

## Archived Information

# Empowering Parents to Help Their Children Achieve

*"Not once in all my travels have I met a parent who didn't want their child learning on grade level now—let alone by 2014. I know I do."*

-- U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings

Every parent, regardless of where they live or how much money they make, wants his or her child to receive a quality education. Thanks to the *No Child Left Behind Act*, parents now have the information they need to be stronger advocates on behalf of their children. *No Child Left Behind's* goal is to have all students reading and doing math on grade level by 2014. And when schools fall short of reaching that standard, the law empowers parents with new choices such as transferring their children to a higher-performing school, or enrolling them in free tutoring.

By requiring states and schools to test children's reading and math skills every year, the law shows parents, teachers, and taxpayers which students need additional help. This spotlight on achievement enables everyone involved to effectively target time and resources. Under **Building On Results: A Blueprint for Strengthening the *No Child Left Behind Act***, parents would continue to have unprecedented options to ensure their children's educational success.

- ❖ **Accountability**—States will be held accountable for ensuring that all students can read and do math at grade level by 2014. They will disaggregate test scores, participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and report state and NAEP results to parents on the same report card.
- ❖ **Promise Scholarships**—Public schools that go into restructuring status will be required to offer private school choice, intensive tutoring, or inter-district public school choice through Promise Scholarships to low-income students in grades 3-12. Federal funds will follow the child to his or her new school, to be supplemented by a federal scholarship of \$2,500.
- ❖ **Opportunity Scholarships**—This new program will support local efforts to expand public and private school choice options within a set geographic area. Modeled after the Washington, D.C. choice program that the federal government has funded since 2004, it would enable students to attend a private school through a locally designed scholarship program. Families could also seek additional tutoring for their children.
- ❖ **Charter Schools**—The federal charter school program will support all viable charter applications that improve academic outcomes. In addition, local decisions to convert schools identified for restructuring into charter schools will be allowed, even if the total number of charter schools would then surpass a state's charter cap.
- ❖ **Supplemental Educational Services (SES)**—Tutoring and after-school instruction will be offered to all low-income students who attend a school in improvement status from the first year forward, one year earlier than before. In addition, districts will be asked to spend all relevant federal funds or risk their forfeiture, eliminating the disincentive to support SES and choice programs.
- ❖ **Graduation Rates**—All 50 Governors have agreed to use a more accurate graduation rate. By 2011-12, this school-level data must be disaggregated and reported in state accountability calculations.