

## Goal 1: Create a Culture of Achievement

### Performance Goals

#### **State Accountability Systems in Compliance**

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* placed new requirements on state accountability systems, requirements designed to improve student achievement. After three years of working within the provisions of the law, Secretary Spellings announced a ["more workable, sensible approach"](#) that remains true to the law's mission while taking into account each state's unique situation. The new flexibility guidelines are captured in [Raising Achievement: A New Path for No Child Left Behind](#).

#### **Local Flexibility for Targeting Federal Funds**

A collection of federal programs gives states, school districts, and schools the authority to target identified federal program funds to unique local education needs. These programs include the following:

- [Funding Transferability for State and Local Educational Agencies](#).
- [State-Flexibility Demonstration Program](#).
- [Local-Flexibility Demonstration Program](#).
- [Rural Education Achievement Program](#).

#### **Customer Satisfaction With Department**

To measure how well our products and services meet the needs of the people we serve, the Department surveyed state-level education leaders who direct federal programs in their states. [Results of the survey](#) indicated an [American Customer Satisfaction Index](#) score of 63, which we will benchmark against businesses and other federal agencies.

#### **Expansion of Choice Options for Parents**

Parents of public school children who attend a Title I school designated by the state to be in need of improvement have [choices](#) under the provisions of *No Child Left Behind*. They may send their child to another public school, and, if the school's status remains "in need of improvement" for more than one year, families whose children stay in the home school may enroll their children in [supplemental educational services](#) (tutoring). Parents' options within the public school system have increased with the growing numbers of [public charter schools](#) that create alternatives to the traditional public school.

#### **Evidence-Based Approaches to Instruction**

The *No Child Left Behind* goal—all students proficient in reading and mathematics by SY 2013–14—has the best chance of being met if classroom instruction is built around what works. The Department's [What Works Clearinghouse](#) just released research findings on what works in middle school mathematics interventions.

## Goal 1: Create a Culture of Achievement

### Key Measures

The Department of Education's first goal is to create a culture of achievement in education. Accountability for results is the foundation for our other five goals. We do not specify programs or funding streams as supporting Goal 1—this goal cuts across all our programs and activities. We have, however, identified nine key measures that inform our progress in meeting Goal 1.

See p. 58 for an explanation of the documentation fields for the key measures.

#### State Accountability Systems in Compliance

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* placed new requirements on state accountability systems, requirements designed to improve student achievement. The basic components of a state accountability system, as outlined in the law, are [standards and assessments](#), goals of [adequate yearly progress](#) for schools and districts to have all students meet state standards, [public school choice](#), [supplemental services](#), and [teacher quality](#). In 2005, a staff of national experts knowledgeable in the fields of standards and assessments began to review state assessment systems through the Department's standards and assessment external peer review process. Secretary Spellings, concurrent with the process of reviewing state assessment systems, announced a new "[more workable, sensible approach](#)" to implementing the accountability provisions of *No Child Left Behind*. To take into account each state's unique situation, new guidelines appeared in [Raising Achievement: A New Path for No Child Left Behind](#).

The Department applied the Secretary's common sense approach and provided additional flexibility as states continued to implement accountability systems. Areas where flexibility was granted during the course of the year are represented in the following provisions:

- Interim policy regarding alternate assessments based on modified achievement standards for students with cognitive disabilities (May 2005).
- [Revised and expanded nonregulatory guidance](#) in "Highly Qualified Teachers and Improving Teacher Quality State Grants" (August 2005).
- [Decision letters](#) sent to 46 states approving requests for amendments to state accountability plans during the 2004-05-amendment cycle. See p. 29 for the most commonly approved amendments.
- The Secretary's announcement of flexibility in [supplemental educational services](#) (Chicago Public Schools and four Virginia districts) (September 2005).

The Department measured states' progress on implementing state accountability systems by calculating the number of states with approved assessment systems in reading and mathematics and the number of states that are field testing reading and mathematics assessments.



<b>1.1 State Assessments.</b> The number of states that have reading/language arts assessments in grades 3 through 8 and high school.	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2004	0
2005	<b>0 with full approval</b> <b>0 with approval with recommendations</b> <b>4 with deferred approval</b> <b>3 with final review pending</b> (partial data)
We did not meet our 2005 target of 18.	

<b>1.2 State Assessments.</b> The number of states that have mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 8 and high school.	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2004	0
2005	<b>0 with full approval</b> <b>0 with approval with recommendations</b> <b>4 with deferred approval</b> <b>3 with final review pending</b> (partial data)
We did not meet our 2005 target of 18.	

U.S. Department of Education, Standards and Assessment External Peer Review Process, Title I review processes, staff recommendations, and decisions by the Secretary of Education.

Note. These measures refer to states with assessment systems that have been approved by the Department as meeting the requirements of *No Child Left Behind*. Six additional states were reviewed in FY 2005 and decisions are pending.

**Analysis of Progress.** The Department did not meet established targets for the numbers of states that have approved reading/language arts and mathematics assessments at the requisite grade levels. However, in FY 2005, we conducted peer reviews of 13 state assessment systems, a year in advance of the *No Child Left Behind* deadline for states to have full systems in place; and we expect to continue to make progress. When *No Child Left Behind* required that all states have mathematics and reading/language arts assessments in grades 3 through 8 and high school by the end of SY 2005–06, states began to add standards-based assessments at the required grades. States that do not have a full complement of assessments are currently working through the process of aligning tests to standards, developing and field testing assessments, and submitting systems for approval.

To help states prepare for the peer review process, which examines evidence that the state’s assessment system meets *No Child Left Behind* requirements and leads to final approval, the Department issued guidance and a timeline for peer reviews of February 2005 to September 2006. States are asked to initiate the review process when they have collected the necessary documents for review. At the end of FY 2005, 13 states had completed the review process. The Department expects all states will participate in the process within the 2005–06 time frame.

Since the passage of *No Child Left Behind*, the Department has made more than \$1.5 billion available under Section 6111 of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* to states to increase their capacity for rigorous assessments. In FY 2005, technical assistance providers under the *Individuals With Disabilities Act* received approximately \$14 million to support states’ ability to administer alternate and modified assessments for students with disabilities.

**Data Quality.** The universe for this measure is the 52 entities (50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico) that are required by *No Child Left Behind* to administer reading/language arts and mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 8 and high school by SY 2005–06.

**Target Context.** The target for this measure represents a relatively small number of the 52 entities that are required to have their standards and assessments peer reviewed and

approved. States are not required by law to have reading and mathematics assessments in grades 3 through 8 and high school until the end of SY 2005–06; consequently, the Department did not expect all states to be ready to submit documentation at the beginning of 2005. Additionally, not all entities could be reviewed in one year since each state’s review takes several months.

**Related Information.** Information on the Standards and Assessment Peer Review Guidance can be obtained at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/saaprguidance.pdf> and <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/saapr.doc>.

**Additional Information.** In 2004, the Department approved a standards and assessment peer review process to be used to review and approve the state assessment systems against *No Child Left Behind* requirements. No reviews were conducted that year. The Department established peer review dates for 2005 (February, May, September, and November) and for 2006 (February, May, and September). In February 2005, the Department conducted its first peer review of reading/language arts and mathematics assessment systems of five states (Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and West Virginia). Reading/language arts and mathematics assessment systems of two additional states (Alabama and South Dakota) were reviewed in May. Six additional reviews (Idaho, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, and Oregon) were conducted in September 2005, and the results of this group are pending. After the review, a state receives one of five distinct ratings: full approval, full approval with recommendations, deferred approval, final review pending, or not approved system. Following the administration of the assessment, a state must still provide the Department with data on the technical quality of the assessment instruments (i.e., reliability coefficients, item statistics, and validity coefficients).

<b>1.3 State Assessments.</b> The number of states that have completed field testing of the required assessments in reading/language arts.	
Fiscal Year	Actual
2003	16
2004	20
2005	<b>47</b>
We exceeded our 2005 target of 30.	

<b>1.4 State Assessments.</b> The number of states that have completed field testing of the required assessments in mathematics.	
Fiscal Year	Actual
2003	16
2004	20
2005	<b>47</b>
We exceeded our 2005 target of 30.	

U.S. Department of Education, Consolidated State Performance Report, grantee submissions; state Web sites.

**Analysis of Progress.** The Department exceeded established targets for the numbers of states completing the field testing of reading/language arts and mathematics assessments. All states must field test standards and assessment systems before the systems are peer reviewed. The fact that 47 states, 17 more than we targeted, have completed their field testing positions us well for meeting our FY 2006 target for the number of states that have peer-reviewed and approved standards and assessment systems.

**Data Quality.** Fifty-two entities (50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico) are required by *No Child Left Behind* to have reading/language arts and mathematics

assessments in grades 3 through 8 and high school by SY 2005–06. Each state has developed a schedule by which its reading/language arts and mathematics assessments will be developed and field tested, and submitted to the Department for review and approval prior to implementation.

**Target Context.** The target of 30 was set with the knowledge that states were not required by law to have standards and assessments for grades 3 through 8 and high school until the end of SY 2005–06.

**Related Information.** Information about the standards and assessments peer-review process is available at [www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/peerreview/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/peerreview/index.html). Information on state student assessment programs is available at [www.ccsso.org/projects/Accountability\\_Systems/State\\_Profiles/](http://www.ccsso.org/projects/Accountability_Systems/State_Profiles/).

**Additional Information.** Field testing is one of the initial phases of establishing statewide reading/language arts and mathematics assessments prior to the actual administration of the assessment. Field testing helps ensure the validity and reliability of test items and permits states to omit those test items that it deems biased, too difficult, or too easy, thus affecting the rigor of the test.

### **Local Flexibility for Targeting Federal Funds**

A collection of federal provisions gives states, school districts, and schools the authority to target identified federal program funds toward unique local education needs. These provisions include the following:

- [Funding Transferability for State and Local Educational Agencies](#).
- [State-Flexibility Demonstration Program](#).
- [Local-Flexibility Demonstration Program](#).
- [Rural Education Achievement Program](#).

States reported that in FY 2003 (the most recent year for which the Department has data), some 1,600 districts transferred approximately \$90 million. Districts transferred \$47.5 million into State Grants for Innovative Programs and \$22.7 million into Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies. States reported that districts transferred \$66.5 million out of the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program. In FY 2005 no states participated in the State-Flexibility Demonstration Program and Seattle participated in the Local-Flexibility Demonstration Program.

The Department measured the use of flexibility authorities by collecting data on the percentage of eligible local educational agencies that used the Rural Education Achievement Program flexibility authority.



<b>1.5 Rural Education Program.</b> The percentage of eligible school districts utilizing the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) flexibility authority.	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2003	61
2004	<b>59</b>
2005	Target is 65.
We did not meet our 2004 target of 71. Data for 2005 are pending.	

U.S. Department of Education, Consolidated State Performance Report, grantee submissions.

**Analysis of Progress.** The flexibility authority offered in the [Rural Education Achievement Program](#) has been available for four years. Approximately 60 percent of the 4,000 districts eligible to use this authority have done so according to the two most recent reports from the states. The Department has provided extensive information about the availability of this authority over the past four years

and considers that the 60 percent of users represents close to the percentage of districts that need this authority to allocate resources effectively.

**Data Quality.** Department staff reviewed Consolidated State Performance Reports submitted by state educational agencies in spring 2005 for SY 2003–04.

**Target Context.** After analyzing the FY 2004 data, the Department set more realistic targets for FY 2005. An expectation that 100 percent of eligible districts would use the authority is not a desired outcome because it would reflect that the normal allocation of federal resources did not meet most districts’ needs.

**Related Information.** Information on the Rural Education Achievement Program is available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/reapsrsa/index.html>.

**Additional Information.** Data for FY 2005 will be available in April 2006.

The Alternative Uses of Funds Authority under the Rural Education Achievement Program allows eligible local educational agencies the authority to combine funding under certain federal programs to carry out activities under other specified federal programs. Eligible districts are those that serve relatively small numbers of students and are located in rural areas (*ESEA* Section 6221(b)(1)).

### **Customer Satisfaction With the Department**

To measure how well our products and services meet the needs of the people we serve, the Department conducted several customer satisfaction surveys. The [Grantee Satisfaction Survey](#) queried the chief state school officers and eight groups of state-level education leaders who direct federal programs in their states. The questionnaire included general questions about the Department’s performance in five areas: use of technology, online resources, documents, technical assistance provided by Department-funded providers, and technical assistance provided by Department staff. The questionnaire also included custom questions for each grantee group. In the final section of the survey, respondents were asked to answer three culminating questions that provided the [American Customer Satisfaction Index](#) score. The index score allows the Department to benchmark customer satisfaction against that of businesses and other federal agencies.

Other major Department surveys include a biennial customer survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics and an annual survey conducted by the Office of Federal Student Aid. The results from the Federal Student Aid survey are reported in Goal 6, pp. 182-85, under Student Financial Assistance programs.

<b>1.6</b> The overall American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) as scored by Department grantees.	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2005	<b>63</b>
We established a baseline in 2005.	

U.S. Department of Education, Grantee Satisfaction Survey.

**Analysis of Progress.** For perspective on how to interpret the Department's American Customer Satisfaction Index score of 63, it is notable that the most recent average score for federal agencies was 72. It's

also important to note that federal agencies that serve grantees or interact in a regulatory role typically score in the low 60s. A score of 63, while below the federal agency average, is on a par with the typical scores of comparable agencies. In response to survey results, Department program offices that participated in the survey identified areas of greatest impact (information provided by the survey methodology), which will guide their direction for making improvements.

**Data Quality.** The CFI Group, under contract to the Department, conducted the 2005 survey using the methodology of the [American Customer Satisfaction Index](#). The index was developed by the University of Michigan Business School, the CFI Group, and the American Society for Quality and meets their standards for data quality. The CFI Group reports business and federal agency customer satisfaction indices quarterly in major news outlets, which allows for standardization of customer satisfaction information.

Grantee Satisfaction Survey respondents included the chief state school officers and the state-level directors and coordinators of the Early Intervention, Special Education, Education Data Exchange Network, Career and Technical Education, Adult Education and Literacy, English Language Acquisition (Title III), Improving the Academic Achievement for Disadvantaged Students Grants to Local Educational Agencies (Title I), and Educational Technology programs. The survey was e-mailed to 490 potential respondents; the response rate was 73 percent.

The FY 2005 actual value of 63 is the American Customer Satisfaction Index score reported by our revised customer survey. It is not a percentage; rather, the score is best thought of as a weighted scale based on multiple responses to questions in the survey. Survey scores are indexed on a 100-point scale. Agencies that score in the 80s are ranked as world class.

**Target Context.** The FY 2005 actual value provides baseline data for the new Grantee Satisfaction Survey.

**Additional Information.** Prior to FY 2005, the Department conducted the Survey on Satisfaction with the U.S. Department of Education. Beginning in FY 2005, we revised our measure for customer satisfaction to reflect data we intended to collect from the new American Customer Satisfaction Index survey. To smooth the transition, in the 2005 survey we included the seminal question of the Survey on Satisfaction, the question on overall satisfaction with the Department's products and services. The response to that question

indicated that 66 percent of respondents (a 1 percent decline from the previous year, considered not statistically significant) were satisfied with the Department's products and services. We collected these data to meet our FY 2004 commitment for providing customer satisfaction data. Data will not be collected on this question in FY 2006.

### **Expansion of Choice Options for Parents**

Parents of public school children who attend a Title I school that has been designated by the state to be in need of improvement have choices under the provisions of *No Child Left Behind*. They may send their child to another public school in the district, and, if the school's status remains "in need of improvement" for more than one year, families whose children stay in the home school may enroll their children in [supplemental educational services](#) (tutoring).

2005 data show that many more parents are eligible to secure supplemental educational services for their children than are currently doing so. To help inform parents of this opportunity, the Department created a [listserv](#) where interested parents automatically receive periodic notification of relevant information posted on ed.gov, the Department's Web site. A similar [service for charter school information](#) is also available to parents.

As of August 2005, state lists posted online include 2,796 approved supplemental service providers, compared to 2,535 in September 2004. In 2005, private providers continued to represent about 80 percent of all providers. States and districts continue to identify providers and encourage parents to use their services.

Using data from SY 2003–04, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reviewed the implementation of the [school choice](#) provision, which allows parents to transfer their child from a school in need of improvement to another public school within the district. GAO found that about 1 in 10 of the nation's 50,000 Title I schools were identified for school improvement in each of the first two years of implementation (SY 2002–03 and SY 2003–04). And about 1 percent of eligible children, or 31,000 students, transferred under the *No Child Left Behind* choice option in SY 2003–04. GAO recommended that the Department monitor the extent to which classroom capacity constraints appear to limit school choice options. The Department responded to the GAO report by pointing to its initiatives for expanding classroom capacity through such means as technical assistance workshops; grants to support national-level choice activities; and discretionary grant competitions for the Charter Schools Grants program, Magnet Schools Assistance program, and Voluntary Public School Choice program.

Since 1995, the Charter Schools Grants program has provided funds to increase the number of charter schools in operation. Charter schools are public schools that operate with freedom from many local and state regulations that apply to traditional public schools. Under *No Child Left Behind*, the charter school initiative has gained momentum as a way to offer parents public school options. [Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program: Final Report](#) (November 2004), the Department's study on charter schools, reports that while the growth in the number of states with charter legislation has tapered off, the number of charter schools continues to grow.

The measures adopted by the Department to monitor the expansion of parental choice under *No Child Left Behind* are the number of charter schools in operation and the amount of funding raised by Credit Enhancement for Charter Schools Facilities grantees for charter school facilities in addition to the amount contributed to the financing from the grant.

<b>1.7 Charter Schools Grants.</b> The number of charter schools in operation.	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
1996	255
1997	428
1998	790
1999	1,100
2000	1,700
2001	2,110
2002	2,431
2003	2,700
2004	2,996
2005	<b>3,344</b>

We did not meet our 2004 target of 3,000.  
We exceeded our 2005 target of 3,300.

Center for Education Reform, Annual Survey of America's Charter Schools.

**Analysis of Progress.** Similar to recent years, the number of charter schools increased at a rate of approximately 10 percent, surpassing the expectations of the Department and allowing us to exceed our target. The Department's Charter Schools Grants program will continue to increase national awareness of the charter schools model by funding national leadership activities that result in the dissemination of successful charter schools practices and policies.

**Data Quality.** Data are verified by Department program staff through monitoring and technical assistance

activities and by a review of Government Accountability Office and Office of Inspector General reports.

There are substantial differences in the definition of charter schools among states. Some states count a single charter with multiple sites as a single charter school, while other states count a single charter with multiple sites as multiple charter schools, causing variability in the counts reported by state educational agencies. Reported data are based on each state's definition of charter schools.

**Target Context.** Targets are based on previous growth trends, which have averaged 10 percent per year over the last five years.

**Related Information.** The Department's charter school program Web site is <http://www.ed.gov/programs/charter/index.html>.

The Education Commission of the States compiles statistics, policy reviews, and case studies on charter schools as part of its public education issues data collection. These data are available at

[http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/educationalIssues/CharterSchools/CHDB\\_intro.asp](http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/educationalIssues/CharterSchools/CHDB_intro.asp).

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) provides research and policy briefs for states and their chartering agencies at <http://www.charterauthorizers.org/site/nacsa/>.

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) provides research, studies, and policy for states and their charter schools enrolling students with disabilities, and it provides technical assistance for implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and other federal laws relevant to serving the needs of students with disabilities at [http://www.edgateway.net/cs/spedp/print/usuc\\_docs/spedp/home.htm](http://www.edgateway.net/cs/spedp/print/usuc_docs/spedp/home.htm).

The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools compiles policy reviews, issue briefs, and studies on charter schools. These data are available at <http://www.charterschoolleadershipcouncil.org/>.

The Center for Education Reform compiles statistics on charter schools. These statistics are available at <http://www.edreform.com>.

The Common Core of Data compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics collects information on charter schools as part of the NCES Public School Universe data collection. These data are available at <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/>.

The U.S. Department of Education published *America's Charter Schools—Results From the NAEP 2003 Pilot Study*. This study can be accessed electronically at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.

**Additional Information.** Growth in the number of charter schools is largely under the control of state legislatures, which maintain authority to pass laws authorizing the creation and regulation of charter schools. While some states have reached capacity in terms of the number of charter schools allowed by their laws, other states have successfully amended their statutes to allow for multiple authorizers and, therefore, greater flexibility. In addition, some states have used *No Child Left Behind* provisions that allow local educational agencies to convert low-performing Title I schools into charter schools.

<b>1.8 Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities.</b>	
The amount of funding grantees leverage for the acquisition, construction, or renovation of charter school facilities.	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2003	\$66 million
2004	<b>\$74 million</b>
2005	Target is \$100 million.
We did not meet our 2004 target of \$100 million. Data for 2005 are pending.	

U.S. Department of Education, Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program Performance Reports.

**Analysis of Progress.** The Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities program helps charter schools with their facility needs typically by guaranteeing debt and sometimes leases that are used to obtain their facilities. The program, which first issued grants in 2002, reported leveraging \$140 million in debt and leases as of the end of FY 2004. The

total amount leveraged will be much greater over the 5- to 20-year lifespan of the grants.

**Data Quality.** Data are self-reported annually by grantees. Department program staff verify these data during site visits to grantees and to the schools that grantees serve. The number of dollars leveraged consists of the dollar amount raised as a direct result of the guarantee.

Some grantees under the Credit Enhancement program have loan pools through which they work with a number of lenders to raise a given amount of funds for charter school facility

loans. If the grantee received a non-Department of Education grant (such as a New Markets Tax Credit allocation<sup>1</sup>) and is using it to provide additional leveraging for a school served by the federal grant, such leveraging may also be counted as funds leveraged by the federal grant. A grantee may count senior debt toward the total amount of funds leveraged if it uses grant funds to guarantee or insure subordinate debt. Likewise, grantees may count subordinate debt toward the total amount of funds leveraged if it only uses grant funds to credit-enhance senior debt.

The Department originally computed the dollars pledged by lenders as the amount of dollars leveraged in the year the loan pool closed. After learning that these pledges have contingencies, we revised our methodology to reflect only the funds in loans that have closed. Trend data shown in the table reflect this revised approach.

**Target Context.** We modified our FY 2005 target to be more realistic based on the updated methodology.

**Related Information.** Additional information on the New Markets Tax Credits program is available at <http://cdfifund.gov/programs/programs.asp?programID=5>.

More information on the Credit Enhancement for Charter Schools Facilities program is available at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/charterfacilities/index.html>.

**Additional Information.** Data for FY 2005 will be available in January 2006. Grantees for this program receive multiyear funding at the beginning of the first project period. The federal funds and earnings on those funds remain available until they have been expended for the grant's purposes or until financing facilitated by the grant has been retired, whichever is later. Most of the Department's grantees are required to report midyear to qualify for continuation awards, but, because there are no continuation awards for this program, we allow these grantees to report after the end of each fiscal year to give them a full year of performance before reporting data.

## **Evidence-Based Approaches to Instruction**

The *No Child Left Behind* goal—all students proficient in reading and mathematics by SY 2013–14—has the best chance of being met if classroom instruction is built around what works.

The Department's What Works Clearinghouse released research findings on the effectiveness of curriculum-based interventions for improving mathematics achievement for middle school students ranging from 6th to 10th grade. The Clearinghouse collected more than 800 studies for the middle school mathematics curriculum review. Studies were rated according to the strength of their causal evidence. The Clearinghouse identified 10 studies of five middle school mathematics interventions that met the Clearinghouse's standards of

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Treasury Department provides New Markets Tax Credits on a competitive basis. These tax credits are used to attract development in low-income communities. The credit provided to the investor totals 39 percent of the cost of the investment and is claimed over a seven-year credit allowance period. In each of the first three years, the investor receives a credit equal to 5 percent of the total amount paid for the stock or capital interest at the time of purchase. For the final four years, the value of the credit is 6 percent annually. Investors may not redeem their investments prior to the conclusion of the seven-year period.

evidence. The [middle school mathematics Intervention and Topic reports](#) are posted on the [What Works Clearinghouse](#) Web site. The Department is currently working on the next six topic reviews on beginning reading, character education, early childhood education, elementary school mathematics, English language learners, and dropout prevention.

1.9 The proportion of school-adopted approaches that have strong evidence of effectiveness compared to programs and interventions without such evidence.	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2005	Not available
Data for 2005 were not collected.	

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Research survey.

**Analysis of Progress.** Data on the use of evidence-based interventions cannot be collected until the clearinghouse has released more information on such interventions. To date, information is available only on middle school mathematics programs. The Department intends to retain this

measure and will collect data when more information is available to schools about a range of evidence-based approaches.

**Related Information.** The What Works Clearinghouse collects, screens, and identifies studies of the effectiveness of education interventions (programs, products, practices, and policies). See <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov>.

The Department also provides evidence-based information for the education of English language learners to the education community and to parents through the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. The Clearinghouse has adopted the guidelines of the National Board of Education Sciences for evaluating and incorporating documents into its resource library. More information is available at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/oela/summit2004/cd/FILES/wwAppendixB.pdf>.

### Discontinued Strategic Measures

The following measures were discontinued after FY 2004 but were reported as pending in our *FY 2004 Performance and Accountability Report*. We report here our results on those for which we now have data. (See p. 23 for a discussion of why we discontinued measures.)

Measure		Fiscal Year	Target	Actual	Status
1.2.1a	The percentage of school districts using Transferability	2004	22.5	18.7	Target not met
1.2.4	The percentage of Department grantees that express satisfaction with Department customer service	2004	67	66	Target not met
1.3.3	Of eligible children, the percentage using supplemental educational services under the provisions of ESEA Title I	2003	Set baseline	Pending	Data expected 10/2005
		2004	Baseline + 5 PP	Pending	Data expected 12/2005

PP = percentage point

**Sources**

- 1.2.1a U.S. Department of Education, Consolidated State Performance Report, grantee submissions.
- 1.2.4 U.S. Department of Education, Grantee Satisfaction Survey, 2005.
- 1.3.3 U.S. Department of Education, *Evaluation of Title I Accountability and School Improvement Efforts (TASSIE): Findings From 2002–2003 and 2003–2004*.

## **Goal 1: Create a Culture of Achievement**

### **Findings and Recommendations From Program Evaluations, Studies, and Reports**

Information that the Department uses to inform management and program improvements comes from many sources, including evaluations, studies, and reports that are Department-sponsored studies and those from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Office of Inspector General (OIG). The following evaluations, studies, and reports were completed during FY 2005.

#### **[America's Charter Schools: Results From the NAEP 2003 Pilot Study](#)**

This snapshot study by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) determined that charter schools have considerable variation in student and school characteristics and that their unique qualities require additional information to be collected by future surveys. One key finding concluded that in both reading and mathematics, the performance of charter school fourth-grade students with similar racial and ethnic backgrounds was not measurably different from those in other public schools. (See p. 76 for a summary of this report.)

#### **[Charter Schools: To Enhance Education's Monitoring and Research, More Charter School-Level Data Are Needed \(GAO-05-5\)](#)**

Under *No Child Left Behind*, charter schools are subject to the same performance requirements as other public schools, but some flexibilities are permitted. This report examines the ways states allow flexibility for charter schools, the ways states promote accountability for performance and financial integrity, and the roles that *No Child Left Behind* and the Department play in holding charter schools accountable. Of the states that were surveyed, most provided flexibility by releasing charter schools from some traditional public school requirements. (See p. 77 for a summary of this report.)

#### **[Evaluation of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program: First Year Report on Participation](#)**

The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program is the first federal initiative to provide vouchers for grades K–12 to families who live in the District of Columbia and who are at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty line. The vouchers enable families to send their children to private schools of their choice. In SY 2004–05, applications were received from 1,848 students with about 53 percent of all private schools in the District participating in the program. (See p. 78 for a summary of this report.)

#### **[Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program: Final Report](#)**

Since 1995, the Public Charter Schools program has provided funding to plan, develop, and implement charter schools and to assist successful charter schools in disseminating best practices. This report provides a descriptive examination of the Public Charter Schools program and looks at the growth of the charter schools movement in the United States. Charter schools tend to have greater autonomy over their curricula, budgets, and teaching staff than do traditional public schools. Charter schools, overall, tend to be smaller, more

likely to serve minority and low-income students, and more likely to have teachers from minority backgrounds. (See p. 79 for a summary of this report.)

**[No Child Left Behind Act: Education Needs to Provide Additional Technical Assistance and Conduct Implementation Studies for School Choice Provision \(GAO-05-7\)](#)**

The school choice provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act* apply to schools that receive Title I funds and that have not met state performance goals for two consecutive years. Students in such schools must be offered the choice to transfer to another school in their district. This report reviews the first two years of implementation of *No Child Left Behind* school choice provisions. About 31,000 students transferred under choice options in SY 2003–04. (See p. 80 for a summary of this report.)

**[Case Studies of Supplemental Services Under the No Child Left Behind Act: Findings from 2003–04.](#)**

The *No Child Left Behind Act* provides that children from low-income families enrolled in Title I schools that have not made adequate yearly progress for three years or more receive supplemental services, including tutoring, remediation, and other academic instruction. This report presents findings from case studies conducted on a sample of six states and nine districts during SY 2003–04, the second year that the supplemental services provisions of *No Child Left Behind* had been in effect. The number of supplemental service providers approved for SY 2003–04 increased in all six states, in line with a nationwide increase of about 90 percent. In SY 2003–04, the amount of Title I, Part A, allocation districts set aside for choice-related transportation and supplemental services ranged from 2 to 21 percent. (See p. 81 for a summary of this report.)

## **Study of Charter Schools' NAEP Results**

### **Report Title**

*America's Charter Schools: Results From the NAEP 2003 Pilot Study* (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics) December 2004.

### **Overview**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) conducted a pilot study of America's charter schools and their students as part of the 2003 NAEP reading and mathematics assessments of fourth-graders. The study included 150 charter schools. Charter schools have considerable variation in student and school characteristics. Because the study was a snapshot of the schools, it could not capture all of the unique characteristics of the individual charter schools. Additional information will be collected to supplement the NAEP survey information.

### **Findings in Reading**

- There was no overall measurable difference between the reading scores of charter school students and other public school students.
- Female students in charter schools scored lower, on average, in reading than female students in other public schools.
- Charter school students eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch scored lower in reading than eligible students in other public schools.
- The reading scores for white, black, and Hispanic students in charter schools were not measurably different from those for students with the same racial/ethnic background in other public schools.

### **Findings in Mathematics**

- Both male and female charter school students had a lower overall average score in mathematics than students in other public schools.
- The average score for charter school students who were eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch was lower than that of their peers in other public schools.
- Students who attended charter schools in central cities scored lower on average than students who attended other public schools in similar locations.
- The percentages of students at or above *Basic* and at or above *Proficient* were lower in charter schools than in other public schools.

### **Recommendations**

The report made no recommendations.

## **Report on the Quality of Charter Schools' School-Level Data**

### **Report Title**

*Charter Schools: To Enhance Education's Monitoring and Research, More Charter School-Level Data Are Needed* (GAO-05-5) January 2005.

### **Overview**

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, charter schools are subject to the same performance requirements as other public schools, but the act allows some flexibilities where permitted by state law. This report examined how states allow flexibility in design and operation, how states promote accountability for school performance and financial integrity in their charter school systems, the implications of *No Child Left Behind* for charter schools, and the role the Department plays in charter school accountability for school performance and financial integrity.

### **Findings**

- Of the 39 states surveyed, most provided flexibility by releasing charter schools from some traditional public school requirements.
- About half of the 39 states reported having primary responsibility for enforcing school improvement actions for charter schools that did not achieve performance goals under *No Child Left Behind*, and a third reported having primary responsibility for monitoring charter schools' financial situations.
- Though the Department must ensure that charter schools receive timely payment of federal grant funds, it focuses its monitoring and data collection efforts on states rather than on individual schools.

### **Recommendations**

- The Department should support implementation of the Performance-Based Data Management Initiative's financial performance information component to assist states in developing automated financial information systems to measure and track the disbursement of funds to the charter schools.
- The Department should require Charter School program grantees to include in their annual performance reports standard indicators of program accomplishment, especially the number of schools started through the use of grant funds.
- The Department's planned charter school impact evaluation should include an analysis of the effects of accountability practices on charter schools' performance.

### **Department's Response**

- The Department agrees to expand its impact evaluation design to include a review of authorizers' oversight and accountability practices.
- The Department will look more closely at selected state financial information systems to assess the degree of burden in tracking financial information to the school level.
- The Department will seek to include standard indicators of program accomplishments in its annual performance report.

## **Evaluation of School Choice Option for the District of Columbia**

### **Report Title**

*Evaluation of the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program: First Year Report on Participation* (U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences) April 2005.

### **Overview**

The District of Columbia School Choice Incentive Act of 2003, passed by the Congress in January 2004, established the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program. This is the first federal initiative to provide K–12 education vouchers to families living in the District of Columbia and having an income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level to enable them to send their children to private schools of choice. In SY 2004–05, applications were received from 1,848 eligible students.

### **Findings**

- Of the 109 private schools in the District of Columbia, 58 participated in the voucher program in its first year, representing 53 percent of all private schools in the District.
- All but four of the schools made new slots available for voucher recipients.
- Four schools were willing to enroll voucher students only if they had been previously accepted to the school.
- Seventy-two percent of the eligible applicants were attending public school in SY 2003–04, while 28 percent were already attending private schools but met the statutory eligibility requirement.
- Fifty-one percent of the participating private schools were Roman Catholic, 21 percent were various non-Catholic religions, and 28 percent were independent.
- Most participating private schools served a higher proportion of students of color than nonparticipating private schools.
- About 70 percent of the participating schools charged tuitions that were under the \$7,500 maximum provided by the federal scholarship program.

### **Recommendations**

No recommendations are available at this time. This is the first in a series of reports on the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program and provides an important foundation for the future analysis of program impacts.

## **Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program**

### **Report Title**

*Evaluation of the Public Charter Schools Program: Final Report* (U.S. Department of Education, Policy and Program Studies Service) November 2004.

### **Overview**

Since 1995, the Public Charter Schools program has provided funding to plan, develop, and implement charter schools and to assist successful charter schools in disseminating best practices to other public schools. This evaluation, based on three years of data collected in SY 1999–2000, SY 2000–01, and SY 2001–02, provides a descriptive examination of the program and documents the evolution of the charter school movement.

### **Findings**

- While growth in the number of states with charter legislation has tapered off, the amount of Public Charter Schools program awards to states has increased, and the number of charter schools continues to grow.
- State charter school offices have responsibilities to monitor charter schools, but most states have limited staff to perform these functions.
- Only one-third of charter schools automatically receive waivers from state policies and regulations, but many schools receive waivers on a case-by-case basis.
- Compared with traditional public schools, charter schools are smaller and more likely to serve minority and low-income students but less likely to serve students in special education.
- Charter schools, by design, have greater autonomy over their curricula, budgets, and teaching staff than do traditional public schools.
- Teachers in charter schools are more likely to be African-American; more likely to participate in a variety of professional development activities; and less likely to meet state certification standards than traditional public school teachers.
- While this study does not examine the effect of charter schools on student learning, in five case studies, charter schools were less likely to meet state student academic performance standards than traditional public schools.
- Charter schools are more likely than traditional public schools to have high levels of parent involvement.

### **Recommendations**

- Future studies should focus on the extent to which charter schools serving high proportions of educationally disadvantaged students exhibit improved academic performance over time.
- States should develop an adequate infrastructure to provide administrative oversight, assistance in meeting state or federal regulations, and special education services to students with disabilities who attend charter schools.

## **Report on the Implementation of School Choice Provisions**

### **Report Title**

*No Child Left Behind Act: Education Needs to Provide Additional Technical Assistance and Conduct Implementation Studies for School Choice Provision* (GAO-05-7) December 2004.

### **Overview**

The school choice provisions of the *No Child Left Behind Act* apply to schools that receive Title I funds and have not met state performance goals for two consecutive years. Students in such schools must be offered the choice to transfer to another school in the district. The Government Accountability Office reviewed the first two years of implementation of *No Child Left Behind* school choice options and reported to the Congress the number of Title I schools and students that have been affected nationally, the experiences of selected school districts in implementing choice, and the guidance and technical assistance provided by the Department.

### **Findings**

- About 1 in 10 of the nation's 50,000 Title I schools were required to offer school choice in each of the first two years since enactment of the act.
- About 1 percent of eligible children, or 31,000 students, transferred under choice options in SY 2003–04.
- Proportionately lower percentages of transferring students were minority, and lower percentages were from low-income families.

### **Recommendations**

- The Department should monitor issues related to limited classroom capacity and consider whether additional flexibility or guidance on capacity might be warranted.
- The Department should collect and disseminate examples of successful strategies to address capacity limitations and information on the costs of these strategies and assist states in developing strategies for better informing parents about school choice options. The Department should identify, for its student outcome study, the methodology that has the greatest potential to identify the effects of school choice transfer on students' academic achievement.

### **Department's Response**

- The Department is focusing on expanding capacity for public school choice through such large discretionary grant programs as the Charter Schools Grants program, the Magnet Schools Assistance program, and the Voluntary Public School Choice program, as well as through funding to organizations to provide information and resources on choice on a national level.
- The Department assists states and districts in developing strategies for better informing parents about school choice options by collecting and disseminating best practices, and by posting tools and templates online. The Department is working to design a rigorous evaluation of student outcomes associated with the participation in the Title I school choice options.

## Study of Supplemental Services

### Report Title

*Case Studies of Supplemental Services Under the No Child Left Behind Act: Findings from 2003-04* (U.S. Department of Education, Policy and Program Studies Service) September 2005.

### Overview

The *No Child Left Behind Act* provides that children from low-income families enrolled in Title I schools that have not made adequate yearly progress for three years or more receive supplemental services, including tutoring, remediation, and other academic instruction. Each state is required to develop criteria for selecting supplemental service providers and to publish a list of approved providers. School districts are responsible for notifying parents of their children's eligibility to receive supplemental services and for providing parents with information to select appropriate providers. This report presents findings from case studies conducted on a sample of six states and nine districts during SY 2003–04, the second year that the supplemental services provisions of *No Child Left Behind* had been in effect.

### Findings

- The number of supplemental service providers approved for SY 2003–04 increased in all six states, in line with a nationwide increase of about 90 percent.
- State supplemental services coordinators reported that small districts and rural districts continued to be underserved, compared with urban districts.
- In SY 2003–04, the amount of Title I, Part A, allocations districts set aside for choice-related transportation and supplemental services ranged from 2 to 21 percent.
- The average district per pupil expenditure for supplemental services was \$1,408 in SY 2003–04.
- In SY 2003–04, the majority of providers interviewed for this study hired only certified teachers to staff their programs.
- Many parents reported that they had received enough information to choose good providers for their children and were satisfied with the services, while nearly as many reported that they were confused about the services available to them.

### Recommendations

- Districts need guidance on ways to increase participation rates in supplemental services.
- Districts need guidance on monitoring and evaluating providers' performance and assessing provider quality and impact.
- Districts need support in refining their outreach and communications efforts to parents.
- Both districts and providers need guidance on improved payment policies that ensure providers are paid fairly when students do not attend regularly.