathematics at the 4th grade,¹³ below average at the 8th grade,¹⁴ and among the lowest performing countries at the 12th grade.¹⁵ These results suggest possible weaknesses in mathematics instruction in U.S. middle schools, and underscore the importance of encouraging middle school students to take rigorous coursework to prepare them for advanced mathematics courses in high school. In light of these findings, this section will focus on 8th grade students.

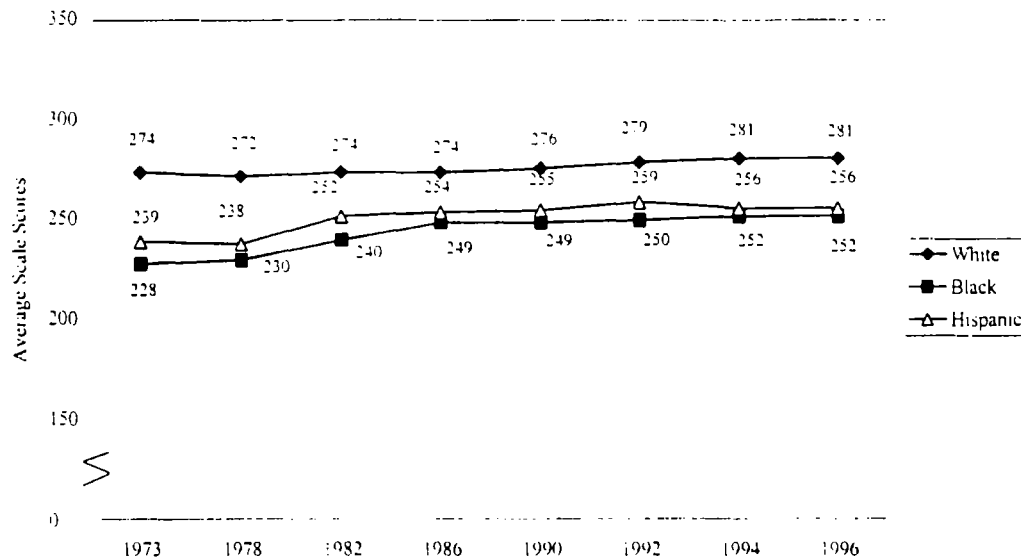
Taking a long-term view of progress in mathematics, Exhibit 2.8 shows that on the NAEP trend assessment, average mathematics performance improved over the past two decades for 9-, 13-, and 17-year olds. After declining in the 1970s and early 1980s, scores increased in the late 1980s, and have leveled off during the past decade. After these fluctuations, student mathematics scores on the trend NAEP assessment were higher in 1996 for all three grade levels than they had been two decades ago, with 9-year olds making the largest improvements, a gain of a little more than one grade level since 1973.



Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Trend NAEP). Also see Endnote 8.

Since 1973, math scores have improved for all race/ethnic groups, by 0.7 grade levels for white students, by 1.7 grade levels for Hispanic students, and by 2.4 grade levels for black students.¹⁶ These gains have narrowed the achievement gaps between black and white 13-year olds and between Hispanic and white 13-year-olds narrowed, as shown in Exhibit 2.9.¹⁷ Results for 9- and 17-year olds followed the same patterns, except that 9-year-old Hispanic students did not narrow the gap with white students.

EXHIBIT 2.9 TRENDS IN NAEP MATH SCORES FOR 13-YEAR OLDS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY

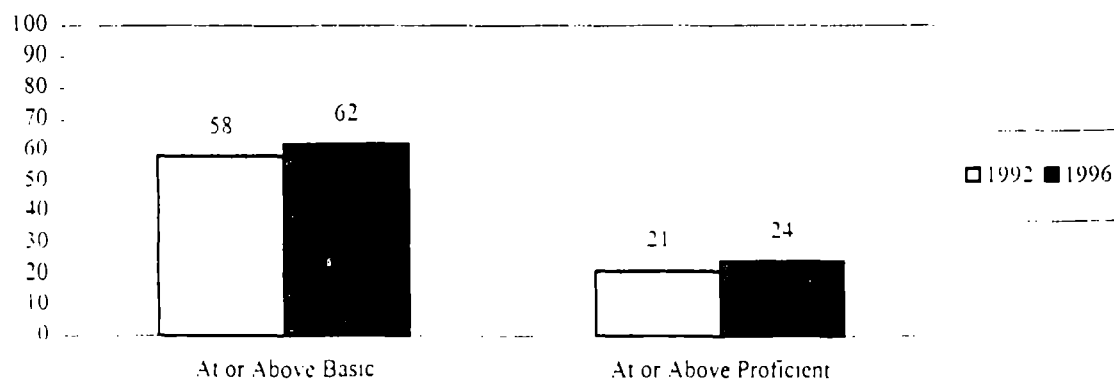


Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Trend NAEP). Also see Endnote 8.

Mathematics: Recent Trends

The main NAEP mathematics assessment measures achievement based on recent mathematics curricular emphasis and standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Exhibit 2.10 shows that the percentage of 8th graders scoring at or above either the basic or the proficient level of performance increased since 1992.¹⁸

EXHIBIT 2.10 PERCENTAGE OF EIGHTH-GRADERS SCORING AT OR ABOVE BASIC AND PROFICIENT LEVELS IN MATH ON MAIN NAEP, 1992-1996

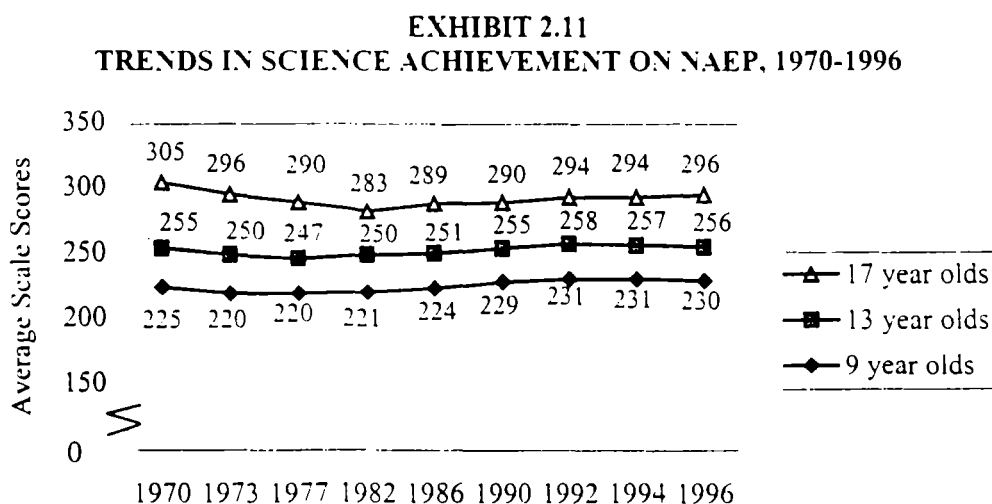


Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Main NAEP, 1992 and 1996). Also see Endnote 4.

Science Achievement: Long Term Trends

Twelfth-grade students' science scores are an important indicator of students' readiness to live and work in today's technological and scientific society. U.S. high-school graduates now must compete for jobs in an increasingly global and international workplace. On TIMSS, U.S. 4th graders' international standing was among the best in the world. Our students were outperformed by those in only one country.¹⁹ Our 8th grade international standing was above average,²⁰ while at the 12th grade level U.S. standing was among the lowest of the nations tested.²¹ These results raise concerns about how well prepared U.S. students are for the workplace of the future.

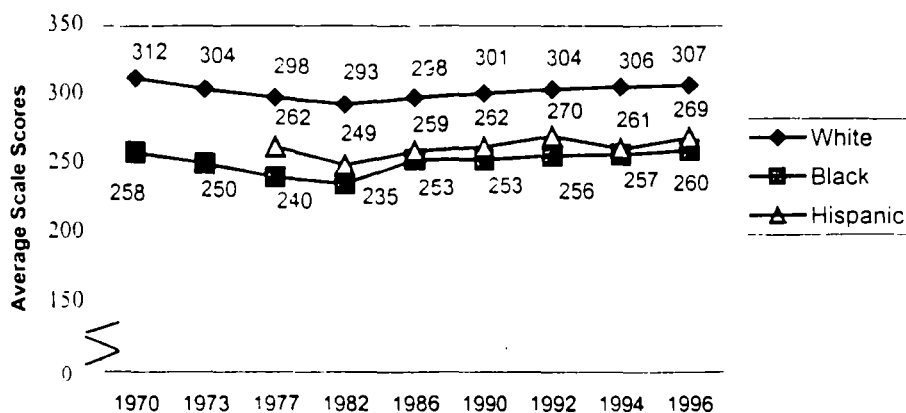
Taking a long-term view of progress in science, Exhibit 2.11 shows that average student achievement, after declining in the 1970s, rose during the 1980s for all age groups. However, scores have been relatively static throughout the 1990s for all groups of students except 17-year olds, for whom they have improved.



Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Trend NAEP). Also see Endnote 8.

During the past two decades, the achievement gap in science narrowed slightly for white and black 17-year olds, but the gap between white and Hispanic students did not narrow (Exhibit 2.12).²² Results for 9- and 13-year olds followed the same trends, except that 13-year-old Hispanic students did narrow the gap with white students.

EXHIBIT 2.12
TRENDS IN NAEP SCIENCE SCORES FOR 17-YEAR-OLDS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY

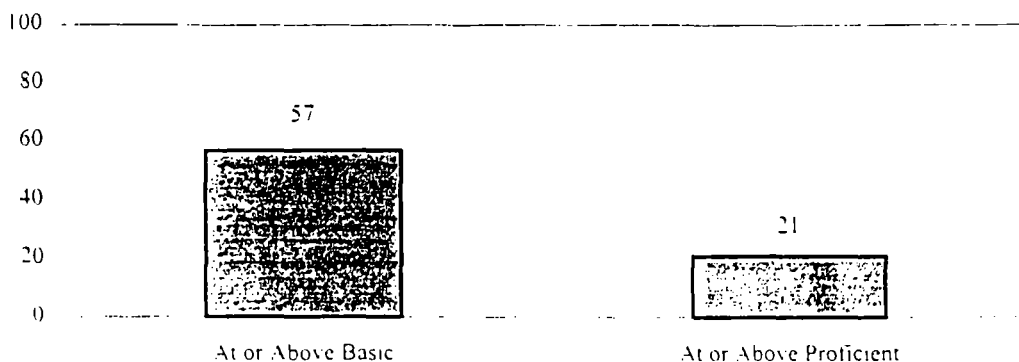


Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (Trend NAEP). Also see Endnote 8.

Science: Short Term Trends

The percentage of students scoring at or above various proficiency levels in science on the main NAEP has been assessed only once before, in 1996. Until the next assessment is completed, this is the only information available on the percentage of students scoring at or above the basic and proficient levels in science. Exhibit 2.13 shows the percentage of students scoring at or above the basic and proficient levels in the twelfth grade.²²

EXHIBIT 2.13
PERCENTAGE OF ALL TWELFTH-GRADE STUDENTS SCORING AT OR ABOVE BASIC AND PROFICIENT LEVELS IN SCIENCE ON MAIN NAEP, 1996



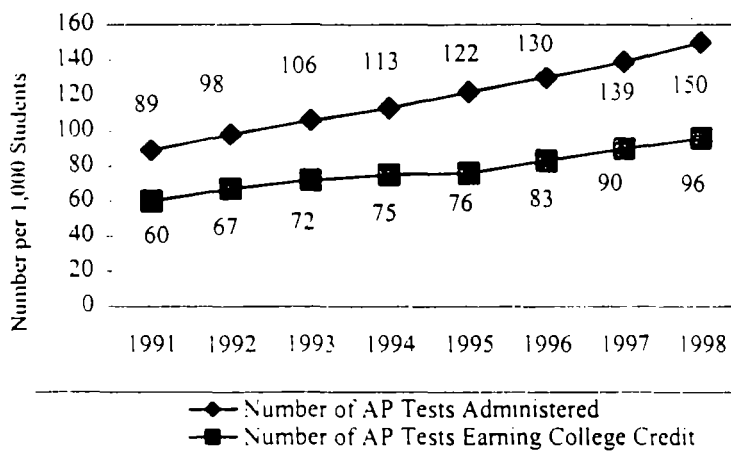
Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (1996 Main NAEP). Also see Endnote 22.

Are Our Students Making The Personal Choices Necessary For Productive Citizenship?

Course-Taking

To prepare for college and careers, more students are taking demanding classes in high school. Research has shown that an increased amount of time spent in more academically challenging courses is strongly related to improved achievement.²⁴ Between 1990 and 1994, the percentage of high school students taking challenging math and science courses such as geometry, calculus, and chemistry increased for all race/ethnic groups;²⁵ data on course-taking patterns in later years are not available. Since 1994, an increasing proportion of 11th and 12th grade students have been taking Advanced Placement courses and an increasing number have passed at the level required to receive college credit (Exhibit 2.14).²⁶ Policy makers hope that this trend toward studying more advanced material will lead to higher achievement for the nation's students.

EXHIBIT 2.14
NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) TESTS ADMINISTERED PER 1,000 11TH AND 12TH GRADE STUDENTS, AND NUMBER WITH TEST SCORES REQUIRED FOR COLLEGE CREDIT, 1991-1998



Note: Data for years prior to 1991 are not available.

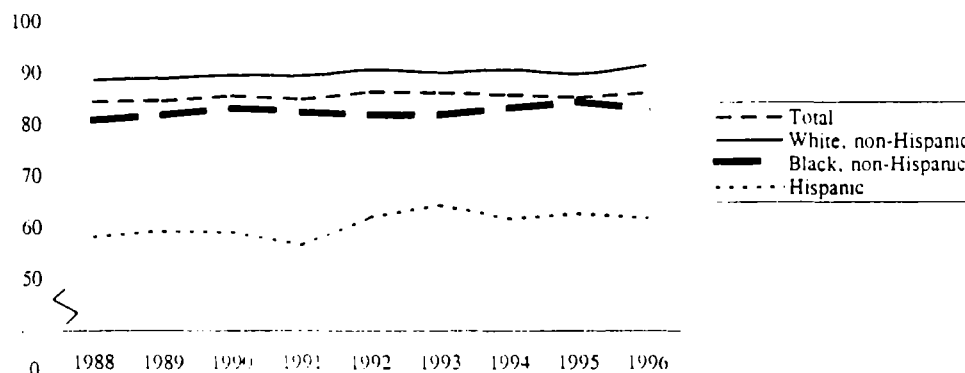
Source: The College Board, Advanced Placement Program, *National Summary Reports*, various years

High School Completion

The economic value of a high school education has continued to increase over the past two decades, although the overall high school completion rate -- measured as the percent of 18- to 24-year olds who have earned a high school diploma or its equivalent -- has increased only slightly. **The rate wavered around 84 percent between 1972 and 1983 and then increased in 1994 to 86 percent where it has remained since.** Within particular racial/ethnic groups, completion rates have fared differently. The completion rates of white and black youth have increased over the past two decades, while completion rates for Hispanics, although fluctuating somewhat, have remained stable at rates well below those of

whites and blacks.²⁷ In 1996, approximately 91.5 percent of white young adults had completed high school, compared with 84 percent of blacks about 62 percent of Hispanics.

EXHIBIT 2.15
HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES FOR PERSONS AGES 18-24 NOT CURRENTLY
ENROLLED IN HIGH SCHOOL, BY RACE/ETHNICITY:
OCTOBER 1988 THROUGH OCTOBER 1996



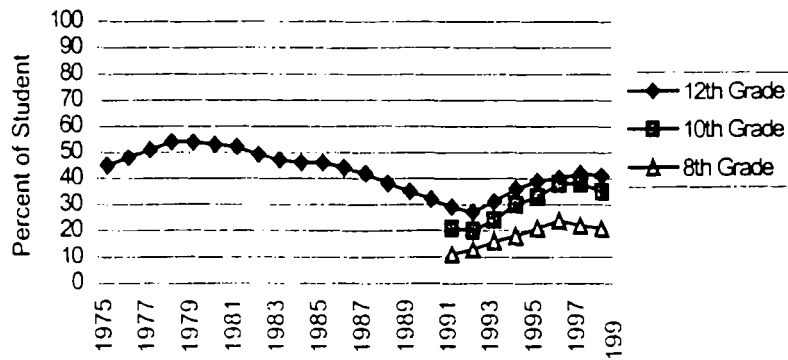
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

The slow progress over the past decade in increasing high school completion rates is of major concern, since the costs of not completing high school have risen over the past decade. Earnings for college graduates have increased over the past decade while earnings of high school completers and those without a high school diploma have decreased. Moreover, high school dropouts are more likely to face a number of difficulties in life. Compared with high school graduates, they are more likely to be unemployed and to receive public assistance, and young women who drop out are more likely to have children at younger ages and to be single parents.²⁸

Drug Use and Violence

Drug use is declining but remains a concern. In 1998, after six years of steady increases in the use of illicit drugs, use among secondary school students is down, as shown in Exhibit 2.16.²⁹ This downturn represents the second year of decreases for 8th graders and the first for 10th and 12th graders since their previous declines early in the decade. The longest term trend data for 12th graders show that after peaking in the late 1970s, drug use declined steadily throughout the 1980s, and even after increasing in the 1990s did not return to its previous high. The recent downturn is considered modest but represents the reversal of a troublesome trend. Reported use of alcohol, which increased gradually among secondary students in the 1990s, also declined somewhat in 1998; yet, one third of high school seniors reported being drunk at least once in the previous 30 days.

EXHIBIT 2.16
TRENDS IN ANNUAL USE OF ILLICIT DRUGS AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

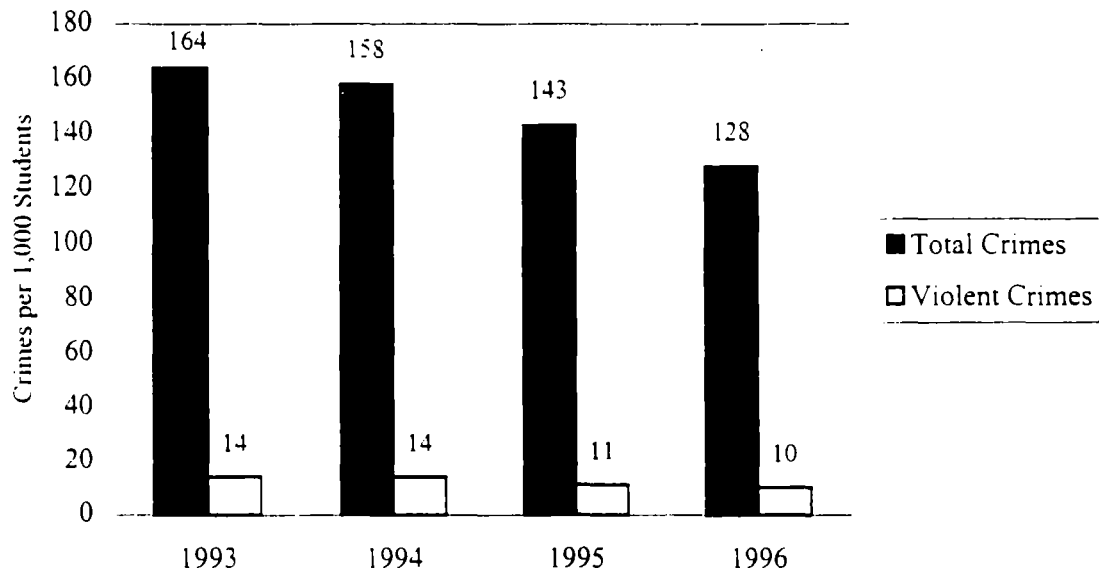


Note : Data are not available for 8th and 10th grade students prior to 1991.

Source: Monitoring the Future, University of Michigan.

Violence in schools appears to have decreased significantly. According to student reports, crime in or on the way to school has fallen steadily from 164 crimes per 1,000 students in 1993 to 128 crimes per 1,000 students in 1996³⁰ (Exhibit 2.17). The most common school crime is theft, and violent crime is comparatively less common.³¹ Students are almost twice as likely to experience violent crime outside of school as they are in or going to school.³² However, one in ten schools reported at least one violent crime in the 1996-97 school year.³³

EXHIBIT 2.17
NUMBER OF VICTIMIZATIONS* OF STUDENTS AGE 12 TO 18
OCCURRING AT OR ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL, PER 1,000 STUDENTS



* According to a household survey of students.

Source: Annual Report on School Safety, 1998, U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice.

¹ A recent report from the National Research Council, *Grading the Nation's Report Card*. (National Academy Press: 1999) raised questions about the internal consistency and validity of the achievement levels and concluded that they should continue to be considered developmental and therefore be interpreted and used with caution (p. 183).

² U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Fourth-Grade Mathematics and Science Achievement in International Context* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Eighth-Grade Mathematics and Science Teaching, Learning, Curriculum, and Achievement in International Context* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996) 18; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Reading Literacy in the United States: Findings from the IEA Reading Literacy Study* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1996 Science Performance Standards, 1996 Math Report Card, 1994 Reading Report Card*.

³ Patricia L. Donahue, Kristin E. Voelkl, Jay R. Campbell, and John Mazza. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card for the Nation* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998) 20.

⁴ Clyde M. Reese, Karen E. Miller, John Mazza, and John A. Dorsey, *NAEP 1996 Mathematics Report Card* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996) 47.

⁵ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Fourth Grade Mathematics and Science Teaching*; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Eighth Grade Mathematics and Science Teaching*; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of Twelfth-Grade Mathematics and Science*.

⁶ NAEP measures for low-income status using percent of students receiving free and reduced-price lunch go back to 1986 in math and 1988 in reading. For earlier trend data back to 1970, see I.V.S. Mullis et. al., *Trends in Academic Progress* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1991). Earlier measures of the gap in performance by poverty were made by comparisons of children living in advantaged and disadvantaged urban communities. Mullis found some closing of the gap in performance between students in advantaged and disadvantaged urban communities through the late 1980s.

⁷ NAEP trend scores are reported for 9-, 13-, and 17-year olds. Most U.S. students of those ages are enrolled in 4th, 8th, and 12th grades, respectively.

⁸ Jay R. Campbell, Kristin E. Voelkl, and Patricia L. Donahue, *Report in Brief: NAEP 1996 Trends in Academic Progress*. Publication No. 98-530 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1998) 5-6.

⁹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Reading Literacy in the United States: Findings from the IEA Reading Literacy Study* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996).

¹⁰ Campbell, Voelkl, and Donahue 14-15, 17-18.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card* 20.

¹² U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card* 70.

¹³ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Fourth-Grade Mathematics and Science Achievement in International Context* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1997).

¹⁴ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Eighth-Grade Mathematics and Science Achievement in International Context* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1996).

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- ¹⁵ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Twelfth-Grade Mathematics and Science Achievement in International Context* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1998).
- ¹⁶ John H. Bishop, "Employment Testing and Incentives to learn," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 33, (1988) 404-423.
- ¹⁷ Campbell, Voelkl, and Donahue 14-15, 17-18.
- ¹⁸ Reese et al. 47.
- ¹⁹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Fourth-Grade Mathematics and Science Achievement in International Context*.
- ²⁰ *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Eighth-Grade Mathematics and Science Achievement in International Context*.
- ²¹ *Pursuing Excellence: A Study of U.S. Twelfth-Grade Mathematics and Science Achievement in International Context*.
- ²² Campbell, Voelkl, and Donahue 5-6, 14-15, 17-18.
- ²³ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1996 Science Performance Standards* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996) 23.
- ²⁴ Rolf Blank and D. Langesen, *State Indicators of Science and Mathematics Education: 1997* (Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers, 1997) 24.
- ²⁵ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The 1994 High School Transcript Study Tabulations: Comparative Data on Credits Earned and Demographics for 1994, 1990, 1987, and 1982 High School Graduates*, 1996.
- ²⁶ The College Board, Advanced Placement Program, *National Summary Reports*, various years.
- ²⁷ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States, 1996*.
- ²⁸ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States, 1996*.
- ²⁹ University of Michigan, Survey Research Institute, Institute for Social Research, *Monitoring the Future Study* (Ann Arbor, MI: Author, December 1998).
- ³⁰ U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, *Annual Report on School Safety 1998* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998) 2.
- ³¹ Serious violent crime includes murder, rape or other type of sexual battery, suicide, physical attack or fight with a weapon, and robbery.
- ³² U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, *Annual Report on School Safety 1998* 2.
- ³³ U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, *Annual Report on School Safety 1998* 3.

3. ARE FEDERAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS HELPING TO PREPARE CHILDREN FOR SCHOOL?

KEY FINDINGS

Title I, Part A

- Serving about 260,000 preschool-age children, Title I, Part A, is the largest of the Department's early childhood efforts, yet little data exist on program performance or the quality of preschool services funded under the program. Recent evaluations have not explicitly addressed this topic.

Even Start

- The Even Start Family Literacy Program serves approximately 34,000 seriously economically and educationally disadvantaged families and their children. The second national evaluation found that at least 90 percent of these families had incomes at or below the federal poverty level. Eighty-five percent of adults had not earned a high school diploma or GED at enrollment.
- On average, Even Start projects have increased the amount of instruction they have offered in all core service areas over time, and attendance rates have improved. However, only about 25 percent of all projects meet or exceed the Department's performance indicator for the number of service hours offered in the three core instructional components.
- About half of new Even Start families in 1995-96 dropped out of the program within the first year, for reasons other than accomplishing their goals or moving out of the area.
- Children who participate in Even Start for at least one year make more progress on measures of school readiness and language development than could be expected by normal development.
- Parents also showed moderate gains on a measure of the home environment for literacy, gains not found in a control group of parents in a study of the Comprehensive Child Development Program.
- A 1998 synthesis of Even Start evaluations found that the quality of local evaluations varied, and that, as shown in their evaluation reporting, projects "rarely engage in the systematic use of data to manage and improve their programs."

Education for Homeless Children and Youth

- The percentage of state administrators who report that homeless children in their state had no difficulty enrolling in public preschool programs has increased slightly, but is still below 20 percent.