

Memorandum for DPC-Education Team

From: JB

Re: High School Exit Exam Options Paper

Date: January 20, 2000

Summary

This paper lays out four options concerning incorporating rewards for states that have rigorous high school exit exams into our current NAEP Performance Rewards package. Options range from not using exit exams, to rewarding only those states also receiving NAEP awards, to rewarding all states with sufficiently rigorous exams. Options also include the possibility of requiring evidence of a remediation plan for students that are failing as a condition of receiving the award.

Background

The FY01 budget includes \$50 million for rewarding state performance on NAEP exams. More specifically, the initiative creates a rewards fund for states that make exemplary progress in student performance and close the achievement gap on the National Assessment of Educational Progress exams in 4th and 8th grade reading and mathematics. In FY2001, rewards would be given to states based on achievement gains on the 4th and 8th grade math exams between the 1996 and 2000 administrations.

Under this proposal, the following states would not be eligible for rewards based on non-participation in the 1996 and/or 2000 administrations of NAEP 4th and 8th grade math: Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Washington.

One option still on the table is to include rewards as part of the NAEP pot for states with rigorous high school exit exams. Under Title XI of the President's ESEA reauthorization proposal, states would be required to "hold school districts accountable for ensuring that all students meet challenging standards" to graduate from high school. Including rewards for states that have accountability mechanisms in place like rigorous exit exams would underscore our commitment to this issue and provide some level of incentives for states to move forward with implementation of graduation standards and accountability. Including rewards for exit exams could also bring some states into the fold that are not eligible for NAEP awards that would help on the Hill.

State of the States: HS Exit Exams

At present, there are 27 states and Puerto Rico that have high school exit exams in place or in development. As reported in Education Week, 8 states have exams in place that reflect a 10th grade standard. What that generally means is that the exams the students must pass are subject matter exams that reflect their 10th grade courses. In all states,

students can retake the exams, and in all but 3 states (Alaska, Hawaii, and South Carolina) and Puerto Rico, the retakes are unlimited.

A chart on the states is attached at the end of the memo.

Options

OPTION #1: Do not include high school exit exams in the Rewards Fund.

Advantages

- It keeps the NAEP Performance Rewards initiative focused on actual performance (outputs), not inputs such as an exit exam.
- It would also keep us consistent with our message on high school reform, which is to change the nature of how high schools are organized and run, not make rewards for current practice.
- Finally, it would recognize that these exams are still an unknown quantity and that we may reward states for exams that aren't sufficiently rigorous.
- Avoids social promotion like fights with the same opposition lobby on the grounds that this disproportionately impacts African-American and Latino kids.

Disadvantages:

- By not including these exams, we can not bring anyone of the states that haven't participated in NAEP into the process. Of those left out of our NAEP math rewards for FY01, the following states would be eligible for HS exam rewards if we used the 10th grade standard and allowed rewards for exams in development: Delaware, Florida (need to check on), New Jersey, Ohio, and Washington.
- It does not allow us to highlight our support for accountability and rigorous graduation standards, which are included in our ESEA proposal. As we are trying to put many of our ESEA initiatives into the budget, the Rewards Fund is the best vehicle for incorporating HS exit exams.
- Also, without the HS component, our performance rewards initiative does not include an accountability mechanism at the graduation level.

OPTION #2: Include a reward for all states with high school exit exams *in place* that reflect at least 10th grade standards. Use \$5-\$10 million of the \$50 million pot for this purpose.

By FY2001, there will be at least 18 states at some stage of implementation with HS exit exams based on 10th grade standards. We may want to also consider requiring that there is some kind of remediation plan in place to assist students failing the exam. Otherwise we may be saying to a state: "congratulations for having an exam which shows how poorly you have been educating many of your students for the past 12 years."

Advantages:

- Requires that states have the exams in place—not just in development

- Allows us to underscore our commitment to graduation standards and our ESEA reauthorization proposal. We can make a political statement with rewards at

Disadvantages:

- Only brings one state into the process—Delaware—that isn't in it otherwise by virtue of NAEP.
- Only rewards states for implementing the exams rather than making a commitment to implement them. Theoretically, rewards for implementation could be seen as helping ease the mandate through the provision of funds (although they would not be earmarked to pay for the exam process).

OPTION #3: Include a reward for all states with high school exit exams *in place or in development* that reflect at least 10th grade standards. Use \$5-\$10 million of the \$50 million pot for this purpose.

As of today, there are 27 states and Puerto Rico with exams in place or in development. There are 25 or 26 states with at least 10th grade standards. As stated above, we may want to also consider requiring that there is some kind of remediation plan in place to assist students failing the exam.

Advantages:

- Rewards states for making the commitment to graduation standards and accountability exams.
- Helps undermine the mandate argument about our graduation accountability requirement in ESEA.
- Brings more states to the table: Delaware, Florida (need to check on), New Jersey, Ohio, and Washington.

Disadvantages:

- May reward states that later renege on this commitment or later water down standards to below a 10th grade level.
- Less reward money per state in an already small pot of money.

OPTION #4: Include a reward for all states with high school exit exams in place or in development that are externally benchmarked to high quality exams such as TIMSS, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate exams. Use \$5-\$10 million of the \$50 million pot for this purpose.

As yet, I can find no information on either states that have exams that would fit this description or agencies/organizations that even know the answer. We could charge NAS or like group to determine an evaluation process that would help DoED make this determination for rewards purposes.

Advantages:

- Clear and high standards

- Would reward only those states with standards and exams in place, which would keep the reward averages high.

Disadvantages:

- May mean we give out ZERO rewards, which would be ludicrous.

States with High School Graduation Exit Examinations (as of July 31, 1999)

State and Contact	Name of Test	Implementation Status	Subject(s)	Grade(s)	Month(s) Offered Every Year	Results Permitted/Limit on Number of Retakes	Remediation Required by State/State Funding	Use of Data Collected
Alabama Dorothy DeMan 334/242-8038	High Schools Basic Skills Exit Exam ¹	Currently being phased out	Reading comprehension, language, math, science, social studies	11th—all subjects	October, March	Yes/No	Yes/Yes ¹	Data determine students placed in remediation and identify areas for improvement.
	Alabama High School Graduation Exam	March 1999; class of 2001	Language, math, reading comprehension, science, social studies	11th—all subjects	March, September, December, July ²	Yes/No	Yes/Yes ¹	
Alaska Richard Smiley 907/465-8691	Alaska High School Graduation Qualifying Examination	Spring 2000; class of 2002	Reading, writing, math	10th—all subjects	Ten times per year ³	Yes/Yes ¹	No/Yes ¹	Data will be used in school accountability system and district and state report cards.
Arizona Anabel Apunela 602/542-3151	Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards	Spring 2000; class of 2002	Reading, writing, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability, combined mathematical structure and logic and number sense	10th	Spring	Yes/No ²	Yes ¹⁴ /No	
California Owen Stephens 916/637-3014	High School Exit Examination	2000-01: optional for 9th graders; 2001-02: required for 10th graders; 2003-04: required for graduation	Language arts, math	10th ¹³	To be determined ¹²	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined
Delaware Wayne Barton 302/739-4700	Delaware Student Testing Program	Spring 2000; class of 2002	English/language arts, math, science, social studies	10th—English/ language arts, math	April	Yes/To be determined	Yes/Yes	Results place students in remediation and determine whether students receive a state high school diploma or certificate of completion.
				11th—Science, social studies				
Florida Lynn Mabris 850/488-8198	High School Competency Test	October 1993; class of 1995	Communications, math	11th—all subjects	October	Yes/No ¹¹	Yes/Yes	Scores are used for graduation and school report cards. Scores also are part of a formula for grades assigned to schools.
Georgia Joan Boonman 404/657-0312	Georgia High School Graduation Test	Fall 1993; class of 1995	English language arts, math, science, social studies, writing	11th—all subjects	Spring, summer, ¹⁴ fall, winter	Yes/No ¹³	No/Yes	Results are published in a state report card; data are used in state and local remediation efforts.
Hawaii Selvin Chin-Chance 808/733-9103	Hawaii State Test of Essential Competencies	Spring 1979; class of 1983	Basic Skills: Reading, forms, writing, math, measurement, visual symbols; Other Life Skills ¹⁵	10th—all subjects	November, April	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	School districts how data will be used.
Indiana Mary Thede Withhurst 317/232-6614	Indiana Statewide Testing for Education Progress—Plus (ISTEP+) Graduation Qualifying Exam	September 1997; class of 2000	English/language arts, math	10th ¹⁷	September	Yes ¹⁶ /No	Yes ¹¹ /Yes ¹²	Results are tied to accreditation system and used to determine school eligibility for remediation funding. Data help schools make improvements and align curriculum to state standards.
Louisiana Scott Norton 225/342-3406	Louisiana Educational Assessment Program—Graduation Exit Examination	April 1989; class of 1991 ¹ Currently being phased out	Language arts, math, science, social studies, written composition	10th—language arts, math, written composition 11th—science, social studies	April	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Data are used to improve instruction. Results are released to the public.
	Louisiana Educational Assessment Program—Graduation Exit Examination (updated version)	March 2001 and 2002 ¹⁸ ; class of 2003	English/language arts, math, science, social studies	10th—English/ language arts, math 11th—science, social studies	March	Yes/No ²⁰	Yes/No ¹⁸	
Maryland Mark Moody 410/767-0073	Functional Testing Program ¹⁹	1978-79; class of 1982 Currently being phased out	Reading, math, writing, citizenship	Totals 12th ¹³	October, December, January, February, April, July ¹⁴	Yes/No	Yes/No	Results are used to provide accountability to the public and improve education programs in the state.
	High School Assessment	January 2002; class of 2005	English I, government, algebra, geometry, biology	End of course	January, May	Yes/No	Yes/No	
Massachusetts Jeff McDermott 781/388-3300, ext. 327	Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)	Spring 2001; class of 2003	English/language arts, math, science and technology, history and social science, world languages ¹⁷	10th	May	Yes/No ¹⁶	No/Yes ¹⁸	Data will be used to improve the testing program; address the needs of individual students; and inform policy decisionmaking.
Minnesota Diane Giksona 651/582-8759	Basic Standards Tests	Spring 1999; class of 2000	Math, reading, written composition	8th/12th	January, February	Yes/No ¹⁶	Yes/No	Data are used to develop improvement plans at the school level.

States with High School Graduation Exit Examinations (as of July 31, 1999)

State and Contact	Name of Test	Implementation Status	Subject(s)	Grade(s) ¹	Month(s) Offered Every Year	Retakes Permitted/Limit on Number of Retakes	Remediation Required by State/State Pending	Use of Data Collected
Mississippi Jon Simmons 601/359-3052	Functional Literacy Examination (FLE) ²	Fall 1987; class of 1989	Math, reading, written communication	11th—all subjects	December, March	Yes/No ¹¹	No/No	Data help identify educational needs at the district and school levels and identify the educational needs of individual students. Data also serve as accountability measures for accreditation.
Nevada Tom Klein 775/687-9184	Nevada High School Proficiency Exam ³	April 1998; class of 1997	Math, reading, writing	11th—all subjects	October, February, April, June ¹³	Yes/No	Yes/Yes ¹⁴	Data are used to help identify the need for remediation efforts. Results are released to the public.
New Jersey Marlene Courtney 609/292-8736	High School Proficiency Test (HSPT) ²	October 1992; class of 1994	Math, reading, writing	11th—all subjects	October, April	Yes/No	Yes/No ¹⁴	Data are used to determine if students have mastered the core curriculum content standards. Data also are used to satisfy a part of the graduation requirements, determine students' needs for remediation, and identify areas for improvement.
	High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA)	2001-02 ¹⁵ ; Class of 2003	Language arts literacy, math, science, social studies, visual and performing arts, health and physical education, world languages	11th—all subjects (when fully implemented)	October, April	Yes/No	Yes/No	Data are used to satisfy a part of the graduation requirements, determine students' needs for remediation, and identify areas for improvement.
New Mexico Jim Treviño 505/827-6324	High School Competency Exam	February 1988; class of 1990	Language arts, math, reading, science, writing, social studies	10th—all subjects	November, January, February	Yes	No/No	Results are released to the public. Because of the high passing rate, there is concern that the value of the test is reduced and that the test should be revised.
New York Tom Schoeck 518/674-5102	Regents Competency Tests ²	1987-88 Currently being phased out.	Reading, writing, math, science, social studies (global history), U.S. history and government	9th or 10th—math, science 10th—global history 11th—Reading, writing, global history, U.S. history, government	January, June, August	Yes/No	Yes/Yes ¹¹	Schools are issued report cards that include a measure of test performance. Data also enable the department to identify high-need schools to provide support.
	Regents Examinations ¹²	June 1999; class of 2005	English/language arts, global history, U.S. history and government, math, science (life and physical), second language ¹³	10th—life sciences, Math A, global history ¹⁴ 11th—English/language arts, U.S. history and government ¹⁵	January, June, August	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	
North Carolina Mildred Bazzucce 919/715-1191	North Carolina Competency Tests in Reading and Math	Summer 1994; class of 1998	Math, reading	8th ¹⁶	Fall, spring, summer ¹⁷	Yes/No ¹⁸	Yes/No ¹⁹	A state report of student performance is generated annually. Data enable the department to identify schools with the greatest needs.
	Essential Skills Exit Exam ²⁰	Graduating class of 2003	English, reading, grammar, math, science, social studies	11th	Spring	Yes/To be determined	Yes/Yes	Data provide assurances of student proficiency.
Ohio Jan Grudell 614/466-0223	9th-Grade Proficiency Tests ²¹	Fall 1990; class of 1994	Citizenship, math, reading, science, writing	9th-12th ²²	October, March, May (seniors only), August	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Data serve as measures of school and student performance; identify areas of work for schools, students, and parents; and flag changes needed in the curriculum.
Puerto Rico Isida Albino 787/754-6164	Puerto Rico Competency-Based Test	April 1999 ²³	Spanish, English, science, math, social studies	9th—all subjects 11th—all subjects	April	Yes/Yes	Yes/Yes	Data are used to determine students' progress and identify areas of improvement. Results are made public.
South Carolina Susan Agnew 803/734-8298	Basic Skills Assessment Program (BSAP)	Spring 1988; class of 1990 Currently being phased out	Math, reading, writing	10th ²⁴	April, July, October	Yes/Yes ²⁵	Yes/Yes	Data are used to determine placement in remedial classes, serve as diagnostic tools for schools and districts, and help direct curriculum improvements.
	Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT)	Spring 2001; class of 2003	Math, reading/language arts ²⁶	10th				

States with High School Graduation Exit Examinations (as of July 31, 1999)

State and Contact	Name of Test	Implementation Status	Subject(s)	Grade(s) ¹	Month(s) Offered Every Year	Retakes Permitted/Limits on Number of Retakes	Remediation Required by State/State Funding	Use of Data Collected
Tennessee Ben Brown 615/512-4770	Tennessee Competency Test	Currently being phased out ²	Language arts, math	9th—all subjects	October, February, June, July	Yes/No	No/No	Data are used to improve schools, student learning, and instruction for teachers, school, and system accountability.
Texas Keith Cruise 512/463-9535	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) ¹¹	Currently being implemented	Reading, writing, math	10th—all subjects	October, February, ¹⁰ April, July	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Data are used to determine content areas in which students need remediation, evaluate programs, resources, and staffing patterns; and evaluate district and campus curriculum and instruction.
	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)	2002-03	English language arts, math, science, social studies	11th—all subjects	To be determined	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Data are used to determine content areas in which students need remediation, evaluate programs, resources, and staffing patterns; and evaluate district and campus curriculum and instruction.
Utah Barbara Lawrence 801/538-7810	10th-Grade Competency Exam ⁴	Spring, class of 2003	English, language arts, reading, math	10th	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined	To be determined
Virginia Cameron Harris 804/225-1102	Literacy Passport Test ⁵	Spring 1999; class of 1996 Currently being phased out	Math, reading, writing	8th	February, July, October (retakes and transfer students only)	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Data are used to determine remediation efforts, assess a school's weaknesses, and help direct attention to those weaknesses.
	Standards of Learning Tests (SOL)	Spring 1998 Currently being phased in; will be fully implemented for the class of 2004 ¹¹	English, math, science, history ¹²	End of course	Spring/fall; limited summer administration starting in summer 1999	Yes/No	Yes/Yes	Data are used to determine remediation efforts, assess how well curricula align with the state standards, assess a school's weaknesses, and help direct attention to those weaknesses. Data provide a basis for school accreditation.
Washington David Anderson 360/564-3155	Washington Assessment of Student Learning—10th Grade (WASL 10) ¹³	Will be implemented effective 2000 ¹⁴	Reading, writing, communications, math, science ¹⁵	10th	Spring	Yes ¹⁶ /No	Yes/Yes	Data are used to make accountability decisions. In addition to assessment scores, data are collected on poverty levels, English-as-a-Second-Language students, dropout rates, special education students, and student mobility.
Wisconsin John Forner 608/266-1361	Wisconsin High School Graduation Test ¹⁷	Spring 2001; class of 2003	English/language arts, math, science, social studies	10th	Spring, fall	Yes/No	No	Data are used to certify that graduating students have attained the knowledge and skills in the Wisconsin Model of Academic Standards. Data also are used to provide information that will assist students who have not passed the test and provide schools with valid, reliable reports that serve as criteria, statewide passing standards.

¹ Grade listed is the first grade in which tests are administered.

² The High School Basic Skills Exit Exam will be phased out by 2003.

³ Funding will be provided effective October 1, 1999.

⁴ These months are proposed and may change. The test given in July will be optional and will be administered only at the discretion of the school district to students who have not passed previous tests. Students also have the option to take the test in those districts that offer a July test date.

⁵ Funding will be provided effective October 1, 1999.

⁶ Tests will be administered once in the sophomore year and twice in both the junior and senior years.

⁷ Although students are not limited regarding the number of times they may take the test while in high school, they are eligible to take the test only five up to three years after their graduation date.

⁸ If students do not pass the Alaska High School Graduation Qualifying Examination, they are eligible to stay in school until age twenty.

⁹ The test can be retaken during the fall and spring of the junior year and fall and spring of the senior year.

¹⁰ Policy has yet to be determined, but the law does not require remediation. The districts would make the determination if remediation were necessary.

¹¹ Beginning in 2001-02, students in the tenth grade will be required to take the exam. They may take the exam during each subsequent administration until they pass each section.

¹² The superintendent of public instruction will designate four dates on which the exam will be administered and four make-up dates. Each high school must offer the exam on at least three of the designated dates.

¹³ Students have two opportunities during their junior year and three during their senior year to take the test. Students receive a certificate of completion if they do not pass the exam. Students receiving certificates may retake the test an unlimited number of times to earn a standard diploma.

¹⁴ In addition to normal testing dates, retakes are offered between the summers of the junior and senior year. Students also are permitted to retake the exams in September and November of their senior year and during the summer after graduation as retakes.

¹⁵ Students may take the test five times while in high school and an unlimited number of times after their graduation date if they have been unable to pass one or more of the tests. If students have met all other requirements, they receive a certificate of performance or special education diploma after their graduation date until they pass the exam.

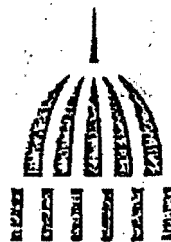
¹⁶ "Other life skills" are defined as reasoned solutions, facts versus opinion, resources for learning, health, careers, government, voting, citizenship, and global diversity.

¹⁷ Although it is first administered in the tenth grade, the ISTEP+ tests students to ascertain ninth-grade proficiency in English/language arts and mathematics.

¹⁸ Currently, retakes are offered once each semester during students' junior and senior year.

¹⁹ Remediation decisions are made at the local level. Schools must have a remediation plan for students who do not pass the test and may provide preventive remediation to students in any grade who are at risk of not passing the test.

- ¹⁰ The state provides remediation/prevention prize monies for each test (mathematics and English) for which the standard is not met for all tested grade levels (three, six, eight, and ten), and the local school corporation must have a 1:2 match for state funds. The first class subject to the Graduation Qualifying Exam (2000) also received additional remediation funds through the action of the Governor's office and state budget agency (15 million).
- ¹¹ The test administered in the tenth grade will be implemented in spring 2001, and the test administered in the eleventh grade will be implemented in spring 2002.
- ¹² Policy has yet to be determined.
- ¹³ Policy has yet to be determined.
- ¹⁴ The citizenship test may be eliminated in 2001, pending field trials of the new High School Assessment.
- ¹⁵ The reading, writing, and math tests may be given as early as the seventh grade. The citizenship test is waived for students who complete an approved course in government. Exceptions include students who had already been scheduled in a prior semester to take the citizenship test.
- ¹⁶ Reading and math tests are given in October and April. The citizenship test is given in January, February, and April. The writing test is given in December and July.
- ¹⁷ Students will be tested on English/language arts, math, science and technology, and history and social sciences during the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System's first administration in May 1999. World languages will be among the subjects to be tested beginning in May 2000.
- ¹⁸ Policy has yet to be determined.
- ¹⁹ Currently, remediation is not required under law, but the issue is being discussed. The most recent budget included funds for school districts whose students did not perform well to provide extra assistance if remediation was recommended.
- ²⁰ Districts may elect to offer the test in June.
- ²¹ Grade fixed is the first grade in which tests are administered.
- ²² Beginning in school year 2000-01, plans are to replace the FLE with mandatory end-of-course tests in Algebra I, Biology I, U.S. History, and English II (with a writing component) to obtain a high school diploma. The plans are still under development.
- ²³ Districts are not required to let individuals take the test after they have been out of school for three years.
- ²⁴ Nevada has had a graduation exit exam in place since 1977. The current test, first administered in April 1994, was redesigned to reflect higher standards.
- ²⁵ During a student's junior year, tests are administered according to the following schedule: reading/math—October; writing—February; and reading/math—April (retakes only). All three tests are administered during October, February, April, and June (after graduation exercises) for seniors who did not pass one or more of the tests during their junior year.
- ²⁶ School districts provide remediation services (e.g., adult education programs) to students who do not pass the tests prior to high school completion and are interested in retaking the test. Students do not receive a diploma from their high school if they pass the test(s) after their scheduled graduation date. They receive a diploma indicating that they have met all the requirements for a Nevada high school diploma from the adult education program.
- ²⁷ A revised version of HSPT II is being field tested. The new test, the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA), will assess student performance in language arts literacy, the arts, world languages, math, science, social studies, and comprehensive health and physical education. This exam will be required for all students beginning in the 2001-02 school year.
- ²⁸ Districts may use federal and/or state funds for remediation.
- ²⁹ Although implementation begins in October 2001, HSPA will not be fully operational until the 2005-06 school year. Language arts, literacy, and math will be implemented in 2001-02; science and social studies in 2002-03; visual and performing arts in 2003-04; health and physical education in 2004-05; and world languages in 2005-06.
- ³⁰ The Regents Competency Tests are being phased out between 1999 and 2004. During that period, local schools may use 55 to 64 as the passing score on Regents Examinations to meet local diploma requirements, though a passing score of 65 is required for a Regents diploma.
- ³¹ School districts have discretion in using state funds.
- ³² The class of 2003 will be the first class that must pass each of the Regents Examinations with a score of 65 or higher to graduate.
- ³³ The second language will be an elective.
- ³⁴ The Math A test will be administered during the middle of the tenth grade, and the life sciences and global history tests will be administered at the end of the tenth grade.
- ³⁵ The English/language arts and U.S. history and government tests will be administered at the end of the eleventh grade.
- ³⁶ Students may only take the reading and math tests in the eighth grade. Students retake the tests in the tenth grade and each year thereafter if they do not pass them the first time. The end-of-grade reading and math tests (grade eight) are the first opportunity to screen for the competency requirement. Students may be tested in the ninth grade.
- ³⁷ Seniors have four opportunities to pass the test if previous efforts have been unsuccessful.
- ³⁸ School districts are now required to administer the test(s) to individuals above age twenty-one.
- ³⁹ Districts may use federal and/or state funds for remediation.
- ⁴⁰ Another exit criterion for graduation in North Carolina is a passing score on the Computer Skills Test. This is effective with the graduating class of 2001. A student first takes the test in the eighth grade. The Computer Skills Test is separate from the Essential Skills Exit Exams.
- ⁴¹ In 1997 the state legislature decided to phase out the current 9th-Grade Proficiency Tests and replace them with tests that measure high school proficiency through the end of the tenth grade. The new tests will be a graduation requirement beginning with the class of 2005. In spring 2003, sophomores will take the new tests in reading, writing, mathematics, citizenship, and science.
- ⁴² Eighth graders may take the tests at the option of the school district.
- ⁴³ Effective April 2000, tests will be administered to students in grades three, four, nine, and eleven.
- ⁴⁴ Tenth grade is the first time students take the test. If they fail the test in April of their sophomore year, they may retake the test in April of their junior year and in October, April, and July of their senior year.
- ⁴⁵ Students may also take the exam in the summer after their senior year if all other requirements have been completed. Adults may take the test if they are enrolled in an adult education program.
- ⁴⁶ A science test will be added to the PACT as a requirement for graduation in spring 2002, and the plans are to add a social studies test as a graduation requirement in spring 2004.
- ⁴⁷ Grade fixed is the first grade in which tests are administered.
- ⁴⁸ For students entering the ninth grade in 2000-01, the competency tests will be replaced by end-of-course examinations in Algebra I, English II, and biology to meet graduation requirements.
- ⁴⁹ Students may meet the graduation requirements by passing state end-of-course tests. In that case, students are not required to take TAAS.
- ⁵⁰ February reading is only for graduating seniors and out-of-school youth.
- ⁵¹ The name of the test is not yet official.
- ⁵² This test will be phased out in 2003.
- ⁵³ The tests are being administered now. However, for graduation purposes, the tests will first be administered to the graduating class beginning in 2004. The test is given at the end of the course, so members of the class of 2004 who are taking algebra and other high school courses in middle school already are beginning to take their required tests.
- ⁵⁴ A standard twenty-two credit diploma requires a student to pass six tests. Of those tests, a student is required to take and pass two English tests (one in reading, literature, and research and one in writing). A student must also take one history test, but he or she may choose either world history to 1000 A.D. and geography; world history from 1000 A.D. to the present and geography; or U.S. history. The student must choose one math test among Algebra I, geometry, or Algebra II and one science test among earth science, biology, or chemistry. The sixth required test can be one of the student's choosing, but it must be chosen from the tests listed above. An advanced twenty-four credit diploma requires students to pass nine tests (English—two; math—two; science—two; history—two; and one course of the student's choosing).
- ⁵⁵ Passage is recommended to earn a certificate of mastery (CoM), which is required for graduation.
- ⁵⁶ The state board of education determines when WASL 10 is valid and reliable. The CoM is expected to be effective as a state graduation requirement beginning with graduating seniors in 2004.
- ⁵⁷ Social studies will be included by 2005-06; arts, health, and fitness will be included by 2006-07.
- ⁵⁸ Students will be permitted to retake tests only for the subjects they did not pass.
- ⁵⁹ Continuation of the test depends on further legislative and gubernatorial action.



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Rewarding High Performance and Closing the Achievement Gap

Summary

This initiative creates a \$50 million rewards fund for states that make exemplary progress in student performance and close the achievement gap on the National Assessment of Educational Progress exams in 4th and 8th grade reading and mathematics. In FY2001, rewards would be given to states based on achievement gains on the 4th and 8th grade math exams between the 1996 and 2000 administrations. Fifteen states would not be eligible for rewards based on non-participation in either 1996 or 2000. Based on state eligibility of 7-15 states for rewards, awards could range from \$3.5 - \$7 million.

Background

The current statutory language that authorizes rewards to states for demonstrating significant statewide achievement gains is predicated on an annual administration of NAEP exams in math and reading. However, NAEP is not given every year in the same subject areas. In fact, NAEP exams are administered every two years and individual NAEP subjects like math and reading are administered only every four years.

In order to develop a rewards package based on performance for FY2001, awards could only be made for state performance in 4th and 8th grade math and 4th grade science (8th grade science was not tested in 1996). While 4th and 8th grade reading exams were given in 1998, they will not be given again until 2002.

A FY2001 Rewards Program

For the purposes of the budget, a Rewards Program for FY2001 would have the following components.

State Eligibility

State would have to have participated in the 1996 and 2000 administrations of the 4th and 8th grade math NAEP exams.

Under this criteria, 15 states would be ineligible for rewards: Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Washington and Michigan. Included at the end the memo is a table provided by ED on state participation since 1994.

Options:

- The program could include the 4th grade science exam. This would provide another achievement indicator. At the same time, the focus on math is cleaner and it is likely that the rewards program will be based on reading and math performance only.

Also, although OMB has talked about allowing states to use exams that have standards on par with NAEP to get more states into the process, the fact is, according to the NRC, there are no states that meet that standard.

Reward Criteria

States would have to achieve the following on the 2000 NAEP exam in 4th and 8th grade math as compared with their performance on the 1996 exams:

1. Increased student achievement overall (mean score).
2. Progress in closing the achievement gap between high-performing and low-performing students in the state. The gap could only be closed by increases at the bottom and increases or flat scores at the top (and not by decreases at the top).

For example, progress could be benchmarked at increases in the state mean of 3 points and decreases in the gap of 3 points, without decreases in the mean for the 75th percentile.

In addition, the state would have to show that it was including students with limited English proficiency and/or disabilities to the greatest extent possible.

Options:

- Include a requirement that states must put in place a high school exit exam.
Pros: Given that the rewards are based on 4th and 8th grade performance, this would include an accountability mechanism at the graduation level. It would place an incentive on having an accountability system in place that includes graduation.
Cons: It is a departure for the "reward for performance" construct and it would reward states for having exams in place for graduation that include 8th grade standards. At present, there are reported to be only 8 states that have graduation exams that use a 10th grade standard. The emphasis would be on inputs rather than outcomes, which would be contradictory to the rewards message and incentives.
- Provide two sets of rewards: high achievers and exemplary growth: 1) those that make significant progress and close the achievement gap and 2) those that make significant progress, close the gap and that surpass some absolute standard (such as "having more students at the proficient level than the national average" or "50% or more of the state's students at a basic level).
Pros: Provides for rewards for high flyers that might not have as much room to grow (although they would also have to make progress and close the achievement gap). Would avoid a situation where all the rewards could go to states that are making progress but have low overall scores.
Cons: Opposing arguments is that we should be rewarding progress and focus on those who are making the greatest strides, irrespective of scores.

- Provide rewards for those 1) making exemplary progress and 2) making satisfactory progress. Again, these states would also have to close the achievement gap.
Pros: This would allow anyone moving forward to receive an award, but would reward more highly those making great strides.
Cons: Finite funds should only be used to reward top performers so that rewards can be as large as possible.

Size of Rewards

Contingent upon how you structure the rewards program and assuming 7-15 awards each year, awards could range from \$3.5 - \$7 million per state.

The Department applied the above reward eligibility and achievement criteria to 4th grade reading exams in 1994 and 1998. They found that 11 states would be eligible (CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, KY, MD, NY, TX, VA, and WA). An evenly divided \$50 million (with no money for dissemination or evaluation) would yield roughly \$4.5 million per state.

Use of Funds

Consistent with the President's ESEA reauthorization proposal, reward funds could be used to provide supplementary grants or administrative funds to States to carry out the purposes of the ESEA. Alternatively, states could be required to use funds to further close the achievement gap and/or to allocate the funds to low-performing LEAs within the State.

Plan for the Out-Years

In the out-years, the Rewards Program would offer awards for performance, as described above on 4th and 8th grade reading and math NAEP exams. At present the exams are each given every four years—at two-year intervals. Thus, reading exams will be given in 2002 and awards could be given based on progress since 1998 in FY2003. Math exams will be administered again in 2004 and rewards could be given based on progress since 2000.

Alternatively, the NAEP administrations could be changed from every four years to every two years, allowing rewards to be given each year alternately for math and reading performance. In addition, rewards could also be given for performance on science and writing exams. Including them would provide a more well rounded rewards program and create incentives for states to continue their focus on each of these subject areas. At the same time, not including them would focus rewards on acknowledged core subject matters: math and reading and would be consistent with the Administration's focus on these areas (including the President's call for national tests).

According to NCES, administering state NAEP on annual, rather than biennial basis would cost NCES an estimated \$12 million for state and \$9 million for National NAEP per subject for 2 grades.

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NAEP Year	Reward Year	Subject and Grade	States not participating or did not meet guidelines for reporting
1994		Reading, 4	10 states: AK, DoDEA, ID, IL, KS, NV, OH, OK, OR, SD, VT, VI
1996		Math, 4 & 8; Science 4	7 states: ID, IL, KS, OH, OK, PA (participated in 4 th grade math only), SD, VI
1998		Reading & Writing, 4 & 8	13 states: AK, GM, ID, IN, KS (no grade 8 writing), MA (4 th grade reading only), NV, NH (4 th grade reading only), NJ, ND, OH, PA, SD, VT,
2000	FY01	Math & Science, 4 & 8	9 states: AK, CO, DE, FL, NH, NJ, PA, SD, WA, MI?
2002	FY03	Reading & Writing, 4 & 8	
2004	FY05	Math & Science, 4 & 8	
2006	FY07	Reading & Writing, 4 & 8	

Recognition and Rewards for Student Achievement Gains

DRAFT

January 14, 2000

Objective:

Create a recognition and rewards initiative designed to identify and reward States that demonstrate progress toward improving student outcomes. The initiative would highlight and make grants to States for demonstrated success in improving student achievement and closing the gap between high- and low-performing students, while also creating further incentives for states to focus on achieving student performance goals.

Awards would be made to states that have 1) increased student achievement in the core academic subjects and 2) made progress in closing the achievement gap between high- and low-performers in the state, over two administrations of the State National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Awards Cycle:

Because improvements can not be measured well from year to year (too many perturbations, progress is slow), and because state NAEP is currently administered every two years (alternating subjects)¹, awards can only be made in two-year cycles (based on gains over four years). These awards would be made for either reading or math, depending on the year. (These could be two-year awards.)

NAEP Year	Reward Year	Subject and Grade	States not participating or did not meet guidelines for reporting
1994		Reading, 4	10 states: AK, DoDEA, ID, IL, KS, NV, OH, OK, OR, SD, VT, VI
1996		Math 4 & 8, Science 4	7 states: ID, IL, KS, OH, OK, PA (participated in 4 th grade math only), SD, VI
1998		Reading & Writing, 4 & 8	13 states: AK, GM, ID, IN, KS (no grade 8 writing), MA (4 th grade reading only), NV, NH (4 th grade reading only), NJ, ND, OH, PA, SD, VT,
2000*	FY01	Math & Science, 4 & 8	9 states: AK, CO, DE, FL, NH, NJ, PA, SD, WA, MI?
2002	FY03	Reading & Writing, 4 & 8	
2004	FY05	Math & Science, 4 & 8	
2006	FY07	Reading & Writing, 4 & 8	

* Results for 2000 administration will be available in January 2001.

Criteria (option):

101 Math 4 & 8
Science 4

102

States must have participated in the most recent administration of the state 4th grade NAEP (reading or math) and demonstrate:

- 1) Inclusion of students with limited English proficiency and/or disabilities to the greatest extent possible;
- 2) Increases in state mean score above 3 points; and
- 3) Narrowing of the achievement gap by at least 3 points, without decreases in the mean for the 75th percentile.

Example:

For 1994-1998 4th grade reading, 27 states and DC improved the state average (.17-9.18 differences in mean score). 21 states both increased the state mean and made progress toward closing the gap (without increasing the scores in the top percentile) (.52-9.23 change)ⁱⁱ.

Given the above criteria, awards would be made to only 11 states (CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, KY, MD, NY, TX, VA, WA).

Uses of Funds:

- Reauthorization Proposal – To provide supplementary grants or administrative funds to States to carry out the purposes of the ESEA, or
- To provide supplementary grants to States, but require that States allocate the funds to low-performing LEAs within the State.

Size and Range of Awards:

Assuming 7-15 awards are made per year, awards could be as large as \$7million.

Smaller awards might also be made for states meeting one, but not both of the achievement criteria or for making progress (though not enough) on both.

ⁱ Administering state NAEP on annual, rather than biennial basis would cost NCES an estimated \$12 million for state and \$9 million for National NAEP per subject for 2 grades.

ⁱⁱ Not yet able to determine percent change is statistically significant.

~~Include Report Card \$~~

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\$ for Report Card?

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for transitioning NAEP administration?

EDUCATION REFORM

Recognition and Reward

(Elementary and Secondary Education of 1965, Title X, Part A)

FY 2001 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined¹

Budget authority (\$000s):

<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>Change</u>
0	\$50,000	+\$50,000

¹The GEPA extension expires September 30, 2000; new authorizing legislation is proposed.

FY 2001 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2001, the Administration requests \$50 million for a new Recognition and Reward activity. This activity would be initiated under the broad authority for the Administration's Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) reauthorization proposal of the Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE). It would also be the first step toward implementing the vision, embedded in Title XI of the Department's ESEA reauthorization proposal, of providing financial incentives to States to fully implement the types of standards-based accountability systems that have proven effective in improving student achievement.

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Fiscal year 2001 funds would be used to reward States that: (1) demonstrate significant statewide gains in student achievement; and (2) reduce the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students in mathematics, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The Department would use NAEP results because NAEP is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. In addition, in making awards the Department could also take into consideration other criteria it considers appropriate, such as whether States have in place rigorous examinations to help ensure that all students have met prescribed standards before graduating from secondary school.

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By requiring that States ^{to} (1) demonstrate increases in student achievement in the core academic subjects over an extended period of time, and (2) simultaneously narrow the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students, the Administration's proposal deliberately sets a high standard for States to achieve to before receiving an award. As a result, the Department expects that a small number of States would be eligible for an award in any year.

This would be a forward-funded program. Funds would become available for obligation July 1 of the fiscal year in which they are appropriated and remain available through September 30 of the following year.

EDUCATION REFORM

Recognition and reward

Since 1994, with the passage of the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) and the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Administration has committed to the idea that all students can achieve to challenging standards. To help ensure that all students are prepared to meet challenging standards, the Administration has focused on promoting academic equity and excellence through such strategies as:

- ! **Implementing high standards in every classroom.** To enable States, districts, and schools to implement high standards, the Administration initiated the Class Size Reduction program to reduce average class size in the early elementary grades to 18 students per classroom so that students can receive the individual attention they need to learn to read independently and well by the end of third grade.
- ! **Improving teacher and administrator quality.** Research has shown that teacher quality is the most important in-school factor affecting student learning. The Administration is committed to ensuring that all children have a talented, dedicated, well-prepared teacher in their classroom. Title II of the Higher Education Act is supporting State and local efforts to take comprehensive approaches to improving teacher quality.

The Administration's 1994 reauthorization of the ESEA required that States develop challenging content and student performance standards and assessments aligned to those standards. There are encouraging signs that States have made progress as a result those accountability provisions. For example, 48 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have developed State-level standards. Recent data also indicate that the accountability provisions in Title I are driving higher standards to poor districts and schools. States and school districts are developing accountability systems that identify and reward high-performing schools, provide assistance to low-performing schools, and sanction persistently low-performing schools. In addition, States are developing strategies to end the practices of retention and social promotion and are, instead, providing low-achieving students with opportunities to participate in high-quality learning environments that build on the regular school program.

SELECTED PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

This section presents information on performance goals and objectives and selected performance indicators and strategies for measuring the progress made toward achieving program results. Desired targets will be identified after a baseline has been established. Achievement of targets will be based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided FY 2001 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Other performance indicators and strategies for this program are included in the Department's Annual Performance Plan and Annual Program Performance Report.

Performance goal: To increase the number of States that increase student achievement in the core academic subjects, narrow the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students, and have in place strategies for continuous improvement.

EDUCATION REFORM

Recognition and reward

Objective: The achievement gap between high- and low-performing students will be reduced.

<u>Indicator</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
The number of States that are able to demonstrate increased student achievement and a reduction in the gap between high- and low-performing students will increase annually. <i>Baseline to be established.</i>				

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Estimated number of awards	0	0	10
Estimated average amount of award	0	0	\$5,000