



# SCHOOL CHOICE

A TIMELINE (2001–2008)

DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL

# THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

## MEMORANDUM

THROUGH: KARL ZINSMEISTER

FROM: CLAIRE SULLIVAN

SUBJECT: SCHOOL CHOICE

President Bush believes that parents, armed with information, options, and choices are the best forces for accountability in education. He believes parents deserve the opportunity to choose the most effective and appropriate education for their children. This is why school choice has been an important principle of President Bush's work to reform public education.

George W. Bush's commitment to school choice began in Texas. As Governor, he saw too many children being left behind in too many public schools beset by low expectations and illiteracy. He saw students being shuffled through the system without any chance to escape to better schools, and Governor Bush was convinced there was a better way.

As Governor in 1995, he worked with the Texas Legislature to authorize the creation of open-enrollment charter schools to provide more education options for students within the public school system. By 1999, there were 168 approved charter schools in Texas that were providing much-needed alternatives to the State's traditional public schools and helping to educate some of its neediest students. Governor Bush also worked with the legislature to create Public Education Grants, which offer students the opportunity to transfer out of schools that the State has rated as "low-performing" or in which 50 percent or more of the students have not passed the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) tests two years in a row.

During his campaign for President, George W. Bush made expanding school choice a central principle of authentic school reform in his No Child Left Behind (NCLB) proposal. He pledged that parents would be given the information, options, and choice to ensure that their children got the most effective education possible.

As President, George W. Bush has kept these promises to America's parents. For eight years, President Bush has advanced school choice through three primary strategies: (1) empowering parents under NCLB; (2) expanding charter schools; and (3) creating innovative scholarship programs.

### **Empowering Parents Under NCLB**

On January 23, 2001, President Bush presented Congress with his blueprint for nationwide education reform. NCLB sought to advance four principles: increase accountability for student

performance, focus on what works, increase flexibility, and empower parents with choices. The President was committed not only to fixing troubled public schools but also to arming parents with information about school performance, giving them better options for their children, and empowering those parents to leverage change in the public school system. To that end, the 30-page legislative blueprint called on Congress to:

- Provide school choice to all students trapped in struggling or persistently dangerous schools. Students in schools that failed to make adequate progress after three years would be able to use Title I funds to transfer to a higher performing public or private school or to receive tutoring.
- Increase funding to assist charter schools with start-up costs, facilities, and other needs associated with creating high-quality schools.
- Broaden Education Savings Accounts, which allow parents to set aside money in tax-free savings accounts to help pay education costs, to include K–12 education-related expenses, and increase the maximum contribution limit to \$5,000.
- Expand school choice through a new grant program designed to promote the demonstration, evaluation, and dissemination of information on innovative approaches that promote school choice.

On December 18, 2001, Congress passed, with overwhelming bipartisan support, a version of NCLB that included an unprecedented commitment to providing parents with options and choices for their children's education. Under NCLB, any child in a low-performing school can transfer to another public school of his parents' choice.

The law also provides free tutoring and after-school help, called Supplemental Educational Services (SES), to low-income students in struggling schools. Under the SES provision, low-income students in schools in the second year of improvement are eligible to receive free tutoring or remedial assistance from over 1,600 providers (including faith-based organizations) approved by states. This extra help can be provided before or after school, on weekends, or in the summer. A study conducted by the RAND Corporation for the U.S. Department of Education, found that students in nine urban school districts receiving SES experienced significant gains in achievement. Those who participated for multiple years made gains that were twice as large as those in the program for one year. The study also found that SES-enrolled students had lower academic achievement than other students, suggesting that the program is reaching the students who need it the most.

Since the passage of NCLB, the President and his Administration have worked tirelessly to increase the quality and timeliness of the information available to parents and to improve parents' access to high-quality education options for their children. For example, the Administration's FY 2003 budget request included \$50 million for a new Choice Demonstration Fund to support research projects that develop, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to school choice, and \$25 million for the Voluntary Public School Choice Program, a grant program that supports school districts and States in five-year projects to establish, expand, or more effectively notify parents about public school choice. On September 9, 2003, the President announced a unique public-private partnership to provide detailed performance data online for every school in each State to help parents determine how their child's school compares to other schools. After two years, the free, web-based service was transferred to the privately-run Web

site SchoolMatters.org, which continues to provide valuable information to parents about their children's school.

Despite the Administration's support for choice programs, the number of students benefiting from them remained disappointingly low. Although a total of more than two million students have participated in these programs since the law's enactment, during the 2006–07 school year, only 120,000 students—just 2 percent of those eligible—took advantage of their opportunity to transfer out of a failing school. Low participation rates are associated with a perverse incentive structure—school districts must notify parents of their options to transfer their child, or get them SES tutoring, but doing so may result in the district losing a small portion of its Federal funding to another school or tutoring provider. As a result, many districts drag their feet when it comes to providing timely notification or design complex sign-up procedures to discourage participation in both programs. That way they can keep the unused choice money on site for general purposes.

When NCLB came up for reauthorization in 2007, President Bush viewed it as an opportunity to strengthen the law's promise to empower parents with more information and better options for their children. In his 2007 State of the Union Address, President Bush called on Congress to reauthorize NCLB and issued a detailed blueprint to outline the Administration's proposals, including requiring school districts to use their entire allocation for SES and school choice or roll it over to the next year. This change would ensure that choice and SES money can only be spent on those programs and would eliminate the incentive for schools to ensure take up is low. The blueprint also called on States to provide assessment results to parents earlier in the summer so they could make more informed decisions about SES and choice.

By early 2008, Congress had still not reauthorized NCLB; however, the President remained committed to the reforms that he knew would enhance parental choice and asked the Department to address these reforms through administrative action. In April 2008, the Department proposed new regulations that would require districts to work with community-based organizations to inform parents of their SES and choice options before the district could reallocate unused funds. The regulations, which took effect in October 2008, would also require parents to be notified of their choice and SES options at least two weeks before the first day of school.

### **Expanding Charter Schools**

To ensure that there are high-quality, appropriate options for parents, particularly low-income parents, President Bush has promoted and expanded charter schools. Charter schools are public schools that specialize in finding innovative ways to educate the Nation's neediest students. They are given greater freedom from burdensome regulations in exchange for being held to strict standards of accountability, and as a result, these schools can be highly responsive to the needs of students and communities.

The President's most significant investment in public charter schools has occurred through two grant programs—the Charter School Program (CSP) and the Credit Enhancement for Charter Schools Facilities Program (Facilities Program). The Department awards CSP grants to help States set up, develop, and expand charter schools, and to promote the exchange of information

about best practices. In 2002, the Department awarded an unprecedented \$198 million in CSP grants. By FY 2008, the CSP budget had increased to \$211 million, and in FY 2009, the President requested another \$25 million increase. As a result, under President Bush, 1,890 charter schools have received CSP funding, representing more than one-half of all charter schools in the country. The Facilities Program was created by the Administration in 2002. The Program awards grants to public entities and nonprofit organizations that leverage their own funds to help charter schools obtain, construct, or renovate school facilities through practices including guaranteeing and insuring debt or leases, facilitating a charter school's facilities financing, or encouraging private lending. Since 2002, the program has leveraged \$739 million to serve 207 charter schools to the benefit of 57,000 students.

The resulting expansion of charter schools has been impressive. Since 2000, the number of charter schools in the Nation has more than doubled. Today, an estimated 4,300 charter schools are educating 1.2 million students in 40 States and the District of Columbia. Another 365,000 children are on waiting lists for the opportunity to attend a charter school.

Charters are delivering results for students and parents. For example, the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) operates 66 schools serving 16,000 students. Eighty percent of their students are low-income, and 90 percent are African American or Latino, and more than 80 percent of KIPP alumni have gone on to college. High Tech High in California operates eight schools serving 2,500 students with 100 percent of graduates accepted to college.

### **Creating Innovative Scholarship Programs**

Some students don't have better public school alternatives, so the NCLB choice provisions are of limited help. President Bush has worked to give these parents options outside the public school system, particularly parents with students trapped in public schools that cannot—or will not—improve. He has argued that these choices should be enabled through scholarships, similar to how we provide government scholarships and loans to students to use to attend the college of their choice, regardless of whether it is a public or private institution. However, these scholarships, already being tested in a few school districts around the country, have proven controversial. Opponents argue that scholarships or vouchers take Federal dollars away from the public school system and in some cases inappropriately allow government funding of religious activity.

On June 27, 2002, the Supreme Court held in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* that school vouchers did not, as some opponents claimed, constitute unconstitutional government support for religion. Rather, the challenged Cleveland, Ohio, voucher program was declared constitutional because it permitted families "to exercise genuine choice among options public and private, secular and religious" and, therefore, was "a program of true private choice . . . that . . . does not offend the Establishment Clause."

This holding freed the President to pursue legislation that would put scholarship money in the hands of low-income parents with children in failing schools. On July 1, 2003, the President called on Congress to support a unique, locally-developed, three-sector initiative to reform Washington D.C.'s public schools, replicate high-performing charter schools, and provide private

and religious school scholarships to some of Washington's poorest children. One year later, the Congress answered his call by providing \$40 million for education reform in the District of Columbia, including \$14 million for the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program (D.C. OSP).

Since 2004, the D.C. OSP has provided more than 2,600 low-income students with up to \$7,500 to attend the private school of their choice and has made a real difference in these students' lives. The average family income for scholarship recipients is just \$22,700 per year. Without the OSP, 86 percent of the participating students would return to failing D.C. schools. As a result, the program receives four applications for every available scholarship.

A study by Georgetown University found positive parental satisfaction with the program and demonstrated that students in the program showed greater enthusiasm for school and an improved attitude toward learning. The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) conducted an evaluation of the first two years of the program and found that, overall, there was no statistically significant difference in the average test scores of students who were offered a scholarship and the average scores of students who were not offered a scholarship. However, IES further examined three key subgroups of students representing 88 percent of participating students (students who had applied in the first year of the program, students who had previously attended a relatively more effective D.C. public school, and students who entered the program with relatively higher test scores). What IES found was that there was a statistically significant difference when the reading scores of the students in each of these three subgroups who were offered scholarships were compared to the scores of the students within that same subgroup who were not offered scholarships. In fact, the reading scores of students in these subgroups who were offered scholarships were higher by the equivalent of two to four months of additional schooling.

These subgroup findings lead to the conclusion that after two years, participation in the program increased the test scores of students who entered the program with a relative advantage in academic preparation, whereas the program did not have an effect on the less-prepared students. This is probably because the academically-prepared students were more equipped to benefit more immediately from the typically more rigorous private school environment. However, despite the size of these subgroups, the academic benefits experienced by the better-prepared students in those subgroups who were offered scholarship—two to four months of additional schooling—were not large enough to create a statistically significant difference overall between the scores of students who were offered scholarships and those who were not.

The D.C. OSP's popularity and the signs of its positive effects on student attitudes and achievement have inspired President Bush to ask Congress to replicate this type of scholarship program to low-income students nationwide. In his FY 2007 budget request and as part of his blueprint for NCLB reauthorization, the President asked Congress to support two new programs:

- Require schools that go into restructuring status under NCLB to offer \$2,500 Promise Scholarships, which would allow low-income students in grades 3–12 to attend a private school, receive intensive tutoring, or attend another public school.
- Offer Opportunity Scholarships, modeled after the Washington D.C. choice program that would provide competitive grants to cities, nonprofits, and other entities working to

provide low-income students in failing schools with the opportunity to attend a private school or receive intensive tutoring.

These proposals were met with fierce opposition from the teachers union and other voucher opponents who convinced Congress not to act. The President remained undeterred and used his FY 2009 budget request to propose two different scholarship programs. First, the Pell Grants for Kids program would offer \$300 million in scholarships to enable poor students in struggling schools to transfer to a new school of their choice. It would be narrowly targeted to the neediest of our Nation's students—those in schools that have not made adequate yearly progress for five consecutive years or that have a graduation rate less than 60 percent. Philosophically, the program is modeled after two highly successful higher education initiatives: the GI Bill, which gave World War II veterans scholarships that could be used at the public or private institution of their choice; and the Federal Pell Grant program, which provides low-income students with financial support to attend any of approximately 5,400 public and private postsecondary institutions. Both of these Federal programs expanded the range of high-quality academic opportunities available to individuals by allowing Federal funding to follow the student to the institution of his or her choice. The President believed that the same flexibility and support offered to students seeking a quality higher education should be offered to low-income students in low-performing schools who seek a quality elementary or secondary education.

The second program called for reform of the current after-school program into an \$800 million program called 21st Century Learning Opportunities. The new program would make competitive awards to public or private nonprofit organizations to administer tutoring scholarships for students from low-income families who attend schools that have been identified for school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. Unfortunately, Congress has not authorized either program.

The President has also called attention to the alarming trends facing many alternatives to public education. In his 2008 State of the Union Address, President Bush announced that he would hold a White House Summit on Inner-city Children and Faith-based Schools. The summit helped increase awareness of the challenges faced by low-income students in the inner cities and addressed the role of non-public schools, including faith-based schools, in meeting the needs of low-income, inner-city students. Despite their educational successes, urban faith-based schools are disappearing at an alarming rate. Between 2000 and 2006, nearly 1,200 inner-city faith-based schools closed, displacing 425,000 students. Participants in the Summit helped to show that when growing numbers of these schools close, we suffer as a Nation.

President Bush has an established record of fighting for those parents and students who most need alternatives to the schools that are failing them. By empowering parents through NCLB, supporting charter schools, and creating scholarship programs, he has helped countless children escape broken schools and sent a clear message to ineffective schools throughout the Nation: shape up or lose your students.

## Chronology of Events

October 5, 1999 Governor George W. Bush gives a campaign speech on education reform at the Manhattan Institute Luncheon in New York in which he explains that promoting more choices for parents will be one of the primary goals of his reforms. In particular, Governor Bush proposes giving parents with children in failing schools scholarships amounting to \$1,500 for tutoring or tuition at the school of their choice and establishing a Charter School Homestead Fund to help finance the start-up costs of charter schools.

Education: A Culture of Achievement (campaign document)

January 23, 2001 The President presents to Congress his blueprint for nationwide education reform entitled "No Child Left Behind." The 30-page legislative blueprint called on Congress to promote informed parental choice by: giving parents access to school report cards on achievement for all groups of students, providing funding to assist charter schools with start-up costs and other needs, and granting awards for innovative efforts to expand parental choice.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/reports/no-child-left-behind.html>

April 12, 2001 The President calls on Congress to expand options for parents and students. He emphasizes that children trapped in struggling schools should have the option to transfer to better performing schools, the vital role charter schools play in our education system, the idea that Title I funding should follow students trapped in schools that do not improve, and the need to increase education savings accounts from \$500 to \$5,000 and broaden the eligible use of those funds to K-12 expenses.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/04/20010412-3.html>

May 23, 2001 The House of Representatives passes an education reform bill by a vote of 384-45. In addition to strengthening state, district, and school accountability, the bill provides students in struggling schools with the opportunity to transfer to higher-performing public schools or receive tutoring.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2001/05/05232001b.html>

June 14, 2001 The Senate passes an education reform bill by a vote of 91-8. The bill increases Federal funding for education and requires that each student subgroup improve its test scores by at least 1 percent each year.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2001/06/06142001a.html>

December 11, 2001 The House-Senate conference comes to an agreement on NCLB. States are required to publish annual state and school district report cards to inform parents about state and school academic progress. Parents of low-income students trapped in failing schools may transfer their child to a high-performing public or charter school or have their child receive supplemental educational services (SES). The agreement also expands Federal support for charter schools by giving parents, educators, and other community leaders greater opportunities to create new charter schools.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2001/12/12112001b.html>

December 18, 2001 The NCLB conference report, including the provisions that promote informed parental choice, is adopted by the House and Senate by a vote of 381-41.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2001/12/12182001.html>

January 8, 2002 The President signs NCLB.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2002/01/01082002.html>

February 4, 2002 The President's FY 2003 budget request includes two new proposals that would expand options for parents: \$100 million for a new Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program for public entities and nonprofit organization that enhance the credit of charter schools by guaranteeing to schools the capital to address the cost of acquiring, constructing, or renovating charter school facilities; and \$50 million for a new Choice Demonstration Fund to support research projects that develop, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to increasing parental choice.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2002/02/02042002a.html>

June 14, 2002 Secretary of Education Paige releases preliminary guidance on increasing education options under NCLB. The guidance calls on school leaders to move quickly to implement the law's choice provisions. Specifically, school districts must make choice available to students in schools identified as in need of improvement by January 7, 2002, and must make SES available to students in schools in their second year of improvement status.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2002/06/06142002.html>

June 27, 2002 The Supreme Court upholds the constitutionality of school choice programs. In the landmark decision, *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, the Court holds that Cleveland, Ohio's voucher program does not violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment because the parents who received the

vouchers were free to choose either religious or non-religious schools.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020627-2.html>

October 4, 2002

Three states and 10 school districts receive \$23.8 million in grants under NCLB's Voluntary Public School Choice Program. This new competitive grant program supports school districts and States in five-year projects to establish or expand public school choice programs. Funds can be used to plan or design the program, to help notify parents of the existence of the choice program, or for other reasonable expenses to carry out the program.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2002/10/10042002.html>

October 7, 2002

The Department of Education will award an unprecedented \$198 million in grants under the Public Charter Schools Program to help set up, develop, and expand charter schools and to promote the exchange of information about best practices for improving student achievement in charter schools.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2002/10/10072002.html>

January 31, 2003

The President's 2004 Budget requests \$756 million to expand options for parents, including: \$75 million for a new School Choice Incentive Fund, which provides competitive awards to States, school districts, and community organizations with a proven record of promoting educational opportunities for children; and a \$20 million increase for the Public School Charter Program.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2003/01/01312003.html>

April 4, 2003

The Department of Education begins accepting applications for its Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program. The program will leverage Federal dollars to encourage private lenders, investors, and landlords to help charter schools acquire, construct, or renovate school facilities.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2003/04/04042003a.html>

July 1, 2003

The President discusses education reform in Washington, D.C., at the KIPP Academy. He announces his plan to ask Congress for \$15 million to create a Federally-funded school choice program in D.C., which would provide scholarships of up to \$7,500 per student to be used at the private school of the student's choice.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/07/20030701-3.html>

July 10, 2003

The House Government Reform Committee passes the D.C. Parental Choice

Incentive Act of 2003. The bill meets the President's requests—providing up to \$7,500 per year to low-income students in the District of Columbia to cover the tuition, fees, and transportation expenses of enrolling in the private school of their choice. The bill also requires the Secretary of Education to conduct interim and final evaluations of the program's effects on student achievement, expanding choice options, safety, and other issues.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2003/07/07102003b.html>

September 5, 2003

The D.C. Parental Choice Incentive Act passes the House of Representatives.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2003/09/09052003a.html>

September 9, 2003

President Bush highlights new online tool to help parents monitor school performance. The Web-based tool, which was created under a unique public-private partnership, would provide all 50 States with the opportunity to use a free package of data services to help them perform basic data analysis and comply with the reporting requirements of NCLB.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2003/09/09092003.html>

September 18, 2003

The Department of Education announces that it will provide \$25 million under the new Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Grant program to organizations in Massachusetts, North Carolina, New York, and Washington, D.C. These organizations serve charter schools in more than 11 States and Washington, D.C.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2003/09/09182003a.html>

November 3, 2003

The Department of Education awards more than \$600,000 in grants to two organizations—the University of Minnesota and the National Governor's Association—that will assist States with school choice programs. The funds will be used to synthesize information about the most effective ways for States to create and administer charter schools and other choice policies and to partner with governors and other State leaders to develop broad school choice strategies.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2003/11/11032003.html>

January 9, 2004

The President's FY 2005 budget once again requests \$50 million for the School Choice Incentive Fund, which would provide competitive grants to entities with a proven record of expanding school choice. The budget also requests a \$63 million increase in the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program.

- <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/01/01092004.html>
- January 22, 2004 The D.C. choice bill passes the Senate.
- <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/01/01222004.html>
- January 29, 2004 Secretary Paige announced launch of the School Information Partnership website.
- <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2004/01/01292004.html>
- March 4, 2004 The Department of Education announces the establishment of the State Charter School Facilities Incentive Program. The competitive grant program would encourage States to develop per-pupil facilities aid programs—programs in which a State makes payments to charter schools, based on the number of pupils in the schools, to help those schools finance their facilities.
- <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/03/03042004a.html>
- March 24, 2004 As required by the D.C. choice bill, the Secretary of Education and the Mayor of D.C. work together to select the Washington Scholarship Fund, an independent entity, to administer the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.
- <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/03/03242004.html>
- May 24, 2004 The Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement releases *Creating Strong District School Choice Programs*. The publication highlights the promising practices of five school districts that have successfully expanded school choice and urges school districts to take four key actions: help parents make informed choices, build school district infrastructure, support schools, and improve programs over time.
- <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/05/05242004.html>
- July 20, 2004 The House of Representatives passes the District of Columbia FY 2005 budget, which provides \$40 million for education, including \$14 million for the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program.
- <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/07/07202004a.html>
- November 19, 2004 The Department of Education releases its report entitled: *Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program*. Based on data from 1999-2002, the evaluation finds that money from the Public School Charter Program is the most prevalent source of start-up funding available to charter schools. It also finds that charter schools are less likely to meet State performance standards than traditional public schools; however, charter schools are more likely to

serve minority and low-income students.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/11/11192004.html>

December 15, 2004 A pilot study on charter schools from the National Center for Education Statistics finds that the number of students in charter schools is growing and that charter schools tend to serve a higher percentage of black students and urban students than traditional public schools. The study also finds that when race is controlled for, there is no statistically significant difference between the performance of charter school students and public school students on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading test.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/12/12152004.html>

February 7, 2005 The President's FY 2006 budget request once again asks for \$50 million for the School Choice Incentive Fund, which would provide competitive grants to entities with a proven record of expanding school choice.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/02/02072005.html>

August 18, 2005 The Department awards FY 2005 grants under the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities to five organizations. These five grantees will serve 48,000 students in 120 charter schools in California, Delaware, Texas, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/08/08182005a.html>

August 25, 2005 The Department initiates an SES pilot program that will allow school districts to offer SES one year earlier than the law requires in lieu of public school choice. Any school that moves into a second year of improvement will be required to offer SES and choice.

<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/letters/acva5.html>

September 1, 2005 The Department announces a new SES pilot program for urban school districts, which will allow urban school districts that have been identified as in need of improvement to serve as SES service providers. In exchange, the districts will agree to ensure that families receive more opportunities for services and more choices.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2005/09/09012005.html>

September 30, 2005 Louisiana is awarded a \$20.9 million grant under the Charter Schools Program. The Federal funds will help the State reopen charter schools damaged by Hurricane Katrina, create 10 new charter schools, and expand

existing charter schools to accommodate the children whose schools were damaged or destroyed by the Hurricane.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/09/09302005.html>

January 6, 2006

In a narrow ruling, the Florida Supreme Court strikes down the State's Opportunity Scholarship program. The court held that the program violated the State constitution because it "diverts public dollars into separate private systems parallel to and in competition with the free public schools that are the sole means set out in the [State] Constitution for the state to provide for the education of Florida's children."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/06/national/06florida.html>

February 6, 2006

The President's FY 2007 budget request includes \$100 million for America's Opportunity Scholarships for Kids. The new program would encourage local efforts to expand choices for parents by offering competitive grants to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and other entities working to enable low-income students who attend failing schools to attend a private school, or to receive intensive, sustained tutoring assistance.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget07/summary/edlite-section1.html>

June 13, 2006

The Department of Education awards \$21.6 million in grants through the Charter Schools Facilities Grants program to three organization that will use the funds to support charter school construction around the Nation. The Department also awards grants totaling \$36.6 million under the Credit Enhancement for Charter Schools Facilities Grant program.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/06/06132006.html>

July 18, 2006

Senators Alexander and Ensign and Congressmen McKeon and Johnson introduce legislation that would enact the President's America's Opportunity Scholarships for Kids program, which the President requested as part of his FY 2007 budget.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/07/07182006.html>

August 22, 2006

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) releases a report entitled, *A Closer Look at Charter Schools Using Hierarchical Modeling*. The report demonstrates that charter schools are a relatively new, yet fast-growing component of public education. However, it concludes that, after adjusting for student demographic characteristics, the mean reading and math scores were lower than those for traditional public schools.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/08/08222006a.html>

October 4, 2006

Memo to the President briefing him on the status of NCLB and plans for the upcoming reauthorization of the law. The memo emphasizes that although the number of eligible students participating in supplementary services and school choice has grown, the participation rates still need to be increased.

MEMO TO THE PRESIDENT

December 11, 2006

The Department of Education releases a new publication entitled, *Charter High Schools Closing the Achievement Gap* as part of the Office of Innovation and Improvement's *Innovations in Education* guide. The publication highlights eight charter high schools that are using innovative methods to close the achievement gap between low-income, minority, and special needs students and their peers. For example, the Gateway High School in San Francisco offers a highly-individualized college preparatory education, which features differentiated instruction, project-based learning, and supportive relationships between students and teachers.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/12/12112006a.html>

December 15, 2006

Memo to the President for the December 15 policy time on the reauthorization of NCLB, which emphasizes that reauthorization of the law must preserve the core principle of providing timely information and options to parents. It recommends the following new choice-related policy proposals for reauthorization: requiring school districts to use their entire allocation for SES or school choice or roll it over to the next year, providing assessment results to parents more quickly so they can make more informed decisions about SES and choice, and reimbursing parents for time spent transporting children to alternative schools. The memo also discusses the political risks and benefits of demanding that reauthorization include a private school choice experiment.

MEMO TO THE PRESIDENT

January 23, 2007

President George W. Bush delivers his State of the Union Address and outlines his blueprint for strengthening NCLB by giving parents with children in failing schools the right to choose a better school through Promise Scholarships or the Opportunity Scholarship Program. He also pledges to help parents get clearer and more timely information about schools, to expand access to SES, and to increase the availability of effective charter schools.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/stateoftheunion/2007/initiatives/education.htm> ll  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070123-2.html>

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/nclb/factsheets/blueprint.html>

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/nclb/buildingonresults.pdf>

February 5, 2007

The President's FY 2008 budget includes a request for \$300 million to expand school choice and tutoring options. This request once again includes \$50 million for America's Opportunity Scholarships, which would award competitive grants to local entities working to expand choices for student in failing schools. It also includes \$250 million for a new program called Promise Scholarships, which would give low-income students in failing schools the opportunity to transfer to a private school or a public school in another district, or to obtain intensive tutoring.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget08/summary/edlite-section1.html>

April 13, 2007

The President meets with parochial education leaders and parents. After the meeting, he calls on Congress to reauthorize NCLB and expand parental choice initiatives, such as the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, to other parts of the nation.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/04/20070413-4.html>

May 18, 2007

An evaluation of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program conducted by Georgetown University finds positive parental satisfaction with the program and indicates that participating parents increased their involvement in their children's education. The evaluation also demonstrates that students in the program show greater enthusiasm for school and an improved attitude toward learning.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/05/05182007.html>

June 21, 2008

The Department of Education's Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) releases an evaluation of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program after one year. The evaluation does not find significant gains in achievement for participants after one year in the program. However, it does indicate that the program has a significant positive effect on parental perceptions of school satisfaction and school safety.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/06/06212007.html>

June 29, 2007

The Department of Education awards \$36.5 million in grants through the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Grant program.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/06/06292007a.html>

July 27, 2007

The Department of Education awards a second round of grants under NCLB's Voluntary School Choice Program to 14 programs in 12 States. The \$25 million will support projects that help States and school districts create or expand public school choice initiatives.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/07/07272007.html>

August 28, 2007

Chairman George Miller introduces the Miller-McKeon discussion draft for the reauthorization of Title I of NCLB. Secretary Spellings responds with a letter that outlines her concerns with the draft, particularly Miller's changes that would make the information available to parents fuzziier and reduce the availability of choice and SES.

<http://science.nsta.org/nstaexpress/TitleI-DiscussionDraft.pdf>

September 20, 2007

The Department of Education releases *Giving Parents Options*, a new handbook to help State and local educators improve the implementation of school choice and supplemental education services (SES) as well as the outreach to parents about their options under NCLB.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/09/09202007.html>

January 28, 2008

President Bush uses his State of the Union speech to call on Congress to support a new \$300 million "Pell Grants for Kids" scholarship program and to fund \$800 million in scholarships for tutoring.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/stateoftheunion/2008/initiatives/education.html>

February 4, 2008

The President's FY 2009 budget request includes \$300 million for Pell Grants for Kids. This new program would provide competitive grants to States, municipalities, LEAs, and other organizations to develop K-12 scholarship programs for eligible low-income students attending failing schools or schools that have high drop-out rates to transfer to local private schools or out-of-district public schools.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget09/summary/edlite-section2a.html#pellkids>

Helping Families By Supporting and Expanding School Choice

<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/choice/schools/choicefacts.html>

April 15, 2008

Memo to the President recommending the approval of administrative actions, including the following new regulations that would strengthen school choice: require that districts work with community-based organizations to inform parents of their SES and choice options before the district can reallocate unused SES and choice funds, and require parents to

be notified of their choice and SES options at least two weeks before the first day of school.

MEMO TO THE PRESIDENT

April 22, 2008

Secretary Spellings announces the proposed regulations that would improve parents' access to information on school choice and SES and parental notification processes.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2008/04/04222008.html>

April 24, 2008

The President attends the White House Summit on Inner-City Children and Faith-Based Schools. His speech draws attention to the alarming trend of faith-based school closing which shut the doors on opportunities for hundreds of thousands of our children.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/04/20080424-2.html>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/education/whschoolsummit/index.html>

June 16, 2008

The Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences releases an evaluation of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program after two years. The evaluation finds no statistically significant difference in test scores overall between students who were offered a scholarship and students who were not offered one; however, it does find that achievement trends are moving in the right direction. Reading achievement improved for three large subgroups of students, who comprise 88 percent of participating students.

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2008/06/06162008.html>

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/dcchoice/factsheet.html>

## **Position Paper**

### **Education: A Culture of Achievement**

October 5, 1999

*"The final object of education reform is not just to shun mediocrity; it is to seek excellence. It is not just to avoid failure; it is to reward achievement. Our nation has a moral duty to ensure no child is left behind. And we also, at this moment, have a great national opportunity – to ensure that every child, in every public school, is challenged by high standards that meet the high hopes of parents. To build a culture of achievement that matches the optimism and aspirations of our country."*

*Governor George W. Bush*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Governor Bush believes America must be committed to both equality and excellence in education. In addition to closing the achievement gap between rich and poor students, we must raise standards of excellence for all students. This requires pressure from above for high standards, and competition from below to provide parents and students with information and options.

**To Redefine the Relationship Between the States and the Federal Government, Granting Freedom from Regulation in Exchange for Results, Governor Bush will:**

- Free states from regulation by consolidating most of the 60 elementary and secondary education programs into five flexible categories: improving achievement of disadvantaged children, promoting fluency in English, training and recruiting teachers, encouraging character and school safety, and promoting innovation and informed parental choice.

*Part 1: Educating Every Child*

- Offer states the option to become "charter" states, providing them with even more flexibility in return for meeting rigorous performance standards.
- Require all states to establish an accountability system in which they test every child, every year, in grades 3-8 on reading and math. States will be free to choose their own tests, and the federal government will equally share the cost.
- Pay for states to administer an annual National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) sample exam, or its equivalent, in reading and math.
- Establish a \$500 million fund to reward states that improve student performance, and commit to withdraw the administrative portion of federal funding – about 5 percent – from states that permit student performance to stagnate or decline.

**To Promote Competition to Increase the Options and Influence of Parents, Governor Bush will:**

- Require school-by-school report cards to be published on the Internet and elsewhere.
- Establish a Charter School Homestead Fund to provide \$3 billion of loan guarantees to help establish or improve 2,000 charter schools in two years.
- Expand Education Savings Accounts by allowing parents to increase their annual contributions from \$500 per student to \$5,000, and withdraw funds tax-free to pay for education expenses from kindergarten to college.

★ ★ ★

**Redefining the Federal Role in Education**

Determined parents, educators and legislators across America have embraced education reform. Too often, however, these reformers are finding

that the heavy hand of federal bureaucracy is hindering their efforts.

Federal education dollars are spread over too many programs – and cost too much to administer. The paperwork involved in tracking and accounting for federal dollars drains resources from schools that would be better spent on teachers' salaries and students. In some states, an estimated 50 percent of paperwork done by local schools is spent administering federal education programs, even though federal funds account for only 7 percent of total spending. According to a 1998 study by the U.S. Department of Education, only 85 cents out of every federal education dollar actually reaches the school district, and even less reaches the classroom.

But federal red tape is not the only problem reformers face. Not only does the federal system currently fail to provide states with the flexibility they need to improve their schools, the system also fails to demand academic results:

- A 1997 GAO report on federal education funding stated that "federally funded programs have historically placed a low priority on results and accountability."
- A 1998 report by the U.S. House Subcommittee on Education found that "it has been years since many [federal education] programs have been evaluated, and often those reviews are more concerned with process – accounting for numbers of participants and educators, not whether the children are actually better off."

Governor Bush believes that the "era of low expectations" must now be replaced with an "age of accountability." Effective school reform requires pressure from above to establish high standards, and competition from below to expand information and options for parents and students. Thus, as President, to promote a culture of excellence in the nation's schools, Governor Bush will:

- Redefine the relationship between the states and the federal government, offering states unprecedented freedom from regulation in exchange for measurable achievement; and
- Increase the options and influence of parents by providing information on school performance and promoting competition.

### **Goal 1: A New Federal-State Education Pact – Freedom in Exchange for Results**

Governor Bush believes that to reform education it is necessary to redefine

## *Part I: Educating Every Child*

the relationship between the states and the federal government. Therefore, he is proposing a new federal-state pact offering freedom from regulation and bureaucratic red tape, in exchange for achievement.

### **Providing Freedom from Regulation**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), established in 1965, is the largest source of federal funding for K-12 education. It provides nearly \$14 billion annually through more than 60 different programs designated under 13 different Titles. The largest portion of these funds is contained in Title I, an \$8 billion program aimed at assisting disadvantaged children. Other ESEA programs address issues ranging from teacher training to teen drug use to funding for arts in education.

The proliferation of ESEA programs has generated a corresponding increase in regulation and red tape. As a result, hearings held by the House Education and Workforce Committee in 1997 revealed that the U.S. government spends almost twice as much on administering education programs as other industrialized countries.

The complexity of the ESEA system also imposes higher costs on the states. In the state of Georgia, for example, it takes 4.5 times as many people to administer a federal education dollar as it does to administer a state education dollar.

As President, Governor Bush will free the states from the regulation, red tape, and high costs of administering ESEA funds. Specifically, Governor Bush will:

Consolidate and Simplify ESEA Funding: The current categorical system of 60 separate programs will be replaced with five flexible categories, representing broad education goals:

- Improving the Academic Performance of Disadvantaged Students.
- Moving Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students to English Fluency.
- Preparing, Training and Recruiting Qualified Teachers.
- Creating a Safe Culture for Learning.
- Promoting Informed Parental Choice and Research-based Innovative Practices.

• A few specific programs, such as Impact Aid, which is granted to districts

#### 4 Culture of Achievement

affected by military bases and other federal activities, will remain unchanged. Administrative funds will be separated and provided in one lump sum.

Eliminate Restrictions and Red Tape: Within the five broad categories, states will have freedom to determine priorities and to assign responsibility for administering the funds within state government, so long as they certify that the funds are being spent for the intended purposes.

Offer States the Option to Become "Charter" States: States will have the option of entering into a charter agreement with the federal government, whereby they would commit to meet especially high levels of academic achievement for all students, particularly disadvantaged ones, in exchange for further consolidation of their federal education funding – and further flexibility in spending. The same contract option will also be made available to individual districts.

#### **Ensuring Accountability**

In return for this increased freedom from regulation, Governor Bush will ask that every state implement an accountability system, involving high standards and regular performance measurement.

Many states have set education standards, but often they are too low to ensure excellence. In 1998, the Fordham Foundation appraised state standards in English, history, geography, mathematics, and science. Independent reviewers assigned a letter grade – A, B, C, D, or F – to each state, based on the clarity, rigor and effectiveness of the state standards. The results showed most state standards must be improved before they will guarantee excellence. When assigned composite grades based on the average grades of all its standards, no state earned an "A" average; only three earned "B" averages; and nine flunked. The national cumulative GPA was a "D +."

Governor Bush believes that not only should high standards be set, they must be accompanied by performance measurement. Testing makes standards meaningful, promotes competition, and empowers parents and teachers to seek change. Unfortunately, while many states test some students, fewer than 12 states test all students in consecutive grades, every year.

Therefore, as President, in exchange for giving states unprecedented freedom in spending federal funds, Governor Bush will:

Require States to Set Up Their Own Accountability Systems: All states receiving federal education assistance will be required to establish within three years an accountability system with the goal of achieving and demonstrating

## *Part 1: Educating Every Child*

academic improvement. Each state will be free to set its own standards and craft its own system free of federal control, so long as those systems contain certain minimum elements:

- High standards in core subjects: English, math, science and history.
- Annual assessment of all students in at least grades 3-8 in reading and math. States will be free to choose their own tests, and the federal government will share equally in the cost of administering them. Any student exemptions from testing should be based upon a limited and consistently applied standard.
- A commitment to reward school success and impose consequences for failure. States' responses to school results could include an array of actions, including honors and/or rewards; restructured management; personnel changes; takeover of persistently low-performing schools and districts; and even the transfer of education dollars to the parent and implementation of a choice system.

Ask States to Participate in Annual NAEP Exams: As part of the new federal-state education pact, the federal government will pay for states to participate in an annual National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) sample exam, or its equivalent, for students in grades 4 and 8 in reading and math. All states receiving federal education assistance must participate in the sample exam, which can be done reliably with sample sizes of no more than 1,700 to 2,600 students per state. If a state would prefer to use another test in lieu of the NAEP and can show that its results can be equated with those of NAEP, the state can, at its own expense, use or continue using such a test.

Ensure an Independent NAEP: To insulate NAEP from political influence, the office that administers NAEP and the bipartisan board that sets policy for it, will be made independent of the Department of Education.

### **Establishing Consequences for Success and Failure**

Governor Bush believes that accountability must be accompanied by consequences. As President, to ensure that success in achieving high standards is rewarded, while stagnating or declining performance is not tolerated, Governor Bush will:

Reward States that Demonstrate Academic Improvement: An "Achievement in Education" fund will be created to reward states that demon-

## *A Culture of Achievement*

strate substantial and valid progress on the state assessments, as verified by NAEP. A total of \$500 million will be made available to be awarded over five years. Rewards will be based upon achievement of one or more of the following goals, with the size of the reward increasing with the number of goals achieved:

- Closing the achievement gap, by raising the achievement of disadvantaged students.
- Increasing overall student performance, by raising the achievement of all students.
- Increasing opportunities for advanced academic achievement, by increasing, for example, the percentage of students who are deemed proficient on NAEP, raising SAT/ACT scores, and increasing the number of students who take and pass Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams.

Impose Consequences on States that Fail to Demonstrate Results: States that fail to demonstrate results in academic achievement over the course of five years will have the administrative portion of their federal funding – roughly 5 percent of the total – withdrawn and re-directed into the charter school grant fund.

### **Goal 2: Empower Parents by Promoting Competition**

Governor Bush believes that increased competition is an essential factor in raising education standards. Ultimately, only the pressure of accountability and competition – combined with the power of parental choice – can change the status quo. Promoting effective competition will require parents to have information, options, and resources.

#### **Arming Parents with Information**

Governor Bush believes that parents are the most important enforcers of accountability in education. But parents must be armed with more information to determine whether quality education is taking place. Unfortunately, too few parents have access to adequate information about their schools. A 1999 *Education Week* survey found that 76 percent of parents thought widely publicized ratings on such measures as test scores and graduation rates motivate public school teachers to work harder to improve schools' performance. Yet,

## *Part I: Educating Every Child*

only 39 percent of parents in the survey said that they had ever seen a school-by-school report card in their community. Indeed, currently, only 36 states provide parents with school-by-school report cards.

Governor Bush believes that information empowers parents, providing them with the leverage to press for change and a reason to become participants in the education of their children. Thus, to arm parents with information, as President, Governor Bush will:

Require School-by-School Report Cards: States will be asked to provide school-by-school report cards, publicizing assessment and testing results, particularly in reading and math. The results should be disaggregated by race, gender, poverty, and English proficiency, and should be published widely, including on the Internet.

### **Expanding Charter Schools and Parental Choice**

Information alone, however, is not enough to empower parents and spur competition. There must be viable options, as well. While vouchers for private schools represent one such option, most parents want more choices, higher standards and more influence within their public schools. That is the promise of the charter school movement. In charter schools, freedom and accountability combine with parental choice to create a culture of achievement.

Charter schools are independent public schools that are formed by teachers, community leaders, parents or others with a desire to break free of the bureaucracy and regulatory red tape that characterize too many of today's public school systems. Attendance at charter schools is free: funds that would otherwise be allocated to a child at his or her regular public school follow the child to the charter school.

Unlike traditional public schools, charter schools are held to the highest level of accountability – consumer demand. If charter schools fail to meet the expectations of parents and teachers, they will be unable to attract students and, as a result, their charters will be revoked.

The demand for charter schools is great. According to the Department of Education, the number of charter schools grew by more than 50 percent in 1998. Just seven years ago, there was only one charter school in existence. Today, 36 states and the District of Columbia have charter school laws, and there are over 350,000 students attending nearly 1,700 charter schools. Seven out of every ten charter schools have a waiting list of students.

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According to the Pioneer Institute and the Department of Education, a lack of readily available start-up funding is the most significant barrier faced by charter school organizers. While the typical charter school receives 50 to 100 percent of the average funding per student allocated by the local school district to school operations, most receive no *capital* funds. The Department of Education offered \$100 million in grants to charter schools in 1999, but those grants may be used only for equipment and teacher training, not to acquire, lease, or renovate a facility.

To encourage the growth of charter schools and spur competition, Governor Bush will:

Create a "Charter School Homestead Fund:" The fund will support \$3 billion in loan guarantees to private lenders. The goal of the fund will be to upgrade or establish 2,000 charter schools – potentially doubling the number now in existence – within the first two years of Governor Bush's administration:

- The loan guarantees will be made available to lenders who agree to finance charter school start-up or improvement costs, including the acquisition, lease and/or renovation of a facility, teacher training, and the purchase of equipment and instructional material.
- To leverage private equity, the fund will provide guarantees ranging from 75 to 100 percent, depending upon the amount of private equity the organizers raise (the greater the equity, the higher the guarantee).
- Priority will be given to schools in states with charter laws that promote high standards and accountability, allow parental involvement, permit principals to select and terminate teachers, and reward teachers on performance.
- The existing grant program will be maintained and administered in coordination with the loan guarantees.

Allow Federal Funds to Be Used for Choice in Education: The consolidation of federal ESEA funds into a handful of flexible categories will allow states and districts to use these funds to expand educational options for parents, including private school choice programs.

#### **Expanding Education Savings Accounts**

Information on school performance, and options such as charter schools, will stimulate competition. Yet, many parents still need additional resources to

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deal with the specific needs of their children. Whether their children attend public, private, religious, charter, or home schools, parents need funds to pay fees buy books and supplies, cover transportation costs, support after-school programs, and pay for tutoring and special needs.

In principle, education savings accounts could empower parents, allowing parent-directed dollars to be applied to specific problems. However, the current education savings accounts – which permit parents to contribute \$500 annually and to withdraw those dollars tax free – can only be used to pay for college and other higher education expenses.

Unfortunately, President Clinton vetoed the Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999, which would have expanded the existing savings accounts by increasing the maximum annual contribution from \$500 to \$2,000, and by allowing the accounts to be used for expenses associated with K-12 education.

Therefore, to empower parents with additional education resources, as President, Governor Bush will:

Expand Education Savings Accounts: Allow families or individuals with incomes up to \$150,000 (or single earners with annual incomes up to \$95,000) to contribute up to \$5,000 annually per child into Education Savings Accounts. Parents will be permitted to withdraw funds tax free (i.e., without being taxed on any gain or interest earned) to use for education-related purposes – from kindergarten to college and beyond – in public, private, religious, or home schools.

## **Foreword by President George W. Bush**

Bipartisan education reform will be the cornerstone of my Administration.

The quality of our public schools directly affects us all as parents, as students, and as citizens. Yet too many children in America are segregated by low expectations, illiteracy, and self-doubt. In a constantly changing world that is demanding increasingly complex skills from its workforce, children are literally being left behind.

It doesn't have to be this way.

Bipartisan solutions are within our reach. If our country fails in its responsibility to educate every child, we're likely to fail in many other areas. But if we succeed in educating our youth, many other successes will follow throughout our country and in the lives of our citizens.

This blueprint represents part of my agenda for education reform. Though it does not encompass every aspect of the education reforms I plan to propose, this blueprint will serve as a framework from which we can all work together Democrat, Republican, and Independent to strengthen our elementary and secondary schools. Taken together, these reforms express my deep belief in our public schools and their mission to build the mind and character of every child, from every background, in every part of America. And I am very open to working with Members of Congress who have additional ideas to meet our shared goals.

I look forward to working with Congress to ensure that no child is left behind.

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**Executive Summary**

"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

-- Thomas Jefferson, 1816

### **Transforming the Federal Role in Education So That No Child is Left Behind**

As America enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century full of hope and promise, too many of our neediest students are being left behind.

Today, nearly 70 percent of inner city fourth graders are unable to read at a basic level on national reading tests. Our high school seniors trail students in Cyprus and South Africa on international math tests. And nearly a third of our college freshmen find they must take a remedial course before they are able to even begin regular college level courses.

Although education is primarily a state and local responsibility, the federal government is partly at fault for tolerating these abysmal results. The federal government currently does not do enough to reward success and sanction failure in our education system.

Since 1965, when the federal government embarked on its first major elementary-secondary education initiative, federal policy has strongly influenced America's schools. Over the years Congress has created hundreds of programs intended to address problems in education without asking whether or not the programs produce results or knowing their impact on local needs. This "program for every problem" solution has begun to add up -- so much so that there are hundreds of education programs spread across 39 federal agencies at a cost of \$120 billion a year. Yet, after spending billions of dollars on education, we have fallen short in meeting our goals for educational excellence. The academic achievement gap between rich and poor, Anglo and minority is not only wide, but in some cases is growing wider still.

In reaction to these disappointing results, some have decided that there should be no federal involvement in education. Others suggest we merely add new programs into the old system. Surely, there must be another way a way that points to a more effective federal role. The priorities that follow are based on the fundamental notion that an enterprise works best when responsibility is placed closest to the most important activity of the enterprise, when those responsible are given greatest latitude and support, and when those responsible are held accountable for producing results. This education blueprint will:

- **Increase Accountability for Student Performance:** States, districts and schools that improve achievement will be rewarded. Failure will be sanctioned. Parents will know how well their child is learning, and that schools are held accountable for their effectiveness with annual state reading and math assessments in grades 3-8.
- **Focus on What Works:** Federal dollars will be spent on effective, research based programs and practices. Funds will be targeted to improve schools and enhance teacher quality.

- **Reduce Bureaucracy and Increase Flexibility:** Additional flexibility will be provided to states and school districts, and flexible funding will be increased at the local level.
- **Empower Parents:** Parents will have more information about the quality of their child's school. Students in persistently low-performing schools will be given choice.

Though these priorities do not address reforms in every federal education program, they do address a general vision for reforming the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and linking federal dollars to specific performance goals to ensure improved results. Details about other programs and priorities will be provided at a later date.\* Our priorities in this blueprint consist of seven performance-based titles:

- I. Improving the academic performance of disadvantaged students
- II. Boosting teacher quality
- III. Moving limited English proficient students to English fluency
- IV. Promoting informed parental choice and innovative programs
- V. Encouraging safe schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- VI. Increasing funding for Impact Aid
- VII. Encouraging freedom and accountability

\* (These proposals are presented within a new legislative framework. There are programs and policies in the current Elementary and Secondary Education Act that are not addressed in these proposals. The proposals that are starred in this document will be considered separately from the ESEA reauthorization.)

There will be additional funds targeted to needy schools and districts. States and school districts will have the flexibility to produce results, and may lose funds if performance goals are not met.

In America, no child should be left behind. Every child should be educated to his or her full potential. This proposal sets forth the President's proposed framework to accomplish that goal. This Administration will work with Congress to ensure that this happens quickly, and in a bipartisan manner.

#### **The Policy**

The Administration's education reform agenda is comprised of the following key components, many of which would be implemented during the re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):

#### **Closing the Achievement Gap :**

- **Accountability and High Standards.** States, school districts, and schools must be accountable for ensuring that all students, including disadvantaged students, meet high academic standards. States must develop a system of sanctions and rewards to hold districts and schools accountable for improving academic achievement.
- **Annual Academic Assessments.** Annual reading and math assessments will provide parents with the information they need to know how well their child is doing in school, and how well the school is educating their child. Further, annual data is a vital diagnostic tool for schools to achieve continuous improvement. With adequate time for planning and implementation, each state may select and design assessments of their choosing. In addition, a sample of students in each state will be assessed annually with the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade assessment in reading and math.
- **Consequences for Schools that Fail to Educate Disadvantaged Students.** Schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress for disadvantaged students will first receive assistance, and then come under corrective action if they still fail to make progress. If schools fail to make adequate yearly progress for three consecutive years, disadvantaged students may use Title I funds to transfer to a higher-performing public or private school, or receive supplemental educational services from a provider of choice.

#### **Improving Literacy by Putting Reading First:**

- **Focus on Reading in Early Grades.** States that establish a comprehensive reading program anchored in scientific research from kindergarten to second grade will be eligible for grants under a new Reading First initiative.
- **Early Childhood Reading Instruction.** States participating in the Reading First program will have the option to receive funding from a new "Early Reading First" program to implement research-based pre-reading methods in pre-school programs, including Head Start centers.

#### **Expanding Flexibility, Reducing Bureaucracy:**

- **Title I Flexibility.** More schools will be able to operate Title I schoolwide programs and combine federal funds with local and state funds to improve the quality of the entire school.
- **Increased Funds to Schools for Technology.** E-rate funds and technology grant funds will be consolidated and distributed to schools through states and local districts based on need. This will also ensure that schools no longer have to submit multiple grant applications and incur the associated administrative burdens to obtain education technology funding.
- **Reduction in Bureaucracy.** Overlapping and duplicative categorical grant programs will be consolidated and sent to states and school districts.

- **New State and Local Flexibility Options.** A charter option for states and districts committed to accountability and reform will be created. Under this program, charter states and districts would be freed from categorical program requirements in return for submitting a five-year performance agreement to the Secretary of Education and being subject to especially rigorous standards of accountability.

#### **Rewarding Success and Sanctioning Failure:**

- **Rewards for Closing the Achievement Gap.** High performing states that narrow the achievement gap and improve overall student achievement will be rewarded.
- **Accountability Bonus for States.** Each state will be offered a one-time bonus if it meets accountability requirements, including establishing annual assessments in grades 3-8, within two years of enacting this plan.
- **"No Child Left Behind" School Rewards.** Successful schools that have made the greatest progress in improving the achievement of disadvantaged students will be recognized and rewarded with "No Child Left Behind" bonuses.
- **Consequences for Failure.** The Secretary of Education will be authorized to reduce federal funds available to a state for administrative expenses if a state fails to meet their performance objectives and demonstrate results in academic achievement.

#### **Promoting Informed Parental Choice:**

- **School Reports to Parents.** Parents will be enabled to make informed choices about schools for their children by being given access to school-by-school report cards on student achievement for all groups of students.
- **Charter Schools.** Funding will be provided to assist charter schools with start-up costs, facilities, and other needs associated with creating high-quality schools.
- **Innovative School Choice Programs and Research.** The Secretary of Education will award grants for innovative efforts to expand parental choice, as well as to conduct research on the effects of school choice.

#### **Improving Teacher Quality:**

- **All Students Taught by Quality Teachers.** States and localities will be given flexibility in the use of federal funds so that they may focus more on improving teacher quality. States will be expected to ensure that all children are taught by effective teachers.
- **Funding What Works.** High standards for professional development will be set to ensure that federal funds promote research-based, effective practice in the classroom.

- **Strengthening Math and Science Education.** K-12 math and science education will be strengthened through math and science partnerships for states to work with institutions of higher education to improve instruction and curriculum.

### **Making Schools Safer for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:**

- **Teacher Protection.** Teachers will be empowered to remove violent or persistently disruptive students from the classroom.
- **Promoting School Safety.** Funding for schools will be increased to promote safety and drug prevention during and after school. States will be allowed to give consideration to religious organizations on the same basis as other nongovernmental organizations when awarding grants for after-school programs.
- **Rescuing Students from Unsafe Schools.** Victims of school-based crimes or students trapped in persistently dangerous schools will be provided with a safe alternative. States must report to parents and the public whether a school is safe.
- **Supporting Character Education.** Additional funds will be provided for Character Education grants to states and districts to train teachers in methods of incorporating character-building lessons and activities into the classroom.

### **Achieving Equality Through High Standards and Accountability**

#### **Title I**

#### **(Part A: Closing the Achievement Gap for Disadvantaged Students)**

#### **Overview**

The federal government can, and must, help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers.

To meet that goal, the federal investment in Title I must be spent more effectively and with greater accountability. This proposal changes current law by requiring that states, school districts and schools receiving Title I funds ensure that students in all student groups meet high standards. Schools must have clear, measurable goals focused on basic skills and essential knowledge. Requiring annual state assessments in math and reading in grades 3-8 will ensure that the goals are being met for every child, every year. Annual testing in every grade gives teachers, parents and policymakers the information they need to ensure that children will reach academic success.

Schools that fail to make sufficient progress should receive special assistance. Students should not be forced to attend persistently failing schools, and they must at some point be freed to attend adequate schools. Under this plan, disadvantaged students will not be required to sacrifice their education and future for the sake of preserving the status quo.

Accountability for student performance must be accompanied by local control and flexibility. If schools are to be held to high standards, they must have the freedom to meet those standards.

## Summary of Proposals

Close the achievement gap for disadvantaged students by providing states additional assistance and flexibility in return for implementing rigorous accountability for results:

**Sets High Standards.** Most states have established standards for what students should know in reading and math. This proposal requires that states also set challenging content standards in history and science.

**Establishes Annual Assessments for Every Child in Grades 3-8.** Annual reading and math assessments will provide parents with the information they need to know how well their child is doing in school, and how well the school is educating their child. With adequate time to plan and implement, states may select and design assessments of their choosing. The only requirement would be that the results in student achievement would be comparable from year to year. States will have three years to develop and implement the assessments. Federal funds will cover the cost of developing these assessments.

**Requires Progress Reports on All Student Groups.** In keeping with current law, states will be required to report student assessment results to parents. In order to hold schools accountable for improving the performance of all students, these results must also be reported to the public disaggregated by race, gender, English language proficiency, disability, and socio-economic status.

**Expects Adequate Yearly Progress for Disadvantaged Students.** Under current law, districts must determine whether each Title I school is making adequate yearly progress based on whether its students are meeting state content and performance standards. The status quo does not ensure, however, that disadvantaged students within each school make progress. Under this proposal, a states definition of adequate yearly progress must apply specifically to disadvantaged students, as well as to the overall student population. This expectation will serve to hold schools and districts accountable for improving the performance of disadvantaged students and to help educators, parents and others discern whether achievement gaps are closing.

**Helps States with Technical Assistance Funds to Help Turn Around Low-Performing Schools.** Federal funds will be available to states and districts to augment their efforts to provide capacity building and technical assistance to schools identified as needing improvement. State technical assistance provided with these funds must be grounded in scientifically-based research.

**Increases Flexibility for Schools.** Flexibility will be increased by lowering the schoolwide poverty threshold from 50 percent to 40 percent, so that more schools can combine their federal dollars to improve the quality of the school.

**Provides Corrective Action for Low-Performing Schools and Districts.** Schools and districts that have not made adequate yearly progress for one academic year will be identified by the district or state as needing improvement. Immediately after identification, these schools will receive assistance to improve performance:

- If the identified school still has not met adequate yearly progress after two years, the district must implement corrective action and offer public school choice to all students in the failing school.
- If the school fails to make adequate progress after three years, disadvantaged students within the school may use Title I funds to transfer to a higher performing public or private school, or receive supplemental educational services from a provider of choice. All non-public providers receiving federal money will be subject to appropriate standards of accountability.
- Students may continue to attend a school of choice for the duration of the time they would have attended the failing school. Choice options must continue to be offered until two years after the school is no longer identified as being in need of improvement.
- There will be an appropriate transition period for schools that have already been identified as needing improvement under current law.

**Rewards Schools and States That Narrow the Achievement Gap.** Schools and states that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap will be honored with awards from a "No Child Left Behind" school bonus fund and an "Achievement in Education" state bonus fund.

**Puts in Place Consequences for Failure.** States that fail to make adequate yearly progress for their disadvantaged students will be subject to losing a portion of their administrative funds. Sanctions will be based on a states failure to narrow the achievement gap in meeting adequate yearly progress requirements in math and reading in grades 3 through 8. Progress on state assessments will be confirmed by state results on an annual sampling of 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in math and reading.

**Protects Homeschools and Private Schools.** Federal requirements do not apply to home schools or private schools. Protections in current law would be maintained.

### **Improving Literacy by Putting Reading First**

#### **(Part B: Reading First)**

**Overview** The Administration is committed to ensuring that every child can read by the third grade. To help meet this goal, a new program will be established known as the "Reading First" initiative.

The Reading First initiative gives states both the funds and the tools they need to eliminate the reading deficit. The findings of years of scientific research on reading are now available, and application of this research to the classroom is now possible for all schools in America. The National Reading Panel issued a report in April 2000 after reviewing 100,000 studies on how students learn to read. The panel concluded:

"effective reading instruction includes teaching children to break apart and manipulate the sounds in words (phonemic awareness), teaching them that these sounds are

represented by letters of the alphabet which can then be blended together to form words (phonics), having them practice what they have learned by reading aloud with guidance and feedback (guided oral reading), and applying reading comprehension strategies to guide and improve reading comprehension."

The Reading First initiative builds upon these findings by investing in scientifically-based reading instruction programs in the early grades. Ensuring that more children receive effective reading instruction means that more children will receive the help they need before they fall too far behind. This will also reduce the cost burden on all levels of government as fewer children are diagnosed as needing IDEA services simply because they did not receive proper reading instruction during the crucial early years.

### **Summary of Proposals**

**Creates Comprehensive, Statewide Reading Programs to Ensure Every Child is Reading by the Third Grade.** States and local districts will have access to funds from the new Reading First program to implement comprehensive, science-based reading programs in Kindergarten through second grade. The Reading Excellence Act would be consolidated under Reading First. The Even Start family literacy program (Title I Part B) also would become a part of this larger initiative, while continuing to fund family literacy programs throughout the nation.

**Supplements Reading First with an Early Childhood Reading Initiative.** States participating in the Reading First program will have the option to receive "Early Reading First" funding to implement research-based reading programs in existing pre-school programs and Head Start programs that feed into participating elementary schools. The purpose of this program is to illustrate on a larger scale recent research findings that children taught pre-reading and math skills in pre-school enter school ready to learn reading and mathematics.

### **Improving Teacher Quality**

#### **Title II (Part A: Grants for Improving Teacher Quality) Overview**

The Administration's proposal for preparing, training and recruiting teachers is based upon the basic principle that teacher excellence is vital to achieving improvement in student achievement.

This proposal will provide a major boost to schools in their efforts to establish and support a high-quality teaching force. According to the U.S. General Accounting Office, there are 28 programs within the Department of Education that spend a significant portion of their funds on teacher training. A total of 87 programs support teacher training, administered by 13 different agencies.

This proposal combines the funding of Federal education programs, including the Class Size Reduction program and the Eisenhower Professional Development program, into

performance-based grants to states and localities. Using these funds, they will have the support and flexibility necessary to improve academic achievement through such initiatives as providing high-quality training for teachers that is grounded in scientific research. In return, states will be held accountable for improving the quality of their teachers.

### **Summary of Proposals**

**Grants States and Districts Greater Flexibility for Effective Professional Development.** Every child in America deserves a high-quality teacher. The current structure of federal programs fails to deliver on this promise. In order to assist states in their efforts to prepare, recruit and train high-quality teachers, the Eisenhower Professional Development Program and the Class Size Reduction program will be consolidated into more flexible teacher quality grants to states and local districts.

**Establishes High Standards for Professional Development.** States and local districts will be permitted to use this funding to meet their particular needs and to strengthen the skills and improve the knowledge of their public school teachers, principals, and administrators. In return, states and districts would be required to ensure that federal funds promote the use of scientific, research-based and effective practice in the classroom.

**Promotes Innovative Teacher Reforms.** In addition to funding professional development, states and school districts will be free to use their funds to promote innovative programs such as reforming teacher certification or licensure requirements; alternative certification; tenure reform and merit-based teacher performance systems; differential and bonus pay for teachers in high-need subject areas such as reading, math and science, and in high poverty schools and districts; and mentoring programs.

**Expects Teacher Quality to Improve.** States will be accountable for ensuring that all children are taught by effective teachers and for developing a plan to ensure this goal will be met.

**Awards Grants for Excellence in Teaching.** One percent of funding for this program is set aside for the Secretary of Education to award grants to states that develop teacher assessment systems that measure teacher performance using gains in student academic achievement.

**Protects Teachers.** Teachers, principals, and school board members acting in their official capacity will be shielded from federal liability arising out of their efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom, so long as they do not engage in reckless or criminal misconduct.\* \*

**Provides Tax Deductions for Teachers.** Teachers will be able to make tax deductions of up to \$400 to help defray the costs associated with out-of-pocket classroom expenses, such as books, school supplies, professional enrichment programs and other training.\*

**Empowers Parents with Teacher Quality Information.** Parents have a right to know if their child's teacher is effective. Local districts, upon the request, will be required to disclose to parents information about the quality of their child's teacher, as defined by the state.

## **Improving Math and Science Instruction**

### **(Part B: Math and Science Partnerships) Overview**

Among the underlying causes for the poor performance of U.S. students in the areas of math and science, three problems must be addressed -- too many teachers teaching out-of-field; too few students taking advanced coursework; and too few schools offering a challenging curriculum and textbooks.

The Higher Education Community recognizes that it has a vested interest in working to improve elementary and secondary math and science achievement. More than twenty states have begun to form partnerships with colleges and universities for the purpose of raising math and science standards for students, providing math and science training for teachers, and creating innovative ways to reach underserved schools.

The Math and Science Partnership program provides funds for states to join with institutions of higher education in strengthening K-12 math and science education. States that access these funds will be required to establish partnership agreements with state colleges, universities and community colleges and school districts, with the goal of strengthening K-12 math and science education. These funds could be used by the states to defray the cost of the partnerships and to involve other colleges and community colleges in their math and science initiatives.

The success of partnerships between states and institutions of higher education will be linked to accountability goals that measure important indicators such as student performance on state assessments, increasing participation of students in advanced courses in math and science and passing advanced placement exams, and increasing the numbers of teachers that major in math or science.

### **Summary of Proposals**

**Establishes Math and Science Partnerships.** States and local districts would be eligible to receive new federal funds to help fund partnerships with the math and science departments of institutions of higher education. Partnerships would focus on strengthening the quality of math and science instruction in elementary and secondary schools and could include such activities as making math and science curricula more rigorous, improving math and science professional development, attracting math and science majors to teaching, and aligning high school math and science standards to foster college placement.

**Involves Major Research Institutions.** Research universities will be encouraged to participate fully in these state partnerships in order to strengthen K-12 math and science education.

## **Moving Limited English Proficient Students to English Fluency**

### **(Title III) Overview**

One of America's greatest attributes is our diversity. Ensuring that all children, regardless of background, have the chance to succeed is a central purpose of the federal role in education. The changes that our schools have witnessed over the last decade have created new challenges to teaching and learning. All parents want their children to graduate with the basic tools needed to work and succeed in today's global marketplace. For the more than 3 million Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in America, this means learning English in school.

Unfortunately, there are indications that LEP students are not receiving the services they need to make this transition. For example, research has shown that English language learners, when compared with their English-fluent peers, tend to receive lower grades and often score below the average on standardized math and reading assessments. This is partly because federal funding for bilingual education currently has no performance measures attached to it. Our proposal will give districts more flexibility in using bilingual funds in exchange for effectively transitioning LEP students into English fluency and improving their achievement.

In order for all students to meet high standards, limited English proficient (LEP) students need to master English as quickly as possible. To accomplish this goal, states and school districts will be held accountable for making annual increases in English proficiency from the previous year. Moreover, they will be required to teach children in English after three consecutive years of being in school.

### **Summary of Proposals**

**Streamlines ESEA Bilingual Education Programs.** These programs will be streamlined into performance-based grants to states and local districts.

**Sets Performance Objectives for Improving English Fluency.** As part of their application for funds, states will set performance objectives to ensure LEP children achieve English fluency within three years. States would also ensure that LEP students meet standards in core content areas that are at least as rigorous as those in classes taught in English.

**Imposes Sanctions for Poor Performance.** States that do not meet their performance objectives for LEP students could lose up to ten percent of the administrative portion of their funding for all ESEA state administered formula grant programs.

**Frees School Districts to Select a Teaching Approach That Meets the Needs of Students.** Regulations on the funds mandating a particular method of instruction to educate LEP students will be prohibited.

## Promoting Parental Options and Innovative Programs

### (Title IV) Overview

The purpose of Title IV is to promote parental choice and to increase the amount of flexible funds available to states and school districts for innovative education programs.

Systems are often resistant to change no matter how good the intentions of those who lead them. Competition can be the stimulus a bureaucracy needs in order to change. For that reason, the Administration seeks to increase parental options and influence. Parents, armed with data, are the best forces of accountability in education. And parents, armed with options and choice, can assure that their children get the best, most effective education possible.

### Summary of Proposals

**Promotes Charter Schools.** Funding will be provided to assist charter schools with start-up costs, facilities, and other needs associated with creating high-quality schools.

**Broadens Education Savings Accounts.** The amount of funding that can be contributed annually to these accounts will be increased to \$5,000 and allowable uses of funds will be expanded to include education-related expenses in Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.\*

**Expands School Choice.** A school choice fund will be created and administered by the Secretary of Education to demonstrate, develop, implement, evaluate, and disseminate information on innovative approaches that promote school choice.

**Consolidates Categorical Grant Programs to Send More Dollars to Classrooms.** Overlapping and duplicative grant programs will be consolidated into one flexible grant for innovative programs and sent to states and school districts. Funds may be used for local innovative programs, as well as to provide choice to students in persistently failing or dangerous schools so they can attend adequate, safe schools of choice.

**Expands Public-Private Partnership in School Construction.** States are currently allowed to issue a certain number of tax-exempt bonds for private contractors to build public facilities, such as airports and low-income housing. Public school construction is currently not an allowable use of such bonds. By allowing private activity bonds to be used for public school construction, local districts across America will be able to leverage additional funds to be used for school construction and repair. The amount of bonds in each state able to be used for public-private partnerships in school construction would be based on the state population.\*

### Safe Schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

#### (Title V) Part A: Supporting Drug and Violence Prevention and Education for Students and Communities Overview

The purpose of Title V is to help children meet challenging academic standards by empowering states and school districts with the means to provide a high-quality education that is also safe and drug free.

This proposal seeks to ease the burden of administering two separate but similar programs that clearly overlap each other in statute and practice. It streamlines the Safe and Drug Free Schools program and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centers program into a performance-based grant for before and after-school learning opportunities, as well as for violence and drug prevention activities. States are held accountable for using research-based programs to improve academic achievement, improve school safety, and reduce drug use. In addition, this Title ensures that parents know whether their child attends a safe school, and frees students from those that are dangerous.

#### Summary of Proposals

**Consolidates and Simplifies Funding for the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Centers Program.** School districts will be able to use federal dollars on after-school learning opportunities and drug and violence prevention activities.

**Establishes Accountability for School Safety and Achievement.** In order to receive funds for this program, states must develop a definition for a "persistently dangerous school" and must report on safety on a school-by-school basis. Victims of serious, school-based crimes and students trapped in persistently dangerous schools will be provided the option to transfer to a safe alternative.

**Grants Teachers Control Over Their Classrooms.** Teachers will be empowered by the states to remove violent or persistently disruptive students from the classroom. In order to receive funds from this program, states must adopt a zero-tolerance policy for violent or persistently disruptive students.

**Focuses on What Works.** An emphasis will be placed on preventing drug use and violence among youth and ensuring that schools utilize funds for programs that have demonstrated proven effectiveness in making schools safer. Funds may be used for after school programs, to provide students with safety and anti-substance abuse activities before, during and after school; and to educate students about the dangers of drugs, especially newly emerging drugs.

**Allows Community-Based Organizations to Receive Grants for After-School Programs.** Before and after-school learning opportunities will be expanded by granting states and school districts freedom to award grants to faith-based and community-based organizations.

**Facilitates Crime Prevention and Prosecution.** The Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) will be amended to make it easier for public school districts and local law enforcement authorities to share information regarding disciplinary actions and misconduct by students.\*

**Strengthens Gun Law Enforcement.** Project Sentry, a new federal-state partnership will be established to identify, prosecute, punish, and supervise juveniles who violate state and federal firearms laws. \*

**Increases Funds for Character Education.** Funding for character education grants to states and districts to train teachers in methods of incorporating character-building lessons and activities in the classroom would be increased.

### **Enhancing Education Through Technology**

**(Part B: Grants for Education Technology)**

#### **Overview**

The Administration believes schools should use technology as a tool to improve academic achievement, and that using the latest technology in the classroom should not be an end unto itself.

This proposal begins to accomplish that goal by streamlining duplicative technology programs into a performance-based technology grant program that sends more money to schools. Consolidating the technology grant programs and allocating with E-rate funds by formula ensures that schools will not have to submit multiple grant applications and incur the associated administrative burdens to obtain education technology funding. Furthermore, a single program will facilitate comprehensive and integrated education technology strategies that target the specific needs of individual schools.

#### **Summary of Proposals**

**Sends More Dollars to Schools for Technology.** Consolidated technology grant programs and E-rate funds will be allocated by formula to states and school districts to ensure that more technology funds reach the classroom. Funds will be targeted to high-need schools, including rural schools and schools serving high percentages of low-income students.

**Reduces Paperwork and Increases Flexibility.** Burdensome paperwork requirements will be eliminated by sending E-rate funds to schools by a formula instead of the current application process. Flexibility will be increased by allowing funds to be used for purposes that include software purchases and development, wiring and technology infrastructure, and teacher training in the use of technology.

**Allows Funds to be Used for Internet Filters.** In support of Childrens Internet Protection Act of 2000, funds may be used to purchase filters to protect children from obscene and adult material on the Internet.

**Focuses Funds on Proven Means of Enhancing Education Through Advanced Technology.** States will be encouraged to set performance goals to measure how federal technology funds are being used to improve student achievement.

**Offers Matching Grants for Community Technology Centers.** Matching federal grants will be provided through the Community Development Block Grant Program administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to establish Community Technology Centers in high poverty areas.\*

## **Impact Aid**

(Title VI)

**Rebuilding Schools for Native Americans and Children from Military Families**

Overview

The federal government has a special obligation to certain schools those schools that educate the children of families who serve in the United States military and those that educate Native American children.

However, the federal obligation to these schools has often not been met, most notably in the area of school construction. These shortfalls can be addressed by increasing funds for construction in the Impact Aid Program and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Approximately 700,000 dependents of military personnel are educated in public schools. More than three-quarters of these students are educated in 600 school districts located on or near military facilities. Funded by the Department of Education, these "Military Impacted Schools" are located throughout the country. Schools educating military dependents generally receive federal school construction funding from the Department of Defense Education Activity program for DODEA schools located on military facilities, and through the Department of Education's "Impact Aid" program for other public schools located on or near such facilities.

During the 1999 school year, more than 50,000 children attended 185 Native American schools in 23 states. The majority of these schools managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) are concentrated in Arizona, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Washington State. Enrollment in BIA schools is growing, having increased by 25 percent since 1987. While more children are attending BIA schools, they are doing so in physical environments that are among the worst in the nation.

### **Summary of Proposals**

**Increases Funds to the Impact Aid Construction Program.** Funds will improve the quality of public school buildings and eliminate the backlog of repairs and construction for schools on or near military facilities and those serving children from Native American lands.

**Establishes a Tribal Capital Improvement Fund.** Funds will help replace schools and eliminate the backlog of school repairs in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools. \*

## **Freedom and Accountability**

(Title VII)

Overview

The purpose of Title VII is to establish a system for how states and school districts will be held accountable for improving student achievement.

States and school districts will be granted unprecedented flexibility by this proposal in how they may spend federal education funds. Accountability for student results is expected in return. States will submit plans that address specific accountability requirements. States and schools that make significant progress will be honored with rewards. The Secretary of Education will be authorized to withhold administrative funds from states that fail to make adequate progress.

Sanctions and rewards will be based on state assessment results as confirmed by the results of an annual sample of students in each state on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade assessment in reading and math.

#### **Summary of Proposals**

##### **Frees Schools, Local School Districts, and States with More Flexibility:**

**Creates a Charter Option for States and Districts on the Cutting-Edge of Accountability and Reform.** Interested states or school districts will be able to enter into a charter agreement with the Secretary of Education. The agreement would offer freedom from the current requirements placed on categorical grant programs in return for submitting a five-year performance agreement to the Secretary establishing specific goals for increased student performance. During the course of the charter, states or school districts will be subject to strict accountability for improving student achievement, review during the course of the charter, and sanctions for failing to meet the terms of the agreement. A state or school district would lose "charter" status if student achievement and other performance indicators did not improve as agreed to in the charter.

**Increases Funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).** IDEA funds will be increased in order to reduce the burden that states and local districts bear in meeting the special needs of their disabled students. \*

##### **Increases Accountability for Improved Student Achievement:**

**Expects States to Improve Academic Achievement.** In a manner similar to that in current law, states will, within a reasonable period of transition, submit to the Secretary of Education a consolidated state plan for all ESEA funds. The plan will include assurances that the state:

- Has adopted standards, annual assessments of all children in grades 3-8 in math and reading, reporting, and consequences for academic achievement in LEAs and schools. Federal funds will be available to help pay for such assessments and state accountability systems.
- Has developed a system of sanctions and rewards to hold LEAs accountable for meeting performance objectives.

- Publishes school-by-school report cards for parents, as well as on the Internet for all public schools. These report cards should include math and reading results disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, poverty, students with disabilities as compared to non-disabled students, and English proficiency. These report cards should be integrated with existing state and local report cards where possible.
- Agrees to participate in an annual National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for grades 4 and 8, in reading and math. Congress would fund administration of the test.

**Creates Sanctions for Low-Performing States.** The Secretary of Education will be authorized to reduce the amount a state may use for administration of ESEA programs if a state fails to meet its performance objectives. Sanctions will be based on whether a state meets its performance objectives for improving the achievement of disadvantaged students and English language proficiency.

**Rewards for High-Performing States and Schools:**

**Creates an Achievement in Education Fund.** The "Achievement in Education" fund will reward high-performing States that have made the greatest progress in closing achievement gaps and improving English proficiency. Performance will be evaluated using state assessment results. Those results will be confirmed with other indicators of academic achievement and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

**Grants Bonuses for Early Implementation of Annual Assessments.** States that implement annual reading and math assessments in grades 3-8 before the end of the second year after this plans enactment will be eligible to receive a one-time bonus.

**Awards "No Child Left Behind" School Bonuses.** This proposal reforms the current Blue Ribbon Schools program. The Secretary of Education will administer a "No Child Left Behind" bonus fund that would honor and provide financial rewards to schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

###

## President Bush Speaks on Parental Empowerment in Education

Presidential Hall

11:35 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Please, be seated.

Well, Reverend Flake, thank you very much. It's an honor to be with you again. This city really misses Floyd Flake. But Jamaica, Queens is better off for him being there. (Laughter.) He's a visionary. He understands a different kind of power than politics. And the community in which he is associated is better off and I'm honored he's here and I want to thank all the leaders who are here, as well. And I want to thank you all for coming.

I really appreciate the contributions toward educational excellence that the folks on this stage are making and that you all are making all across the country. It's an honor to have you at the White House.

I believe this -- and I know we share the same principle -- that no child, whatever their parents' income or whatever their background, should be condemned to a failing school. (Applause.) Our public schools have put generations of the disadvantaged and generations of immigrants on the path to a better life. They are essential institutions. But too many are in trouble.

Just a week ago we learned that less than a third of the nation's 4th grade students are proficient at reading. And there is a growing gap between the highest achieving readers and those who scored the lowest on the test. Students who score in the top 10 percent of the NAEP, the National Assessment of Educational Progress exams, scored slightly higher than in 1992; while those in the bottom 10 percent scored lower.

This is a serious problem that requires serious focus and a serious effort of change. We have spent \$125 billion of Title I money over 25 years -- money spent on low income students. And if the truth be told, we have little to show for it. This is not just wasted money; more importantly, it is wasted potential and wasted hope.

America's schools are increasingly separate and unequal. And that is unacceptable in our great land. (Applause.) We must do more than tinker around the edges. We must all come together and fight for real reform and real change. Effective education reform requires both pressure from above and competition from below. (Applause.)

We must challenge schools with higher standards and arm parents with better options. (Applause.) I'm asking that every state have a real accountability system, meaning that they test every child, every year, in grades three through eight, on the basics of reading and math.

Without yearly testing, we don't know -- we don't know who's falling behind, and who needs help. Without yearly testing, too often, we don't find failure until it is too late to fix. One of the greatest benefits of testing is the information it gives to parents. Given that information, more parents will be involved, becoming participants, not spectators in the education of their children. Armed with that information, parents will have leverage to force reform.

Yes, we also need to empower parents by giving them more options and more influence. (Applause.) And my administration, with the help of a lot of folks -- some of them Republicans, a lot of them Democrats -- (laughter) -- are pushing toward that goal. (Applause.) Are pushing toward that goal. I don't view this as a partisan issue. I view this as incredibly important public policy, that rises above politics. (Applause.)

People on the Hill who will decide the shape of the federal legislation must understand that supporting parents and giving them options is not a partisan issue. It's a people issue. (Applause.) And here's some ideas that I hope the Congress listens to. First, I'm an enthusiastic supporter of charter schools. (Applause.) Charter schools are beginning to change our understanding of public education, no question about it. These schools are public, because they're publicly funded, and publicly accountable for results. The vision of parents and teachers and principals determines the rest.

And the competition charter schools oftentimes provide can serve as an agent to strengthen other schools. You see, you hear a lot of talk about, well, we can't have charter schools or choice because some school is going to be left behind. That's got it backwards. (Laughter.) Excellence in neighborhoods means excellence in another neighborhood. It means raising the bar. (Applause.)

Ours is an administration that wants the Congress to provide funding to assist charter schools with start-up costs, facility costs, and other -- (applause) -- and other needs associated with high quality schools. My budget offers \$150 million in additional funding next year, for the priority of encouraging the growth of charter schools all around the country.

Secondly, the education proposal I submitted to Congress gives alternatives for students trapped in persistently dangerous schools. States must report to parents whether or not the schools are safe. And if safety does not improve, students must get the option of attending another public school. (Applause.)

Third, Congress is considering legislation that would allow Title I funding to follow children after a failing school has failed to improve after a reasonable period of time. If a child -- if a school receives Title I funding and progress is not being made -- in other words, the school refuses to change, the school child is trapped in failure -- then the money, the federal money attributable to that child should follow the child. And the parent should be able to make a choice of any kind of school that he or she wants to send her child to. (Applause.)

I vigorously campaigned on this idea, because I think it is right. And it's an idea that I remain strongly committed to. I don't believe the federal government should fund

persistent failure. I think there's a role for federal government in funding education. But we need to do better than we've done in the past. We need to encourage accountability. And when we find success, we need to thank the teachers and principals. (Applause.) When we find failure, we must give parents different options; different options. (Applause.)

We've also submitted a plan to increase education savings accounts, to expand them from \$500 to \$5,000 a year. And parents will be able to use these funds for any education-related expense, from kindergarten to college and beyond. (Applause.)

The goal of these reforms is to ensure that every child in every school receives a quality education. That's the goal. And it's time we moved beyond the old arguments and old divides, to make sure that we fulfill our duty that no child in America is left behind. It is time to set aside the old partisan bickering and finger-pointing and name-calling that comes from freeing parents to make different choices for their children. We can do better in America, we can do better. (Applause.)

I realize that all the differences between parties and people on different sides of the choice issue will not dissolve overnight. I understand that, and so do you. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't continue to fight for good ideas and herald a philosophy that is eminently fair and hopeful and optimistic for every single child, regardless of their neighborhood or their income status.

That's what this is all about. It's really about the promise of America, what America should be about. And that's providing hope and opportunity for every single citizen, regardless of where you're from. There are some encouraging signs, there are. Slowly but surely, people are beginning to understand the logic behind accountability, the understanding that we can't accept failure, the need to trust individuals to make right decisions for their children. Slowly but surely, people are hearing that message. And I want to thank you for your help.

I have come to realize that ordinary folks can have a big influence on the process in Washington, D.C. That ours is a responsive democracy. (Applause.) And that you're only one e-mail away -- (laughter) -- from telling somebody how you think. And it's helpful, it's helpful. We're doing the right thing. We're doing the right thing for our country.

I believe we can get positive results out of the Congress. I believe we can make progress toward reforming a system that is working in some places and not working in others. I know we can have quality education for every child. And when we do, this great land of ours -- by the way, the greatest nation on the face of the earth -- will be even greater. We'll be even greater.

Thank you for coming, and God bless. (Applause.)

**PRESS RELEASES**

**STATEMENT OF U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION ROD PAIGE  
REGARDING PASSAGE OF H.R. 1  
ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

FOR RELEASE:

May 23, 2001

It is a pleasure to be able to thank the Members of the House of Representatives and the Education and Workforce Committee for their tireless work on H.R. 1 and for their commitment to President Bush's "No Child Left Behind" plan for reforming our elementary and secondary schools. In particular, my thanks to Chairman John Boehner, Ranking Member George Miller, and to the leadership of the House of Representatives.

Tonight, I can make a clear and loud statement that the House of Representatives has passed a bipartisan bill that advances each of the four pillars of the president's plan, and in doing so, its members have done a great service for America's children. As a result of H.R. 1, schools, districts and states will have more flexibility and control; parents, teachers, schools and states will have more information about student performance and what works in the classroom; parents and communities will be able to hold schools accountable for providing a quality education to every child; and, children trapped in persistently failing schools will for the first time ever have more choices, and more chances to succeed.

On his second day in office, President Bush laid out his four pillars of comprehensive education reform: accountability, local control and flexibility, expanded parental choice, and doing what works. H.R. 1 makes unprecedented advances in all four areas, and it answers the fundamental question of how we can create an education system that will leave no child behind.

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**STATEMENT OF U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION ROD PAIGE**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 14, 2001

I congratulate the United States Senate, especially Senators Kennedy and Gregg, on final passage of S.1. This bill is the result of extended bipartisan negotiations, but it also advances the four pillars of President Bush's No Child Left Behind plan for comprehensive education reform.

For more than 30 years, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act has emphasized spending at the expense of accountability. Test scores have amply demonstrated that until this year, the Federal Government has been funding failure. With this vote, we take the next step toward changing the culture of education from compliance to performance. If the Congress can sustain its momentum in conference, it can sharpen the legislation's focus on basic and proven reforms in order to deliver a bill to President Bush that guarantees no child will be left behind.

I encourage the conferees to complete this process as soon as possible so teachers and administrators can begin the school year with a clear picture of the cultural shift that lies ahead.

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**House-Senate Education Conference Report: *No Child Left Behind***

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FACT SHEET—FOR RELEASE:**

Revised: December 12, 2001

President Bush has made education his number-one domestic priority. On Jan. 23, 2001, he sent his *No Child Left Behind* plan for comprehensive education reform to Congress. At that time, he asked members of Congress to engage in an active bipartisan debate on how we can use the federal role in education to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. The agreements reached by the members of the House-Senate conference committee on education reform are a result of that process and they embody each of the four basic principles of President George W. Bush's education reform plan: stronger accountability for results, expanded flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work.

The agreements reached will result in fundamental reforms in classrooms throughout America. This is the most sweeping reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since it was enacted in 1965, and it will redefine the federal role in K-12 education so it can be used to improve the academic achievement of all American students.

**The following are some of the major provisions of the Conference Report to H.R. 1, the *No Child Left Behind Act*.**

**Accountability for Results**

H.R. 1 will result in the creation of standards in each state for what a child should know and learn in reading and math in grades 3-8. Student progress and achievement will be measured according to tests based upon those state standards and given to every child, every year.

H.R. 1 will empower parents, citizens, educators, administrators and policymakers with data from those annual assessments. The data will be available in annual report cards on school performance and on statewide progress. They will give parents information about the quality of their children's schools, the qualifications of teachers, and their children's progress in key subjects.

Statewide reports will include performance data disaggregated according to race, gender, and other criteria to demonstrate not only how well students are achieving overall but also progress in closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and other groups of students.

**Creating Flexibility at the State and Local Levels and Reducing Red Tape**

To cut down on federal red tape and bureaucracy and enhance local control, H.R. 1 will reduce the overall number of ESEA programs at the U.S. Department of Education from 55 to 45.

For the first time, H.R. 1 will offer every local school district in America the freedom to transfer up to 50 percent of the federal dollars it receives among several education programs without separate approval.

For the first time, all 50 states will also have the freedom to transfer up to 50 percent of the non-Title I state activity funds they receive from the federal government among an assortment of ESEA programs without advance approval.

H.R. 1 will allow the creation of up to 150 local flexibility demonstration projects for school districts interested in entering into an accountability agreement based upon improved student achievement with the U.S. Department of Education in exchange for a waiver of several federal education rules.

Seven states will have new flexibility in the use of their non-Title I federal funds in a variety of categories in the form of waivers from federal requirements relating to a variety of ESEA programs. States participating in the new demonstration projects will also be able to coordinate their efforts with local school districts through state-local "flexibility partnerships" designed to make sure federal education funds are being used effectively to meet student needs.

H.R. 1 will give local school officials serving rural schools and districts more flexibility and a greater say in how federal funds are used in their schools.

### **Expanding Options for Parents of Children from Disadvantaged Backgrounds**

H.R. 1 creates meaningful options for parents whose children are trapped in failing schools and makes these options available immediately:

**Public School Choice:** Parents with children in failing schools would be allowed to transfer their child to a better-performing public or charter school immediately after a school is identified as failing.

**Supplemental Services:** Federal Title I funds (approximately \$500 to \$1,000 per child) can be used to provide supplemental educational services - including tutoring, after school services, and summer school programs - for children in failing schools.

**Charter Schools:** H.R. 1 expands federal support for charter schools by giving parents, educators and interested community leaders greater opportunities to create new charter schools.

### **Ensuring Every Child Can Read with Reading First**

H.R. 1 increases federal funding for reading from \$300 million in FY 2001 to more than \$900 million in FY 2002 and links that funding to scientifically proven methods of reading instruction through the President's Reading First plan.

### **Strengthening Teacher Quality**

H.R. 1 asks states to put a highly-qualified teacher in every public school classroom by 2005. The bill also makes it easier for local schools to recruit and retain excellent teachers.

H.R. 1 will consolidate smaller programs within the U.S. Department of Education. The bill also creates a new Teacher Quality Program that allows greater flexibility for local school districts.

In addition to specific funds for teacher quality, H.R. 1 will also give local schools new freedom to make spending decisions with up to 50 percent of the non-Title I federal funds they receive. With this new freedom, a local school district can use additional funds for

hiring new teachers, increasing teacher pay, improving teacher training and development or other uses.

### **Confirming Progress**

Under H.R. 1 a small sample of students in each state will participate in the fourth- and eighth-grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and math every other year in order to help the U.S. Department of Education verify the results of statewide assessments required under Title I to demonstrate student performance and progress.

### **Promoting English Proficiency**

H.R. 1 consolidates the U.S. Department of Education's bilingual and immigrant education programs in order to reduce federal bureaucracy. The new federal program will focus on helping limited English proficient (LEP) students learn English through scientifically based teaching methods.

Under H.R. 1, LEP students will be tested for reading and language arts in English after they have attended school in the United States for three consecutive years.

Under H.R. 1 parents will be notified that their child demonstrates limited English proficiency and is in need of English language instruction.

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**Statement of U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige Regarding  
Senate Passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act***

Senate Passes Historic Legislation with 87-10 Vote

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

December 18, 2001

On January 23rd, President Bush sent his *No Child Left Behind* plan to the Congress with a request for a vigorous bipartisan debate about his proposals to change the culture and performance of America's schools so that no child is left behind in a failing school. Today's decisive and bipartisan action by the Senate is the final statement in what has been a strong and fruitful debate.

I thank Senator Ted Kennedy and Senator Judd Gregg for their dedicated and tireless leadership in the Senate on behalf of America's children. They have delivered President Bush a final bill with strong accountability for results, expanded options for parents of disadvantaged children, increased flexibility and local control for states and school districts, and programs that support teaching methods based upon solid scientific research on what works.

The *No Child Left Behind Act* offers the U.S. Department of Education a powerful set of tools in our effort to meet the needs of America's neediest students. The bill raises the quality of the education we provide our students and offers that high quality education to every child. We look forward to the hard work of implementing the new reform provisions and ensuring the achievement of all students.

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**Paige Joins President Bush for Signing of Historic No Child Left Behind Act of 2001**

Bold New Federal Law to Improve Student Achievement

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

January 8, 2002

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige today joined President Bush for the signing of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* - a historic new law that will change the culture of America's schools and, most important, improve student achievement in classrooms across the country.

President Bush signed the legislation at Hamilton High School in Hamilton, Ohio - the first of three stops scheduled for today to discuss the new law with Americans. The president, Secretary Paige and the members of Congress who led the effort to pass the bill also will visit the University of New Hampshire in Durham, N.H., and Boston Latin School in Boston, Mass.

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* passed both houses of Congress by overwhelming bipartisan majorities in December, fulfilling President Bush's promise to offer America's students meaningful education reform as his foremost domestic policy priority.

"A year ago, President Bush set out to improve every public school in this country - to ensure that students of all races, all abilities and all ages receive the education they need and deserve," Paige said. "Today, with the stroke of his pen, President Bush changed the culture of education in America and kept his promise to leave no child behind."

Under the new law, states and school districts will develop strong systems of accountability based upon student performance. The new law also gives those states and school districts increased local control and flexibility, removing federal red tape and bureaucracy and putting decision-making in the hands of those at the local and state levels. Parents of children from disadvantaged backgrounds will have options under the new law to participate in public school choice programs or obtain supplemental services such as tutoring. And teachers around the country will be encouraged to use teaching methods that are based upon scientific research demonstrating that they work.

"Education is a national priority, and for the first time federal policies will focus squarely on improving student achievement," Paige said. "For too long, many of our schools did a good job educating some of our children. With this new law, we'll make sure we're providing ALL of our children with access to a high-quality education."

Paige also said that he looks forward to working with state and local education leaders and others to develop partnerships with the states to make sure the reforms contained in the bill will benefit all American students.

"The U.S. Department of Education is committed to being a full partner with state leaders and our local schools to help put this new law into action," Paige said. "We'll be building strong relationships with the people who are on the front lines of education - parents, teachers, state leaders, school administrators - and we'll be engaging the entire country in a conversation about how we will work together to help our schools and our teachers make sure every child learns and grows."

Among other provisions, the Act will:

Enhance accountability for results by requiring states to issue annual report cards on school performance and statewide results;

Authorize \$400 million to help states design and administer tests for students in grades 3 through 8 that are aligned to state standards for what a child should be able to know and do in the basic subjects of reading and math;

Provide unprecedented state and local flexibility for all 50 states and every local school district in America in the use of federal education funds;

Give parents of children in failing schools the option to transfer their child to a better-performing public or charter school, and - where failure persists - it will allow federal Title I funds to be used to provide supplemental education services (including tutoring, after-school services and summer school programs);

Triple the federal funding investment in reading and ensure that teachers are using instructional methods that have been proven to work through *Reading First*; and

Invest almost \$3 billion in improving teacher quality this year alone while asking states to put a highly qualified teacher in every public school classroom by 2005.

"This historic law offers all of us the promise of stronger accountability for results, more flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work," Paige said. "I'm looking forward to the important work ahead so that together we will make sure that no child in America is left behind."

For more information about the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, visit [www.ed.gov/nclb](http://www.ed.gov/nclb).

**PRESS RELEASES**

**President Bush Requests \$56.5 Billion for Department of Education,  
Continuing His Commitment to Leave No Child Behind**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

February 4, 2002

At a press conference today in Washington, D.C., officials from the U.S. Department of Education announced President George W. Bush's FY 2003 budget request of \$56.5 billion--including a record high \$50.3 billion for discretionary programs--continuing his commitment to improve student achievement and to leave no child behind.

President Bush's request builds on recent growth in the Department's budget, which has more than doubled since 1996.

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige called President Bush's budget another strong investment in meeting the needs of the nation's disadvantaged students.

"President Bush's budget demonstrates his continued commitment to meeting the needs of disadvantaged children. The president's proposed investments stretch from early childhood education through college and beyond," Paige said. "They not only will help us ensure every child has access to a quality education, but also will help us keep our economy sound and our homeland strong."

Deputy Secretary of Education William Hansen said President Bush's proposal will better target resources to students and schools with the greatest needs.

"Federal education investments are mostly targeted to programs that support poor and minority students--students who are most likely to be left behind by our education system," Hansen said. "President Bush's 2003 education budget would do an even better job of targeting our investments to help students and schools with the greatest need and to fund programs that produce results."

Increases in President Bush's 2003 budget request correspond to his determination to close the achievement and attainment gaps that persist among racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups across the country.

Hansen highlighted the proposed investments in new and existing programs that support the principles of President Bush's *No Child Left Behind* framework now embodied in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, including:

\$11.4 billion for Title I grants to local education agencies, an increase of \$1 billion or 9.7 percent, to give states and school districts additional resources to turn around low-performing schools, improve teacher quality, and ensure that no child is trapped in a failing school;

\$2.85 billion for Improving Teacher Quality State Grants, to give states and school districts the flexibility to adopt research-based strategies that will work best to meet their need for improving the quality of teaching and raising student achievement in the core academic subjects;

\$1 billion for Reading First, an increase of \$100 million or 11.1 percent, for a nationwide effort to support comprehensive reading instruction for children in grades K-3. Plus, another \$75 million for Early Reading First, a competitive grant program to

develop and support the school readiness of preschool-aged children in high-poverty communities;

\$665 million for English Language Acquisition through a redesigned program that offers states grants to help English language learners make progress in learning English and meeting the same high standards as all other students;

\$644.3 million for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities programs to implement drug and violence prevention programs including \$472 million for state grants and \$172 million for national programs to make sure our students will not be trapped in persistently dangerous schools;

\$387 million for state assessments and enhanced assessment instruments, to help states develop and implement--by the 2005-2006 school year--the expanded annual assessments in grade 3 through 8 that are integral to the strong state accountability systems required by the NCLB Act. This request is particularly important because the Title I requirement for states to develop and administer the new assessments is contingent on continued federal financial support for this purpose; and

\$175 million for research, an increase of \$53.2 million or almost 44 percent, to expand efforts to develop proven, research-based practices for improving student achievement.

Hansen also highlighted programs in the proposed budget that would expand options for parents, including:

\$200 million for Charter Schools to stimulate continued growth in the number of charter schools nationwide, an important element of the administration's proposal to increase choice for students and parents--particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The request would support approximately 1,800 new and existing charter schools;

\$100 million for a new Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program to assist charter schools in acquiring, leasing, and renovating school facilities through competitive grants to public and nonprofit entities for loan guarantees, insuring debt, and other activities that facilitate private lending;

\$50 million for a new Choice Demonstration Fund to support research projects that develop, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to providing parents with expanded school options, including both private- and public-school choice;

\$25 million for Voluntary Public School Choice grants to encourage states and school districts to establish or expand public school choice programs by providing financial support for planning, tuition transfer payments, and efforts to increase the capacity of participating schools;

In addition, to the discretionary programs at the Department of Education, the president's proposed budget includes a new tuition tax credit program through the Department of Treasury. With tax credits valued at \$3.5 billion over five years, this new program will offer families of students currently trapped in failing public schools a refundable tax credit to cover 50 percent of the cost of books, computers, transportation, supplies and tuition at a family's school of choice (including home schools).

The president's FY2003 budget proposal also includes investments that support children and adults with disabilities, such as:

\$8.5 billion for special education grants to states, an increase of \$1 billion, or 13 percent; and

\$2.6 billion for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) state grants program, an increase of \$134.9 million or 5.4 percent, to help individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain and retain employment (this proposed investment includes the mandatory inflation increase and a proposed consolidation of three other programs into VR state grants).

President Bush's proposal also includes investments that will help ensure access to postsecondary education for low-income students and families, including:

\$10.9 billion for the Pell Grant program, and increase of \$549 million or 5.3 percent over the 2002 funding level. In addition, in a supplemental request the Office of Management and Budget will ask Congress for \$1.3 billion to address a Pell Grant funding shortfall.

\$54.9 billion for student financial aid, an increase of \$2.8 billion, or 5 percent, with the number of recipients of grant, loan, and work-study assistance growing by 339,000 to 8.4 million students and parents. The proposal also would encourage highly qualified math, science, and special education teachers to teach in low-income communities by expanding loan forgiveness for such teachers from \$5,000 to a maximum of \$17,500. Too often, schools in such communities are forced to hire uncertified teachers or assign teachers who are teaching "out-of-field"; and

\$350 million for programs that will strengthen Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Historically Black Graduate Institutions (HBGIs) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), an increase of more than \$12 million.

More information about President Bush's proposed budget is available on the Department of Education's Web site at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**Preliminary Guidance Issued on Increasing Education Options Under No Child Left Behind Act**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

June 14, 2002

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige today called on America's school leaders to move quickly in planning how to implement the public school choice, supplemental education services and collective bargaining provisions under the landmark No Child Left Behind Act.

In a Dear Colleague letter to school superintendents and state education chiefs, Paige announced preliminary guidance on how those three aspects of the law will be treated.

"Once again, because the law requires implementation of these programs to begin this coming school year, I want to reiterate that your planning processes for this should be underway," Paige said in his letter.

He noted that the statute will "substantially affect the 2002-2003 school year" and said his guidance was intended "to give initial direction" to school officials as they proceed this summer to carry out the measure.

In the coming months the department will be issuing formal guidance and regulations concerning the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act. A public comment period will be provided, and the department encourages all interested parties to submit their opinions.

Among the areas covered in the letter:

-- **Public School Choice.** "The new choice requirements must be implemented beginning this fall," Paige said. In general, for any Title I elementary or secondary school identified for school improvement, the school district must provide all students enrolled in the school with the option to transfer to another public school in the district. "As you continue your planning, I strongly encourage you to provide several choice options for parents," the secretary said. "Parents should be provided a reasonable amount of time to consider their options, be given concise but detailed information on the performance and overall quality of the receiving schools, and be provided an opportunity to visit potential schools of choice." He said school districts should begin planning now, if they have not already, to make choice available for students in any school that was in school improvement status as of Jan. 7, 2002. If a student exercises the option to transfer to another public school, the school district has certain obligations to provide or pay for with federal funds the student's transportation to the new school. Schools will have flexibility in the use of their federal funds to pay for transportation costs.

-- **Supplemental Education Services.** For Title I schools in the second year of school improvement, the district must arrange for the provision of supplemental education services for eligible students enrolled in the schools, such as private tutoring, after-school services, and summer school programs. Parents must be notified about the availability of supplemental services. And, states must provide a list of organizations that are on a roster of "preferred providers" and their record of success. Service providers can include public schools, faith-based operations, distance learning services, for-profit and non-profit concerns.

-- **Collective Bargaining Agreements.** The act "does not operate to invalidate employee protections that exist under current law and collective bargaining and similar labor agreements. However, it does not exempt state education agencies, local education agencies and schools from compliance with Title I based on prospective collective bargaining or similar agreement or prospective collective bargaining or similar agreements or changes in state or local law."

For more details on the No Child Left Behind Act, visit <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml?src=pb>. A new page for parents describing supplemental services is displayed at <http://www.nclb.gov/parents/supplementalservices/index.html>.

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## **President Pleased with Court Decision on School Choice**

This landmark ruling is a victory for parents and children throughout America. By upholding the constitutionality of Cleveland's school choice program, the Supreme Court has offered the hope of an excellent education to parents and children throughout our country. This decision clears the way for other innovative school choice programs, so that no child in America will be left behind.

School choice offers proven results of a better education, not only for children enrolled in the specific plan, but also for children whose public schools benefit from the competition. The Milwaukee choice plan, begun in the early 1990s, has resulted in substantially improved reading and math scores for thousands of low-income children. The program has also had a positive impact on the entire public school system, which has responded to competition with better results.

The education reforms we enacted earlier this year give unprecedented new options to parents of children trapped in low performing schools. My budget builds on this Act by adding important new options to empower parents -- particularly low-income families -- to improve their children's education. I urge Congress to move quickly to build on the momentum generated from this decision to enact my education priorities.

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**Thirteen Grantees Get \$23.8 Million in Support for Public School Choice Programs under No Child Left Behind**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

October 4, 2002

Three states -- **Arkansas, Florida and Minnesota** -- and 10 school districts or partnerships in California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, New Hampshire, New York and Oregon, will benefit from \$23.8 million in grants under a new program to help school districts and states establish or expand public school choice programs, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige announced today.

The grants come under the new Voluntary Public School Choice Program authorized by the landmark education reform law, the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB).

The competitive program supports five-year projects that offer the widest variety of choices to students in participating schools, including options that allow students to transfer from low-performing schools to higher performing schools. Under NCLB, students in under-performing Title I schools must be given the option to transfer to a higher performing school in their school district. This new program offers additional options for those children and for others.

"As we work to improve all of our public schools, we must give children who are trapped in low-performing schools an opportunity for a brighter future," Secretary Paige said. "These innovative public school choice programs will demonstrate that greater parental options -- and greater competition -- will help all schools to improve and succeed."

Grantees develop the program with parental and community involvement, in concert with those who will carry out the program, including teachers, administrators and other staff.

To ensure the widest possible reach and participation, the funds can be put to use to help notify parents about the existence of the choice program, what the program offers and the program's availability. In addition, the grants can be used for:

- One year to plan and design the program;

- Tuition transfer payments to the higher-demand schools to which students transfer;

- Capacity-enhancing activities that enable higher-demand schools to accommodate transfer requests; and

- Other reasonable expenses necessary to carry out the program.

A portion of grant funds must be used to provide transportation services (or the costs of transportation to and from public elementary, secondary or charter schools) for students selected to participate in the program.

Students must be selected by lottery if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated.

Those eligible to be grantees are: state education agencies (SEAs); school district or local education agencies (LEAs); or partnerships of SEAs or LEAs with public, for-profit, or non-profit organizations.

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Paige Announces \$198 Million in Support for Charter Schools**

Grants will support expanded options for families in 35 states and Washington, D.C.

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

October 7, 2002

An unprecedented \$198 million will go to help set up, develop and expand charter schools and to promote the exchange of information regarding what works to improve student performance among charter schools across the nation, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige announced today.

New grants totaling \$71 million are being awarded to Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Tennessee, which recently passed charter legislation, is being funded for the first time. Unlike the other states, Arizona's \$3.5 million will go to 27 schools that receive funds directly from the department. In addition, the department is directly funding one school in New Hampshire, and, for the first time, two schools in Wyoming.

To provide ongoing support to start-up charter schools and to share best practices, more than \$119 million in second- and third-year funding will go to 17 states and to 82 schools in Arizona and one in Nevada.

"Charter public schools are a critically important part of the education landscape in this country," Paige said. "Thanks to charter schools, more parents have more choices than ever before, and these grants will help keep strong the charter school movement in the United States and, most important, help ensure that no child is left behind."

In most cases, the U.S. Department of Education's Public Charter Schools Program makes the awards to states, which in turn make subgrants to eligible charter schools. The funds provide support for planning and program design; measuring student progress; professional development; and for acquiring curricula, materials and supplies. In addition, charter schools that have been open for at least three consecutive years, have strong leaders, have raised student achievement, and report high levels of parent satisfaction may receive grants for up to 24 months to share best practices with those who are creating new schools or are converting existing public schools to charters or to other schools including charter schools.

The remaining nearly \$7 million in continuation grants was awarded to the Field-Initiated National Activities Projects which support national activities including: research and data collection; technical assistance; providing information on facilities; and sharing best practices in instruction and assessment.

The department estimates that about 2,400 charter schools are operating this school year around the country. Some 38 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have charter school legislation. Charter schools are public schools operating with a contract, or charter, from a public agency. They are created by groups of parents, teachers, school administrators or others who want to provide alternatives within the public school system, with museum, local businesses and community organizations among their partners. They are intended to stimulate the creativity and commitment of teachers, parents, students and citizens and, therefore, contribute to better student achievement.

Charter schools are free of cost to parents and open to all students, but exempted from most statutory and regulatory requirements in exchange for performance-based

accountability. They must meet standards set forth in their charters for students and the school as a whole, or else the chartering agency can close the school. Charter schools must be non-sectarian and abide by civil rights, health and safety laws.

NOTE TO EDITORS: A list of grantees, by state, contacts and grant amounts attached.

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**President Bush's 2004 Budget Will Include an Estimated \$756 Million to Expand Options for Parents, Paige Says**

Builds on previous investments in empowering parents

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

January 31, 2003

President Bush's 2004 budget again will demonstrate his administration's commitment to expanding education options for parents by including an estimated \$756 million to help insure America's parents have more choices for their children.

"School choice is an essential part of authentic school reform," Secretary Paige said. "When I was a superintendent, I saw firsthand the power of choice--empowered parents making decisions about their children's education. And I believe choices must be part of the education landscape if we're committed to leaving no child behind. President Bush's budget for next year will help empower even more parents and help us achieve our bold goals."

The choice programs in the 2004 budget will include:

\$75 million for a new Choice Incentive Fund to provide competitive awards to states, school districts and community-based nonprofit organizations with a proven record of securing educational opportunities for children. A major objective would be to help school districts address their capacity problems by providing low-income parents with expanded opportunities for transferring their children to high-performing public, private or charter schools. A portion of the funds would be reserved for school-choice programs in the District of Columbia.

\$226 million in refundable tax credits for parents transferring a child from a public school identified for improvement. Parents would receive a credit of 50 percent of the first \$5,000 in tuition, fees and transportation costs incurred when a student's regular school is identified for improvement and he or she transfers to another public or private school. Eligible students would be those who attend under-performing schools, as defined under the No Child Left Behind Act, during the prior academic year. (This program is administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.)

\$25 million for Voluntary Public School Choice grants to support planning, transportation, tuition transfer payments and efforts to increase the capacity of schools to accept students exercising a choice option. As a result, families will have more education options by encouraging states and school districts to establish or expand public school choice programs across states or districts.

\$220 million for charter school grants -- a \$20 million increase over last year's request -- to support approximately 1,800 new and existing charter schools, an important element of the administration's proposal to increase choice for students and parents. The increase would initiate a new per-pupil facilities aid program, which will provide funds to states to assist charter schools in obtaining facilities. The No Child Left Behind Act specifically includes public charter schools as an option when districts are required to permit students to transfer from a school identified for improvement to a better public school.

\$100 million to continue the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program to assist charter schools in acquiring, leasing, and renovating school facilities. A major obstacle to the creation of charter schools is their limited ability to

obtain suitable academic facilities. This program supports competitive grants to public and nonprofit entities to help charter schools finance their facilities through such means as providing loan guarantees, insuring debt, and other activities to encourage private lending.

\$110 million to continue the Magnet Schools Assistance Program to provide grants to eligible local education agencies to establish and operate magnet schools that are operated under a court-ordered or federally approved voluntary desegregation plan.

#### Other 2004 Budget Highlights

Earlier this month, the administration announced a proposed increase in funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) to ensure educational freedom, opportunity and access for every American. The president's fiscal year 2004 budget will increase funding by five percent for the following programs: \$224 million for HBCUs, \$53 million for Historically Black Graduate Institutions and \$94 million for HSIs, totaling \$371 million. The budget also will include a 5 percent increase for the nation's 34 tribal colleges and universities, bringing the total requested amount for these schools to \$19 million.

To encourage more math, science and special education teachers to work in high-poverty schools, the 2004 budget also will expand a loan forgiveness program. The proposal will provide up to \$17,500 in loan forgiveness for teachers in these three fields who work for five consecutive years in schools that serve high-poverty student populations. This is more than three times the \$5,000 in loan forgiveness now allowed for other qualified elementary and secondary teachers serving low-income communities.

In his Jan. 4 radio address, Bush announced that he will propose an additional \$1 billion, a total of \$12.3 billion, for the Title I program in the 2004 budget -- the highest funding level ever for the program that serves our neediest students. In the address, he also announced that he will request more than \$1.1 billion for federal reading programs in next year's budget, an increase of \$75 million over last year's budget request. This investment will go only to support programs with proven results in teaching children to read.

For more information about these and other Education programs, visit [www.nochildleftbehind.gov](http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov).

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Department of Education Accepting Applications for Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

April 4, 2003

The U.S. Department of Education is accepting applications for its Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program. This is primarily a finance program, not an education program, and grantees will provide financial services to charter schools. A notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year 2003 was published in the *Federal Register* on April 3. The notice and application can be downloaded from the Department's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/GrantApps/#84.354A>. The deadline for applications is June 3, 2003.

Despite the popularity of charter schools with parents, teachers and the public, these distinctive public schools face barriers. A high percentage of new charter schools point out that inadequate facilities have impeded the implementation of their charters. Unlike traditional local education agencies, charter schools generally lack the ability to issue general obligation bonds backed by property taxes, and they are often considered to be credit risks by lending institutions. The Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program aims to reduce this perceived financial risk by leveraging a modest amount of federal dollars to encourage private lenders, investors and landlords to help them acquire, construct or renovate school facilities.

Under this program, the Department can award competitive grants to nonprofit and public entities or a consortium of these types of entities. Grantees deposit their grants in a reserve account and then use the funds for a number of purposes, including guaranteeing debt used to finance charter school facilities, guaranteeing and insuring property; identifying and encouraging private lending sources; and providing technical assistance.

The Department expects to award 3 to 5 grants with average awards estimated to be between \$2.5 and \$10 million. Approximately \$25 million is available for the 2003 program.

###

## President Discusses Education Reform in DC

Kipp D.C. Key Academy  
Washington, D.C.

10:05 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. Please be seated. Thanks for coming. I'm honored that -- I'm honored you'd have me -- (laughter) -- here at KIPP Academy. Susan, thanks for your hospitality. I know something about KIPP Academy, the network. The reason I do is, when I was the Governor of Texas, I went to a school in Houston that was called KIPP Academy. Nobody had ever heard of it. I think Steve -- is that you back there, Steve? No, it's not. I thought Steve was here. You look like Steve. (Laughter.) And they said -- the principal -- and they said, come by the school. And it was full of kids that were not supposed to be able to learn.

You know, our state at that time was suffering what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations. Perhaps that's happening in places in the District, as well. You see, when you lower the bar, that's what you get, low results. So they had labeled these kids, you know, unable to learn, difficult to learn. So I go to this KIPP Academy. And first of all I was overwhelmed by the spirit of the kids, the involvement of the parents, the dedication of the teachers and the entrepreneurial spirit of the principal.

And then I said, well, are you making any progress here at KIPP Academy with these so-called hard to educate? And the answer was, yes. They're the best middle school in the city of Houston. The reason we know is because we measured. We wouldn't have known that had we not measured.

But KIPP Academy sets high standards. It's got the absolute right attitude for education, in my judgment. First of all, it says, every child can learn. We refuse to condemn any child to mediocrity and failure. We have high standards, we have high expectations, and we're going to meet those high standards and high expectations with a curriculum which works.

And so I want to congratulate you, Susan, and the KIPP Academy entrepreneurs who are challenging mediocrity on a daily basis and raising standards for those who in some communities have been condemned to failure. Thanks for having us here, and thanks for the bright example you've set. (Applause.)

What we're really here is to talk about how do we make sure that the education system works for everybody. That's why the act that we passed out of Congress, the law was called the No Child Left Behind Act. And the reason why it was called the No Child Left Behind Act, it set out a goal for the country that every child deserves a good education. And it said, no child should be left behind, which means we'd better understand whether any -- we'd better answer the question, is every child learning.

But that wasn't the case oftentimes in America in public schools. We didn't know whether or not we were achieving what we expected. And so we passed this law. And the law basically said, in return for federal dollars, the federal government will finally start asking the question, what are the results -- that we expect to spend money. And as a matter of fact, we set record levels of expenditure for elementary and secondary education programs and Title I programs. That's an obligation of the federal government. We met the obligation with the largest budget increases in our history.

But instead of just spending money, we're starting to ask the question, what's happening in the classrooms. And if things are good, we want to praise the schools that are working like KIPP Academy. But if we find things are lousy and children are being left behind, instead of just accepting the status quo, it is now time for our society to challenge failure. And that's what we're doing. (Applause.)

And I'm proud of Washington, D.C. (Applause.) Washington, D.C. is willing to challenge failure and to praise success. This is not an easy issue for some in the political process. It is hard to take on the established order, particularly when you have to blow the whistle on failure. Nobody likes to have the whistle blown. But for the sake of our children, we need to be blowing whistles.

And so I appreciate very much the Mayor. Mayor Williams has stood strong, along with the Councilmen Chavous. And I appreciate my friend, David, being here, as well, for standing strong, and making sure that the children -- we focus on results, not process. I want to thank very much my friend, Rod Paige. When I hired -- hired -- I asked Rod to join me -- I didn't hire him. (Laughter.) He gets hired by school boards, not by presidents. (Laughter.) I was interested in somebody that actually had been on the front lines of public school education. He had a tough job in Texas. He was running the Houston Independent School District, which is a heck of a lot tougher than being President. (Laughter.) And the results in Houston were exceptional because Rod challenged the soft bigotry of low expectations and raised the bar. And he understands you've got to hold people accountable in life. And so he's doing a fine job for our country.

And, Peggy, I appreciate you being here, too. Peggy is the head of the school board. That is a tough job. That's a tough job. And I thank you for taking it on. (Applause.)

I appreciate the members of Congress coming. Tom, I'm glad you're here. I'm honored you're here. He's the Chairman of the House Government Reform Committee. He is concerned about making sure D.C. functions well, its schools function well. He's going to work closely with the Mayor.

And Rodney Frelinghuysen is here, as well. He's the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the District of Columbia. I'm sure he and the Mayor spend a lot of time talking and coming up with the amount of money the Mayor thinks is appropriate to run this important city. My only admonition is to make sure the potholes in front of the White House are full. (Laughter.)

But I want to thank you guys for coming here today. We're going to talk about an extremely important initiative that will make a difference in the lives of children here in the city. And I want to describe them a little bit, this federal initiative that is going to serve as a model for the rest of the country. I want my second home to become a model of excellence so that when people look at -- (applause) -- so that when people see the educational entrepreneurial spirit alive and well in D.C., they realize they can do the same in their own communities.

Father McCarrick, thank you for coming, too, sir. I appreciate the -- I appreciate your presence. I appreciate the excellence of the Catholic school system, not only here in Washington, but around the country. I think it's very important for our fellow citizens to see the Catholic school system as a model of what is possible, how to provide a high-quality education at a reasonable cost per student. And it's an interesting -- these Catholic schools can serve not only as an interesting go-by, but as a model, as well, for other schools in the District.

Listen, the No Child Left Behind Act understands that there must be accountability, and the way you achieve accountability is you measure. And so now we're measuring a lot. We're measuring annually to determine whether or not the children can read and write and add and subtract. We've got to know that. The first fundamental question in terms of achieving educational excellence is to measure and to provide the test and to see whether or not the children have got the basics; and if they do, recognize that the curriculum being used is working. If they don't, recognize something has got to change.

See, the measurement is not meant to punish, it is meant to remedy. It is meant to serve as a diagnostic tool. No one ever wants to measure, to hold a good teacher up and say, gosh, you've got a good heart, but you're doing a lousy job, therefore, you're a failure. That's not the reason you measure. The reason you measure is you say to a teacher, you've got a great heart, but you need to fine-tune what you're doing because it's not working right now.

You've also got to measure in order to begin to effect change that's just more -- when there's more than talk, there's just actual -- a paradigm shift. That's what measurement does. It provides the foundations for significant change.

Accountability is important. But accountability without consequences means nothing. So in other words, if you measure and find success, there needs to be -- something needs to happen, which is praise. And parents will say, well, gosh, if that's successful, I think we'll continue sending my child to that school. But if parents don't have any options other than a public school system, there's no accountability -- really no accountability. In other words, if there's nothing else can happen, if you find failure and you're stuck, why measure?

And so one of the things that we're going to talk about today is making sure that any accountability system has got -- has got some oomph to it, by trusting parents to make the right decision for their particular child.

The District of Columbia needs to improve. Let me just put it bluntly. (Laughter.) There are some great schools in the District and there are some lousy schools in the District. There has been a recent measurement to determine how the District schools do relative to other schools around the country, and 90 -- in grades four and eight, those were the two grades tested, the District of Columbia scored below every single state in the Union in terms of basic skills. And that's unacceptable. It's unacceptable to the Mayor, it's unacceptable to the City Council, it's unacceptable to Peggy, it's unacceptable, most importantly, to the parents. And we need to do something about it.

And the Mayor and the City Council and Peggy have started by invigorating a -- having a vigorous charter school program. See, charter schools say to the world, if you've got a better idea, show up and show us whether or not you can do a better job of challenging the status quo, if the status quo is failing. And that's what's happening in Washington. And I want to applaud the city for being on the front edge of the charter school initiative.

I'm going to work with Congress -- and I appreciate the members of Congress being here to -- we need to boost our budget for charter schools. I proposed \$320 million for charter schools. I want to work specifically with the city of Washington, D.C. The mayor and I have -- I answered the Mayor's calls, and he occasionally answers mine. (Laughter.) And one of the things that he likes to talk about is the need to make sure that the charter school system here is -- receives good federal attention. After all, the federal government has got a lot to do with how the schools in Washington, D.C. are funded. So we're committed to a charter school program in my administration. I think it's one of the options that ought to be made available to parents.

KIPP Academy is a charter school. The money follows the child, and that makes sense. (Applause.) The problem is that oftentimes there's not enough charter schools, in certain communities, to meet the demand. And there is big demand here in Washington, D.C. for alternatives other than the status quo. And so I've got an idea that I want to share with you today about how to meet that demand. And that is, I'm going to request \$75 million from the Congress for what we call a choice incentive fund. This will be basically scholarships for students to be able to use the money as they see fit, public or private. (Applause.) Obviously, private is where they're going to require tuition.

Fifteen million of that dollars will stay in Washington. (Applause.) It is the beginning of a school choice program funded by the federal government for students here in Washington, D.C. The scholarships will range up to \$7,500 per student. If the private school charges less than that, then the remainder, the difference between \$7,500 and the tuition, goes back into the pot so that more children will be funded. We think this will affect a couple of thousand children here in Washington, D.C. It is the beginning of an experiment that will show whether or not private school choice makes a difference in quality education in public schools. I happen to believe it will.

I do believe that competition will serve its purpose, and that will -- other schools will say, wait a minute, we're losing folks, we better try something differently. The accountability system says we're doing so well. We need to remember the customer. The customer happens to be the parent and the student. And I believe the change will cause folks to want to invigorate their own curriculum and to figure out what's going right or wrong. It

will certainly shake the system up. And it sounds like to me the system needs to be shaken up if you're not doing as well as you should be here in Washington, D.C. (Applause.)

People say, well, gosh, if you're going to do that then there will be no accountability. Of course, if a school receives a scholarship, then the school needs to be held accountable, as well. The same accountability system applies to the recipient school as it does to the public schools in Washington. We want there to be accountability throughout the system. Father McCarrick wouldn't mind that at all. He runs a system that is anxious to be held accountable. And so if a private scholarship ends up in a Catholic school, people will be held to account. After all, it's taxpayers' money. We want to know. We want to know whether it -- in a public school or a private school, whether or not the children are learning.

Now, if there -- if we run out of -- if there's more applicants than scholarships, then people will say, what's going to happen. Well, there needs to be a lottery. I mean, there needs to be a fair way. This isn't -- to make sure that everybody has got an equal shot. And then, of course, the Congress is going to want to know whether or not the program is working, just like the President will want to know. And so, therefore, what we'll end up doing is Rod will measure and then submit a report to the Congress on an annual basis, so that people will begin to see firsthand whether or not what we're attempting to do in Washington, D.C. has got the positive effect that a lot of us think it will have.

Look, what we're trying to do is to give parents more options. Step one was to measure; step two was to post the results so everybody knows. They can compare school to school. Step three is to say, in any accountability system, there has to be consequences. And the consequences when it comes to education for failure is the parent says, I've had it, I'm going to a different option for my particular child.

The other thing that's important is we've got to have the philosophical notion that we cannot have a two-tiered education system in America -- one tier for those who can afford a certain type of school, and one tier for those who can't. And so this plan is an attempt to say, the two-tiered deal is over with, we're starting to a new tier. (Applause.)

And there's a demand for this, by the way, in Washington. The Washington Scholarship Fund is an interesting idea where people came together, I presume from the business community, and others, and put up money to help children. There are a thousand applications last year for a hundred slots. It's a measurement, a data point, a measurement of demand where people are interested in doing something differently.

Virginia Walden-Ford, who I met, is the executive director of the D.C. Parents for School Choice. She says that hundreds of calls come in each week to her organization. Parents are wondering, do I have a choice, is there something else I can do, I'm frustrated.

Virginia is a good person to be running the program. She -- mom of three. Her youngest son looked like he was a -- I guess the best way to describe it would be a train wreck. He wasn't doing well in the public school system. He might say, the system quit on him, but he certainly quit on the system. And Virginia pulled him up and got him into a

Catholic school. From ninth grade on, he became a student. He was challenged. It raised his standards. He's now a United States Marine. He's preparing to go to college. (Applause.) It's a wonderful story about Archbishop Carroll High School. More importantly, it's a wonderful story about a mom who never gave up.

So she's taking that experience and is now trying to help other parents who are frustrated and other parents who are looking for different options for a particular child. I want to thank her for that very much. Here's what she said. She said, "Low-income parents don't want handouts, they just want the same opportunities to send their children to schools that meet their children's needs." And I appreciate that comment and I appreciate you working on this. (Applause.)

I appreciate meeting Valarie Garland today. We had a very emotional meeting. Valarie is concerned, frustrated, worried. We had a -- we shed a tear or two about the future. Valarie is a single mom, which, by the way, is the toughest job in America. It's really hard to be a single mom in our country. And then she's a single mom who is worried about the education system on top. And her emotions came forth, and we had a good visit about trying to provide a hopeful future for Valarie's child. And I believe we can get the Congress to move on this. It will make a difference in a lot of people's lives here in Washington.

Let me summarize by saying, first of all, there's a lot of great teachers in America. There's a lot of great teachers right here in Washington, D.C. There's a lot of good, hardworking folks. And we need to always keep in mind the need to praise our teachers and to praise people on the front lines of education.

Sometimes, however, the system, the curriculum, whatever it may be, it becomes stagnant. And wherever we find mediocrity, this society has an obligation to challenge that. And that's what we're talking about today. We're talking about making sure no child gets left behind by focusing on each child. And the best way to focus on each child is to look at results and then remember the decision-maker, who the decision-maker is in society. The decision-maker is the mom or the dad.

The District of Columbia is setting a bright example of what is possible in education reform. And I'm here to praise the public school system of Washington, D.C. and for those who are working hard to make it better. I'm here to praise the elected officials of Washington, D.C. for your willingness to step out and to confront failure when you see it and to praise success when you see it, as well.

And I'm here to say to the parents of Washington, D.C.: We care about your children. Each child matters. We believe every child can learn. We're going to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations in the Nation's Capital and around the country, because we know a more hopeful America depends on this nation's capacity to educate each and every child.

I want to thank you for coming, and may God bless America. (Applause.)

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Paige Issues Statement on Committee Passage of D.C. Choice Proposal**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

July 10, 2003

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige today released the following statement on the House Government Reform Committee's passage of the D.C. Parental Choice Incentive Act of 2003:

"Choice is essential for authentic school reform. I believe that we must empower parents to make the choices that will set their children on a path to a bright future. Thanks to the committee's bold action today, thousands of parents in our nation's capital are now one step closer to being able select the best school for their children.

"I applaud Rep. Davis, his staff and the committee for their commitment, courage and dedication to the children of Washington, D.C. I also want to thank Rep. Boehner and his staff for their participation in crafting the language. Finally, I thank Mayor Williams and Board President Cafritz for their untiring efforts and for being part of this team whose primary focus is on D.C.'s children. I look forward to continuing our work with Congress to expand choices and to ensure that no child in America is left behind."

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**Statement by U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige on Passage of D.C. School Choice Legislation in the House of Representatives**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

September 5, 2003

"I've always believed that expanding educational options for parents MUST be an integral part of our efforts to strengthen our schools and to leave no child behind. Parents in our nation's capital are demanding more and better options for their children, and this vote takes us one step closer to making the dream of a better education a reality for thousands of children in Washington, D.C.

"A child should not have his or her educational circumstances limited by their parent's income, the color of their skin, or the dialect of their speech. It's just not fair to use the power of government to chain a child to a school, which is not serving them well. Disadvantaged parents should have the right to make choices for their children just as other parents have.

"Today's action represents not just the vision of the President and I, and a bipartisan Congress, but also the demands of Washington's local leaders who boldly challenged the status quo and fought hard for children who are being left behind. They deserve our praise.

"I want to congratulate Reps. Davis, Boehner, Frelinghuysen, Shays and their colleagues for their tenacity and their untiring commitment to D.C.'s children.

"America will be watching as this program unfolds and makes its indelible mark on our efforts to help reform education in D.C. and across the country. I'm proud to have worked with the countless individuals who helped make today's vote possible."

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**President Bush Highlights Powerful Information Available to Parents, New Tools for Teachers under No Child Left Behind**  
**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

September 9, 2003

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.--President Bush today highlighted powerful new information that's available to parents under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and introduced a new "toolkit" to help the nation's educators with accurate, easy-to-understand information about the historic education-reform law.

Under the law, parents receive detailed information about their child's progress and the performance of local schools. Regular testing lets parents know how well their children are learning and where they need extra help. The law also requires states and school districts to give parents easy-to-read, detailed report cards on schools and districts, telling them which ones are succeeding and why. Included in these report cards is a wealth of information, such as student achievement data broken out by race, ethnicity, gender, English language proficiency, and migrant, disability or low-income status.

"Testing and report cards provide the information that allows us to diagnose a problem, so we can work together to fix it," Secretary Paige said. "For too long, we've been in the dark when it comes to solving our educational challenges. No Child Left Behind gives teachers and parents the information they need to help the students in danger of being left behind."

**Empowering Parents with Information**

During today's event, the president highlighted a new, Web-based tool to provide even more useful information to parents, educators and communities. The tool was created under a unique public-private partnership that includes the U.S. Department of Education; the Broad Foundation, a charity whose goal is to dramatically improve K-12 urban public education through better governance, management and labor relations; the National Center for Education Accountability, a nonprofit that promotes higher student achievement through data, research and best practices; and Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services, a provider of data and analysis for the education community.

The partnership provides all 50 states the opportunity to use--at no cost--a special package of data services to immediately assist states and schools with the basic data analysis and reporting requirements of NCLB.

Parents, taxpayers, teachers and policy makers can visit an easy-to-use Web site to search, sort, analyze and compare school performance trends.

The Broad Foundation will match the department's \$4.7 million investment to fund this effort. All told, by leveraging public and private investments, the initiative is expected to invest more than \$50 million to provide enhanced data analysis and reporting services to state education agencies.

Ten states will be invited to have their data analyzed to be available in January 2004. The remaining states that decide to participate will have their schools analyzed and reported by summer 2004.

**Empowering Teachers with Information**

No Child Left Behind also ensures that every child will be taught by a highly qualified teacher.

"Recent studies confirm what parents have always known--the quality of a teacher is one of the most important components of how well students learn," Secretary Paige said. "This law protects teachers from being forced to teach what they don't know well and ensures that all students are taught by someone who has the expertise to help them succeed."

All new teachers must be licensed or certified by the state, hold at least a bachelor's degree, and meet rigorous state requirements to demonstrate mastery of subject knowledge. States were required to ensure that new teachers in Title I schools met these requirements starting in the school year after the bill was enacted.

The new toolkit unveiled today provides educators with accurate, straightforward information about No Child Left Behind, as well as helpful information about loan forgiveness, tax credits and liability protection for teachers, links to helpful Web sites, information about data-driven decision-making, and guidance on understanding the federal, state and local roles in the No Child Left Behind law.

The Department of Education will distribute No Child Left Behind toolkits for teachers to various education organizations, education leaders and teachers across the country.

In addition, the kit will be available online at [www.ed.gov/teachers/nclbguide/index2.html](http://www.ed.gov/teachers/nclbguide/index2.html).

Teachers can order a copy of the toolkit by contacting the Department at: 1-877-4-ED-PUBS (1-877-433-7827), TTY/TDD: 1-877-576-7734; or by fax at: 1-301-470-1244. Requests for the toolkit may be made online at: [www.edpubs.org](http://www.edpubs.org); by e-mail at: [edpubs@inet.ed.gov](mailto:edpubs@inet.ed.gov); or by mail at: ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398.

President Bush's complete remarks from today's event are available online at [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov).

For more information about the No Child Left Behind Act, visit <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>.

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**\$25 Million in Charter Schools Facilities Grants Announced**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

September 18, 2003

BOSTON -- On behalf of U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige, Michael Sentance, the secretary's regional representative in Boston, today announced that organizations in Massachusetts, North Carolina, New York and Washington, D.C., will receive \$25 million under the new "Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Grant" program.

Together, these grantees will serve charter schools in California, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin, and other states, as well.

Sentance made the announcement during an event at the Renaissance Charter School in Boston, where he was joined by Gov. Mitt Romney; Lt. Gov. Kerri Healy; board of education Chairman James Peyser; Commissioner David Driscoll; Michael Hogan, executive director, Massachusetts Development Finance Agency; school officials; and others.

"Charter schools are one of the most innovative reforms in American education today," Secretary Paige said. "Yet many charter schools struggle to meet their full potential because they cannot afford suitable facilities. These grants are a good start on solving the challenges that charter schools facilities face. Congress should continue the progress by funding the President's full \$100 million request for this program in 2004."

Grantees will place funds in a reserve account, which will then be used to guarantee capital to address the cost of acquiring, constructing, or renovating charter school facilities. The reserve account funds are not for the direct purchase, lease, renovation or construction of school buildings.

The following organizations will receive grants under this program:

**Massachusetts Development Finance Agency**

75 Federal Street

Boston

Project Director:

Todd Rassiger

617-330-2000

\$6 million

**Center for Community Self-Help**

301 West Main Street

Durham, N.C.

Project Director:

Marc Hunt

828-253-5251

\$6,722,500

**NCB Development Corporation**

1725 Eye Street, N.W.

Washington

Project Director:

Annie Donovan

202-336-7677  
\$6,000,000

**Local Initiatives Support Corporation**

733 Third Avenue  
New York, N.Y.  
Project Director:  
Barbara Page  
(212) 455-9884  
\$6 million

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Paige Announces Grant to Assist States with School Choice Programs**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

November 3, 2003

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige today announced that two organizations have been awarded more than \$600,000 in grant funds for a joint project to help states identify the most effective ways to create and administer school choice programs.

The Center for School Change at the University of Minnesota's Hubert Humphrey Institute and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices will use the grant for a three-year project to help states develop the most effective and efficient ways to create and administer school choice systems that will produce improved student achievement.

"No Child Left Behind gives unprecedented options to parents of children in low-performing schools, including the choice to transfer their child to a better performing public school," Secretary Paige said. "This grant will help ensure that states have the most timely, up-to-date information on school choice and how other states are effectively administering and creating these programs, which will in turn help parents make an informed decision for their child's best interests."

The grant has two goals: to synthesize information about the most effective ways for states to create and administer charter schools and other school choice policies; and to partner with governors and other key state officials to help them develop broad school choice strategies.

The project will identify research-based policies for school choice programs and work with a small group of states to provide technical assistance and other activities to help states develop and implement a plan for school choice in their state.

During the second and third years of the project, the grant partners will select five states to assist in developing a comprehensive school choice strategy. The partners will then help high-level teams from each state improve existing school choice programs or broaden the array of high-quality school choice options available in their state.

No Child Left Behind is the landmark education reform law designed to change the culture of America's schools by closing the achievement gap, offering more flexibility, giving parents more options and teaching students based on what works.

Under the act's strong accountability provisions, states must describe how they will close the achievement gap and make sure all students, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve academic proficiency. In addition, they must produce annual state and school district report cards that inform parents and communities about state and school progress. Schools that do not make adequate progress after two years must provide public school choice; followed by supplemental services, such as free tutoring or after-school assistance; then take corrective actions; and, if still not making adequate yearly progress after five years, make dramatic changes to the way the school is run.

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**President Bush's 2005 Budget to Include \$50 million for School Choice Incentive Program**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

January 9, 2004

President Bush's 2005 budget continues his commitment to expanding education options for parents by including an estimated \$50 million for a Choice Incentive Fund to ensure America's parents have more choices for their children.

"The President is committed to empowering parents and students," U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige said. "This additional funding is an important step forward—because it will help to give parents more information, more options, and more control to help secure the best possible education for their children. This action builds upon the No Child Left Behind Act and other efforts to make certain every child in this country receives a quality education—and we mean every child, regardless of race, special needs, income, or geography. All children in America deserve the chance to learn and thrive."

The Choice Incentive Fund would provide competitive awards to states, school districts and community-based nonprofit organizations with a proven record of securing educational opportunities for children. A major objective would be to help school districts address their capacity problems by providing low-income parents with expanded opportunities for transferring their children to high-performing public, private or charter schools.

No Child Left Behind is the landmark education reform law that is designed to change the culture of America's schools by ensuring that all children can read and do math at grade level, closing the achievement gap, offering more flexibility to state and local schools, giving parents more options about their child's education and teaching students based on what works. During the past two years, the Department of Education has worked aggressively with states to implement the law.

The law's provisions empower parents in several ways, including allowing students who attend schools in need of improvement to transfer to another public school that better meets their needs, or get after-school help and tutoring. The law also provides support for other parent options, including funds for public charter schools and outreach to parents about their rights and responsibilities under No Child Left Behind.

Under No Child Left Behind's strong accountability provisions, states must describe how they will close the achievement gap and make sure all students, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve academic proficiency. In addition, they must produce annual state and school district report cards that inform parents and communities about state and school progress. Schools that do not make progress must provide supplemental services, such as free tutoring or after-school assistance.

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Paige Applauds Senate Passage of D.C. Choice Bill**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

January 22, 2004

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige today issued the following statement regarding Senate passage of the D.C. school choice legislation:

"Today is a truly historic event in the drive to provide educational choices to the children of the District of Columbia. The Senate's passage of the school choice legislation means that now, many of city's low-income students will have the same educational opportunities as the district's more economically fortunate students.

"Being able to make choices is a bedrock of a democratic society. With school choice, whether under the transfer provisions of No Child Left Behind or opportunity scholarships in the district and elsewhere, all parents can exercise their right to make educational choices for their children. School choice is one policy that will help create an educational system that makes no distinction between the poor and the privileged in terms of the quality of education received.

"I am proud to be a part of this historic initiative with Mayor Williams and members of the district's City Council and school board. It shows the public that when the future of our children is at stake, education and political leaders are willing to form partnerships and cross party lines to create better educational opportunities for all. Education is not and should not be a partisan issue.

"I hope that the D.C. experiment will be a model for the nation, showing how opportunity scholarships can not only help the children who take advantage of them, but also will force the public schools themselves to improve as they compete for students. Recent evidence from other states with opportunity scholarships has proved the positive changes these programs can make.

"I want to thank members of the Senate, especially Sens. Judd Gregg and Mike DeWine, for their support of this initiative and their mutual concern for the educational needs of D.C.'s children. I also want to again thank Mayor Williams, Councilman Kevin Chavous and School Board President Peggy Cooper Cafritz for their persistence in seeing this initiative through. I know that we will all continue to work together to level the education playing field and work diligently to improve public education throughout the nation. I look forward to working with the mayor as a full partner in implementing and measuring the program."

###

**SPEECHES**

**Remarks of Secretary Paige at the Launch of the School Information Partnership Website**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

January 29, 2004

Following are the prepared remarks by U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige at the launch of the School Information Partnership Website. The site, [www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com), displays timely, relevant and comparable school, district and state data required to be publicly reported by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The secretary discussed the unprecedented public-private partnership that will provide parents with the information and analytical resources needed to make the best possible decisions about their child's education.

"Today we witness another milestone in educational reform. Two years ago, the President proposed and Congress passed No Child Left Behind. This country pledged to make our educational system more inclusive, successful, and just. We pledged to make education more accountable and transparent, to put qualified teachers in every classroom, and to test students to see if they are learning. We pledged to give parents and students greater choices. And we are keeping those promises.

Last September, the President announced an unprecedented partnership to further transform American education. The United States Department of Education and the Broad Foundation began an initiative with Standard and Poor's School Evaluation Services and the National Center for Educational Accountability, world-class information analyzers. We wanted to give parents, educators, the media and policy-makers the information and analytical resources necessary to make the best possible decisions about their child's schools. The public and private sector partners, represented here today, pledged to produce a unique website—[www.SchoolMatters.com](http://www.SchoolMatters.com)—to display relevant and comparable school, school district, and state-wide data from all 50 states. In effect, we would create a consumer's clearinghouse for American education.

"All the relevant information would be here, in one spot. This would eliminate the need for concerned parents to search multiple websites, read numerous written reports, find scattered assessments, or track down other sources of information. By typing in one address and clicking, parents would find simple, comprehensive, and valuable data about neighborhood schools, their local school districts, and their particular state.

"Parents, educators, and taxpayers will benefit. The website gives parents greater knowledge, and more awareness of their realistic range of choices. It helps policy-makers generate greater accountability from schools. It enables educators to identify schools with high achievement and focus on the reasons for such achievement. It also helps them focus resources so that schools that need help get it. Taxpayers can see what their hard-earned money purchases. This is democracy in action, working best with the free-flow of public data.

"Many parents will tell you this information is desperately needed. Information is power. The data will help advance a national debate about the performance of our educational system – it can no longer be hidden in the shadows. The website will help diagnose the problem and help states and school districts fix it. Information that was once the province of superintendents, school boards, state education departments, or legislative committees needs to be readily available to the entire public – students, parents, teachers, taxpayers,

government officials, the media – everyone. The data will strengthen the entire American educational endeavor, from pre-school to university, from Florida to Alaska, and from parents to governmental officials. We will all be able to do our job better and more effectively with the data that will be available on schoolmatters.com.

"Today we are extremely pleased that some states are already online. The rest of the states are working with the Partnership, and will soon have their information available. By the summer, we anticipate having the majority of states involved with the initiative online. Information will be added incrementally as it becomes available. But the first set of data for some states is ready, and parents and educators in those states deserve to get this information as quickly as it can be made available.

"I encourage other states to follow the timely example set by the online states and have their data included as quickly as possible. Your participation will benefit your state's parents and teachers, and participation also counts as meeting the report card requirements of No Child Left Behind. I also want to ask that all of our schools and states continue their efforts to improve and enhance their data systems. Such investments facilitate partnerships such as the School Information Partnership. They also help provide the information you need to make the decisions that are best for our children.

"After all, we want—we need—empowered parents, teachers and decision-makers. Thanks to the vision of the President and the bi-partisan support of Congress, we have ignited a revolution in education. The indifference, exclusion, and blindness that hampered educational quality are being replaced by accountability, inclusion, and partnership. The most visible symbol of this revolution is the No Child Left Behind Act. It creates a new, open, and rigorous educational environment. Now, finally, our schools have objective requirements that will institute greater accountability, testing, local control, qualified teachers, and parental empowerment. And now we will have the data available to make this law even more effective and workable.

"On behalf of the President, the state governors assembled here, educators, and parents, I want to thank Eli Broad and the Broad Foundation, the National Center for Educational Accountability, and Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services for their leadership, vision, commitment, and support for this remarkable initiative."

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**Department Announces New Program to Help States Establish and Enhance Funding For Charter School Facilities**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

March 4, 2004

The U.S. Department of Education has announced a new grant program that will further enhance the school choice options under *No Child Left Behind* by helping states with their charter school facilities costs.

"It is important to empower parents with educational options, be they public schools, charter schools, cyber schools or homeschooling," said Secretary of Education Rod Paige. "Supporting charter schools is a wise investment, and I encourage states to take advantage of these federal funds to create or expand their charter school facilities programs. This is an historic opportunity for states to tap into federal funds for this important purpose and it would be a shame for them not to seize it."

Recently announced in the Federal Register, the State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants Program competition is designed to encourage states to develop and expand per-pupil facilities aid programs and to share in the costs related to the management and operation of charter schools.

A per-pupil facilities aid program is one in which a state makes payments to charter schools to provide them with financing that must include or be used only for the funding of facilities. The payments are based on a formula that takes into account the number of pupils in the charter school. The new program will provide grants to eligible states to help them establish or enhance and administer per-pupil facilities aid programs for charter schools.

"Research shows that finding and affording decent facilities is a major challenge for charter schools," Paige said. "These new grants will ensure that charter schools are on sound footing."

Some states already have per-pupil facilities aid programs in place. For a state to be eligible to receive a grant, its program must be specified in state law and provide annual matching funds on a per-pupil basis for charter school facilities. States with existing programs are eligible to receive a grant only if they increase the funding level of per-pupil facilities aid programs for charter schools.

Applications for the State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants Program will be available March 12. July 1 is the deadline for submitting the applications to the department. The department expects to award five, five-year grants, averaging about \$3.7 million per grant.

To access the Federal Register notice about this new grant program, visit <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/2004-1/022304a.html>.

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Administrator for DC School Choice Incentive Program Selected**  
**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

March 24, 2004

The U.S. Department of Education, in conjunction with the D.C. mayor's office, has selected the Washington Scholarship Fund (WSF) to administer the D.C. Choice Incentive Program, Education Secretary Rod Paige announced today. The \$14 million, five-year demonstration initiative is the first federally funded program in the nation to provide "equal opportunity scholarships" to low-income students in the district to attend parochial or private schools.

The WSF was founded in 1993 by a group of local business leaders who were concerned about expanding school choice for low-income families in the district. Since then, WSF has provided \$10 million in scholarships to more than 2,700 students. During the current school year, the WSF is distributing about \$1.7 million in scholarships to 1,023 students from 673 families. Currently, they are funded entirely through private donations.

"I'm glad to see that this effort to expand school choice is moving ahead full-speed," Paige said, who announced the competition for selecting the administrator last month. "The WSF has a proven track record for this type of work, and I'm happy to see them take on this project. We're in the business of improving education by providing parents with choices—regardless of their income level—and so are they. This project will add another 2,000 children to their growing list of low income students in the district who are looking to achieve their dreams through the best education available."

The prospective scholarship recipients will receive grants of up to \$7,500 to be used for tuition, fees and transportation. The program is scheduled to begin this fall.

"This is a huge step in the right direction," said Mayor Anthony A. Williams. "I look forward to the WSF taking on the task of operating this program and moving quickly to ensure a successful effort in the fall. I am confident that WSF will continue its good work of providing increased educational options for parents."

At the department, the Office of Innovation and Improvement will have the lead responsibility for implementing the program and for carrying out cooperative activities with the D.C. government.

In addition, the department's Institute of Education Sciences will have the lead responsibility for implementing the evaluation of the effectiveness of the program, including cooperative activities with the D.C. government that are related to that evaluation. A detailed request for proposals was announced on March 16. To access the request for proposals, visit <http://www.eps.gov/spg/ED/OCFO/CPO/ED%2D04%2DR%2D0008/listing.html>.

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Department Identifies Promising Practices for Implementing Public School Choice**

Paige releases guide highlighting five school districts' activities

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

May 24, 2004

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige offered tips and promising practices on implementing public school choice that can be found in *Creating Strong District School Choice Programs*, a new publication released today by the Department's Office of Innovation and Improvement.

Under *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)*, if a school with disadvantaged students fails to meet its academic achievement targets for two consecutive years, that school is defined as "in need of improvement." At this point, parents must have the option of moving their child to a public school in the same district that has met its achievement targets.

The guide shares practical advice and concrete examples from five school districts that have been successful in creating and expanding public school choice initiatives and making them work for students and parents. It also has information on how to avoid some of the pitfalls that school districts may face in addressing the needs of *all* students, a requirement under *NCLB*. The guide is the first of six booklets on promising and innovative education practices to be released this year.

"In the past, we have watched as isolated islands of educational improvement emerged," Paige said. "This promising practices book, along with the rest in the series, will help end that isolation and build bridges to those islands so we may learn from one another and turn our good intentions into positive results.

"This public school choice publication shows that superintendents and districts are indeed fulfilling their responsibilities and making choices available to families so that the school system truly serves the needs of the students. The experiences of these districts can inform the work of others. By taking lessons from these case studies, districts can avoid starting from scratch."

The secretary launched the publication in Milwaukee, one of five districts profiled in the guide that were selected because of their prior experience with school choice. Some, but not all, have received grants from the Department through the Voluntary Public School Choice or Magnet Schools Assistance Programs. The other districts highlighted are: Cambridge, Mass; Desert Sands, Calif.; Mesa, Ariz.; and Miami-Dade County, Fla.

In Milwaukee, for example, the Milwaukee Public School System improved the letter it sends home to parents alerting them of their options, deleting "legalese" that was in the previous year's version and making it more readable. Milwaukee's "Frequently Asked Questions" and "Parent Letter and NCLB Transfer Request Form" are both included in the guide as models for other districts to use. Milwaukee also is listening to parents' ideas and concerns and creating more K-8 schools, adding specialty programs and before- and after-school programs, and increasing neighborhood safety.

The guide provides advice in four basic areas, suggesting the "first steps" to take and how to "go deeper." The four key actions in implementing public school choice are helping parents make informed choices, building school district infrastructure, supporting schools, and improving programs over time.

Among the first steps to take to inform parents, according to the publication, is for school districts to implement a multi-faceted communications strategy on the *NCLB* choice options. To enhance school districts' infrastructure, suggestions include determining space and transportation options and starting new schools and programs.

The publication further calls for supporting schools by preparing them to communicate with parents and helping them to market their programs. It highlights the importance of informing front-line teachers and principals of the district's choice options, because these are the people most likely to receive questions from the parents. Finally, to help improve their programs over time, administrators should conduct surveys about parental satisfaction and the reasons they chose the school they did, and replicate successful and popular schools.

"The overall message of this publication is that implementing an effective school choice program can be done," said Nina Rees, deputy under secretary for Innovation and Improvement. "We're confident that the information in this guide will help school districts across the nation create and maintain successful programs in their communities."

*Creating Strong District School Choice Programs* is available online at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/comm/choice/choiceprograms/index.html>.

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Paige Applauds Passage of District of Columbia Budget**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

July 20, 2004

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige today issued the following statement regarding the House of Representatives' passage of the District of Columbia fiscal year 2005 budget, which provides \$40 million for education, including \$14 million for the D.C. School Choice initiative.

"I am very pleased that the House of Representatives has included additional funding for the D.C. School Choice program. All students deserve the opportunity to learn without regard to family income. Choice is a fundamental right of our society, and that's exactly what the D.C. School Choice program provides -- opportunities for students of lesser means to achieve. Despite being one of the top spenders in the nation, D.C. schools have little to show for it but an achievement gap that's more than double the national average. To have such a staggering achievement gap in this, the capital of the free world, is a national disgrace.

"Mayor Williams is committed to improving education in the district, and one of the ways he is doing this is by giving parents more choices for their children. I look forward to continue working with the mayor and the Congress on this issue, and thank the members of the House, especially Chairman Frelinghuysen, for their leadership."

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Statement by Deputy Secretary Eugene Hickok on Charter Schools Report**

**ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

November 19, 2004

U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education Eugene W. Hickok today released the following statement regarding *Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program*, a report from the Department's Policy and Program Studies Service:

"The findings from the study show that the Public Charter Schools Program is achieving its intended purpose: to provide states with flexible funding to support new charter schools. As can be evidenced by their growing popularity, charters are an important educational option for the nearly three-quarters of a million students who attend them—students who are, according to this report, disproportionately from low-income and minority backgrounds. These schools are popular because they respond to an unmet need: the provision of freedom and flexibility in the classroom in exchange for accountability for results. They provide real options for families who previously had none. And they demand continuous evaluation of both students and schools. This study is a part of that evaluation process.

"One part of the study examined charter schools in five states and found that more than half of charter schools in each state (and 90 percent in Colorado) were meeting state performance standards in the 2001-02 school year (the year prior to the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act*). However, charter schools were less likely to meet performance standards than traditional public schools. But that is all the study shows. It does not mean that traditional schools are outperforming charter schools or vice versa. The study is a snapshot, and it is impossible to know from one picture whether charter students are catching up or falling behind. Other more sophisticated studies have shown that charter schools do, in general, help students make faster progress than do traditional public schools, though charter students have more distance to cover. This should not be surprising, since the families most desperate for the new options charters provide are the ones whose children have been left behind by the traditional system.

"This report makes an important, though limited, contribution to the literature on charter schools, but, as with most studies, groups will use it to advocate for their own position. I hope that educators and policy-makers use it to further improve the quality of charter schools—an important part of the American education system—as well as of all public education. I look forward to further study and evaluation of charters over a longer time period, as well as a rigorous examination of the effect of charter schools on student learning, such as the charter study recently launched by the Department's Institute of Education Sciences. We have much yet to learn about how to create excellent schools that leave no child behind."

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**Statement from Secretary Paige on NAEP Charter School Results  
ARCHIVED INFORMATION**

**FOR RELEASE:**

December 15, 2004

The following is a statement from U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige regarding *The National Assessment of Educational Progress: America's Charter Schools*, a report from the Department's National Center for Education Statistics:

"There are some useful findings in this pilot study on charter schools, particularly in terms of quantifying the types of families that have chosen these educational alternatives. Charters tend to serve students whom the traditional public school system left behind years ago.

"Given its findings, this study cannot and should not be used as a red flag by those with an agenda of trying to stop the charter schools movement in its tracks. The analysis clearly shows that when you control for race, there are no statistically significant differences between charters and traditional public schools. This pilot study simply measures the characteristics of charter school students, as opposed to measuring the effectiveness of the schools themselves.

"As a result, as the report states, 'the unique characteristics of charter schools require additional information to be collected.' Harvard University's Caroline Hoxby released yesterday one analysis that does exactly that. It found that when charter students were compared to students in comparable traditional public schools, they in fact outperformed them in both reading and math. Her study points to the need for these vital educational choices—if the testimony of hundreds of thousands of parents is not enough."

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**President's FY 2006 Budget Focuses Resources on Students Who Need Them the Most**

President Bush proposes high school initiative, more assistance to help students pay for college

Budget includes funding increases for special education, Title I

**FOR RELEASE:**

February 7, 2005

President Bush today unveiled his plans to build upon the success of the historic *No Child Left Behind* education reforms by submitting a budget request for 2006 that provides \$56 billion in discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of Education. Since taking office, President Bush has increased education funding by \$13.8 billion, or 33 percent.

The president's 2006 budget request continues his strong commitment to educational excellence for all children and exercises fiscal discipline by focusing on programs that work. The budget directs taxpayer resources to the students who need them the most—including funding increases to help states and school districts implement *No Child Left Behind*, the president's sweeping education reform law. It also saves taxpayers' money by proposing to stop funding programs that duplicate efforts already underway or that have been proven ineffective.

President Bush has proposed nearly \$1.5 billion for a new initiative to ensure high school students graduate with the skills they need to succeed in college or the workforce; a \$603 million increase in Title I grants to help the neediest local schools implement *No Child Left Behind*; and a \$508 million increase for special education grants to states so that all children, including those with disabilities, have the opportunity to reach their full academic potential.

President Bush's 2006 budget also includes a record \$13.7 billion for the Pell Grant program to increase the maximum grant to \$4,150 and help an estimated 5.5 million low-income students pay for their higher education. The president's budget is a common-sense approach that would improve the effectiveness of the student aid programs while reducing program costs and subsidies to private lenders. The savings generated from the student aid reforms would result in a \$19 billion investment in the Pell Grant program over the next 10 years, including the funds needed to provide a \$500 increase in the maximum award over the next five years (including the \$100 increase for FY 2006) and \$4.3 billion to eliminate the current funding shortfall. In total, the Department of Education will administer more than \$78 billion in grants, loans and work-study assistance to more than 10 million students and parents in FY 2006.

"Three years ago, President Bush made a commitment to provide a quality education for every child, and to close the achievement gap that plagued our schools and society," U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings said. "The president has delivered on his promise—thanks to *No Child Left Behind*, our nation's schools are making great strides toward ending the 'soft bigotry of low expectations' and ensuring that all children have the opportunity to learn.

"But the job's not done. In the 21st century, education is not confined to the four walls of the schoolhouse and learning does not end when you are handed your diploma. Our future is one of flexibility and change. Whether they choose higher education or the workforce, our young adults must have the skills needed to take full advantage of all the opportunities that await them.

"High schools are the portal to the future. A high school diploma must be a ticket to success in the 21st century. We've all seen the studies that show American students are losing significant ground in reading and math scores as they enter high school. We can do better, and our students deserve better." Among the highlights of the 2006 budget request are:

### **Extending the Success of *No Child Left Behind* to High Schools**

**Our high schools must adapt to the 21st century:** Just two-thirds of students entering ninth grade will receive their diploma within four years—and fewer than four out of 10 will directly enter college. President Bush has a plan to change this. The president's 2006 budget includes:

\$1.24 billion to improve the academic achievement of students at risk of falling behind or dropping out;

\$250 million to measure student performance in reading/language arts and math in high school;

\$200 million—a \$175 million increase—for the Striving Readers program to improve the reading skills of teenage students;

\$120 million—a \$90 million increase—for the Math and Science Partnership to help struggling students reach grade level; and

\$125 million for a new Community College Access program to support "dual enrollment" by high school students who take college-level courses.

### **Continuing Our Commitment to Students in Need**

**President Bush's 2006 budget focuses substantial resources on making the most difference for students most in need:** President Bush's 2006 budget request builds on the momentum of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, which is improving academic performance across the nation. The president's budget includes:

\$25.3 billion—an overall increase of nearly \$1 billion—for the *No Child Left Behind Act*;

\$13.3 billion—a \$603 million or 4.7 percent increase—for Title I grants to help local school districts improve low-performing schools, enhance teacher quality and expand choices for students and parents. If enacted, the request would be an overall increase of \$4.6 billion—52 percent—in Title I funding since the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act*; and

\$11.1 billion—a \$508 million increase—for special education grants to states, a 75 percent increase for students with disabilities since 2001.

### **Giving Parents More Options and Teachers the Tools They Need to Help Students Achieve**

**Highly qualified teachers and highly involved parents are the keys to a quality education:** President Bush's budget includes several proposals aimed at helping our teachers help their students and giving parents more choices about their child's education, including:

\$500 million for a Teacher Incentive Fund to attract and reward the very best teachers for high-risk, high-poverty schools;

Making permanent the increase in loan forgiveness from \$5,000 to \$17,500 for highly qualified math, science and special education teachers who serve low-income communities;

\$50 million for a Choice Incentive Fund to give parents more opportunities to transfer their children to better-performing schools; and

\$219 million for charter schools, including \$37 million to help charter schools acquire, lease and renovate their facilities.

### **Helping More Students Afford a Higher Education**

**Access to college should not depend on financial success:** Higher education is increasingly becoming a need, not an option, in the 21st century. Nearly two-thirds of the fastest-growing jobs will require a higher education. And workers must be able to refine and broaden their skills on their timetable, not the government's. President Bush's 2006 proposed budget includes:

A record \$13.7 billion for the Pell Grant program, which would increase the maximum grant award by \$100 to \$4,150 in FY 2006 and help an estimated 5.5 million students pay for their higher education;

A \$19 billion investment in the Pell Grant program over the next 10 years, including the funds needed to provide a \$500 increase in the maximum award over the next five years (including the \$100 increase for FY 2006) and \$4.3 billion to eliminate the current funding shortfall.

\$33 million for a new Enhanced Pell Grant program to provide up to an additional \$1,000—for a total maximum award of \$5,150—to students who complete the rigorous state scholars curriculum in high school; and

\$50 million for a new Presidential Math-Science Scholars program to provide up to \$5,000 to low-income students pursuing math and science studies.

### **Spending Resources More Effectively**

**Taxpayers' money must be spent responsibly:** President Bush's 2006 budget frees up nearly \$4.3 billion in savings by changing or eliminating dozens of wasteful, duplicative or ineffective programs, including:

The \$205 million Comprehensive School Reform program, which duplicates activities already being carried out through Title I grants to local school districts; and

The \$225 million Even Start program, which three separate national studies have shown has produced no significant gains in literacy skills among children or adults.

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**New Grants Awarded To Help Charter Schools Expand**

Department Awards FY 2005 Grants Under the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program

**FOR RELEASE:**

August 18, 2005

The U.S. Department of Education today announced five grantees for the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Grant program. Together, these grantees will serve approximately 48,000 students in 120 charter schools in California, Delaware, Texas, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C.

Under this program, funds are provided on a competitive basis to public and nonprofit entities, and consortia of those entities, to leverage other funds and help charter schools obtain school facilities through such means as purchase, lease and donation. Grantees may also use grants to leverage funds to help charter schools construct and renovate school facilities.

Despite the popularity of charter schools with parents, teachers and the public, these distinctive public schools face barriers. A high percentage of new charter schools point out that inadequate facilities have impeded the implementation of their charters. Unlike traditional local education agencies, charter schools generally lack the ability to issue general obligation bonds backed by property taxes, and they are often considered to be credit risks by lending institutions.

"Charter schools must be able to grow and expand wherever the demand is greatest," said U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings. "We must not allow a lack of space to become a barrier to parents and children stuck on long waiting lists. These grants will help communities open up new spaces to charter schools so that charter schools can open their doors to new students."

To help leverage funds for charter school facilities, grant recipients may, among other things, guarantee and insure debt to finance charter school facilities; guarantee and insure leases for personal and real property; facilitate a charter school's facilities financing by identifying potential lending sources; encourage private lending; and establish charter school facility "incubator" housing that new charter schools may use until they can acquire a facility on their own.

These five new grantees will join the nine previous grantees under the program in serving charter schools. President Bush has requested an additional \$37 million for the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program in Fiscal Year 2006, building on the \$124 million that has been appropriated since 2001. This is in addition to the more than \$1 billion invested in the Charter Schools Program since the president took office.

The new grantees are:

The Reinvestment Fund  
718 Arch Street, Suite 300N  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1591  
Project Director: Donald R. Hinkle-Brown  
(215) 574-5829  
donald.hinklebrown@trfund.com  
\$10,000,000

California Charter Schools Association  
818 W. Seventh Street, Suite 910  
Los Angeles, CA 90017-3407  
Project Director: George Fatheree  
(213) 244-1446  
georgef@charterassociation.org  
\$10,000,000

Illinois Facilities Fund  
One North LaSalle Street, Suite 700  
Chicago, IL 60602-3902  
Project Director: Joe Neri  
(312) 596-5104  
jneri@iff.org  
\$8,000,000

Indianapolis Local Improvement Bond Bank  
200 East Washington Street, 2421  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Contact Person: Katie Aeschliman  
(317) 327-4277  
KAESCHLI@Indygov.org  
\$2,000,000

Texas Public Finance Authority  
300 W. 15th Street, Suite 411  
P.O. Box 12906  
Austin, TX 78711  
Project Director: Kim Edwards  
(512) 463-5544  
kim.edwards@tpfa.state.tx.us  
\$6,930,768

###

**LEAD & MANAGE MY SCHOOL**  
**Supplemental Educational Services**

Request for a flexibility agreement to provide supplemental educational services in lieu of public school choice, to students attending Title I schools in the first year of school improvement

August 25, 2005

Honorable Thomas M. Jackson, Jr.  
President  
Virginia Board of Education  
227 North Main Street  
Hillsville, Virginia 24343

Dear President Jackson:

I am writing in response to Virginia's request for a flexibility agreement on behalf of four school districts to provide supplemental educational services under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), in lieu of public school choice, to students attending Title I schools in the first year of school improvement.

Supplemental educational services (SES) are an important component of NCLB, giving low-income families real options to obtain free tutoring and other academic enrichment services for their children. This extra help for students who attend schools in need of improvement is a key element of school improvement efforts. We have learned valuable lessons about SES, a new initiative under NCLB, in these first few years of implementation. Creating and implementing a successful SES program takes coordination and cooperation by States, school districts, providers, and parents.

Unfortunately, not enough eligible students are receiving SES. According to several studies, only 10 to 20 percent of eligible students across the country participated in SES during the 2003-04 school year. Therefore, in order to increase the number of students receiving services, as well as the quality of services provided to students, the U.S. Department of Education is beginning several SES pilot programs in a select number of school districts across the country. Pilot programs will fulfill two key priorities: they will ensure that more students are receiving SES, and they will ensure better information on how programs are improving the academic achievement of students receiving services. I hope to gain valuable information about SES from these pilot programs -- information that can be shared with other States and districts to help them improve the quality of these services.

Virginia has requested that four school divisions (districts) within the Commonwealth be allowed to offer SES to eligible students in Title I schools in the first year of school improvement under NCLB in lieu of public school choice. These four divisions would then offer SES and public school choice to eligible students enrolled in any school that moves to the second year of school improvement. The four divisions are Alexandria City, Henry County, Newport News City, and Stafford County.

The Department has reviewed Virginia's request for flexibility and its efforts to meet the guiding principles of NCLB that I outlined on April 7 of this year at Mount Vernon. Virginia is meeting the core principles by improving student achievement, implementing the accountability provisions as required by NCLB, providing accessible information and options for parents, and improving the quality of teachers.

I am approving Virginia's request for a flexibility agreement under section 9401 of the ESEA for the 2005-06 school year for the four requested divisions as an SES pilot program of the Department. This agreement permits the four pilot divisions to provide SES to eligible students in Title I schools in the first year of school improvement in lieu of choice, thereby reversing the statutory order specified in sections 1116(b)(1)(E) and 1116(b)(5)(B) of Title I. Approval is conditioned on Virginia's fulfilling the conditions detailed in the enclosed Attachment and summarized here:

More students participate in SES and public school choice

Virginia must provide information on the academic achievement of students receiving SES

Virginia must ensure parent access to SES providers

Virginia must participate in a data exchange project with the Department

In addition, as required by section 9401(b)(3)(B) of the ESEA, within 30 days of the date of this letter, each pilot division must provide notice and information to the public about its participation in the pilot in the manner in which it customarily provides similar notice to the public. Each division must also submit a report under section 9401(e)(1) of the ESEA to the Virginia Department of Education (VDE) at the end of the 2005-06 school year that describes the division's provision of SES in Title I schools in the first year of school improvement; describes how those schools continued to provide Title I services to eligible students; and evaluates the progress of the division and schools in improving the quality of instruction or the academic achievement of students. VDE must then submit a report to the Department based on the pilot divisions' reports.

This flexibility agreement applies to the provision of SES in Title I schools in the four pilot divisions during the 2005-06 school year.

Supplemental educational services are an important component of No Child Left Behind, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that students are accessing services and succeeding in the classroom.

Sincerely,

Margaret Spellings

cc: Honorable Mark Warner  
Dr. Jo Lynne DeMary

Enclosure

## **ATTACHMENT**

### **Conditions of Flexibility Agreement**

Virginia must ensure that more students participate in SES and choice by demonstrating that the combined participation in choice and SES in the pilot divisions increases substantially in 2005-06 over the 2004-05 levels.

Virginia must provide the Department with information on the academic achievement of students receiving SES by school within the four pilot divisions within one month of the date that each of the four divisions receives its 2005-06 assessment results.

Virginia must provide parents in pilot divisions access to a variety of SES providers, as demonstrated by the following:

1. Maintaining a comprehensive list of SES providers (e.g. nonprofit, for-profit, faith and community-based, online);
2. Ensuring that at least two providers from which parents may choose are available in each pilot division;
3. Providing information to parents in pilot divisions on school performance and student eligibility for, and enrollment in, choice and SES that is clear, accurate, and easily accessible. Virginia may want to develop model parental notification letters and standard forms for enrolling students in choice and SES; and
4. Ensuring that the pilot divisions provide fair and equitable treatment of non-district providers by giving providers access to school facilities at a reasonable price and dividing space among providers in a fair manner.

Virginia must require pilot divisions to notify parents about SES within the first few weeks of the school year and provide SES shortly thereafter.

Virginia must require pilot divisions to offer continuous enrollment in SES or multiple SES enrollment periods throughout the 2005-06 school year until each pilot division spends the requisite 20 percent or all students eligible for SES and choice are served.

Virginia must submit complete and accurate data to the U.S. Department of Education via the Educational Data Exchange Network (EDEN) for the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years by the end of October 2005. Subsequent submissions for the 2005-06 school year must be provided during the EDEN transmission windows and completed by September 30, 2006, with the exception of the "Close Out" data which should be submitted by November 1, 2006. The exact details and schedule of the EDEN data submissions from Virginia will be outlined in a Data Transfer Agreement.

NCLB Policy Letters to States

## SPEECHES

### **N-C-L-B Spells Free Tutoring**

Prepared Remarks for Secretary Spellings at the Supplemental Educational Services (SES) Pilot Announcement at Sherwood Elementary School in Chicago, Illinois

#### **FOR RELEASE:**

September 1, 2005

Thank you Arne Duncan for your kind introduction. Arne is a real innovator, and I'm happy to celebrate back-to-school season with him. But as children in Chicago and across America get ready to start classes, our thoughts and prayers are with the children who are living along the Gulf Coast, who may not be able to return to their schools for weeks or months.

I'm working with the White House Task Force on Hurricane Katrina Response to find any way we can to help these children. We will stick with these communities for as long as it takes to get them back on their feet.

One of the things I love most about working in education is that everybody-Republicans and Democrats alike-cares about our children's futures. I'm thrilled to be here today with leaders in Congress like Sen. Mike Enzi of Wyoming, the chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. And Sen. Dick Durbin, and Congressmen Danny Davis and Bobby Rush, and Mayor Richard Daley, and Arne Duncan, the CEO of Chicago Public Schools. Thank you all for being here today. I know Congressman John Boehner of Ohio wishes he were with us today. He's a stalwart as well.

*No Child Left Behind* passed in Congress by 87 - 10 votes in the Senate, and 435 - 82 in the House. And today, bipartisan support for this law is alive and well. The people who are here today demonstrate that our commitment to working together lives on, three and a half years after the act was signed into law.

With *No Child Left Behind*, Americans made a historic commitment to raise achievement for every child across our country. The law aims high and focuses on using what works. It holds schools accountable for student achievement, and it brings practical, research-based tools into the classroom while respecting local decisionmaking. It's providing states, schools, and teachers with the resources they need to help children learn.

Thanks to this law, families now have access to new services-like free after-school tutoring for their children and the ability to transfer them to better-performing schools. Scores are rising, the achievement gap is closing, and *No Child Left Behind* is working. We're seeing all-time highs in student achievement.

The Nation's Report Card shows that, nationally, reading scores for 9-year-olds increased more over the last five years than in all the years between 1971 and 1999 combined!

In math, 9- and 13-year-olds' scores also reached all-time highs. Hispanic 9-year-olds saw their scores rise by 17 points over the last five years.

These results show that we're on the right track. The law is working. But some parts of it need improvement. In the 2003-04 school year, about two million students across our country were eligible for free, high-quality tutoring, also known as "supplemental educational services." Unfortunately, only about 10-20 percent of them actually received the services-which is less than the current number of eligible students here in Chicago. That just doesn't add up. We need to try a new approach.

The bottom-line, most important thing we talk about in education is whether kids are learning. We will continue to abide by the bright-line principles of *No Child Left Behind*—annual testing, disaggregating data (that means reporting by each student group), and closing the achievement gap by 2013-14. But we are implementing the law in a sensible, workable way.

We worked with people on the front lines to come up with a terrific new approach that we will try here in Chicago. We listened to parents like Natosha, and we worked with others like Mike Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, and National PTA President Anna Weselak, and Sherwood's principal Charles McGehee, and Arne Duncan, and Mayor Daley.

You all are doing a great job on behalf of children and parents in Chicago. That's why I'm proud to be here to announce our plans to help more of Chicago's children receive free tutoring, as promised by *No Child Left Behind*. The Department of Education is partnering with the Chicago school district to start a pilot program that will give families more opportunities to help their children do better in school through after-school tutoring.

Here's the agreement we came up with together. The Department is allowing Chicago to provide supplemental services to families, even though the district has been identified as "needing improvement." Last week, we announced a slightly different agreement with some districts in Virginia. The point of all of these agreements is to give parents better information and more choices, and to help more children get the extra help they need to succeed in school and beyond. The Chicago school district believes it can help 20,000 new students right off the bat through this pilot program.

In return for this flexibility, Chicago will ensure that more families receive services—from the provider their parents feel most comfortable with. The district will give parents more opportunities and more choices. Our hope is that increased choices for parents will lead to increased achievement for children.

Parents will be notified early about the opportunities that are available to them, and they will be able to enroll their children in tutoring programs at multiple times throughout the year. Every parent knows that a child can be doing great in school, and then all of a sudden, he or she will hit a bump in the road and need extra help. These pilot programs allow for more than one enrollment window so that students can start getting help as soon as they need it.

Chicago will allow providers to access its school buildings at a fair, reasonable price. I hope other districts will do the same, so that tutoring occurs in the safest, most comfortable and, frequently, most convenient environment possible.

The Education Department sees these pilot districts as laboratories working on the answers to some very important questions—for example, how can we help even more parents take advantage of the choices available to them? And, are these after-school programs effective?

The supplemental services provisions of *No Child Left Behind* were a brand new option in federal education law. We've learned some valuable lessons in the law's first three years, and we want to learn even more about supplemental services by testing some new approaches this year.

At the end of this school year, we will collect data from these pilots that will help us understand what ingredients are necessary for student success. We will know a lot more

than we know today-and after testing some theories with this pilot, we will have a much better idea of how we can best help the most students.

Going forward, we will continue to listen and learn, and I hope to announce more programs like this one. In fact, Senator Enzi and I are already looking at the unique challenges of providing supplemental services in rural areas.

*No Child Left Behind* is all about making sure that all students are learning-no matter what zip code they live in, what language they speak, or what special needs they may have. We hope that NCLB plus free tutoring equals the way to help parents and schools achieve that goal.

###

**PRESS RELEASES**

**Louisiana Awarded \$20.9 Million *No Child Left Behind* Grant to Assist Damaged Charter Schools, Create New Charter Schools**

Funds to be used to expand classrooms for students displaced by hurricanes

**FOR RELEASE:**

September 30, 2005

Louisiana has been awarded a \$20.9 million *No Child Left Behind* grant through the Charter Schools Program to help reopen charter schools damaged by the hurricanes, help create 10 new charter schools, and expand existing charter schools to accommodate students displaced by hurricane damage, U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced today.

"President Bush and I are committed to making sure these students get a quality education wherever they are and this funding will get Louisiana students back in school," said Spellings. "School is a stabilizing influence for children and entire families who are working to rebuild their lives."

"I want to thank Secretary Spellings and President Bush for this infusion of federal funds," said State Superintendent of Education Cecil J. Picard. "Charter schools, like many of our public schools, have been impacted dramatically by the hurricanes and our students will benefit greatly from these highly flexible grant funds. We will rebuild Louisiana through education, and this is an awesome first step."

As a result of the hurricanes, public schools, including charter schools, were severely damaged or destroyed in New Orleans and its surrounding parishes. Eleven charter schools were located in the Orleans parish, one of the hardest-hit areas. Families and their children have moved to other parts of the state and to other states. It is estimated that more than 300,000 students were displaced as a result of these hurricanes.

Louisiana will use these funds to assist charter schools damaged by the hurricanes in the recovery of professional staff, supplies, equipment and other operational needs. Funds will also be used to assist charter schools that have the ability and capacity to significantly expand existing classrooms and facilities in geographic areas of highest need in order to serve large numbers of students displaced by the hurricanes.

With the grant, Louisiana will be able to plan, design and implement an estimated 10 new charter schools approved by local school boards and the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Many of these are planned to be open and operating by January 2006.

Charter schools are independent public schools designed and operated by parents, educators, community leaders, education entrepreneurs and others with a contract, or charter, from a public agency, such as a local or state education agency or an institution of higher education. Charter schools are operated free-of-charge to parents and are open to all students. These schools provide parents enhanced education choices within the public school system. Exempt from many statutory and regulatory requirements, charter schools receive increased flexibility in exchange for increased accountability for improving academic achievement. The first U.S. public charter school opened in 1992. Today, more than 3,400 charter schools serve nearly one million students in 40 states and Washington, D.C.

The *No Child Left Behind Act* is the bipartisan landmark education reform law designed to change the culture of America's schools by closing the achievement gap among groups of

students, offering more flexibility to states, giving parents more options and teaching students based on what works. Under the law's strong accountability provisions, states must describe how they will close the achievement gap and make sure all students, including those with disabilities, achieve academically.

More information about the *No Child Left Behind Act* is available at [www.nclb.gov](http://www.nclb.gov).

###

# Florida Supreme Court Blocks School Vouchers

New York Times

By SAM DILLON

Published: January 6, 2006

In a ruling expected to reverberate through battles over school choice in many states, the Florida Supreme Court struck down a voucher program yesterday for students attending failing schools, saying the State Constitution bars Florida from using taxpayer money to finance a private alternative to the public system.

The 5-to-2 ruling orders state officials to end, at the close of this school year, a program that Gov. Jeb Bush has considered one of his chief accomplishments.

Known as the Opportunity Scholarship Program, it uses public money to pay tuition for 730 students who have left failing public schools and enrolled in private schools. But a prominent voucher proponent said yesterday's ruling could also endanger the state's charter school system and a voucher program for disabled students, which together serve nearly 100,000 students.

The United States Supreme Court has ruled that the federal Constitution does not prohibit vouchers, but it also held last year that states were not obliged to finance religious education as well as secular education. Those actions left it to state courts to decide whether voucher programs were legal, and focused national attention on the battle over vouchers in Florida, which teachers' unions first challenged in 1999.

The Florida ruling cannot be appealed to the United States Supreme Court because no federal issues are involved, lawyers on both sides of the litigation said.

In its ruling, the Florida court cited an article in the State Constitution that says, "Adequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure and high quality system of free public schools."

The Opportunity Scholarships Program "violates this language," the court said.

"It diverts public dollars into separate private systems parallel to and in competition with the free public schools that are the sole means set out in the Constitution for the state to provide for the education of Florida's children," the ruling said. "This diversion not only reduces money available to the free schools, but also funds private schools that are not 'uniform' when compared with each other or the public system."

Governor Bush called the ruling "a blow to educational reform."

"It temporarily removes a critical tool for improving Florida's public schools and it also challenges the power of the Florida Legislature to decide as a matter of public policy the best way to improve our educational system," Mr. Bush said.

He said the state would explore all legal options including amending the Florida Constitution.

Voucher proponents across the nation called the ruling a setback, just weeks after Congress enacted the nation's largest federally financed school choice program, which reimburses tuition for more than 350,000 students displaced by Hurricane Katrina, regardless of whether they enroll in public or private schools.

"We ended last year with a major victory and begin this year with a major setback," said Clint Bolick, a lawyer who was a participant in the Florida litigation on behalf of voucher supporters and is president of the Alliance For School Choice, a group based in Arizona.

Since Wisconsin established the nation's first voucher program in Milwaukee in 1990, a handful of other states have followed suit, including Ohio, Colorado and Utah. In 2004, Congress enacted a voucher program for the District of Columbia.

Some of the state programs have come under legal challenge and the verdicts have been mixed. The Wisconsin Supreme Court upheld the Milwaukee program's constitutionality in 1998. The United States Supreme Court upheld the Ohio program in 2002. But in Colorado in 2004, the State Supreme Court upheld a lower court's decision that the state's newly enacted program would unconstitutionally strip local school boards of their control over education.

Joseph P. Viteritti, a professor at Hunter College who has written widely on voucher programs, called the Florida ruling important because many state constitutions have provisions similar to Florida's, requiring that public education be "uniform."

"It signals a direction that litigation may go in the future, offering a strategy for people who may want to strike voucher programs down," he said.

Chief Justice Barbara J. Pariente, who wrote the court's majority ruling, said that private schools are not "uniform," partly because they are exempt from many requirements imposed on public schools, including standardized tests and teacher credentialing rules.

Mr. Bolick, the voucher proponent, called the Florida ruling especially disheartening because it not only ends the Opportunity Scholarships Program but also offers a legal basis for challenging two other major Florida efforts: the McKay Scholarships, which provide vouchers for more than 14,000 disabled students, and the state's collection of more than 300 charter schools, which educate 82,000 students.

Toni Cortese, executive vice president of the American Federation of Teachers, called the ruling "very encouraging."

"It's clear that the court felt that public monies ought to be used for public schools," Ms. Cortese said. "Certainly for Florida this is the nail in the coffin of a voucher program."

Mr. Bush, a Republican, made the voucher plan a cornerstone of his campaign for governor, and the Legislature approved it weeks after he took office in 1999.

Later the same year, the two national teachers' unions – the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers – along with a coalition of other groups including the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People supported a few Florida parents in filing at least two suits challenging the program.

The parallel antivoucher suits were eventually consolidated.

Lawyers for an array of groups that support school choice, including the Florida Catholic Conference and the Black Alliance for Educational Options, filed briefs in the case defending vouchers.

###

# Fiscal Year 2007 Budget Summary — February 6, 2006

## Archived Information

*You've got to know math if you're going to compete in this 21st-century world.*

*President George W. Bush  
January 9, 2006*

### Section I. Summary of the 2007 Budget

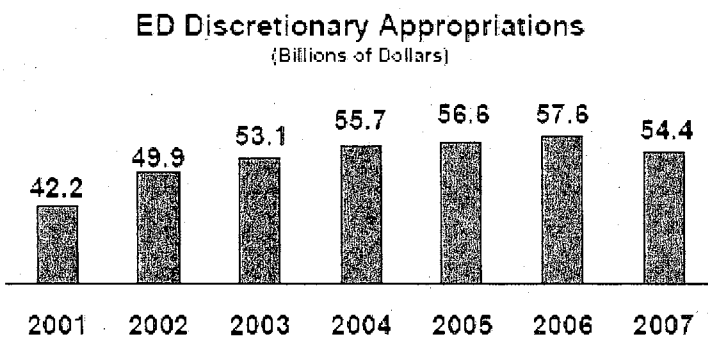
Four years after the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the revolutionary changes to our education system called for by President Bush are almost implemented. States have put in place rigorous new accountability systems and will implement reading and math assessments covering all students in grades 3-8 by the end of the current 2005-06 school year. Improved data collection and reporting on teacher qualifications are helping States to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified. School districts are providing new support and assistance to low-performing schools, while making available public school choice and supplemental educational service options to millions of students who attend those schools.

The latest results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), better known as "The Nation's Report Card," show that these changes are paying off in the only way that counts: improved student achievement. Long-term NAEP trends show that America's 9-year-olds have made more progress in reading over the past five years than in the previous two decades, and the achievement gaps between African-American and Hispanic 9-year-olds and their white peers are at an all-time low. Importantly, NAEP also shows that students in large urban school districts—those most likely to be served by NCLB programs—have made larger achievement gains than the national average.

Despite this progress in the early grades, NAEP results for older students provide a reminder of the need to hold fast on the "bright line" principles of NCLB—annual assessments in grades 3-8, disaggregation of data for key subgroups, and proficiency for all students in reading and math by 2014—and the challenge of ensuring continued US prosperity in a globally competitive, technology-based economy. The 2005 NAEP math results for 8th-graders, for example, are both illustrative and alarming: less than one-third of 8th-graders, and just 13 percent of low-income 8th-graders, scored at the proficient level or above. If, as the President says, "you've got to know

math if you're going to compete in this 21st century world," US math instruction clearly needs to kick into a higher gear, and this is a key goal of the President's 2007 Budget for Education.

**For 2007, the President is requesting \$54.4 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Education, a**



Note: 2007 reflects the President's request level.

decrease of \$3.1 billion, or 5.5 percent, from the 2006 level. Even with the proposed decrease, discretionary appropriations for the Department will have grown by almost \$12.2 billion, or 29 percent, since fiscal year 2001.

Key increases in the 2007 budget include the following:

**\$380 million in new funding to improve math and science instruction in K-12 schools**, requested as part of the President's American Competitiveness Initiative.

**Nearly \$1.5 billion for a renewed High School Reform proposal** designed to more thoroughly extend NCLB principles to the high school level and ensure that all students, including low-achieving students most at risk of dropping out, graduate with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education or the globally competitive workplace.

**\$35 million in new funds for the Department's portion of the President's multi-agency National Security Language Initiative**, which in addition to contributing to national security would help US citizens compete in the global marketplace.

**\$100 million for a new program of America's Opportunity Scholarships for Kids**, which would provide new educational options for low-income students attending schools identified for restructuring under NCLB.

**\$200 million in new Title I School Improvement Grants** to build State capacity to turn around schools and LEAs identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under the Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies program.

In addition to competitiveness, a driving theme of the 2007 request is to continue to restrain Federal spending and stay on track to meet the President's goal of cutting the deficit in half by 2009. The overall 2007 request—including both discretionary and mandatory funds—combines fiscal discipline with strong, continued commitment to longstanding priorities such as Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies, Special Education Grants to States, and Pell Grants for postsecondary students. At the same time, the budget proposes to eliminate 42 duplicative or unnecessary programs, for a total savings of \$3.5 billion. While many of these proposals are repeated from prior years, Congress showed in the fiscal year 2006 appropriations process that it was willing to work with the President to achieve meaningful decreases in programs that are lower priority or do not work well in achieving their objectives. For example, the 2006 appropriations bill contained \$1.4 billion in program reductions, including the elimination of five programs.

Discretionary and mandatory components of the request are shown below:

**Total Department of Education Appropriations**  
(in billions of dollars)

	2005	2006	2007 Request
<b>Discretionary</b>	\$56.6	\$57.6	\$54.4

<b>Mandatory</b>	17.4	31.3	9.0
Total	<u>74.0</u>	<u>88.9</u>	<u>63.4</u>

Department discretionary spending in fiscal year 2006 included \$1.6 billion in education assistance to areas affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and the Reconciliation bill would change the funding of student aid administrative costs from mandatory to discretionary in 2007. Taking into account these one-time changes, the President's 2007 discretionary request for education would be a decline of \$2.1 billion, or 3.8 percent, from the comparable 2006 level.

Mandatory costs for the student loan programs and Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants fluctuate from year to year due to changes in inflation, interest rates, and other factors. The \$22 billion reduction in mandatory costs from 2006 to 2007 reflects \$17 billion in lower estimated student loan costs because of changes in interest rate and consolidation loan assumptions, the one-time \$4.3 billion appropriation in 2006 to eliminate the cumulative Pell Grant funding shortfall, and \$1 billion in student loan savings from changes in the pending Higher Education Reconciliation Act.

Federal funding makes up about 8.2 percent of the estimated \$555 billion that America is spending on elementary and secondary education during the 2005-06 school year. The relatively small size of the Federal investment in education dictates an emphasis on promising, research-based programs that have the potential to leverage more effectively the much larger State and local share of national education spending to bring about real improvement in student achievement. This is the primary goal, for example, of the strong State accountability systems required by No Child Left Behind. Under the President's request, funding for NCLB programs would rise by more than \$1 billion in fiscal year 2007, from \$23.3 billion to almost \$24.4 billion, an increase of \$7 billion, or 40 percent, since NCLB was enacted.

The combination of discretionary and non-discretionary resources in the President's budget is focused on the following areas.

#### **PREPARING AMERICA'S STUDENTS FOR GLOBAL COMPETITION**

Despite the great promise and progress of No Child Left Behind, gaps remain in the Federal effort to improve the performance of America's public schools, gaps that increasingly are exposed by the rapid pace of technological change and increasing global economic competition. To ensure a strong and prosperous America in the 21st century, our students must possess the mathematics knowledge that is the foundation of our Nation's long dominance in science, technology, and innovation; graduate from high school prepared to enter college or the globally competitive workforce; and master critical foreign languages needed both for success in the global business arena and to ensure our national security in the war on terrorism. The 2007 request addresses each of these challenges:

**\$380 million, as part of the American Competitiveness Initiative, for proposals to strengthen the capacity of our schools to improve elementary and secondary instruction in mathematics and science while complementing High School Reform efforts:**

- **\$125 million for the Math Now for Elementary School Students** initiative, modeled after Reading First, to implement proven practices in math instruction—including those recommended by the National Math Panel—that focus on preparing K-7 students for more rigorous mathematics courses in middle and high school.
- **\$125 million for a new Math Now for Middle School Students** initiative, based on the principles of the Striving Readers program, to support research-based math interventions in middle schools.
- **\$10 million for a National Mathematics Panel**, which will be formed in fiscal year 2006 to identify key mathematics content and instructional principles to guide the implementation of the Math Now programs. The request for 2007 would be used to carry out the panel's recommendations, including research and dissemination of promising practices in mathematics education.
- **\$5 million for an Evaluation of Mathematics and Science Programs** proposal that would conduct activities to improve the quality of evaluations of Federal elementary and secondary mathematics and science programs, as well as to evaluate such programs, with a focus on examining whether they are consistent with the principles of NCLB.
- **A \$90 million increase for Advanced Placement** to bring a new emphasis on training teachers and expanding opportunities for students, particularly in high-poverty schools, to take high-level Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses in math, science, and critical foreign languages.
- **\$25 million for the Adjunct Teacher Corps** to create opportunities for qualified professionals from outside the K-12 educational system to teach secondary-school courses in the core academic subjects, with an emphasis on mathematics and the sciences.

**\$1.475 billion for the President's High School Reform initiative** to support interventions and expanded high school assessment aimed at improving the academic achievement of students at greatest risk of not meeting challenging State academic standards and not completing high school. Related increases include:

- **\$70.3 million for the Striving Readers** program, for a total of \$100 million to significantly expand the development and implementation of research-based interventions to improve the skills of teenage students who are reading below grade level.
- **\$8 million for State Scholars Capacity Building** under the Fund for the Improvement of Education to increase the number of States implementing State Scholars programs, which encourage high school students to complete a rigorous four-year course of study.
- **\$60 million for Academic Competitiveness and National SMART Grants**, for a total of \$850 million to provide grants of up to \$4,000 to an estimated 600,000

low-income, high-achieving postsecondary students who have completed a rigorous high school curriculum or are majoring in mathematics, science, technology, engineering, or critical foreign languages.

**\$35 million for the Department's portion of the President's multi-agency National Security Language Initiative**, to significantly increase the number of American students learning foreign languages critical for our national security and global competitiveness:

- **\$24 million for a new Advancing America Through Foreign Language Partnerships** program, which would establish fully articulated language programs of study in languages critical to US national security through grants to institutions of higher education for partnerships with school districts for language learning from kindergarten through high school and advanced language learning at the postsecondary level.
- **A \$2 million increase for Foreign Language Assistance**, for a total of almost \$24 million for this existing program, to provide new incentives to school districts and States to offer instruction in critical foreign languages, such as Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Japanese, Korean, Russian, and Urdu, in elementary and secondary schools.
- **\$5 million for the Language Teacher Corps**, which would provide training to college graduates with critical language skills who are interested in becoming foreign language teachers.
- **\$3 million for a Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative** that would provide intensive summer training sessions and online professional development for foreign language teachers.
- **\$1 million for a nationwide E-Learning Language Clearinghouse** to help deliver foreign language education resources to schools, teachers, and students across the country.

#### **A NEW FOCUS ON IMPROVEMENT IN NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND**

The 2007 request will fund the sixth year of No Child Left Behind implementation. With all the key elements of the law in place—including assessments in grades 3-8, strong State accountability systems, new choices for students and parents, and highly qualified teachers—States and school districts will increasingly focus on making the substantial annual improvement in student achievement needed to reach the 100-percent proficiency goal by 2014. In particular, States will need comprehensive, statewide systems of support to help school districts turn around low-performing schools that have been identified for improvement, corrective action, and restructuring. This challenge of continuous improvement will only grow as more school districts themselves are identified for improvement and corrective action. For this reason, the request includes critical proposals for strengthening Title I school improvement, while maintaining strong support for other key NCLB programs:

**\$12.7 billion for Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies**, the same as the 2006 level, to maintain support for State and local efforts to meet the rigorous accountability

and teacher quality requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act. The request also proposes to give States greater flexibility to reserve the full 4 percent of their Title I allocations required for LEA school improvement. Title I funding has grown by nearly \$4 billion, or 45 percent, since enactment of NCLB.

**\$200 million in first-time funding for Title I School Improvement Grants** to support strong and effective State leadership in helping to turn around low-performing schools and school districts. States would have flexibility in using formula grants to establish or expand comprehensive, statewide systems of support for the continuous LEA and school improvement needed to meet NCLB proficiency goals.

**\$408 million for State Assessment Grants** to maintain statutorily required levels of support for development and implementation of the annual State assessments required by NCLB, including the science assessments that States will implement by 2007-2008. The total includes \$7.6 million for competitive grants to improve the quality and reliability of State assessments, especially for students with disabilities and limited English proficiency.

**\$55 million for Statewide Data Systems**, an increase of \$30 million, to expand support for State efforts to implement longitudinal data systems to monitor individual student performance to improve instruction and close achievement gaps, to increase State capacity for accurate reporting and use of high school graduation rates and dropout data, and to increase the capability of States to efficiently satisfy Federal reporting requirements through systems like the Education Data Exchange Network.

**\$2.9 billion for Improving Teacher Quality State Grants** to help States ensure that all teachers of core academic subjects are highly qualified and to strengthen teachers' subject-matter knowledge and teaching skills.

**\$99 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund**, first funded in 2006, to encourage States and school districts to develop and implement innovative ways to provide financial incentives for teachers and principals. This program will help close the equity gap in access to the best teachers and principals by rewarding those that raise student achievement, help to close the gap in achievement, and work in hard-to-staff schools, subjects, or rural areas.

**\$1.0 billion for Reading First State Grants and \$103 million for Early Reading First** to maintain support for comprehensive reading instruction, grounded in scientifically based reading research, that enables all young children to read well by the end of third grade.

**\$669 million for English Language Acquisition** to support flexible, performance-based formula grants to help ensure that limited English proficient (LEP) students learn English and meet the same high academic standards as all other students. States must use a portion of their awards to increase the size of grants to districts that have experienced a significant increase in the percentage or number of recent immigrant students over the preceding two years.

**\$163 million for Research, Development, and Dissemination** to maintain support for ongoing initiatives critical to the success of the NCLB Act, including research on reading comprehension, mathematics and science education, teacher quality, and cognition and learning in the classroom, as well as a new program of field-initiated evaluations of promising education products and approaches to find out what works in the classroom.

### **MORE OPTIONS FOR PARENTS**

The 2007 request would build on the expansion of parental choice in No Child Left Behind, which requires public school choice and supplemental educational services options for students attending schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. While nearly all States and most school districts have made good-faith efforts to implement NCLB choice options, the reality is that there are too few alternatives in many districts for parents seeking a quality education for their children. The 2007 request would help increase the range of these alternatives through the following proposals:

**\$100 million for a new America's Opportunity Scholarships for Kids program**, which would provide the parents of students enrolled in schools identified for restructuring under NCLB—a school that has not met State progress goals for 6 or more years—with expanded opportunities to transfer their children to a private school or to obtain intensive supplemental services. This proposal would complement nearly \$15 million in the 2007 request for the District of Columbia to continue funding opportunity scholarships for low-income students in DC schools.

**\$26 million for Voluntary Public School Choice grants** to give families better education options by encouraging States and school districts to establish or expand public school choice programs, including those providing choice across a State or across districts. The request would support a new competition focused specifically on increasing school capacity through inter-district choice strategies. Few districts have created inter-district choice arrangements under NCLB, limiting the effectiveness of the Title I choice provisions in many areas.

**\$215 million for Charter Schools Grants**, which would support approximately 1,200 new and existing charter schools. The request includes \$15 million for the State Charter School Facilities Incentive Grants program, which assists charter schools in obtaining facilities by matching funds from State programs that make payments, on a per-pupil basis, to finance charter schools facilities.

**\$37 million for the Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program** to maintain assistance for charter schools in acquiring, leasing, and renovating school facilities by encouraging public and nonprofit entities to provide financing through such means as providing loan guarantees, insuring debt, and other activities to encourage private lending.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION**

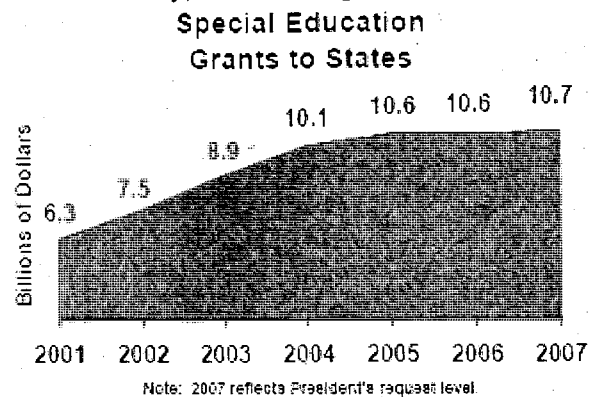
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was reauthorized in late 2004 to improve educational results for students with disabilities by more closely aligning IDEA with NCLB in areas such as accountability for results, flexibility and reduced paperwork, enhancing

the role of parents, and research-based instruction. By demanding greater accountability for the achievement of students with disabilities, NCLB is helping to complete the work launched by the IDEA 30 years ago, and is producing meaningful gains for these students in terms of reading and math performance, lower dropout rates, and higher enrollment in postsecondary education. The 2007 request would help build on these gains.

The request also maintains support for comprehensive and coordinated vocational rehabilitation and independent living services for individuals with disabilities through research, training, demonstration, technical assistance, evaluation, and direct service programs. Consistent with the Administration's multi-year initiative to reform the Federal government's overlapping training and employment programs, funds are not requested for 3 vocational rehabilitation programs in this account: Supported Employment State Grants, Projects with Industry, and the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program. These programs provide services to individuals with disabilities that can be funded by the larger VR State Grants program.

The 2007 request for these activities includes the following:

**\$10.7 billion for Special Education Grants to States**, an increase of \$100 million over 2006, and a total increase of \$4.3 billion, or 69 percent, since fiscal year 2001. The request would provide an estimated \$1,535 per student for more than 6.9 million individuals with disabilities ages 3-21.



**\$2.8 billion for Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants**, an increase of \$117 million or 4.3 percent, which represents the amount necessary to satisfy the requirement to increase funding for the program by at least the percentage change in the CPIU for the 12-month period completed in October 2005.

### POSTSECONDARY STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

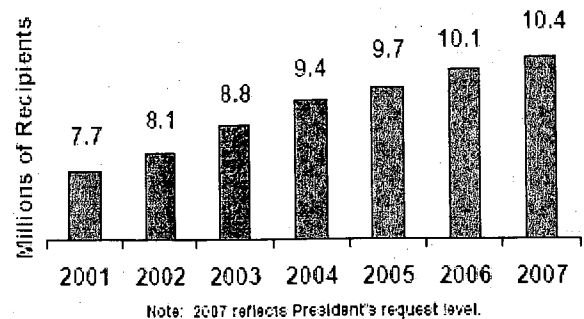
In 2007 the Department of Education will administer over \$82 billion in new grants, loans, and work-study assistance to help over 10 million students and their families parents pay for college. The request would provide nearly \$13 billion for Pell Grants to more than 5.2 million students, or 60,000 more than the 2006 level. The budget also supports \$66 billion in guaranteed and direct student loans. The 2007 request for student aid builds on a number of significant accomplishments in 2006, including the provision of \$4.3 billion in mandatory funding to eliminate the multi-year funding shortfall in the Pell Grant program and put the Pell Grant program on a firm financial footing after years of growing fiscal instability.

The 2007 Budget also assumes enactment of the Higher Education Reconciliation Act (HERA), which is expected in early 2006, and which makes significant changes to the student aid programs, including several proposed in the 2006 President's Budget. These changes include:

**New, need-based Academic Competitiveness Grants and National SMART Grants.** A new program would award Academic Competitiveness Grants of up to \$1,300 to high-achieving first- and second-year undergraduate students who have completed a rigorous

high school curriculum. Third- and fourth-year students majoring in physical, life, or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, engineering, or a critical foreign language could receive National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grants of \$4,000 annually. Funded through mandatory appropriations, the program would provide \$850 million in grants to 600,000 low-income postsecondary students in 2007, and an estimated total of \$4.5 billion over five years.

Growth in Student Aid Recipients



**Eliminating origination fees on most student loans.** These fees charged to students, currently as high as 3 percent, would be phased out beginning with a 1 percent reduction on July 1, 2006. By July 1, 2010, fees would be eliminated in the FFEL program and reduced to 1 percent in Direct Loans, with FFEL borrowers paying a 1 percent insurance premium after that date.

**Raising annual loan limits,** beginning July 1, 2007, from \$2,625 to \$3,500 for first-year students, from \$3,500 to \$4,500 for second-year students, and from \$10,000 to \$12,000 for graduate students.

**Permanently expanding teacher loan forgiveness.** The HERA permanently expands loan forgiveness for highly qualified math, science, and special education teachers serving low-income communities, while broadening the availability of this benefit for private school teachers.

**Adding a new, 3-year deferment for active military duty** for FFEL, Direct Loans, and Federal Perkins Loans disbursed on or after July 1, 2001. During the deferment period, the government would pay the interest on such loans for borrowers serving on active duty, or performing qualifying National Guard duty, during a war or other military operation or national emergency.

**Capping special allowances when student interest rate exceeds guaranteed rate.** Under current law, FFEL lenders receive the higher of the student interest rate or a statutorily guaranteed rate of return, called the special allowance rate. If the student rate is lower than the guaranteed rate, the government makes up the difference. Under HERA, for new loans made on or after April 1, 2006, when the student rate is higher than the guaranteed rate, lenders would be required to rebate the difference to the government.

**Restricting excessive lender subsidies** by permanently limiting the ability of loan holders to retain higher-than-standard subsidy payments of up to 9.5 percent on loans funded with the proceeds of tax-exempt securities originally issued before October 1, 1993, while ending the practice of "recycling" loans for most loan holders.

## HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In addition to student financial assistance, the request provides continuing support for institutional development at colleges and universities serving large percentages of minority

students, and funds opportunities for postsecondary students to gain international expertise and training as language and area specialists. Highlights include the following:

**\$417 million for the Aid for Institutional Development (HEA Title III) programs** to maintain support for institutions that help close achievement and attainment gaps between minority students and their non-minority peers, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Historically Black Graduate Institutions.

**\$94.9 million for Developing Hispanic-serving Institutions** to maintain support for postsecondary education institutions that serve large percentages of Hispanic students. This program is a key part of the Administration's effort to increase academic achievement, high school graduation, postsecondary participation, and life-long learning among Hispanic Americans.

**\$106.8 million for the International Education and Foreign Language Studies (IEFLS) programs**, an increase of \$1 million to help meet the Nation's security and economic needs through the development of expertise in foreign languages and area and international studies. The additional \$1 million is requested as part of the President's National Security Language Initiative to establish a nationwide E-Learning Clearinghouse to deliver foreign language education resources to teachers and students across the country.

#### **ASSISTANCE TO AREAS AFFECTED BY HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA**

On December 30, 2005, President Bush signed into law the Hurricane Education Recovery Act, which provided \$1.4 billion to assist school districts and schools in meeting the educational needs of students displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and in helping schools that were closed as a result of the hurricanes to reopen as quickly and effectively as possible. The Act also provided \$200 million to help institutions of higher education that were directly impacted by hurricanes as well as other colleges and universities around the country that enrolled displaced students. In addition, the Department has made available \$30 million in unspent Federal student financial assistance to help hurricane-affected institutions. Assistance under the Hurricane Education Recovery Act includes:

**\$750 million for Immediate Aid to Restart School Operations**, under which the Department is awarding funds to State educational agencies (SEAs) in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Alabama, which in turn are providing assistance to local school districts and non-public schools to help schools resume operation in areas affected by the hurricanes. The Department announced on the day the law was signed that it would immediately release \$254 million of these funds to the eligible SEAs as a "first installment" of the Restart program.

**\$645 million in Emergency Impact Aid for Displaced Students**, which will make awards to SEAs to cover the costs of educating students enrolled in public and non-public schools who were displaced by hurricanes Katrina and Rita during the 2005-06 school year. The Department will use these funds to make four quarterly payments to SEAs based on counts of displaced students enrolled in public and non-public schools.

**\$5 million in Assistance for Homeless Youth** to provide a separate source of funding to SEAs to address the needs of homeless students displaced by Hurricanes Katrina or Rita. SEAs will subgrant funds to LEAs on the basis of demonstrated need, and LEAs must use their grants for activities authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

**\$190 million to help rebuild institutions of higher education and assist displaced postsecondary students** in Louisiana and Mississippi. Congress directed \$95 million each to the Louisiana Board of Regents and the Mississippi Institutes of Higher Learning.

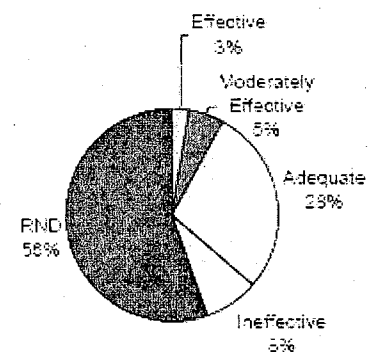
**\$10 million for the 99 postsecondary institutions around the country that enrolled displaced students following the hurricanes.**

### BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE INTEGRATION

As part of the President's Management Agenda, the Administration developed the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) to assess and improve program performance and achieve better results. Each program receives scores for program purpose and design, strategic planning, program management, and program results, as well as an overall rating of Effective, Moderately Effective, Adequate, Ineffective, or Results Not Demonstrated.

Of the 74 programs in the Department assessed since 2002 using the PART, the Administration rated 2 programs Effective, 4 programs Moderately Effective, 21 programs Adequate, 6 programs Ineffective, and 41 programs Results Not Demonstrated (RND).

**PART Ratings For ED Programs  
2002-2005**



A rating of RND often indicates that a program has management issues because it typically identifies a lack of long-term goals, annual performance measures, or reliable data. However, program statutes often contribute by failing to give ED the necessary tools to demonstrate success: clear and measurable objectives; strong accountability mechanisms or other means of ensuring participants focus on achieving results; and mechanisms for gathering high-quality, reliable data on program outcomes.

Outside of the annual budget process, to the extent possible under current law, the Department is working to improve the effectiveness of its programs. In addition, the Department hopes to work with Congress to improve program statutes by clarifying program objectives and measures and by strengthening accountability and data quality. In particular, full implementation of EDFacts, a centralized information management tool based on the Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN), will streamline the collection of timely, accurate program performance and student achievement data.

The President is continuing to focus taxpayer dollars on winning the War on Terror and protecting the homeland, and enforcing additional spending restraint elsewhere across the Federal Government. Given this spending restraint, the Administration is using the PART to ensure that limited resources, in the Department of Education and other federal agencies, are targeted toward those programs and activities most likely to achieve positive results.

In general, this means investments will continue to be made in programs receiving a PART rating of Effective, Moderately Effective, or Adequate, while most programs rated Ineffective will be proposed for elimination. For programs rated RND, the Administration is taking a careful look to determine whether the programs are likely to demonstrate results in the future. If so, the Administration will generally support continued funding along with management or legislative improvements. However, the Administration will propose the termination of RND programs that unnecessarily duplicate other activities or suffer from such major flaws in design or execution that they are unlikely to demonstrate improved performance in the future.

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**\$21.6 Million in Charter Schools Facilities Grants Announced**

**FOR RELEASE:**

June 13, 2006

Three organizations-the KIPP Foundation, the Charter School Development Corporation, and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation-will receive a total of \$21.6 million for three grants through the Charter Schools Facilities Grants program, U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced today. These organizations will use the funds to support charter school construction around the country.

On behalf of Secretary Spellings, Valarie Smith, the Secretary's regional representative, visited KIPP Tech Valley Charter School in Albany to award the grants.

The grants, which may be used to obtain facilities for charter schools, include:

The KIPP Foundation in San Francisco, Calif., has been awarded a \$6.8 million grant;

The Charter School Development Corporation in Washington, D.C., has been awarded a \$6.6 million grant;

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation in New York, N.Y., has been awarded a \$8.2 million grant.

Under the department's Credit Enhancement for Charter Schools Facilities Grant program, seven grants totaling \$36.6 million are being provided to organizations in New York; California; Arizona; New Jersey; North Carolina; Washington, D.C.; and Texas.

"Charter schools are one of the fastest growing sources of school choice in American education today," Spellings said. "But many can't obtain financing for the facilities they need to house their schools. These grants will continue to help those who need help obtaining suitable facilities to help expand educational options to parents and students across the nation."

The purpose of this program is to provide grants to public entities and non-profit organizations to enhance the credit of charter schools to obtain facilities.

Grantees will place funds in a reserve account, which will then be used to guarantee capital to address the cost of acquiring, constructing, or renovating charter school facilities. The reserve account funds are not for the direct purchase, lease, renovation, or construction of school buildings.

The following organizations received grants under this program:

Community Loan Fund of New Jersey  
16-18 West Lafayette Street  
Trenton, N.J.  
Project Director: David Scheck, (609) 989-7766  
Grant amount: \$8,150,000

Raza Development Fund  
111 West Monroe Street  
Suite 1610  
Phoenix, Ariz.

Project Director: Mark Van Brunt,(602)417-1402  
Grant amount: \$1,600,000

Local Initiatives Support Services (LISC)  
501 Seventh Avenue, 7th Floor  
New York, N.Y.  
Project Director: Elise Balboni,(212)455-9884  
Grant amount: \$8,200,000

Center for Community Self-Help  
301 West Main Street  
Durham, N.C.  
Project Director: Laura Benedict, (919) 956-4430  
Grant amount: \$2,200,000

Charter Schools Development Corporation  
1090 Vermont Avenue, Suite 800  
Washington, D.C.  
Project Director: Joel D. Scharfer, (202) 454-9916  
Grant amount: \$6,600,000

KIPP Foundation  
345 Spear Street  
Suite 510  
San Francisco, Calif.  
Project Director: Carmen Maldonado, (212) 233-5477 x13  
Grant amount: \$6,805,000

Texas Public Finance Authority  
300 W 15th Street, Suite 411  
P.O. Box 12906  
Austin, Texas  
Project Director: Kim Edwards, (512) 463-5544  
Grant Amount: \$3,055,299

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**PRESS RELEASES**

**Statement from Secretary Spellings on America's Opportunity Scholarships Legislation**

**FOR RELEASE:**

July 18, 2006

Secretary Spellings today made the following statement on the introduction of *America's Opportunity Scholarships for Kids* legislation:

Year after year, some schools fail to live up to the important standards that ensure our students get the education they deserve. President Bush and I believe that families in communities where schools fall short deserve choices when it comes to their children's education.

Today, we are one step closer to ensuring that parents can make choices that strengthen their children's future and give them a great start in life, regardless of their resources or the communities they live in. The President's America's Opportunity Scholarships program will help low-income students in under-performing schools transfer to the private school of their choice or sign up for intensive tutoring after school or during the summer.

We've already seen the power of choice in Washington, DC, when we launched the first federally funded opportunity scholarship program. With this new legislation, we will spread that success to communities across the country and give parents all over America the ability to make wise choices for their children's education.

I want to thank Senators Alexander and Ensign and Chairman McKeon and Congressman Johnson for introducing legislation today to enact a program that will benefit children and families all over America.

For more information on *America's Opportunity Scholarships for Kids*, please visit: <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/choice/schools/choice-parents.html>

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