

“LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND”

HEARING
BEFORE THE
**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
THE WORKFORCE**
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

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LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7, 2001

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE,

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:30 a.m., in Room 2175 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. John A. Boehner [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Boehner, Petri, Hoekstra, McKeon, Castle, Johnson, Greenwood, Schaffer, Upton, Hilleary, Ehlers, Tancredo, Fletcher, DeMint, Isakson, Biggert, Platts, Tiberi, Keller, Osborne, Culberson, Kildee, Owens, Payne, Mink, Andrews, Roemer, Scott, Rivers, Hinojosa, McCarthy, Tierney, Kind, Ford, McCollum, Solis, and Davis.

Staff present: Becky Campoverde, Deputy Staff Director; Cindy Herrle, Senior Budget Analyst; Dan Lara, Press Secretary; Sally Lovejoy, Director of Education and Human Resources Policy; Patrick Lyden, Professional Staff Member; Maria Miller, Communications Coordinator; Deborah L. Samantar, Clerk; Jo-Marie St. Martin, General Counsel; Rich Stombres, Professional Staff Member; Kent Talbert, Professional Staff Member; Holli Traud, Legislative Assistant; Christie Wolfe, Professional Staff Member; Charles Barone, Minority Deputy Staff Director; Mark Zuckerman, Minority General Counsel; Denise Forte, Minority Legislative Associate/Education; Ruth Friedman, Minority Fellow; Cheryl Johnson, Minority Counsel/Education and Oversight; James Kvaal, Minority Legislative Associate/Education; Maggie McDow, Minority Legislative Associate/Education; Alex Nock, Minority Legislative Associate/Education; Joe Novotny, Minority Staff Assistant/Education; and Brendan O'Neil, Minority Legislative Associate/Education.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JOHN BOEHNER, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, DC

Chairman Boehner. A quorum being present, the Committee on Education and the Workforce will come to order. Under Committee Rule 12(b), opening statements are limited to the chairman and the ranking minority member of the committee. Therefore, if other members have opening

statements, they will be included in the record.

And with that, I ask unanimous consent for the hearing record to remain open for 14 days to allow members' statements and other extraneous material referenced during the hearing to be submitted for the record.

Without objection, so ordered.

Let me extend a warm welcome to all of you, my colleague from Michigan, Mr. Kildee, and my other colleagues, and certainly to our guest this morning, the Secretary of Education, Rod Paige. Thank you very much for being here.

I will pause from my opening statement and announce that there is a vote on the House floor. For those members who would be willing to go now, I would appreciate it. We are going to continue to move the hearing along because of the secretary's schedule. So it's just the fact of us getting to vote.

Continuing, it is a pleasure to have Secretary Paige here with us. As superintendent of the Houston Independent School District, he became a national leader in designing creative solutions to provide schools and teachers with flexibility to educate our children but to also hold them accountable for results.

Our hearing today will focus on President Bush's education reform proposal, which is based on three core principles: giving states and local school districts decision-making flexibility, establishing a rigorous accountability system to measure results, and giving parents the option of removing their children from failing schools. The president's message is clear: public schools must educate our children, and we will hold them accountable for how well they accomplish that job, not just for how quickly they spend taxpayer money.

Although Congress has spent more than \$80 billion on Title I since 1990, achievement scores remain relatively stagnant. Despite spending billions of dollars on education, too many students have fallen short in meeting goals for educational excellence. The academic achievement gap between rich and poor, Anglo and minority, remains wide, and in some cases is growing wider. Today, nearly 70 percent of inner city fourth graders cannot read at a basic level. Robert Kennedy once called the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers, and I quote, "a stain on our national honor." We cannot let this tragedy continue unchecked. The president's plan refocuses federal education spending back toward its original goal of helping America's disadvantaged students.

By asking states and schools to develop annual assessments to measure student progress in reading and math in grades three through eight, the president's proposal would for the first time demand real results from public schools that receive federal education services.

President Bush has proposed an increase in federal education funding, but it is not by any means the centerpiece of his plan. Accountability is the centerpiece. In my view, until we have a system of real accountability in place to ensure that public schools using federal education

dollars are teaching our children, it is not prudent for us to pursue massive increases in Federal education spending. Now, this is the approach that Washington followed in the past and, as a tragic consequence, many of our children have

been left behind. We must open a new chapter in education policy that emphasizes not just resources, but results.

The president's plan also gives states and local schools more flexibility to improve student performance by reducing bureaucracy and consolidating a host of duplicative programs to allow schools to implement innovative solutions that meet the unique needs of their students. The president's plan also says you cannot have real accountability if there are not real consequences for chronic failure. There must be an escape hatch for students trapped in dangerous, failing schools, a means of allowing parents to remove their children from these schools that do not teach, and, as the president says, will not change.

We hope that every school in America will improve and that every school in America will provide a good education for their children. But there must be a safety valve at the end of this process to ensure that every child has a chance at a good, basic education. And for those schools who will not change or cannot change, there have to be consequences.

As a result, the president's plan gives parents the option of sending their children to a different public school or a private school after three years of certified failure. Giving parents the power to do what they think is best for their children, even if only as a last resort, can make failing schools improve and help to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers.

Other elements of the president's plan include his Reading First initiative, enhancing teacher quality, improving math and science education, making schools safer and promoting character education.

I look forward to hearing about these and other issues from Secretary Paige this morning. I am convinced that the president's plan to increase education funding, coupled with education reforms to enhance flexibility for states and schools and hold them accountable for results is the right path for us to take. We must ensure that the American Dream is within grasp of all of our nation's children, not just a selected few. We must close the achievement gap for the most disadvantaged in our society so that in fact no child is left behind.

And at this time, I would like to yield to my friend and my colleague from the State of Michigan, Mr. Kildee.

WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JOHN BOEHNER,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, DC – SEE APPENDIX A

Mr. Kildee. Good morning, I want to join Chairman Boehner in thanking Secretary Paige for making his inaugural appearance before our committee today. I know that all of the members are looking forward to your testimony.

If we are truly going to "leave no child behind," we must address several key issues. First is ensuring that we hold our country's educational system accountable,

including states, school districts, schools, principals, teachers, and others. We must demand results. We must ensure that all segments of a school's population, especially those at risk, are performing up to par with their non-disadvantaged peers. This means disaggregating data and holding schools accountable for the results of every child.

In 1994, I was chairman of the subcommittee that authorized this bill that emphasized disaggregation of data. In 1999, when we passed a bill out of this committee here, it did not go anywhere in the Senate, we cited Texas as one of the states where disaggregated data was done.

We also share a commitment to upgrading the quality of our teaching force. Too many of our children are taught by uncertified teachers and teachers teaching outside their field. Legislation introduced by myself, Ranking Member Miller, and other members seek to remedy this by ensuring that we reach a fully qualified teaching force within four years.

Unfortunately, we also have our differences. The President's proposal renews this committee's discussions over "Straight A's" legislation, which would block grant much of ESEA, eliminating targeting to disadvantaged areas with little, if any, accountability. The track record of block granting has not been a good one. Very often these block grants have been called back. In Title VI, which is part of that block grant, the funding went down precipitously. One of the reasons why that happens is that very often the Federal Government's programs are directed toward certain populations, and when you block grant, very often you lose the identity of that program. You lose the dollars.

So it is very important that we recognize that the Federal Government got into helping SEA's and LEA's to assist those students who were not being served well by the state education agency or the local education agency. The disadvantaged, for example, the disabled, we want to make sure that we do not lose sight of the special populations with special needs for which the Federal Government entered the field of education in the first place.

So while we want to give flexibility, we have got to couple that with accountability and make sure that these programs are still targeted towards those students for which the Federal Government, again, has significantly been facing problems with.

I look forward to hearing the testimony this morning, and I'm going to go over and cast my vote and be right back.

Chairman Boehner. Thank you, Mr. Kildee. The Secretary this morning will be joined today by Thomas Skelly and Thomas Corwin, both with the Department of Education. Mr. Skelly is currently the director of Budget Service and Mr. Corwin, Director of the Elementary and

Secondary and Vocational Analysis Division. We want to thank you for joining the Secretary today.

With that, Mr. Secretary, it is all yours.

STATEMENT OF HON. RODERICK R. PAIGE, SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; ACCOMPANIED BY THOMAS SKELLY, DIRECTOR OF BUDGET SERVICES; AND THOMAS CORWIN, DIRECTOR OF THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY AND VOCATIONAL ANALYSIS DIVISION, WASHINGTON, DC

Secretary Paige. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of "No Child Left Behind," President Bush's plan to strengthen elementary and secondary education, close the inexcusable achievement gap, and discuss the president's 2002 budget for education.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that my full testimony be entered into the record, and I will make a brief summary to the committee.

Chairman Boehner. Without objection.

Secretary Paige. I want to begin by noting how troubled I was by the recent shootings at Santana High School in Santee, California this week. Violence is threatening to become endemic in our communities. Because of that, our schools where the children gather are at great risk. "No Child Left Behind" will strengthen the ability of schools and teachers to prevent violence and other disruptive activities in our schools and will give schools greater flexibility to direct additional federal resources towards making our schools safe and drug free. But ultimately parents, students, and teachers, and others must learn to heed the warning signs of violent behavior, and must become concerned about the amount of rage in our young people, and must take threats of violence seriously, and take appropriate action before students actually show up with something that harms other students.

Turning now to the subject of this hearing, I am pleased and proud that the president has made education his top priority. In his first week as president, he has given the Department of Education the highest percentage increase of any cabinet agency in his first budget. Our commitment to providing first-class education for all children is clear, and I look forward to working with each of you over the coming months so that we can make the changes needed to help reach our goal.

Before I get into the details of the president's proposal, I want to make a few observations. First, "No Child Left Behind" is, as the president has described it, "a framework from which we can all work together, Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, to strengthen our elementary and secondary schools." This means that we are open to your ideas on how to

meet our share goals.

Second, "No Child Left Behind" builds on existing efforts to improve the quality of education for all children. We are not asking states, school districts or schools to drop everything they have done in the past and to start over. But we are pursuing more

vigorously the kinds of changes that they are already making.

At the same time, however, we cannot ignore the need for real change in America's schools. And while the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act moved in the right direction, it didn't go nearly far enough. And if you doubt that the present approach is broken and needs fixing, just consider the appalling achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students, which is the focus of federal education programs, and their more advantaged peers. For example, on the latest National Assessment for Educational Progress in fourth grade reading, 73 percent of white students performed at or above the basic level, compared with just 40 percent of Hispanic students, or even worse, 76 percent of African American students.

Federal education policy is not accomplishing its goals despite the investment of \$130 billion in the last three and a half decades. More often than not, it is a bewildering array of federal programs that get in the way of federal and local school performance. These bureaucratic controls promote a culture of compliance where the professionals at the scene are spending much too much of their time dealing with issues of compliance and not real issues of performance nor real issues of accountability measured by improved student achievement.

We think it is time to discontinue funding failure and promote a culture of accountability, a culture of performance. We have islands of excellence all across our nation but our goal is to have a system-wide impact so that all of our children have an opportunity. To do this, we need to bring to federal educational programs many of the strategies that have worked so well in states and school districts. This includes strategies like increased accountability for student performance, a simple principle of focus on research-based practices so the efforts that we are taking really have the impact that we need, reducing bureaucracy and greater flexibility for the professionals at the scene to do their job, and better information on our efforts so that we empower parents and communities.

"No Child Left Behind" provides a blueprint for accomplishing this goal; a blueprint that we believe will guide the upcoming ESEA reauthorization. To provide the resources needed to implement this blueprint, the president's budget for fiscal year 2002 includes \$44.5 billion for the Department of Education, an 11.5 percent increase in budget authority, and an increase of \$2.5 billion or 5.9 percent over the 2001 program level. This budget also reflects the president's commitment to a balanced fiscal framework which, includes more reasonable and sustained growth in the discretionary spending of our nation, the protection of our Social Security programs, repaying a large portion of our national debt, and tax relief for all Americans.

The core of the president's proposal is the requirement for annual state assessments in reading and mathematics for all students in all students in grades three through eighth. I can tell you from my own experience that there is no substitute for annual information about how well students and how well schools are performing. Children in good schools make remarkable progress during these early grades. And we cannot afford to wait three or four years to find out that some students have fallen behind. Where there are problems, they must be discovered and addressed immediately. And, of course, that can only be accomplished with information provided by recent test data. The important thing about testing, of course, is what we do with the results. We will start by

helping teachers learn to use data effectively, helping school districts where school districts will use these results to make sure that all schools and students are making progress, yearly progress, towards the state-adopted performance standards, and that no group of students is left behind. Secondly, we would use this data to report school progress to parents, citizens, and taxpayers for accountability purposes for federal policy.

We also would assess results to strengthen Title I accountability by requiring more rapid identification of schools needing improvement, as well as greater assistance for states and school districts to turn around low-performing schools.

If such schools fail to improve, they should be subject to more comprehensive measures, such as intensive professional development or reconstitution as a public charter school. And that student should be given the option of attending other public schools, schools not identified for improvement or correction. If in spite of these efforts, the school fails to make adequate progress for three consecutive years, we would permit students to use federal dollars to find a better education at a higher-performing public or private school or to obtain supplementary educational services from a public or private sector provider.

The president also is proposing a system of rewards for states and schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap, while states that fail to improve their performance will be subject to losing a portion of their Title I administrative funds.

Taken as a whole, these proposals reflect what I believe to be a strong consensus, that states, school districts, and schools must be accountable for ensuring that all students, included disadvantaged and minority students, meet high academic standards. At the same time, we recognize, however, that it is unfair to demand accountability without enabling success. This is why other major components of "No Child Left Behind" aims to give states, school districts, schools, teachers, parents, and others appropriate tools and flexibility to help all students succeed.

For example, we would lower the poverty threshold for Title I school-wide programs from 50 percent to 40 percent thereby enabling thousands of additional schools to use Title I funds to upgrade the entire school. We would coordinate education technology programs to reduce the paperwork burden for submitting and administering multiple grant applications serving nearly identical purposes. We would consolidate overlapping and duplicative grant programs and let states and districts decide how to use their share of the single grant resulting

from this combination of federal funds. In each case, the new flexibility provided to states, schools, and school districts is appropriately balanced by performance agreements that will ensure that program purposes are achieved, particularly for those poor and minority students living in high need districts.

We would also create a Charter Option for states that would offer freedom from the current requirements placed on categorical program funds in return for submitting a five-year performance agreement that includes specific and rigorous goals for increased student performance. States would be sanctioned for failure to comply with their performance agreements and would lose their charter if student achievement did not improve.

The education reform proposals contained in "No Child Left Behind," combined with the president's 2002 budget for education, support a comprehensive vision for closing the achievement gap and improving the quality of education for all Americans. I urge you to give these proposals your most careful consideration, and I stand ready to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you so much.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF HON. RODERICK R. PAIGE, SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, DC – SEE APPENDIX B

Mr. Hoekstra. [presiding] Thank you, Secretary Paige. It is refreshing to have you here. Welcome to Washington.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

Mr. Hoekstra. We hope you enjoy your stay. Robert Kennedy once called the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers, "a stain on our national honor." More than \$120 billion has been funneled into Title I since the Johnson administration, representing the federal government's largest single investment in education. I think there are some charts up there that will show that investment. More than \$80 billion has been invested in the last decade alone in Title I, Part A. Despite this huge investment in resources, the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers remains wide. Do you believe that it is responsible for Washington to dramatically increase federal education spending before a system of accountability is in place to ensure that public school students are learning?

Secretary Paige. Repeat that last part, please?

Mr. Hoekstra. Do you believe it is responsible for Washington to dramatically increase federal education spending before a system of accountability is in place to ensure that public school students are learning?

Secretary Paige. Mr. Chairman, we believe the federal government has played a very important role in providing assistance, especially to high-need students and high-need schools. But it has not done as well in monitoring the results and asking for accountability. We believe it is appropriate right now to focus on accountability, along with increased funding. To continue increasing the funding level after making sure that the quality of accountability systems are in place, that dollars are actually directed to the areas that we seek them to be directed and that we are achieving the results that we intend is probably not appropriate.

Mr. Hoekstra. The accountability section of the president's education plan requires states to test students annually in grades three through eight in two subjects, math and reading. Have you done an analysis of how this mandate will impact the states? How many states would have testing programs currently in place that meet the requirements as outlined in the president's proposal, and how many would have to do significant work to get to that point?

Secretary Paige. Yes, we have done some analysis of that issue. And a number of states would be very close to compliance. But about a third to half of states would need to make significant improvements. Most of the states, however, have some programs in place but would need to fill in the gaps, for example, many states test some of the students. Mostly they were aiming at compliance with the requirements under the '94 reauthorization, which requires three tests across the pipeline. This test annually would require most of the states to fill in those gaps.

But we believe the experience that they have earned and gained as result of complying with the '94 reauthorization have provided significant experience for them and so it would not be much of a task to fill in those gaps and come into compliance with what we are calling for in this proposal.

Mr. Hoekstra. I would be remiss for not asking you about the fiscal situation at the department. You know that over the last three years, it has been impossible for the department to get a clean audit. The audit that came out on March 1 indicates that not only do you have a role in helping our children learning reading and math, you also have to spend some time getting the department to improve their math. Out of the report that came out on March 1, "Management indicated there were six known instances of duplicate payments totaling \$154 million during fiscal year 2000, including items for \$125 million." There have been items identified as large as \$900 billion that were identified as government liabilities that should have been identified as payable to the federal government. Have you had an opportunity in the last two weeks to straighten the situation out that we have been struggling with for the last three years?

Mr. Hoekstra. Or take a look at this and perhaps give us an update as to what your plan might be?

Secretary Paige. Well, Mr. Chairman, I thank you so much for your concern, but this issue I can promise you that it is a primary concern to those of who are coming to this department now. And we have looked quite carefully at this most recent audit. And we are very keenly aware of the fact that we did not receive a clean opinion. We are in the process of looking at efforts and ways that we can get this under control. And it is an issue that will receive our very highest priority because we don't want to wake up some time down in the middle of this and own this

problem, so we are going to be working on it.

Mr. Hoekstra. I appreciate your inclusiveness by saying that "we did not get a clean audit." That is very generous on your part, recognizing that all of this work went on well before you ever came to the department and it represents the work of the previous administration for the fiscal year that ended on September 30. We look forward to working with you and providing whatever assistance, we can from Congress to make sure that you have the resources available and whatever else you need to take care of this issue.

Thank you very much. I will yield to Mr. Kildee.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you, Chairman Hoekstra. I would like to first of all indicate that Mr. Miller is not here.

Mr. Secretary, several proposals have been introduced this Congress that would consolidate much of ESEA. The President's proposal is one that would block grant numerous programs. And as I mentioned in my opening statement, I am concerned about future funding and the impact of consolidation. I mentioned earlier that we block granted chapter II in 1981, funding for it was reduced by over 60 percent. Gradually, Congress restored those discrete programs, not at the request of those here in Washington but because basically the local school districts were very concerned about the block granting and the loss of funds. So most of us were contacted by local districts asking that we put them back into their separate programs. Why do you think something similar would not happen under the President's plans for consolidation?

Secretary Paige. May I provide another view? Having served as superintendent of the schools of the nation's seventh largest school district, serving almost 300 schools, my experience has been that a large part of our efforts was seeking compliance with a myriad of requirements that were attached to all of these categorical projects. And that we have professionals in our organization that spend most of their time simply abiding by compliance issues and trying to make sure that we are inside of the requirements for a lot of these categorical funds. We do not want to decrease funds, we want to increase funds, as we can see what has happened in the president's budget this year. And we want to make sure that more dollars flow to the schools where they are needed most. But we think that many of these dollars that are siphoned off are building bureaucracy inside the various organizations. So what we would like to do is to continue some discussions with you and see if we can find some balance in this so that our mutual goals can be accomplished.

Mr. Kildee. I look forward to working with you on that. But I think we can achieve more flexibility with accountability. We're still not completely there. This is not being adequately handled by local education agencies. That is why we got involved. So I think we can lend flexibility and accountability to the consolidated programs, but a less broad consolidation than the President proposes.

The 21st Century Learning Centers, were funded at \$864 million, which has really excited the private sector; the Mott Foundation put in over \$100 million. They have really a

private-public partnership for after-school and before-school programs that are so predictive of children's success. Under the President's proposal, that would be fused with the Safe and Drug Free School Program. I worry about that, because very often the Safe and Drug Free School Program in the appropriation process suffers some ups and downs, depending on how someone can describe a certain program. It has not always been funded as far as we would like to see it funded. And I am worried that the funding we have for the 21st Learning Centers, which is a relatively new program, has caught on so rapidly because the private sector has been a factor.

Secretary Paige. My current thinking is not to completely collapse those two programs but to keep them separate and to streamline them. There would be some linkage but the separation between those two programs would still exist for the purposes that you have outlined.

Mr. Kildee. I would like to make sure that we have a good firewall between the two so that the appropriations process cannot add the numbers up and then subtract funding. The history of the Safe and Drug Free Schools has been a little spotty in the appropriations process. But I would like to work with you to make sure they aren't combined. I prefer that they not be linking them at all. Very often a program needs about five years, this had not been five years yet. And you know that the private sector is very concerned about this.

Secretary Paige. We will be glad to continue some discussions with you about that. Our current thinking, however, does not collapse them so that funds will be streamlined and linked together. It would continue to have separate funds and not request these funds be mixed.

Mr. Kildee. I would like to work with you and make sure that we get a special appropriation.

Secretary Paige. But may I make an observation about the general point of this consolidation, and I do share your concern. But I think what we might want to consider now is a new element that is going to be added to the mix called accountability. Once we define the results we see, and we are vigilant about monitoring, whether or not we are getting those results, then the methodology over here need not have the kind of vigilance that we usually use. Because those people at the scene are going to do what it takes in order to get us the results if we put the accountability in the right place. It will drive the results. Therefore, it is likely if we say that we want these kinds of results in closing the achievement gap that they are going to put the money in the places most needed.

Mr. Kildee. You know, it's quite confusing. I don't know if it gets us anywhere. But if you give a patient aspirin and Zolof and the patient gets better, you don't really know which worked. How do we measure what is the most effective?

Secretary Paige. But our concern is that the patient gets better.

Mr. Kildee. Yes, we hope the patient is better. But I think the ability to measure a relatively new program, the 21st Century Learning Centers is a very new program. And we have not yet really measured it, and begun fusing it with a program with assessed results.

Secretary Paige. We don't intend to do that. We will have some continued discussion with you about it, but our current thinking does not include collapsing these two programs together.

Mr. Hoekstra. Mr. McKeon.

Mr. McKeon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, want to welcome you here, Mr. Secretary. I think it is refreshing to have a secretary who has served as a member of a school board and a superintendent of a large school district, someone who has come right from the firing line to now be able to hopefully take your experiences across the country to benefit others.

There had been several education bills introduced in Congress calling for greater accountability in federal education spending but President Bush's "No Child Left Behind" is the only one that asks states to begin annual testing of public school students every year from grades three to eight in reading and math. It seems to me that when we test at grade three and then test again at grade eight, if we haven't progressed during that time, we have lost five years out of the middle of that child's education. It seems that that is a serious loss and that is probably one of the problems that we are having nationwide. In the last few years along, as Chairman Hoekstra said, we put about \$130 billion into Title I. And the last few years alone it has been escalating. Last year it was \$8.8 billion. Should parents be willing to settle for a plan that spends more and demands less or in your view is annual testing essential for federal education dollars to see that even though they are a small part of the local district's budget, it is a lot of money. And it seems to me that testing is a very essential requirement to ensure that accountability. Would you care to expand on that?

Secretary Paige. I would agree perfectly on that. Testing is essential, annual testing against the state-adopted standards, aligned with the state-adopted standards and aligned with the teaching materials. It is best when it is aligned also with the teacher training programs, which, is an indispensable part of the education mix. It is the same as teaching, it is the two-sided coin of teaching and testing linked together, one without the other is almost unthinkable. And it is especially dangerous that we allow a student to go two or three years before we discover the deficit that the student has. We may then have allowed the student to get out of range of remediation. So it is crucial that we find out at the very earliest moment the amount of deficit, whether the child is learning or is not learning, what they are learning, what strategies are being useful, what strategies are failing, what materials are working best, and what materials should be changed. All this is information that we cannot intelligently gain without good testing.

Mr. McKeon. I think you were probably with the president when he went and visited a local school here with the chairman and ranking member of this committee. And it was I think a 95 percent minority school that had had real problems in the past and brought in a new principal and they went to annual testing and showed great achievement, in my understanding. You probably had similar experiences in Houston. I hope we can come together on this, get this issue resolved so we can make some real progress. We are losing too many of our young people.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

Mr. McKeon. Thank you.

Chairman Boehner. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Roemer, for five minutes.

Mr. Roemer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Nice to see you again, Secretary Paige. And I thank you for coming in and talking to the New Democrats. I also want to thank you and your staff who are working with you on follow-up to a bill that passed last year called the Transition Teaching Bill. In that bill, we are working to bring new quality teachers in the math and science and technology areas. And we want to work with you in the publication of the new rules in the Federal Register and make sure that institutions of higher education are included in this process. And we are working with your staff now on this, and we hope we will continue to work with you.

Mr. Secretary, in the President's proposal there are a lot of areas of agreement, particularly with New Democrats. We believe in a certain degree of consolidation. We believe in increased flexibility for our schools. We believe in getting results. So there is probably about an 80 percent correlation and agreement between where the President has laid out his bill and our three R's bill that we have introduced with Senate counterparts, Senator Lieberman and Senator Bayh. There are two distinct differences that will cause some spirited debate in this committee and on the House floor when they get right to the heart of the matter, what is on the type of tests and the degree of testing and how much resources the Bush plan provides in devising, implementing, and remediating those tests. In Indiana, we will be required under the Bush proposal to test a lot more in a lot more of our grades.

Now there is a raging debate now going on on what kinds of tests should be out there and how much we should test our children. Let me just get to a matter that concerns me, and I will skip over that part of the debate. I fought an unfunded mandate going back to my local schools. How much money_ and I appreciate your quote you said earlier, you want accountability plus increased funds_ if we are going to test more, and if some of these children do not pass the test and they are going to need to be remediated, whether it be with tutors, whether it be with after-school programs, whether that be through a summer school program, I would like to know first of all how many more resources are in the Bush proposal for devising the tests and for the states to implement these tests? And, secondly, how much increased resources are in this bill to help the children to pass from one grade to the next?

Secretary Paige. The proposal "No Child Left Behind" promises assistance with the development of the tests and the additional tests that have to be developed. I hope there can be some additional funds, and if there are additional funds, we would like to also assist in some of the implementation. As far as the specific cost is concerned, allow me to use my own experience in Houston where we tested using the Stanford 9 in grades one through eleven annually in addition to the state mandated of three, eight and ten. Our cost for the Stanford 9 ranged from \$8 to \$10 per child to do this annual testing. This was borne by the school district except I am not sure what the cost would be for developing a new test. This would depend upon the relative status of the various states. I am sure there will be a wide range of costs, but the plan envisions paying for the development of tests. As far as the implementation of the tests, it is yet to be

determined whether or not there will be additional funds available for that I am not certain.

Mr. Roemer. So in Indiana, Mr. Secretary, if we have to test in three or four of our grades and it is \$5 million per grade and \$15 to \$20 million more just to devise and implement the tests, let alone remediate, how much money do you put in the Bush proposal to do the devising and implementation?

Secretary Paige. We will not know the specifics of that until April 3rd when we get that specific information, but the concept is that we envision taking care of that expense.

Mr. Roemer. You will provide the expense and then for remediation, you will provide the expenses as well as_

Secretary Paige. No, remediation is not included in that.

Mr. Roemer. You did not include any funds for remediation?

Secretary Paige. The Title I dollars are all meant for that kind of purpose but there are specific dollars for turning around local funds for schools. Translate that to individual remediation for individual children from the site of the school, and they could make those kinds of determinations in using the dollars that we make available. They can determine the specific use of those dollars.

Mr. Roemer. Well, Mr. Chairman, I know my time has run out, but I would certainly like to continue to have conversations with you and the Department because I hope that we would not just use Title I funds for increased remediation and tutoring and so forth. I would hope that that would come out of a separate account.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Boehner. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware, Mr. Castle.

Mr. Castle. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, I also would like to welcome you to the committee, and to Washington for all that matters. And you have a reputation of being a strong person. I think we need a strong person. I believe that this is a unique opportunity in our history to actually jump start education and have advances we have not seen at the degree of speed that all of us would like to see happen. I think you are at the forefront of that along with the president, and we want to work with you to get that done. I can't emphasize that enough.

Let me with my question just underline one of the problems we have. As you know, some states are still developing their reading and math standards, which were required under the last ESEA authorization in 1994. As a matter of fact, even more of them are working on their line assessments. I believe that the federal government's failure to take actions to implement and enforce that '94 authorization, including consequences for schools that fail to raise student achievement based on the state's assessments has significantly retarded the educational progress.

How can we ensure that all states implement their annual assessments in grades three through eight, assuming we can get this done in a timely manner, when so many are already so far behind? What are going to be our methodologies of doing this? It has not worked, as well I would have liked in the past.

Secretary Paige. We have had a chance to look at states and the progress they have made, and what we see is, of course, a lot of variety in terms of where states are. But many states are making significant progress towards meeting the requirements of the 1994 reauthorization. And for those states that are not meeting requirements, then we have sanctions in place that will be implemented. Some of their administrative funds might be lost as a result of their non-compliance.

Mr. Castle. As I understand the schedule, they should have already been there, but they have not. The sanctions have not really been used, so my hope is we will get a lot stronger about making sure those happen.

Secretary Paige. We call this a new beginning.

Mr. Castle. Good, I would like a new beginning. I am looking forward to it.

Let me go on to another subject for a moment. I believe we need to do a better job of targeting the resources of students with the greatest need, mostly Title I. And, obviously, they only fund about 7 percent of all the education anyhow. That would mean if we change some of those formulas, that some school districts don't really need or deserve funding for certain programs, so they lose. The federal funds would be better focused on those schools and students who really need them.

Unfortunately, our efforts to achieve these goals, even with new federal dollars, have never been fully implemented. We did change the formula here but when they appropriated, they never actually went along with our formula. This committee had the gumption to stand up and say we need to focus more on the kids who have the greatest needs in terms of Title I. Do you have any idea how we can achieve these goals or do you share. I think I can say the philosophy of most of this committee, if not all of this committee, is to move in the direction of making sure that the students with the greatest needs are brought up to speed?

Secretary Paige. We completely agree with you that students with the greatest needs are those we need to provide the greatest amount of help, especially if we emphasize that the students with the greatest needs are the students who are at the bottom of the achievement gap. And if we monitor the achievement gap and insist that that gap be closed since we already know that it can be closed, we see examples of that all across the United States. And so that is the purpose of having good data, so that we can see what progress is being made and what progress is not being made. And that achievement gap not narrowing is a signal to us that we are not getting the results that we need. And following that will be some corrective action.

Mr. Castle. I would just add I am total agreement with what you just stated about the data. To me, it is impossible to disaggregate the data down to the students, to the schools, to the school

districts, and to the states to really learn where kids are going and what they are doing. We absolutely need to do that. And you have a reputation for having done that in your Houston district, and I just think it is something that has to happen all over the country.

Secretary Paige. Allow me to add that we can disaggregate the data not only down to the individual students, to the individual class, but we can disaggregate the data down to the individual objective in the class that the student has not mastered. Therefore, the teachers now are empowered and can be more precise in their instruction. They can also go directly to the specific area where the student's deficit exists, and that is an enormously powerful weapon that they have as a result of being able to disaggregate data. And we must have the data in the first place and being able to disaggregate it.

Mr. Castle. And isn't this information even more important as you get down to the students who are achieving less and less? Often, it is stated that those kids will lose out.

Secretary Paige. No. No, these are the winners, because what we do is make these deficits visible. And when we make them visible, we can see where to go in and intervene. The very worst thing and a problem that we have now is that we have allowed these deficits to be invisible so we don't have to do anything about them because they essentially don't exist. And what we have effectively done is just ignored the child's needs. They are the ones that lose most when they are not tested.

Mr. Castle. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Good luck, and I yield back.

Chairman Boehner. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Scott.

Mr. Scott. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, Mr. Secretary, I welcome you from Hampton Roads, Virginia.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

Mr. Scott. It is good to see you today. On the question of testing, the Office of Civil Rights recently issued a report on high stakes testing, which essentially criticized the use of a single test for high stakes decisions like graduation, promotion, and whatnot. It requires that tests be validated. Is it your intention to continue supporting the Office of Civil Rights' view on high stakes testing?

Secretary Paige. We think that reliance on a single measure for consequences such as that would be inappropriate.

Mr. Scott. Thank you.

Secretary Paige. Multiple measures would be better.

Mr. Scott. In the testing, it has always appeared to me that you tend to punish schools with good dropout prevention programs. If one school is testing everybody, another school nearby has 25

percent dropping out, you compare the average of both schools, and you have essentially punished the school for having an effective dropout prevention program because presumably they could be weighting down the average. Are you adjusting the scores so that schools will not be punished for having good dropout prevention programs?

Secretary Paige. The dropout consideration must be part of the consideration, which is tested and what is measured. It has to be balanced across the table. We have had plenty of experience with that, and that is one of the reasons why in our school district we eliminated exemptions so that every child is tested.

Mr. Scott. And if they have dropped out of school, will the school be punished or rewarded for having that dropout rate?

Secretary Paige. Those positions are being worked on now.

Mr. Scott. Okay, good. I notice in your program you have a I guess zero tolerance policy for expelling persistently disruptive students. In our Juvenile Justice Task Force, the bipartisan task force that met last year, there was unanimous opinion amongst the experts that kicking kids out of school with no alternative services was a bad idea. In your zero tolerance, will you insist that alternative education be available for all students who are removed from schools, particularly those special education students?

Secretary Paige. Well, we intend to leave no child behind even those who are disruptive, so they deserve some type of assistance as well. So then an appropriate placement for them would be in order if they cannot handle the placement they had originally.

Mr. Scott. The present law requires that all sponsors of federally-funded education programs comply with civil rights laws. There have been efforts to give major exemptions to some sponsors of federally-sponsored programs under Charitable Choice the ability to discriminate based on religion and those that have the ability to discriminate on religion have essentially a free pass on any other discrimination that they can allege was religious when in fact it may have been racial discrimination. Will you insist that federally-sponsored programs be subject to all civil rights laws as we are now?

Secretary Paige. We agree with that. We have no problem with that at all.

Mr. Scott. Thank you. And a final question, as you know, I am sure you are familiar with the issue, is this topic of disparity in funding for some school divisions, get a lot of money, other school divisions don't get much money. What can we do to reduce the disparity in funding amongst districts even within a state?

Secretary Paige. Are you saying school divisions, I'm sorry?

Mr. Scott. Big city school systems, I know in Virginia, Fairfax, for example, spends a lot more money per student than some of the poorer counties so they have a lot more resources. And those that live in low-income areas usually get a lot less per student when in fact they need more

resources. What can be done to equalize the funding?

Secretary Paige. Funding equity has been a difficult issue for states, all across the United States. We have seen this inequity addressed in the courts. It is not our intention to get involved in that, but we will make sure that our dollars targets the students who are most needy. And what we have found out, judging from the history of it, is that the federal dollar funds intended to benefit those students who are most needy, they are the ones who are getting the advantages of those dollars.

Mr. Scott. Are you talking particularly about most of the Federal monies in Title I?

Secretary Paige. Yes.

Mr. Scott. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Boehner. Thank you, Mr. Scott.

Mr. Secretary, I missed my chance for questions. I think I will proceed. You are the first secretary of education to actually have been in the classroom and actually been in the principal's office and then a superintendent. You have been through a great achievement in terms of much that the president is proposing, in your own state of Texas as the superintendent of the Houston independent school district.

As we look at the successful passage of the president's plan and the implementation of it, I have a concern because I have been around my district and talked to educators, administrators, and school board members. There is a great need for additional teacher training, professional development, and certification. And there is a concern that all the focus is on testing and going and implementing the tests and starting the tests without first doing the professional development and the teacher training that is necessary to help teachers to bring them up to speed. Is that not actually moving the cart in front of the horse? Help me understand under the president's proposal, and your own experience, as to how we deal with these issues in the proper sequence?

Secretary Paige. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me put it this way, and I will use my experience in Texas to illustrate this. First, the state underwent an arduous process to determine what a Texas child should learn, know, and need to do because of an education in Texas in any grade and in any course. What resulted from this not necessarily tidy discussion and debate are published clear content standards for every grade and for every course. Then these content standards were further broken down into objectives for every grade and every course. Since these content standards were clear, then we could make clear to the publishers of textbooks and the curriculum material that this is what we want our children to know and be able to do. Consequently, we will not buy your material unless you support this. Therefore, this drives the development of content materials. These essential elements are made available to the universities. The universities can build their teacher preparation programs around teachers being competent in the delivery of strategies that were aimed at being successful at teaching these content standards.

Then there was a second arduous process the state underwent, which was to determine what is the level of mastery that we should say is required for each of these sets of content. That was determined.

The next thing would be to build an examination, a test to assess the level of mastery that a student has achieved.

I could go further with this, but my point is there is a whole alignment of materials. And if you just say test by itself, it is really nonsensical, but when you fit it into this matrix of activities, it makes sense.

Chairman Boehner. I understand the interest in sharing that information with the universities that are training teachers, but what about the teacher that has been in the classroom for 20 years?

Secretary Paige. The staff development, this guides staff development for certain. This is not just a pre-service teacher, but teachers who are already in the classroom as well.

Chairman Boehner. Secretary, in your school district in Texas, especially in those schools that would be targeted with Title I schools (the targets they are looking at in the

proposal) but in Texas those schools showed dramatic increase and the achievement gap, which we often talk about, did it in fact narrow in the worst schools?

Secretary Paige. Yes.

Chairman Boehner. Is that one of the keys to that success?

Secretary Paige. Absolutely, having the information about where the exact deficits were for each child was relative to competency standards and having teachers trained in the strategies that can deal with that. It is clearly about having the information and the information is a result of the testing.

Chairman Boehner. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. The chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Payne, for five minutes.

Mr. Payne. Thank you very much. It is a pleasure to meet you, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary Paige. Thank you, Mr. Payne.

Mr. Payne. You indicated in the question that was just asked about the narrowing of the gap, was there any correlation between the dropout rate when high-stakes testing became a part of the overall program?

Secretary Paige. We believe that testing does not have the impact that many people believe was the dropout situation because we have in our parallel testing, tremendous anti-dropout efforts. Our teachers are trained. The schools know how to deal with this. We use a lot of

personalization so adults in the building know a child so the students are tracked. Any student that shows an absentee rating that is unusual, something happens there. So I could imagine that there could be some circumstances where students would not want to continue in school. But what we are proposing is a system that would be comprehensive and that would include measures that would address those kinds of issues.

Mr. Payne. Okay, but in your area when these tests started, was there an increase in the dropout rate?

Secretary Paige. We think that there was a decrease in the dropout rate in the Houston schools. We have data to support that. And at the same time, we were testing quite vigorously, even more than the state required.

Mr. Payne. Thank you. I understand that with entitlement funding, as you know, there is, as Congressman Scott mentioned, the disparity between school districts as a result is a local issue. And in Jonathan Kozol's first book, *Children in Trouble*, he talked about at some schools, for example, in the State of New Jersey, there was a 100 percent differential, one spending \$4,000 and one 8,000. Now, with this high-stakes testing, there is certainly nothing we can do about the disparity there. But by the same token, you are going to penalize the schools that did not close the gap. All of us here want all of our students to learn, we want them to achieve. But could you explain how we are going to assist those schools after the third year when it says you will take funds away to go to private schools, \$1,500?

Secondly, you supported 40 percent, you know, when Title I started, and I know it is a long time, Title I was for school districts with 70 percent poverty. Your support for the 40 percent, which changed last year, as a matter of fact, there are some on this committee on the other side of the aisle, who wanted to move down to 25 percent for Title I funding, meaning 75 percent of the students in that area would not necessarily have to be Title I eligible.

But the other question is that the block granting, for example, E-rate was 90 percent goes to most of the private schools. I can't understand how block granting the E-rate is going to do anything but have a disparate impact on the schools that are entitled to the 90 percent.

So if you could just address those briefly, as my time is going to expire.

Secretary Paige. Thank you. Briefly, the last one on E-rate, our current thinking is that the E-rate will not be folded into consolidating block grants. There will be some consolidation of the technology initiatives in the Department of Education.

Secondly, I would like to comment on a term that I hear often, and that term is "high-stakes testing." I think the high stakes is in losing your children, as we are presently doing. The highest stake we have is in not testing young children. It is the reverse of the whole idea on how this term is used. Children who are not tested, in areas where we have the fewest testing, you have more students, especially minority and disadvantaged students not achieving. So our whole intent here is to use those practices that we already know, have experienced and have seen are successful in bringing expressly disadvantaged children up to standards. That requires knowing

where they are. So we are using the test not to be punitive but to give us more precise and current information about what we need to do in terms of that child.

The third point, if a school has been assisted the first year and the second year, and in three years of lack of success, then we think the focus needs to be on the individual child. Therefore, if there are some other remedies that you can suggest to us that would provide some relief to the child who is resident in this failing school, that has failed three years, we would like to hear that. Our suggestion is to allow that child to go through another school, be it public or private.

Mr. Payne. Are you going to test the private schools, too? That is the question that we wonder what is the testing of those institutions that take these Federal dollars into their vouchers?

Secretary Paige. We will have some discussions with you about that and those policies need to be worked out.

Mr. Payne. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Boehner. Thank you, Mr. Payne. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia, a former member of the state school board in Georgia.

Mr. Isakson. Right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary Paige, we appreciate all the efforts you are making while at the same time filling the department. First of all, you make an observation, and please tell me if I am wrong, in fact, I want to read from your prepared text where it says in one of the paragraphs: "Roughly half of the schools currently identified for improvement have received no additional assistance from their state or their district." And I wanted to direct a series of questions to the comments made by Mr. Scott and Mr. Payne.

My experience is that we are targeting Title I schools and that many of the schools that school boards and administrations overlook and pay the least attention to end up being those schools. Is that a fair statement?

Secretary Paige. I think it is a fair statement, a correct statement.

Mr. Isakson. Number two, the president's plan, by disaggregating numbers and by testing no longer allows school boards or administrations to avoid dealing with problem people.

Secretary Paige. Absolutely.

Mr. Isakson. Excuse me, one other question and then I will shut up on this, but this is important to me. We have the opportunity for the first time in the history of federal involvement in the education of America's poorest children to remove the cloak of mediocrity and lack of attention from administrations and school boards.

Secretary Paige. That is right.

Mr. Isakson. By allowing those teachers who are working their hearts out and those kids who will rise to expectations to finally achieve because we are no longer going to mask the problem. Is that not correct?

Secretary Paige. That is absolutely correct.

Mr. Isakson. In light of the fact I was going to yield, I was hoping you could ask a question. I sat down on this row last year and I know what it is like to be left out. One last question with regard to the question on dropouts in many of the specialized programs that we have-- Isn't true that most dropouts drop out after grade eight?

Secretary Paige. Grade nine is the most, sir.

Mr. Isakson. Isn't it true the president's testing is three to eight to identify those kids who have the symptoms, i.e., not being able to read, that lead most often to dropping out?

Secretary Paige. Absolutely.

Mr. Isakson. So isn't it a fact that when you made the statement the high stake is us failing kids by letting them drop out, and it is about time we measured them when we have the chance and remediate them when we have the chance, thereby lowering the number of dropouts?

Secretary Paige. It will have exactly that result.

Mr. Isakson. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I yield back my time.

Chairman Boehner. The chair recognizes the gentle lady from California, Ms. Solis.

Ms. Solis. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I apologize for not being able to hear all of your presentation. The concerns that I have with respect to the president's proposal on education deals with limited English proficiency. And I know that you probably have much experience dealing with those students, particularly Latino and Asian students who in his proposed plan here, if students are not proficiently taught or compliant in the English language in a matter of three years, then those schools will be penalized, 10 percent of their administrative portion of their bilingual funding would be taken away.

One of the concerns I have is that oftentimes in school districts, and particularly in my area, we have students that come in at different times of the year. We have year-round schools also. But we have many immigrant students that come in from different school districts, many of them have different literacy levels as well. How do you intend to track those students as they go from district to district, and some of are in the migrant program because their parents are migrant, how about those students that come in at age 12 and get slapped with this test? And the test could be the first time they ever read something appropriately or may not even read material because they are not at that standard that has been set for that stage.

We are sending I believe a message that in many cases would be very harmful to the very students that we want to promote, especially promoting their literacy in English. And I am a strong supporter of having that transition, but I also understand that many of the schools that I represent in East Los Angeles and in the San Gabriel Valley and other parts of California are ones that are often penalized negatively because student achievement for these particular students is low. And I would love to hear what you have to say about your proposed plan to help these students?

Secretary Paige. First, allow me to say that when we say "No Child Left Behind," we include limited English proficiency as well. We don't want any child to be left behind. So it is our goal to provide a quality education for every child, including migrant children and children who have limited English proficiency. With respect to the program for limited English proficient students, most students should develop considerable proficiency in English within three years. Our belief is that it is reasonable for states to set a three-year goal for limited English-proficient students to develop proficiency in English. Even so, we would want to know where they are along that goal of developing this proficiency.

You have delved into an acute problem that I can personally attest. It happens all across the board with almost every language, one of the most difficult problems that we ran across in Houston during the beginning of the Bosnian war, we found a lot of young people in our schools from Bosnia who were not literate in English at all, who struggled in English. And so we had to provide opportunities for them to learn. We had to provide the kind of assistance they needed. And our intention is to help them, not to penalize them.

So the purpose of testing them is to determine where they are along that goal of achieving the English proficiency and the course content that we seek. So what we have

to do is have some dialogue about the different strategies and the language in the law that permits us to do this.

Ms. Solis. If I could be permitted to follow up on that, I would be interested in hearing particularly what kind of details or specific examples that you could give us in how you would, once identifying problems through diagnostic tests, or whatever it might be, what kind of support that particular child or that class would be given. And would it include a bilingual teacher, credentialed teachers, bilingual aid, instruction materials, after-school tutoring, one-on-one, what are some of the things that would be included in that?

Secretary Paige. Well, our current thinking would be to provide the resources so the professionals on the scene can make the determinations. They would best know what particular strategies to use in order to be able to help a child. From this distance, we are incompetent to do that. So what we want to do is provide resources and ask for results.

What I would suggest that we do to bring you more confidence in this regard is to have our staff meet with you and your people and to get into some specific details on how to seek to accomplish that.

Ms. Solis. And, if I might, Mr. Chairman, one last issue. In California, we had a program in place, a paraprofessional program—we are finding a shortage overall of teachers; people who want to go in the teaching profession because of the lack of adequate salaries, training, and what have you, in California, we have a program where if you are an identified classified worker at a school site, say you were an instructional aide, you could get into the program, in the career program and actually become a fully credentialed teacher. And I wonder if your budget here is expansive enough to cover those disadvantaged schools, the very ones we were talking about here today. And if this is something that you might include in your plan?

Secretary Paige. Well, I know the effectiveness of that idea, because we did that, too, in Houston; aides who were interested in moving on up the ladder, we arranged and supported programs so that they could actually earn credentials as teachers. That is a great idea.

The budget does include dollars for people at the local scene to decide on those kinds of programs if that is the program that they want. We don't give them that specific program but we provide resources in Title II and allow them to have the flexibility to decide and construct the kinds of programs that they want. For example, in the particular school district that you referenced, if it is their choice to spend dollars on that particular program, we are willing to provide flexibility to let it be done.

Ms. Solis. The problem in California is we don't have enough money from the Federal Government to expand the program, so it hasn't really been more of an experimental basis. And my concern would be that there be enough funds available so that other schools can apply. There are many that have seen the results of what has occurred for Elmonte City School District and would love to be a part of this program but because of limited funding are not able to institute this effort.

Chairman Boehner. The gentle lady's time has expired. We are going to have a vote on the floor in the next five to ten minutes and the secretary will be here until 12:30 if need be.

The chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Ehlers.

Mr. Ehlers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to echo Representative Isakson's comment to you, recognizing how difficult it is to take over a new job, fill the staff at the same time, and deal with obstreperous Congressmen.

Secretary Paige. I wouldn't use that exact terminology.

Mr. Ehlers. But now that I have my turn to badger, I want to make full use of it. I am afraid sometimes that the committee is beginning to think I have a one-track mind on this issue, and I can assure you I am a multi-dimensional person and will be happy to get off my one track as soon as I succeed. That one track is to improve math and science education in this nation. There is substantial reason for that. A survey of the national mathematical and science testing, I am sure you are aware, shows we are near the bottom or at the bottom of all the developed nations in our high school performance in math and science.

Secondly, we have currently over 300,000 open jobs in this nation that cannot be filled because we do not have people who meet the qualifications in science, math, engineering, or technology. As a result, Congress passes the H1-B Visa bill every year, allowing in this year 200,000 foreigners to come in and fill those jobs because our schools are not producing people capable of handling those jobs. At the same time, our graduates are getting paid less in the jobs that they are qualified for. Clearly, this is a national problem. I am sure you are familiar with it.

I think one of the big problems has been the lack of recognition of this issue. But, secondly, the Department of Education in past years has contributed nothing to a solution of this other than the funds of the Glenn Commission, which, indeed, had some good recommendations. I also incorporated some of their recommendations in some legislation that I have authored. I have been working with the White House, with Senators, others on the legislation issue, and the staff of this committee. They have been very, very helpful on that as well.

I just want to make the point that it is not just a matter of legislation. We will work hard and we will give you some legislation to work with, but you also have to have staff within the Department who understands math and science education. And I am not asking for commitments at this point, but I certainly hope you keep that in mind as you make your staff appointments. If you don't get the kind of person in there who really understands the problem and has worked with it on a hands-on basis, our legislation is not going to succeed. So I ask that you do that and continue to work with us on improving that.

I am totally and completely in favor of all the other programs that you and President Bush are advocating. I certainly recognize the need to improve reading. We all have to talk to that, but we are moving into a new age and the jobs are in new areas, and we have to train the people for those jobs as well.

Thank you.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

The Chairman. The chair recognizes the gentle lady from California, Mrs. Davis, for five minutes.

Mrs. Davis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and secretary, good to have you with us.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

Mrs. Davis. I wonder if you could just expand a bit, I am looking at page 6, the bottom of the page, and I am sorry I wasn't here for your testimony, where you talk about "innovative teacher recruitment and retention practices." Could you expand on that? How do we identify those teachers who are our best teachers? I think it alludes here to the fact that some of them would be encouraged to go in schools which have low achievement. How would you provide incentives to states to do that?

Secretary Paige. We think that one of the things that we have to do in order to improve teacher quality is to widen the pool of our potential teachers. We have noticed that the choke point of certification procedures is controlling or blocking many innovative, caring and skilled people who would like to get into teaching. So we would broaden alternative certification programs. We would target recent retirees who have backgrounds in math and science and technology. Notably, those people who have expressed an interest in teaching but who have not yet done so or who are in the process of changing careers. In addition, we would seek young professionals who have found corporate jobs less fulfilling and who would be more interested in coming into teaching.

For many years in Houston, we worked with Teach for America, which we found to be a great organization for finding people who had almost a missionary zeal towards teaching. We learned to adopt some of their strategies, not only using people they found but also learning to copy some of their strategies. These are young people who come from some of the finest universities in this country who would spend time teaching. And we also would provide incentives for them to increase their two-year commitment, to come in from Teach for America to stay for two years. We were successful in getting many of them to continue teaching because they found it fulfilling.

Troops to Teachers is another innovative way for finding teachers, military people who are retiring and efforts like that.

Mrs. Davis. Thank you. If I may, Mr. Chairman, you mentioned trying to attract people from the corporate world to come into teaching. And, again, in terms of incentives, I am wondering how to do that, looking at the disparities in salaries. It is wonderful to have high-spirited people, and I think we know people who go into teaching do it because they love to teach and not because they are interested in their salary schedules. But at the same time, I think it is difficult to encourage from the corporate sector. And I think that is important. I agree with you. I think some of the ways we do that is partly from the quality of the classroom atmosphere.

And one of the issues that we want to look at as well is class size reduction. I understand that is not in the President's plan, but I wonder if you could perhaps help us understand why that is not at some point important, and particularly would that ever be used as one of the strategies in a school that wasn't performing over a period of time where we felt that it was necessary to go in and create that, perhaps as an incentive, to attract the best teachers into a situation so they are teaching kids who may in fact not have had success. It is difficult to teach kids, a whole classroom of kids if you have 35 youngsters. It is different when you have 18 youngsters in that classroom. How can we shift class size reduction into that? Do you anticipate some way that we could use?

Secretary Paige. Yes, just because we do not have it categorically specified that these dollars be targeted for class size reduction does not mean that we do not think it is an important issue. What we are doing is making available flexibility so that there are other issues that are more important that people at the scene can make that decision. For example, if you have a class with 40 students in it and an ineffective teacher, and we reduce it to 20, the only students who are being assisted are those who left and went somewhere else. So the effectiveness in the teacher,

in our case, may be more important than the size of the class. The person at the scene, the principal and people like that will have to make that judgment. So we just want to make those dollars stretch more so if they decide that they would like to use these dollars to equip this teacher and make this teacher stronger instead of bringing an additional teacher into the classroom they may do it. So they can have the flexibility to use these dollars for class size reduction if they feel that that is the most effective way to get the results they want. But they also have the flexibility to use it in other areas if they feel these other areas are more important than that.

Chairman Bohner. The chair recognizes the gentle lady from Illinois, Mrs. Biggert.

Mrs. Biggert. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and to you, Secretary Paige. Last Friday, we had a hearing in Chicago. I am from Illinois. There were two of the witnesses, one of them was a state superintendent, Max Segui, and the other was the superintendent of the Chicago schools, Paul Valis. I heard him a couple of weeks ago about the time of your appointment singing your praises on the radio. So you two know each other.

Secretary Paige. Well, I sing his praises as well.

Mrs. Biggert. Well, I think what has happened in Illinois has been remarkable, particularly in the Chicago schools, in the reform. I was involved in through the Illinois legislature. One of the things that we did was to put in testing for grades three, five, eight, and then ten. We thought that was a great accomplishment at the time, but we really took a lot of flak from it. I was happily surprised to hear both superintendents want annual testing and really thought that that was a great idea to implemented in Illinois.

The question then became what kind of a test, is it a federal test or a state test? I think that is the issue that will be debated. I would like to know just a little bit more about the NNEP. Is it a test that will be considered or a federal test and would that be implemented every year?

Secretary Paige. Thank you. We do not support several tests and several guides of testing. NNEP would be limited to having or providing a distant snapshot around which

we can make judgments about how the state standards and the state testing perform. It will be limited, it will be annual, and it will sample students not across the board. There have been some suggestions that it might be better to organize this in some other way. What we need is an additional measure so that we can be able to assess the quality of the standards and the assessment at the individual state level. We would like to hear some other ideas if there are some ideas.

Mrs. Biggert. I think it is very important that we have local control of our school systems. I think that is clear. The other issue that I am concerned about is when a school is failing after three years. Chicago has had some very innovative ideas with that. I don't know if you are considering alternatives or whether it is just removing the students from the school. One of the ideas and one of the things that they do is to reconstitute the school and not have the children leave the school. First, the principles leave, and then the teachers.

Secretary Paige. Yes, right, right.

Mrs. Biggert. And start over with another school. We do have charter schools.

Secretary Paige. Right.

Mrs. Biggert. That might be a charter school then. I think that we need to look at a few alternatives.

Secretary Paige. Well, the difficulty we have with that solution, reconstituting the schools, and I use that strategy a lot in Houston, I reconstituted much earlier, but the problem we have there is this continues the school solution and it does not specifically give relief to the individual child. If we have a child named Johnny who has been in a failing school for three years, reconstituting the school now is asking for Johnny to stay in a school for two or three more years while they get up to speed, so to speak. We think that three years of ineffective instruction may render Johnny to a position where he can't be remediated. We have evidence of that. The Satin Study in Tennessee said that the greatest leverage for improvement is an effective teacher. But an effective teacher may not be able to undo what an ineffective teacher has done over a period of one year. So then the reason we say we want to go to an individual child after the three years is because we don't want to extend the period of time where the child goes without the kind of assistance they need.

Chairman Boehner. The gentle lady's time has expired. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Hinojosa.

Mr. Hinojosa. Thank you, Chairman Boehner. Welcome, Secretary Paige, and congratulations again on your Cabinet appointment. It is always good to see a fellow Texan come to Washington and take over something as important as education.

I have a couple of questions for you. First, my district in south Texas, a big portion in the Rio Grande Valley is the home base of the largest concentration of migrant and seasonal farm workers in the entire country. Every year families from my district fan out across the country to harvest the crops that feed our nation. Traveling across the school district and state lines, no single state or any local education agency can claim full

responsibility for the education of these children I am talking about. They are truly national children.

Although severely under funded, the Migrant Education Program provides a wide range of services that address the unique needs of these migrant students, such as health screening, family literacy, and summer programs. A particular program is coordination among states so that secondary students can receive high school diplomas. In President Bush's blueprint, "No Child Left Behind" does not address the Migrant Education Program. It only mentions migrant children in the section on reporting achievement data. So how does the administration plan to expand and strengthen this essential national program, and how could we work with you, Mr.

Secretary, to make sure that these children can graduate from high school at least not less than 90 percent of graduation?

Secretary Paige. Thank you. The Title 1 Migrant Education Program provides grants to state education agencies to establish and improve educational programs for children of migrant farm workers and fishers that enable them to meet the same outstanding goals as other children. This program's costs are not usually covered by state and local levels, since no single school district or even single state is responsible for the education of these highly mobile children that you refer to as national children. Migrant funds have made it possible for school districts to identify and enroll greater numbers of highly mobile migrant students to help them overcome educational disruptions and other problems as a result of their repeated moves. The program currently serves 750,000 children age 3 through 21. Our program continues to expand this program.

Mr. Hinojosa. I know that time is running out on us, and I am going to skip the second question, and I will ask you the last one. Tell us the administration's plan to move the Head Start program from Health and Human Services to your Department of Education, how would that make our eligible children school-ready for kindergarten?

Secretary Paige. The president's proposed Reading First agenda aims at intervening earlier, it has based on intervening early to build strong reading remedies for children who need success academically once they go to elementary school. We believe that first grade is too late to begin to focus on school readiness, and early childhood programs, including Head Start, include the development of pre-reading and mathematical skills in young children. We think that as a part of the Department of Education, without subtracting from the Human Services program that they get otherwise, the increased emphasis on pre-reading and mathematical skills is very important for the success of these students. We have learned from reading such data that we have, as educators, under shot the capability of young children's ability to read. Therefore, we simply want to begin structured academic programs early, and the Department of Education is best equipped to manage that.

Mr. Hinojosa. I can't help but agree with you, but I have got a problem. How are we going to deal with the acute shortage of certified teachers? Because in the Head Start program in Texas, they do not even have an associate degree, much less a bachelor's degree, to teach. And then, secondly, how to deal with the shortage of room, especially in areas like ours, where we have grown 60 percent in the last 10 years?

Secretary Paige. You have identified two very difficult problems that we have to cooperate on. But I would add that the present facilities and the present teachers and

Head Start has already gave us a starting point for improving by providing training to the teachers who are currently there and interested in improving their skills. And by making arrangements so that we can use some of the space that is there. In Houston, we have used space at YMCA's and other facilities like that. We have to become more creative about finding it but the solutions are there, provided we are willing to just be broader in our thinking about it.

Mr. Hinojosa. I look forward to working with you, because my findings in a field hearing on Head Start in south Texas was that they had six-week certificates of training, and that is far, far away from a bachelor's.

Secretary Paige. We would change that. We would have to improve the training. And not only improve training in a generic way but improve training specific to the skills that we want them to be able to teach in early childhood programs.

Mr. Hinojosa. Thank you for your response. And I hope you will list me as one of those who would like to work with you on that, because I really believe in taking care of those children from zero to five.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

Chairman Boehner. I thank the gentleman from Texas. Mr. Platts will be next followed by Ms. Rivers, who has gone to vote. Mr. Schaffer will be in the chair while I go to vote. The chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Platts.

Mr. Platts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your testimony. Certainly, I concur with President Bush's commitment to accountability, flexibility, and more local control in your efforts to try to make that happen.

There are a couple of specific areas that I will touch on. In your testimony, you talked about expanding the education savings account from \$500 to \$5,000, which I support, and adopting a bill to use that from kindergarten through college. Is there any consideration to allow preschoolers to be included because Mr. Isakson talked about having programs for testing while we had the kids available before we lose them as dropouts? And knowing how critical the zero to three and preschool ages are, is there consideration of that, if not separate, than part of ESEA?

Secretary Paige. Allow me to get an answer for you on that. I don't have one right now.

Mr. Platts. I would encourage you if it is something we can do separate or if it can be done as part of ESEA because of, again, the importance of establishing that great foundation in preschool programs.

The second area, which you touched on, the budget, special ed funding, and that we will see details made for a third. I am a firm supporter of full funding. Twenty-six years ago, coming out of the statehouse, we regularly wrestled with lack of full funding for IDEA programs. You also talked about an increase, and I know the president spoke about an increase in that area. Is there a specific plan or a position you have now on our ability to reach full funding in six years or eight years? I personally would like to see us do it at five or six years rather than eight to 10. Are you able to share with us at this point or is that something still under consideration?

Secretary Paige. Well, it is still under consideration, but we can share that we agree for the need to move towards increased funding for IDEA. The president's budget would include increased funding. However, we are not in a position to say that the six million children who are

now being served under that will have what they need. It will require somewhere in the neighborhood of \$11 billion under our calculations to bring this up to full funding. We think that this is probably going to be something that is going to involve a progression of budgets. We won't get to it in one full swoop.

But we do want to make this observation. Approximately one-half of students who are now being served under this act are identified as learning disabled. Research supports the idea that better than half of the students who are identified as learning disabled are actually students with reading deficits. We believe that the early reading programs that we are constantly emphasizing would have a great impact on reducing the number of people available for service under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. So we suggest a strategy that works on both ends, both increasing funding but also decreasing the number of students who are eligible to be funded.

Mr. Platts. I concur with that assessment, and appreciate it; the Reading First program is great. Again, having that accommodation that kids are able to learn and that they are not identified inappropriately into the special needs category. I hope you are working towards full funding because I see that timing so well with the issue of flexibility. You had previous questions about class size and school construction and to fully fund IDEA, that gives states that flexibility to use their own funds then for whatever that local need is. So I appreciate the commitment. Again, I am delighted with your appointment and the priority that the Bush administration has placed on education, and I am very much looking forward to working with you.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

Mr. Platts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Schaffer. [presiding] Mr. Secretary, you had in Houston, under the school choice initiative a school choice policy in place that involved public school choice, as well as private schools.

Secretary Paige. That is right.

Mr. Schaffer. If you would talk a little bit about it, just in general terms, the value to students?

Secretary Paige. Well, it is important to note that our strategic plan in Houston was to earn so much respect from the citizens of Houston that we become the K-12 educational system of choice. Put that in front to say that our goal was to have people choose us. However, in order to give people permission to choose us, we provide them other alternatives. Therefore, we had a board policy that says any student who is failing and who is enrolled in a local funded school, that student is eligible to transfer to another funded school in our system or to a private school in the community.

Mr. Schaffer. But was it the Houston district or the state that determined this?

Secretary Paige. It was the Houston district. This was a district policy, specific to the Houston school district.

Mr. Schaffer. As far as who defined a failing school and identified a failing school, was that under the state government?

Secretary Paige The State of Texas characterized as well, it has four categories: exemplary schools, recognized schools, acceptable schools, and low-performing schools. Therefore, the low-performing schools are schools that have less than 50 percent of their students passing in all parts of the state tests. So, by the state accountability system, if they were low performing, they were triggered into this policy.

Mr. Schaffer. First, I want to commend you and the people of Houston for initiating a program that clearly worked and reaching out to children who need the greatest help and assistance in elevating academic performance. I want to suggest that, frankly, this is the defining issue of the president's plan as it comes to the Congress and is considered both in the House and the Senate. There has been a lot of discussion today in this hearing about the testing provisions and some of the consolidation issues and other programs. Without a doubt, this is the cornerstone of the Bush plan. I commend not only the examples that you are able to bring and the credibility you bring on the importance of school choice but also the examples that exist around the country that are folded into the "Leave No Child Behind" proposal.

Everyone about education has a lobbyist here somewhere, the teachers do, the administrators do, the school buildings do, but the kids, they do not have, there are no lobbyists here for school kids. There are instead of members of Congress.

Secretary Paige. We are lobbyists; we are going to be lobbyists for school kids.

Mr. Schaffer. That is exactly right. I think that is our job as members of the Congress, representing our constituents and families and their children move forward. This is going to be a big battle on the federal funds portability but for those who are truly interested in the well being of the children. Focusing on children as opposed to all these other interest groups, this is the key feature of the bill and the greatest cause for hope and opportunity that we have in what is before us.

Secretary Paige. May I comment on what the results of that turned out to be?

Mr. Schaffer. Sure.

Secretary Paige. What it did was make the schools better. So we think this policy of providing parental choice makes schools better. We will begin to see that sort of suggestion from the experiment in Florida. They received the exact same results. Schools improved because of this. In our case, we found very few students willing to leave our system to go to private schools because we were better. The students were actually choosing us. So far from siphoning off the resources from the public schools, it actually strengthens the public schools.

Mr. Schaffer. Well, I just want to assure you, as one member and one who works with quite a lot of others here, there are members that are not on the committee that agree the testing provisions are fine. The consolidation issues are I think admirable. The additional expenditures are important and clearly need to be debated. However, this issue of school choice is the core of what we see as the most positive aspect of the Bush plan and we aim to stand with the White House in helping see it come to fruition.

Head Start, I know I only have a couple of minutes before I recognize the next panelist or questions from a member. Is the Department of Education equipped to absorb the Head Start program?

Secretary Paige. Presently we are still staffing up, and we are finding that this is an arduous process, but we think that we are going to have the staff to be able to do that. Yes.

Mr. Schaffer. I paid one of my surprise visits out to the regional office in Denver last Friday.

Mr. Schaffer. They said the same thing that they are ready to go to work out there.

The chair recognizes Ms. Rivers for five minutes.

Ms. Rivers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary Paige, for being here today. I actually started out on the school board and served for the better part of a decade and also served in the state legislature and now here in Congress. And while we argue passionately here in Washington about Federal programs, there is a whole lot more to education in America than federal categorical.

In fact, what you find, as you well know, is that 93 percent of all the dollars and most of the decision-making that goes on in American education is done at the state or local level. And so the question that I have is given that, what exactly do you think the governors and the state legislatures and the local school boards are doing wrong with their 93 percent of the money? How do you think the President's plan will impact that? And does that in fact cause us to change the traditional role of state and local school boards relative to the Federal Government?

Secretary Paige. Yes, I would be pleased to comment on that. I think probably the thing that state and local jurisdictions are doing less well is governance of the system. The system is not governed well because the government system itself is in many cases incoherent. The thing that the federal government could do is in its leadership role point the way about what works, what does not work, provide resources for those populations who are disadvantaged and need the most, and can stand firm on requiring results as a product of that.

Ms. Rivers. So you are saying that essentially the Federal Government is going to now govern schools?

Secretary Paige. Absolutely not. The states should govern the schools.

Ms. Rivers. Okay, then, but I am confused because certainly the data and research about what works is now out there and available for schools to access, all schools. You were a superintendent, I am sure that your curriculum director spent a lot of time looking at national data and looking at research all over the country.

What would change under the President's plan in terms of the availability of that information and whether or not school districts and state legislatures would make use of it?

Secretary Paige. We intend to strengthen the quality of research that is provided for professionals at the scene. More specifically, what would change is the culture would change because we are going to split from a culture of compliance to a culture of performance. From a culture of compliance with rules as its primary interest to a culture of student achievement and accountability as a primary interest for those states and schools who would like to have access to the 70 percent of the dollars from the federal government.

Ms. Rivers. And if they chose not to participate, they could simply forgo it?

Secretary Paige. They could simply forego it, yes.

Ms. Rivers. The other question that I have is about testing and something you said earlier that I was little confused about well, not confused, I just had some implementation issues. You talked about the disaggregation of data, which is very important, and the fact that you can get individualized results for students and subject areas.

Secretary Paige. Yes.

Ms. Rivers. I have been involved my children went to public schools that had individualized learning plans and student-directed curriculum. It ended up taking a tremendous amount of time from the teacher, not just in the classroom but also in terms of planning time, preparatory time, in order to do the diagnosis of what each student needs and then to make sure that those needs are being met as part of the larger curriculum. Would you envision, if we move to a system where we are trying to address the problems of each child that that is going to take more teacher time, that planning time is going to have to be a part of it, and that in-service is going to have to be a part of it as well?

Secretary Paige. Yes, in-service will have to be a part of it, and I think it will take increased time. But I would not describe it as something added to the basic curriculum. It is the basic curriculum.

In other words, it is the strategy that we are using. It is not something that we are just adding to it. For those who are doing individualized instructions, I think without clarity on state-adopted standards with specific assessment and annual or more frequent measuring, they cannot do that very effectively. So you can only have individual instruction when you have the data and also teachers trained to use it appropriately and materials are mandatory.

Ms. Rivers. One of the categoricals that we were talking about at the last meeting and others is the teacher training programs and potential cuts. Would you feel comfortable doing that, recognizing that with individualized training expectations, we are going to need to make sure that our teaching force understands how to do it?

Secretary Paige. Well, once I explain, yes. The answer is once there is an opportunity to explain the results we want, and to provide the accountability for determining whether or not these results and the consequences there are, then I would have a tendency to trust the professionals on the scene to make an appropriate judgment. They can judge how to specifically spend those dollars as opposed to directing the categorical expenditures of it from this distance.

Ms. Rivers. The last question that I have, this morning's newspaper_

Mr. Schaffer. The gentle lady's time has expired.

Ms. Rivers. Thank you.

Mr. Schaffer. The Secretary has to leave, and we want to make sure as many members have a chance to question as possible. The chair recognizes Mr. Osborne for five minutes.

Mr. Osborne. Secretary Paige, thank you for being here today. I just wanted to maybe shift the field a little bit here. Over a long time, 36 years of working with young people, I saw what I would call some unraveling of the culture, and maybe you have experienced some of that in your endeavors as well. The number of children without fathers has increased dramatically along with some of the problems we are having with violence. In our schools, roughly 50 percent of our young people today are growing up without both biological parents. As a result, it occurs to me that we at times could have the best school buildings, the best teachers, and the best curriculum, and still run into some problems because of the cultural and sociological factors that we are now facing. So my question to you is that I know you have had some experience in coaching and possibly at its best coaching might be called mentoring.

Secretary Paige. Yes.

Mr. Osborne. We have seen a great deal of results in mentoring programs, particularly one-on-one mentoring. According to current accounts, such programs do reduce absenteeism and drug abuse by 50 percent. So I just wondered if you see any role for mentoring in the program that you are talking about?

Secretary Paige. We think that mentoring is a wonderful strategy. In fact, it is goal to get to one-on-one mentoring. So these strategies are available to the school districts and the states under the funding programs that we have, and we would even encourage mentoring.

Mr. Osborne. Thank you.

Secretary Paige. Thank you and might I add, congratulations on your wonderful career as a coach.

Mr. Osborne. Well, thank you.

Mr. Schaffer. Does the gentleman yield back?

Mr. Osborne. Yes.

Mr. Schaffer. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. Tierney. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your time with us today. In the President's plan, he talks about lowering the poverty threshold and allowing funds to be used for school-wide programs of Title I. He wants to reduce that to 50 percent and 40 percent. My question to you is I have read a number of experts recently on the Comprehensive School Reform Program it was in their opinion by and large the best piece of legislation to come down from Congress for some time. Would you as part of your efforts to lower the threshold insist that schools in fact use research-based, proven to be effective programs for the schools that you would recommend?

Secretary Paige. Yes, we would. It is very important that they use proven methods, research based.

Mr. Tierney. To tie those two programs together in the sense of how you might come up with a comprehensive package of how this would work out.

Secretary Paige. I am not sure I understand you.

Mr. Tierney. Well, if you would allow them to lower the threshold, you then insist that they use the Comprehensive School Reform method of working with schools on reform, or you can leave it up to them to do whatever they want.

Secretary Paige. No, no, we are going to insist that they use research-proven methods to reform the schools. That is one that you have mentioned, but there are many others.

Mr. Tierney. I am not familiar with any others in the legislation. The one system that we have right now under Comprehensive School Reform is research-based and proven to be effective is the old reportability. That is the mechanism we need to schools to go out and take a look and see which programs are in fact eligible and apply them to reform their schools. I think it makes some sense if we are going to start lowering thresholds to take the money where you are targeting it to the students and putting in full school reform and then you tie the two together in some sense. And I would like your opinion on that?

Secretary Paige. Well, I am not sure I would agree that the best way to gain the end result that we seek is to improve school performance. If we have a school with 50 or 60 percent of students who meet the poverty threshold for funding under Title I, whether we can improve 40 percent of

the school to make it more effective for them, we think the best solution to that is to improve 100 percent of the school. Fortunately, this includes some students who do not meet the proper threshold. However, this is also the best solution for those students who do not.

Mr. Tierney. I think you agreed earlier that the states are about 100 percent responsible for educating students in this country, that it's not a federal obligation.

Secretary Paige. That is right.

Mr. Tierney. And it is pretty clear though at the time there were some areas at least where they fail to do that, otherwise you wouldn't have Federal monies being put into elementary and secondary education. We are trying in fact to address some needs that either they would not or did not address.

Secretary Paige. Absolutely.

Mr. Tierney. And the way we have been doing that is basically to assess what those needs are and apply the money in that direction.

Secretary Paige. Yes.

Mr. Tierney. And now what I am hearing is rather than do that, you would like to go back to the point where we didn't do that and just give money to the states and allow them to go back to where they were before and here we go right around the circle again_ and you I guess are saying the way we ought to do that is testing the students.

Secretary Paige. No, I think we would not characterize it like that. We would have a difference in the way of characterizing it. I think what you didn't do before is ask for results.

I think that you have been very good at putting out resources but you have not asked for the results. The main difference in what is going to be going on now, if we are successful, is that we are going to switch the culture from compliance with rules and regulations to achieving. We are going to determine whether students are achieving by measuring. We can't think of any other way to go about that.

Mr. Tierney. But I also get the feeling that you are no longer going to insist that schools show that the money they are receiving to address certain needs are in fact spent on those certain needs?

Secretary Paige. We are going to show whether or not the results are achieved.

Mr. Tierney. Well, the way you are going to try to do that I guess is through some sort of testing regime.

Secretary Paige. No, no, the way we are going to do that is ask for results. I think the assumption that we know best on how to teach students and results by drawing the rules may not have proven successful over the three and a half decades that we have done this.

Mr. Tierney. Over the decades that the states were doing it, they proved, at least in some categories, that they weren't very successful or we wouldn't even be involved in this enterprise. And what I am trying to avoid is going back to that point and figuring out if

we are going to now start that flexibility that you are talking about and not even follow our money to see that it is going to the programs where there are identified needs and giving it back to the states to do what they want to do as they did before, aren't we going to get back into the same situation?

Secretary Paige. Well, if this money goes to where we target it and want it to go, and we still do not achieve results, we have not gotten what we want. What we want is student achievement. They can spend the money on the student and still not get the student achievement. That is not what we seek.

Mr. Tierney. Well, that would bring me to the equity question. I think the real question is has the money been being targeted by the states where it ought to go? And I would like to hear your opinion on the issue of equity and funding. There is the disparity between school systems and students in different districts and what would the Federal Government's role be in terms of trying to make sure that it was a more equitable distribution?

Mr. Schaffer. Mr. Secretary?

Secretary Paige. The government's role is supplementary.

Mr. Schaffer. Mr. Secretary, I am grateful that you have been able to stay here 15 minutes longer than you originally intended.

Secretary Paige. I will come by and he and I can have some one-on-one on this if he would like.

Mr. Schaffer. I want to recognize the gentleman from Kentucky and alert the rest of the committee the Secretary has indicated that he was able to stay longer than 11:30 but he has to be out the door absolutely at 11:45. We are going to allow that to take place.

Mr. Fletcher?

Mr. Fletcher. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, it is good to see you. We were having budget hearings, trying to settle that, and I was there so forgive me for not being able to hear your testimony.

I am from Kentucky. We have Kentucky Education Reform that is mentioned as somewhat of a model of what we are looking to do on the national level, which is local control and accountability. We already have testing. We also have rewards and sanctions for schools

that are either doing well or not doing so well.

Let me just ask you a question related to that and then a few questions about NNEP. There are three inner city schools in Lexington, Kentucky, and when you look at their scores, they are much lower than the surrounding schools. They are largely minority and low income. I meet with a small group, Minority Advisory Committee of mostly educators, and they get frustrated with the system because the things they would like to do to really identify kids early and particularly teach them to read.

Secretary Paige. Yes.

Mr. Fletcher The policies over the last number of years have not allowed us to do that for some reason. I wonder just from your perspective, are we going to be able to make a difference and are there some things that we are doing from the national level that are going to help those folks?

Secretary Paige. We know from what has happened in the states that have been successful, such as Kentucky, and other states that have been courageous enough to take some really tough and difficult stands in order to achieve results, we know that these results can be achieved. Therefore, the question now is simply if we can put the mechanisms in place that would give us the best chance of achieving those results. We think that the policies suggested in "No Child Left Behind" will give us that advantage.

Mr. Fletcher. Well, I look forward to that. I want to invite you to come to the State of Kentucky, to my district, and we would certainly love to have you there and meet with some of our school and teachers.

Let me ask you, how will NNEP scores be used and could they be used to sanction the state even if the state does well in their own assessment system?

Secretary Paige. Not in and of itself, it could not be. We would not provide any sanctions for just the results on NNEP's. They would have to include the bad results for the state and bad results for NNEP's, and then we would discuss sanctions, however, in and of itself, no.

Mr. Fletcher. If they do well in the state test, we have what is called KATS test.

Secretary Paige. Right.

Mr. Fletcher. Say in Kentucky, students do well and the schools do fairly well on the KATS test but they do poorly in the NNEP, is there going to be some evaluation of the KATS test meeting the criteria of accountability or have you all given that any thought?

Secretary Paige. Yes, we have. If they are doing great on the state's test but poorly on the NNEP sample, that would clue us that we should have some discussions with the professionals there to see how we can improve it. However, it would not necessarily trigger sanctions.

Mr. Fletcher. Okay, some folks have expressed concern that requiring NNEP sampling, as it is in testing, will encourage states to align their standards to NNEP. Is that really a valid concern?

Secretary Paige. We do not think it is a valid concern. We think the state's alignment should be between the state-adopted test and the state-constructed assessment tool.

Mr. Fletcher. Okay, now, my understanding is there is not another test available quite like NNEP but if there were, would the administration be willing to allow states to select another test to demonstrate that the children are making progress in their state?

Secretary Paige. We agree with you that we do not think there is a substitute for NNEP's but if there is, and one could be demonstrated to us, that that could be used; we would be willing to discuss that.

Mr. Fletcher. One last question, and my time is about up. I have had some concerns, and I don't think it has been brought up, is there any plans of testing some home schooling folks have asked me some questions, is there any issue that has been brought up or discussed about that?

Secretary Paige. There has been no consideration of that as far as I know.

Mr. Fletcher. Okay, thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. Schaffer. Mr. Secretary, I regret there are at least three more members here as well as myself that have more questions, and I want to honor your request to depart at 12:45.

Secretary Paige. We will stay another five minutes if it is okay with everybody.

Mr. Schaffer. We will try to spread as many questions as we can across five minutes, and I will represent.

Mr. Andrews. In that spirit, could I ask unanimous consent that the members who have not had a chance to ask questions be given permission to submit their questions in writing so the Secretary could_

Mr. Schaffer. Without objection, that motion will be so ordered.

Mr. Andrews. With that in mind, I would be happy to yield to others so they can ask their questions.

Secretary Paige. Mr. Chairman, may I say that also, those who have not had a chance to ask questions and would like to have some dialogue can simply call me, and we will come over or we will bring some members of our staff over and have dialogue.

Mr. Schaffer. Mr. Holt?

Mr. Holt. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I will try to be brief. Mr. Secretary, thank you for coming. And you and I have talked about science education.

Secretary Paige. Yes.

Mr. Holt. We have talked about the Glenn Commission and the legislation—the bipartisan, I should say, legislation that we are working on here to implement the recommendations of the Glenn Commission.

I do want to bring to your attention, to the Department's attention, New Jersey's experience with the science standards. And it has been a learning experience but generally good, and I think in keeping with what Mr. Fletcher said, I too would like to invite you to my state, to New Jersey, to see the success we have had with our standards there.

Now, this leads me to some questions about the Eisenhower funding. Since the watchword of your program, of the President's program, is accountability, I am a little bit concerned about some of the loss of accountability that goes with rolling too many programs together under one block grant. And last year, on the Teacher Empowerment Act, the other scientist on this committee and I, Mr. Ehlers, worked to get money I guess you would say earmarked for professional development of teachers in science and mathematics so that although the program, the Eisenhower Program per se, would not have survived, there would be some expectation that attention would be paid to professional development of teachers in math and science. Would that approach be acceptable to you?

Secretary Paige. I think we would be very willing to sit down and discuss that with you, Congressman.

Mr. Holt. Good, well, I am pleased. And then quickly, perhaps this has been addressed in my absence, and if it has, you can tell me about it.

Secretary Paige. That is quite all right.

Mr. Holt. On the subject of Pell grants, you and the President have spoken very positively, and we all know how important Pell grants are in the lives of many adults and current students. We don't see enough money in the budget, as it is sketched out, to cover the needed increase in Pell grants. Have you addressed that already this morning? Are there other funds that you see that can be devoted to increasing the Pell grants?

Secretary Paige. Right now, I think there is a \$1 billion increase in the Pell grant budget. More specific information won't be available to us until after April 3rd.

Mr. Holt. Okay, well, I look forward to talking with you more about that. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

Mr. Schaffer. Mr. Keller, you have just a couple of minutes.

Mr. Keller. Thank you. Mr. Paige, Ric Keller from Orlando.

Secretary Paige. Thank you for inviting me to your great state.

Mr. Keller. Mr. Secretary, I just want to make a brief comment, how honored we were down in Orlando, Florida to have you personally visit our schools. I know that you visited the Orlo Vista Elementary School where 92 percent of the children are on free lunch programs, 86 percent are minorities. You were kind enough to take time out of your busy schedule.

You know that that school went from 30 percent of the kids passing the state standardized test to 79 percent of the kids passing by implementing the very proposals that you are suggesting that we do on a national basis, the measuring of the students in

each grade and then pouring money into those kids who need it the most. We have seen it work there, and you have seen it.

My question to you is do you have optimism if this proposal that you are supporting passes Congress that we could replicate the same success across the country?

Secretary Paige Yes. My experience in seven years in leading the seventh largest school district in America in the fourth largest city in America, with a student population of 75 percent free and reduced lunch-eligible, my experience there, watching the growth of these schools with high poverty, at-risk students, and also with the achievement gap actually beginning to close, it leaves me very optimistic if we can get this program approved, that we will make a quantum leap into the future of America with better students.

Mr. Schaffer. I wish to thank the Secretary for your valuable time and the members' attention. With there being no further business in front of the committee, we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:50 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

**APPENDIX A -- WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN
JOHN BOEHNER, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE
WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON,
DC**

OPENING STATEMENT OF REP. JOHN BOEHNER (R-OH),
CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING ON PRESIDENT BUSH'S "NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND"
EDUCATION PLAN

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2001

Good morning. Let me extend a warm welcome to all of you, to Congressman George Miller -- the ranking member, to my other colleagues, and to our witness -- Secretary of Education Rod Paige. Thank you very much for being here.

It is a pleasure to have Secretary Paige here with us. As superintendent of the Houston Independent School District, he became a national leader in designing creative solutions to provide schools and teachers with flexibility to educate our children but to also hold them accountable for results.

Our hearing today will focus on President Bush's education reform proposal, which is based on three core principles: giving states and local school districts decision-making flexibility, establishing a rigorous accountability system to measure results, and giving parents the option of removing their children from failing schools. The president's message is clear: public schools must educate our children, and we will hold them accountable for how well they accomplish that job -- not just for how quickly they spend taxpayer money.

Although Congress has spent more than \$80 billion on the Title I program since 1990, achievement scores remain generally stagnant. Despite spending billions of dollars on education, too many students have fallen short in meeting goals for educational excellence. The academic achievement gap between rich and poor, Anglo and minority remains wide, and in some cases is growing wider. Today nearly 70 percent of inner city fourth-graders cannot read at a basic level. Robert Kennedy once called the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers "a stain on our national honor." We cannot let this tragedy continue unchecked. The president's plan refocuses federal education spending back toward its original goal of helping America's disadvantaged students.

By asking states and schools to develop annual assessments to measure student progress in reading and math in grades three through eight, the President's proposal would, for the first time, demand real results from public schools that receive federal education resources.

President Bush has proposed an increase in federal education funding, but it is not by any means the centerpiece of his plan. *Accountability* is the centerpiece. In my view, until we have a system of real accountability in place to ensure that public schools using federal education dollars are teaching our children, it is not prudent for us to pursue massive increases in federal education spending. This is the approach Washington has followed in the past -- and as a tragic consequence, many of our children have been left behind. We must open a new chapter in education policy that emphasizes not just resources, but results.

The President's plan also gives states and local schools more flexibility to improve student performance by reducing bureaucracy and consolidating a host of duplicative programs to allow schools to implement innovative solutions that meet the unique needs of their students. But the president's plan also says you can't have real accountability if there aren't real consequences for chronic failure. There must be an escape hatch for students trapped in dangerous, failing schools -- a means of allowing parents to remove their children from schools that do not teach and will not change.

As a result, the President's plan gives parents the option of sending their children to a different public school or a private school after three years of certified failure. Giving parents the power to do what they think is best for their children -- even if only as a last resort -- can compel failing schools to improve and help to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers.

Other elements of the president's plan include his Reading First initiative, enhancing teacher quality, improving math and science education, making schools safer, and promoting character education.

I look forward to hearing about these and other issues from Secretary Paige this morning. I am convinced that the president's plan to increase education funding, coupled with education reforms to enhance flexibility for states and schools and hold them accountable for results, is the right path to take. We must ensure that the American dream is within the grasp of all our nation's children -- not just a selected few. We must close the achievement gap for the most disadvantaged so that no child is left behind.

At this time, I will yield to my friend and Ranking Member, Congressman George Miller for any statement he may have.

**APPENDIX B -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF HON. RODERICK R. PAIGE,
SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, DC**

Testimony by

Dr. Roderick R. Paige
Secretary

on

No Child Left Behind

A Blueprint for Education Reform

before the

House Committee on Education and the Workforce

John Boehner
Chairman

March 7, 2001

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of *No Child Left Behind*, President Bush's plan to strengthen our elementary and secondary schools and close the achievement gap, and to discuss the President's 2002 budget for education.

I want to begin by noting how troubled I was by the recent shootings at Santana High School in Santee, California. Violence is threatening to become endemic in our schools, and we must work much harder to recognize the warning signs and prevent future incidents. *No Child Left Behind* includes proposals designed to strengthen the ability of schools and teachers to prevent violence in our schools, and would give schools greater flexibility to direct additional Federal resources toward making our schools safe and drug-free. Ultimately, however, parents, students, and teachers must learn to heed the warning signs of violent behavior, to take the threat of violence seriously, and to take appropriate action before a student shows up at school with a gun.

Turning now to the subject of this hearing, I am pleased and proud that President Bush has made education his top priority. He announced *No Child Left Behind* in his first week as President, and he has given the Department the highest percentage increase of any Cabinet agency in his first budget. Our commitment to providing a first-class education to all our children is clear, and I look forward to working with each of you over the coming months as we make the changes needed to help reach this goal.

Before I get into the details of the President's proposals, I want to make a few observations. First, *No Child Left Behind* is, as the President has described it, "a framework from which we can all work together—Democrat, Republican, and Independent—to strengthen our elementary and secondary schools." This means that within the context of principles like State-determined high standards for all, accountability for results, choice for parents and students, and flexibility for schools and teachers, we are open to your ideas on how to meet our shared goals.

Second, *No Child Left Behind* builds very deliberately on existing efforts at the Federal, State, and local levels to use standards, assessments, accountability, flexibility, and choice to improve the quality of education for all of our children. Indeed, the President's proposals are the logical next step following the changes made in the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). We are not asking States and school districts and schools to drop everything they are doing and start over, but to pursue more vigorously the kinds of changes they are already making.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the need for real change in America's schools. While the 1994 reauthorization took some tentative steps in the right direction, it did not go nearly far enough. If you doubt that the present approach is broken and needs fixing, just consider that nearly 70 percent of inner-city fourth-graders are unable to read at even a basic level on national reading tests. Or that our high school seniors trail students in most industrialized nations on international math tests. Or that nearly one-third of our college freshmen must take remedial courses before they can begin regular college-level coursework.

And across all levels there is an unacceptable achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their more advantaged peers. For example, on the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress in 4th grade reading, 73 percent of white students performed at or above the basic level, compared with just 40 percent of Hispanic students and only 36 percent of African American students.

Our system of elementary and secondary education is failing to do its job for far too many of our children—a failure that threatens the future of our Nation, and a failure that the American people will no longer tolerate. It is just as clear that Federal education policy is not accomplishing its goals, despite the investment of more than \$130 billion and the creation of hundreds of categorical programs over the past three decades. More often than not, in fact, it is precisely this bewildering array of Federal programs, regulations, and paperwork that gets in the way of promising reforms at the State and local levels. These bureaucratic controls promote a culture of compliance, not real accountability measured by improved student achievement.

It is time to stop funding failure and promoting a culture of compliance and start building a culture of achievement and accountability in our education system. To do this we need to learn from States and school districts across the country that have made remarkable progress in turning around failing schools, raising student achievement, and closing the achievement gap. We need to bring to Federal education programs many of the strategies that have worked so well at the State and local levels: increased accountability for student performance, a focus on research-based practices, reduced bureaucracy and greater flexibility, and better information to empower parents.

No Child Left Behind provides a blueprint for accomplishing this goal, a blueprint that we believe should guide the upcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. To provide the resources needed to implement this blueprint, the President's budget for fiscal year 2002 includes \$44.5 billion for the Department of Education, an 11.5 percent increase in budget authority and an increase of \$2.5 billion or 5.9 percent over the 2001 program level. This budget also reflects the President's commitment to a balanced fiscal framework that includes more reasonable and sustainable growth in discretionary spending, protection of Social Security, retiring a significant proportion of the national debt, and tax relief for all Americans.

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

President Bush believes that the Federal government can, and must, help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers. The primary means toward this goal is to spend the \$9 billion Federal investment in Title I more effectively and with greater accountability.

Our proposal would build on current law by adding science and history to the existing requirement for States to set high standards in reading and mathematics for Title I students. State assessments would continue to be required only for reading and math, but would be conducted annually from grades 3-8, instead of the current law requirement for testing only twice during these critical formative years. The President's budget will include funding to support the

development and implementation of these new assessments. Current requirements for testing students in grades 10-12 would be preserved.

I can tell you from my own experience that there is simply no substitute for annual information on how well students and schools are performing. Children in good schools make remarkable progress during these early grades, and we cannot afford to wait three or four years to find out that some students have fallen behind. Where there are problems, they must be discovered and addressed immediately, an approach that can only be accomplished with the information provided by annual testing.

Contrary to complaints about “teaching to the test,” or too much testing, I believe that teaching and testing are two sides of the same coin that we call education. A major part of our current failing is because we have been using only one side of the coin, based on the flawed notion that we do not need to know where students are academically in order to teach them. The reality is that there is simply no other way to find out whether students are learning and teachers are doing their jobs. Many who say that testing is the problem, rather than lack of learning, are really suggesting that we lower our expectations because some kids can’t learn. I reject that because I know from my experience in Houston that it just isn’t true. We need to set clear goals for performance and help our schools get the job done. The alternative is to continue to rob millions of poor and disadvantaged young Americans of their futures by failing to provide them an effective education.

The important thing about testing, of course, is what we do with the results. We would start by helping teachers learn to use data effectively. Secondly, we would require schools to report assessment results for all students to parents and the public. School districts would use these results to make sure that all schools and students are making adequate yearly progress toward State content and performance standards, and that no groups of students are left behind.

Our proposal would strengthen the Title I accountability process. Current law requires identification of Title I schools for improvement after two years of failing to make adequate yearly progress. We would identify schools for improvement after just one year of failing to meet State standards. Roughly half of schools currently identified for improvement have received no additional assistance from their State or district. We would require States and school districts to provide technical assistance grounded in scientifically based research. The President’s budget will provide additional funding for State and local efforts to turn around low-performing schools.

If the school still has not improved after two years, it would be identified for corrective action and subjected to more comprehensive measures, such as implementation of a new curriculum, intensive professional development, or reconstitution as a public charter school. While such measures are underway, students would be given the option of attending another public school not identified for improvement or correction.

Only after all these efforts, and following three full years of poor performance—during which time a student may well have fallen behind a grade or two—would we use Federal funds to help that student find a better education at a private school. We are proposing to permit the

use of Title I funds to help students transfer to a higher performing public or private school, or to obtain supplemental educational services from a public- or private-sector provider.

The President also is proposing a system of rewards for success and sanctions for failure at both the State and local levels. Once accountability systems are in place, a new fund will reward States and schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap. At the same time, States that fail to put in place the required standards, assessments, and accountability systems, or that fail to make adequate yearly progress and narrow achievement gaps, would be subject to losing a portion of their Title I administrative funds.

Taken as a whole, these proposals reflect what I believe is a strong consensus, both within the Congress and among the American people, that States, school districts, and schools must be accountable for ensuring that all students, including disadvantaged students, meet high academic standards. At the same time, we recognize that it is unfair to demand accountability without enabling success. This is why the other major components of *No Child Left Behind* are aimed at giving States, school districts, schools, teachers, and parents the tools and flexibility to help all students succeed.

EMPOWERING PARENTS WITH CHOICES

President Bush believes that one of the best ways to improve accountability in our schools is to give parents the information and options needed to make the right choices for their children's education. This is why, for example, our accountability proposals include school-by-school report cards and give students in failing schools the option of transferring to a better school. In addition, the President's budget would expand educational choice through \$150 million in new funds to help charter schools acquire, construct, or renovate educational facilities. We also are proposing to expand the limit on annual contributions to Education Savings Accounts from \$500 to \$5,000. Parents would be able to withdraw their funds tax-free to pay educational expenses from kindergarten through college.

EXPANDING FLEXIBILITY AND REDUCING BUREAUCRACY

The Federal government has recognized in recent years that it is possible to achieve better results by reducing regulations, paperwork, and bureaucracy and giving States and communities the flexibility to create their own solutions to problems in areas like education, health care, and protecting the environment. In education, for example, the 1994 ESEA reauthorization greatly expanded eligibility for Title I schoolwide programs, which permit schools enrolling at least 50 percent poor students to combine Federal, State, and local funds to improve the quality of education for all students. Congress also created and expanded the ED-Flex Partnership program, which gives participating States the authority to waive Federal statutory and regulatory requirements in exchange for greater accountability for improving student achievement.

No Child Left Behind would build on these earlier efforts to expand State and local flexibility in the use of Federal education funds. For example, we would lower the poverty threshold for schoolwide programs from 50 percent to 40 percent, thereby enabling thousands of additional schools to use Title I funds to upgrade the entire school. We would coordinate

education technology programs to reduce the paperwork burdens of submitting and administering multiple grant applications serving nearly identical purposes. We would consolidate overlapping and duplicative grant programs and let States and districts decide how to use their share of the single grant resulting from this combination of Federal funds.

We also would create a Charter Option for States that would offer freedom from the current requirements placed on categorical program funds, in return for submitting a five-year performance agreement that includes specific and rigorous goals for increased student performance. This Option is intended for States on the cutting-edge of accountability and reform in education, those that have already established tough accountability systems and demonstrated real gains in student achievement. States would be sanctioned for failing to comply with their performance agreement, and would lose their charters if student achievement did not improve.

President Bush's 2002 budget also would expand flexibility by giving States the authority to redirect the \$1.2 billion provided for school renovation in the fiscal year 2001 appropriation. In addition to renovation of academic facilities, States would be permitted to allocate even more of their 2001 school renovation funds to special education and educational technology than is currently allowed. For 2002, the President is proposing to redirect these resources to other priority programs to help States meet their most pressing needs, including special education, turning around low-performing schools, and accountability reforms. While renovation and construction are needed in many areas, the limited grant funds will not make a significant dent in a problem that the National Center for Education Statistics has estimated would cost at least \$127 billion to remedy. Instead, I believe State and local governments must take responsibility for financing school repair and construction. The President proposes to help school districts meet these demands by allowing States to issue tax-exempt private activity bonds for school construction and repair.

SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENT IN KEY AREAS

Other proposals contained in No Child Left Behind are aimed at supporting State and local efforts in specific areas like reading, teacher quality, math and science, safe schools, and technology.

Our Reading First program would invest \$900 million in scientifically based reading instruction in the early grades, with the goal of creating comprehensive, statewide reading programs to ensure every child is reading by the third grade. The President's budget also includes \$75 million to help prepare young children to read in existing pre-school programs.

Our Title II Grants for Improving Teacher Quality proposal would consolidate the Class Size Reduction and Eisenhower Professional Development programs into a flexible, performance-based grant program for States and school districts. The President is requesting \$2.6 billion in 2002 funding for the new consolidated program. Most of these funds would be used to strengthen the skills and knowledge of public school teachers, principals, and administrators. The program also would support innovative teacher recruitment and retention practices, including bonus pay for teachers in high-need subject areas and in high-poverty districts and schools. In return for the flexibility provided by the program, States and districts

must use Federal funds to promote effective, research-based classroom practices, ensure that all children are taught by effective teachers, and disclose to parents information about the quality of their child's teachers.

The Title V Drug and Violence Prevention and Education program would turn the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program into separate State formula grants for before- and after-school learning opportunities and violence and drug-prevention activities.

The new, streamlined grants would reduce administrative burdens, give school districts greater flexibility in developing programs that address school safety—a major concern of parents and students alike, and support improved academic achievement. Participating States would be required to develop a definition of a “persistently dangerous school,” to report on school safety on a school-by-school basis, and to offer both victims of school-based crimes and students attending unsafe schools options for transferring to safer schools. The President also would expand the role of faith-based and community organizations in after-school programs, and his budget would triple funding for character education to \$25 million in 2002.

Our Grants for Education Technology proposal would consolidate several existing and duplicative technology programs and reduce paperwork and other administrative burdens while directing more funds to the classroom. Funds would be targeted to high-need schools, including rural schools, and could be used for a wide range of activities, including the development or purchase of software, wiring and other infrastructure, and training teachers to use technology effectively in the classroom.

All of these proposals adhere to the core principles of *No Child Left Behind* by expanding flexibility, reducing bureaucracy, and increasing accountability. In each case, the new flexibility provided to States, school districts, and schools is appropriately balanced by performance agreements that will ensure that program purposes are achieved, particularly for poor and minority students living in high-need districts.

OTHER BUDGET PRIORITIES

The details of the President's 2002 budget for education will be released on April 3. There are two priorities, however, that I would like to mention briefly today. The first is special education. We remain committed to helping States meet their obligations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the President's budget will provide increased funding for the Part B Grants to States program.

The second priority is funding for Pell Grants, the foundation of Federal student financial assistance for postsecondary education. The 2002 budget includes a \$1 billion increase for Pell Grants to raise the maximum award for all students and provide more need-based grant aid to low-income college students.

CONCLUSION

The education reform proposals contained in No Child Left Behind, combined with the President's 2002 budget for education, support a comprehensive vision for closing the achievement gap and improving the quality of education for all Americans. I urge you to give these proposals your most careful consideration, and I stand ready to answer any questions you may have.

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