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No Child Left Behind: Expanding the Promise

Guide to President Bush's FY 2006 Education Agenda



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Expanding the Promise

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FY 2006 Education Agenda*

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U.S. Department of Education

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Secretary

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Contents

Four Years of Progresss.	1
The Challenges We Face.	2
Continuing Support for <i>No Child Left Behind</i>	3
President Bush’s Agenda for High Schools.. . . .	4
President Bush’s Agenda for Higher Education.	6
Conclusion	8

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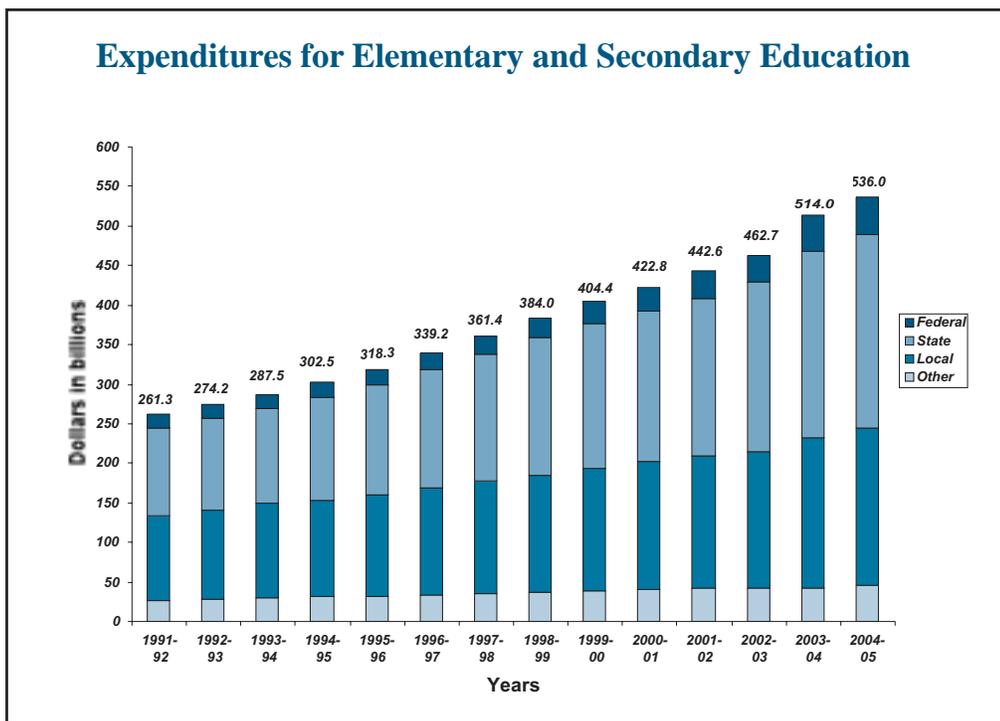
Four Years of Progress

Three years ago, President George W. Bush signed into law the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*, which reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*, a law first passed in 1965. The new law reflected an unprecedented, bipartisan commitment to ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, receive a quality education. To reach this goal, *NCLB* refocused federal education programs on the principles of stronger accountability for results, more choices for parents and students, greater flexibility for states and school districts, and the use of research-based instructional methods.

States, school districts and schools are still doing the hard work of implementing *NCLB*, and the early returns are promising. Recent studies of state achievement data show that reading and mathematics scores are up in most states, and that achievement gaps among racial and ethnic groups have begun to narrow. A majority of states have reported that more schools met the state-set achievement goals (“adequate yearly progress” or “AYP”) in the 2003-04 school year than in the previous year.

Since the enactment of *No Child Left Behind*, President Bush and the U.S. Department of Education have worked with states to help schools to quickly and effectively implement the new law. Federal funding has contributed to the broad increase in national expenditures for elementary and secondary education over the years since Fiscal Year 2001, the year before the passage of *NCLB*.

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, standards are higher, test scores are on the rise, and we're closing the achievement gap for minority students.
—President George W. Bush



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Budget Office and National Center for Education Statistics.

Chicago public school children who transferred from schools in need of improvement to higher-performing schools under *NCLB* showed substantial improvements in reading and math scores.
– *Chicago Sun-Times*, April 25, 2004

Federal resources have increased substantially during this period, including:

- An \$8 billion, or 46 percent, increase for *No Child Left Behind* programs;
- A \$10.3 billion increase in overall funding for federal elementary and secondary education programs;
- An increase of \$4.6 billion, or 52 percent, for Title I Grants for economically disadvantaged students, which go directly to local education agencies—the key drivers of *NCLB* reforms; and
- A \$4.8 billion, or 75 percent, increase for grants to states under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B*.

These additional resources have been invested in the education system in exchange for the stronger accountability measures called for under *No Child Left Behind*. States have set academic achievement standards and annual goals (AYP) to ensure that all students are reading and doing mathematics at grade level by school year 2013-14. Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, all students in grades three through eight will be assessed in those core subjects to help teachers and principals identify weaknesses and make needed changes in instructional practices. These assessments also help schools and districts measure their performance as a whole.

A critical change in measuring performance under *No Child Left Behind* is that schools must disaggregate the data so that all student groups—including poor and minority students, students with limited English proficiency, and students with disabilities—are measured. This disaggregation of test scores ensures that students, including those traditionally left behind, are no longer hidden in school averages and that every student receives the quality education he or she deserves.

Schools with economically disadvantaged students (Title I schools) that do not make sufficient progress toward these state-set progress goals for two consecutive years are identified for improvement, and students attending such schools are given the option of transferring to better-performing public schools. Students from low-income families attending schools identified for improvement for two or more years may obtain supplemental educational services, such as tutoring and other academic assistance, from state-approved public- or private-sector providers, with costs paid by the school district.

The Challenges We Face

Most of the progress in education during President Bush's first term was at the elementary school level, where *No Child Left Behind Act* programs target most of their resources. However, in too many school districts across the nation, the longer students stay in school, the more they fall behind, with far too many students ultimately dropping out altogether. President Bush has called recent evidence of poor performance by America's high schools "a warning, and a call to action."

We have ample evidence that our high schools are not adequately preparing students to compete in the workforce or succeed in the pursuit of higher education. For every 100 17-year-olds, only 72 high school diplomas are awarded each year. For every 100 young adults, only 27 will have graduated with a four-year college degree. The ratios for minority students are even lower. For example, for every 100 black 17-year-olds, only 64 diplomas are awarded, and among 100 black young adults, only 15 get a college degree.

In addition, recent international assessments show that our high school students score well behind those in other nations in key subjects such as mathematics. Because most well-paying jobs in our technology-based, globally competitive economy require at least some postsecondary education, the failure to provide our high school students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed literally places our national prosperity at risk.

We know that students are not prepared; the causes are evident, and the effects are known. Only 24 states require at least three years of math to graduate from high school, and only 21 require three years of science. According to the College Board, only 60 percent of high schools offer Advanced Placement courses.

According to the fifth annual *Reality Check*, a 2002 study by Public Agenda and *Education Week* on the nation's progress in raising academic standards in public schools, 73 percent of employers rated high school graduates' writing, grammar and spelling skills as "fair" or "poor"; 63 percent rated their basic math skills as "fair" or "poor." College professors gave very similar ratings. And students who do not complete high school face a lifetime of lowered expectations, a lower income, and a greater chance of being unemployed. For example, in 2000, the average full-time annual earnings of a male high school graduate were \$36,770, compared to \$28,832 for a non-graduate and \$24,692 for a worker with an eighth-grade education. The benefits of college were even more striking, with male college graduates earning almost \$78,000 annually.

Continuing Support for *No Child Left Behind*

Helping states, school districts, and schools meet the challenge of successfully implementing the *No Child Left Behind Act* remains one of President Bush's highest priorities. The 2006 budget request would provide increased investments in core federal elementary and secondary education programs such as Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies and Part B Grants to States under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These programs allow states and schools greater flexibility to focus resources on their own specific needs. Title I grants will increase by \$603 million this year under the president's budget, while IDEA state grants will increase by \$508 million. The Department would also continue its efforts to expand parental choices, with \$50 million for a new Choice Incentive Fund; support re-

We're leaving behind the old attitude that it's okay for some students just to be shuffled through the system. That's not okay.
—*President George W. Bush*

We see more students reaching higher levels of achievement on state tests ... more districts and schools moving out of academic emergency and academic watch. And we see more districts and schools meeting adequate yearly progress goals under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*.
— Susan Tave Zelman,
Ohio State Superintendent

search with \$164 million for research and development; back scientifically based reading programs with over \$1.1 billion for the Reading First and Early Reading First programs; assist non-English speaking students with \$676 million for English language acquisition state grants; and provide almost \$1 billion for after-school programs.

President Bush's Agenda for High Schools

The president's 2006 request includes a comprehensive proposal that builds on the stronger accountability provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act* to improve the quality of secondary education and ensure that every student not only graduates from high school, but graduates prepared to enter college or the workforce with the skills to succeed.

The president's budget provides nearly \$1.5 billion for this High School Initiative, and includes \$1.24 billion for a High School Intervention initiative that would focus on strengthening high school education and providing specific interventions. The president's high school program also includes \$250 million to help states develop and implement new annual High School Assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics by the 2009-10 school year.

Schools would have great flexibility in designing these interventions, which could include: (1) programs that combine rigorous academic courses with demanding vocational and technical education courses to provide students with high-quality academic and technical training; (2) research-based dropout prevention programs; (3) technology-based assessment systems to provide teachers and other school officials with regular and frequent feedback on the achievement of individual students; (4) programs that, beginning in middle school, prepare students who are at risk of educational failure and dropping out to succeed academically in high school and to enter postsecondary education; and (5) college preparation and awareness activities for students from low-income families.

The president's proposal also includes over \$350 million for other high school programs, including:

- A \$175 million increase for the Striving Readers program, to significantly expand the development and implementation of research-based interventions to improve the skills of teenage students who are reading below grade level;
- \$120 million for a new Secondary Education Mathematics Initiative that would provide competitive grants to accelerate the mathematics learning of secondary-school students;
- A \$22 million increase for the Advanced Placement program to expand the availability of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs in schools with large populations of low-income students and to train teachers for those programs;

- \$12 million for State Scholars Capacity Building to increase the number of states implementing State Scholars programs, which encourage high school students to complete a rigorous four-year course of study. This proposal would complement the Enhanced Pell Grants for State Scholars, discussed below; and
- \$22.5 million increase for the National Assessment of Educational Progress to implement state-level assessments in reading and mathematics at the 12th grade in 2007.

Notably, the president seeks \$500 million to support improvement efforts at all levels of schooling through a Teacher Incentive Fund that would reward effective teachers, create incentives to attract qualified teachers to high-need schools, and support innovative, performance-based compensation systems for the nation’s teachers.

Benefits for High School Students

High School Intervention	\$1.24 billion
<i>Assessment-based, individualized interventions for at-risk students</i>	
High School Assessments	\$250 million
<i>New assessments to guide interventions and measure progress in reading and math</i>	
Striving Readers	\$200 million
<i>Research-based instruction for teens reading below grade level</i>	
Community College Access	\$125 million
<i>Promote dual-enrollment in college-level courses during high school</i>	
Secondary Education Math Initiative	\$120 million
<i>Train math teachers in effective instructional methods</i>	
Advanced Placement	\$51.5 million
<i>Raise the bar and challenge students by expanding availability of AP and IB programs</i>	
State Scholars	\$45 million
<i>Encourage students to complete rigorous State Scholar curricula; includes Enhanced Pell Grants</i>	

Source: U.S. Department of Education, www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget.

**We’ve learned
a new
equation:
accountability
plus high
expectations
plus resources
equals results.
—Secretary
Margaret
Spellings**

Pell Grants make it possible for people to go to school who otherwise won't go to school. I think that is money really well spent.
—President George W. Bush

President Bush's Agenda for Higher Education

The president already has a track record in helping low-income students pay for higher education, and has been committed to colleges and universities serving minority groups. But there continues to be a growing need to ensure that students can afford to go to college or complete other postsecondary training. President Bush already has substantially increased the amount of grant and loan assistance available to postsecondary students and their families. Over one million more students receive Pell grants today than when the president took office. The president also met his commitment to increase funding to Historically Black Colleges and Universities by 40 percent during his first term. His commitment to Hispanic Serving Institutions for a 30 percent federal funding increase was also made. But the challenge remains.

For students who choose to pursue a postsecondary education, the president's budget provides increased funding for the Pell Grant program and ensures the overall financial stability of the program. Pell Grants provide grant aid to low-income students and offer critical financial assistance to lower-income students—the very students who are the focus of *No Child Left Behind*—for pursuing a postsecondary education. The proposed increases to the maximum Pell Grant award and increased loan limits for postsecondary students would be paid for through a comprehensive set of student loan program reforms that would deliver a total of more than \$27 billion in benefits to postsecondary students over the next 10 years.

Under the president's FY2006 budget, overall postsecondary student financial aid would increase from \$48 billion in FY 2001 to \$78 billion in FY 2006, with the number of recipients rising from 7.7 million to more than 10 million. Under the 2006 request for the Pell Grant program, funding will have grown by \$4.5 billion, or 51 percent, since FY 2001. The president's budget also retires an accumulated shortfall of \$4.3 billion in Pell Grant funding—which had been an impediment to raising the maximum award in the past—and then raises the Pell award \$100 in each of the next five years to a maximum of \$4,550. The proposed \$33 million for the Enhanced Pell Grant Program would give an eligible Pell Grant recipient up to an additional \$1,000 in grant assistance for completing a rigorous State Scholars curriculum in high school.

At the same time, the president's 2006 budget includes a comprehensive set of proposals to reauthorize the *Higher Education Act (HEA)*. These proposals take advantage of the financial strength of the student loan program, which provides an opportunity to reduce subsidies to some participants. Those funds would then be reinvested in increased financial assistance to students while continuing to ensure that competition and choice will continue to foster improvements in the student loan programs for years to come. The president's proposal makes both student loan programs more efficient, ensures that schools and students can continue to choose their lender, and generates \$19 billion in savings that can be reinvested in Pell Grants to ensure that *all* eligible students receive larger awards in the years ahead. In total, these proposals would generate more than \$27 billion in benefits to students over the next 10 years.

Providing greater access to economically disadvantaged students to a high-quality education is a major objective of President Bush's FY2006 budget proposal. Among its many components, the budget's major assistance proposals include:

- Strengthening the Pell Grant program by eliminating its budget shortfall while increasing annual disbursements to qualified students; encouraging students to take demanding high school courses in order to receive an Enhanced Pell Grant; and increasing student loan limits to some undergraduate, graduate, and professional students;
- Making permanent the expanded loan forgiveness provisions of the Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act of 2004, which would forgive up to \$17,500 in student loans for highly qualified math, science, and special education teachers serving low-income communities;
- Investing \$50 million in a new Presidential Math and Science Scholars Program in order to encourage students to enter the vital fields of mathematics and science; and
- Providing \$125 million for Community College Access Grants through the Department of Education to expand dual enrollment programs designed to boost college enrollment and completion, especially among low-income students.

**President Bush's proposed FY2006 higher education budget is a step in the right direction for America's families.—
*James A. Boyle,
President,
College Parents of America***

Benefits for Postsecondary Students

- \$19 billion increase for Pell Grants over 10 years to raise the maximum award to \$4,550 and provide grants to 5.5 million low-income students
- \$13.7 billion for Pell Grants in FY 2006, raising the maximum grant by \$100 and adding 138,000 recipients—more than 1.2 million more since the president took office
- Retire the cumulative \$4.3 billion Pell funding shortfall to restore financial stability and ensure that all eligible students receive awards
- Make students eligible for Pell grants for the whole year
- \$4.4 billion over 10 years to maintain variable interest rates for student loans, allowing borrowers to pay as little as 3.37 % this year compared to the 6.8 % fixed rate scheduled for 2006
- Increase annual loan limits to ensure that first- and second-year students and their families can meet rising costs of postsecondary education—a \$3.1 billion increase

Source: U.S. Department of Education, www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget.

A hopeful
America is
one in which
not one child
is left
behind.—
*President
George W.
Bush*

Conclusion

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. 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 is not done. In the 21st century, education is not confined to the four walls of the schoolhouse, and learning does not end when students are handed their diploma. Our future is one of flexibility and change. Whether they choose higher education or the workforce as their next step after high school, 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. The president's budget proposal provides the blueprint to get the job done.

U.S. Department of Education