MEASURING SUCCESS: USING ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO RAISE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM
OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
THE WORKFORCE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

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HEARING ON "MEASURING SUCCESS:

USING ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO RAISE

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT"

Thursday, March 8, 2001

U.S. House of Representatives

Subcommittee on Education Reform

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:30 a.m., in Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Michael N. Castle presiding.

Present: Representatives Castle, Hilleary, Ehlers, Biggert, Osborne, Owens, and Hinojosa.

Staff present: Christy Wolfe, Professional Staff Member; Lynn Selmser, Professional Staff Member; Whitney Rhoades, Staff Assistant; Patrick Lyden, Professional Staff Member; Deborah L. Samantar, Committee Clerk; Becky Campoverde, Deputy Staff Director; Jo-Marie St. Martin, General Counsel.

Chairman Castle. The Subcommittee on Education Reform will come to order. We are meeting today to hear testimony on using assessments and accountability to raise student achievement.

Under Committee rule 12B, opening statements are limited to the Chairman and the ranking minority member of the subcommittee. Therefore, if other members have statements, they may be included in the hearing record. With that, I ask unanimous

consent for the hearing record remain open 14 days to allow member statements and other extraneous material references during the hearing to be submitted in the official hearing record without objection so ordered.

Mr. Owens. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Yes, Mr. Owens?

Mr. Owens. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to make a statement and have it entered for the record.

Chairman Castle. Let me explain to everybody here that we have an unusual circumstance with respect to the Committee and the subcommittee. Actually, it doesn't relate to this subcommittee in particular, but the minority party has not named their Committee members. Therefore, certain members have no standing with respect to speaking today. Only Mr. Miller could actually speak.

It would be my call here, Mr. Owens, to allow you to go ahead and make your statement with the understanding that process-wise we may have to terminate this at some point, but please go ahead.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN MAJOR OWENS, 11TH DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Owens. Yes, I appreciate your generosity, Mr. Chairman. I regret to say that no Democratic members of the Committee will be participating in this subcommittee hearing today as a protest against the unfair way the majority has created our subcommittees.

When the Education and Workforce Committee adopted these organizational rules last month, the Republican majority voted unanimously to remove programs for historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions and tribally controlled colleges from the subcommittee that handles higher education issues.

Every single Democrat on the Committee opposed this ill-conceived idea. Every Democratic member of the Committee, black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific and Native American has spoken out against this separation.

The message should be clear, and it should not be ignored. We have received an overwhelming number of letters and communications from presidents of minority serving institutions expressing their strenuous objection to the Committee's action.

The Committee should include all colleges in the new 21st century competitiveness subcommittee, which was designed to expand higher educational opportunities and emphasize lifelong learning.

No colleges should be relegated to a subcommittee that deals predominantly with issues like juvenile justice, child abuse and the arts. We find nothing wrong with juvenile justice, child abuse and the arts, but we don't think historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions or tribally controlled colleges belong in that category.

We pledge to continue our efforts to reach a fair compromise with our Republican colleagues on this issue, a compromise that ensures that all colleges and all universities have the opportunity to grow and prosper in the 21st century. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN MAJOR OWENS, 11TH DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASINGTON, D.C. – SEE APPENDIX A

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Owens. And as a matter of comment, if Mr. Hinojosa, the distinguished gentleman from Texas, wishes to make a statement, I would certainly yield to him as well.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN RUBEN HINOJOSA, 15TH DISTRICT OF TEXAS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Hinojosa. Thank you, Chairman Castle. I want to say that I appreciate your consideration under these unusual circumstances. I, too, wish to ask unanimous consent to make a statement and enter it into the record.

I am here on behalf of the Hispanic higher education community to echo the sentiments of my colleague, Congressman Owens, and encourage the majority to continue to work with us on resolving this issue expeditiously.

As of today, Democratic members of the House Education and the Workforce Committee are still boycotting any subcommittee assignments. We are receiving letters opposing the jurisdictional split from Hispanic serving institutions, presidents, and the overwhelming majority of them have agreed with us that this situation must be immediately remedied at a time when the recent census numbers indicate a 60 percent increase in the Hispanic population in the United States. We can no longer afford to dismiss nor downplay Hispanic education concerns.

On Wednesday, February 28th, 2001, the Democratic Caucus unanimously adopted a resolution that urges the House leadership to consider stepping in to help us reach a compromise in this situation.

The Education Committee minority staff, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and the Congressional Black Caucus are jointly drafting legislation that will be introduced in

the very near future.

In closing, I want to say that this legislation addresses five or six primary issues impacting minority education, minority higher education, such as increased funding for HSI programs and a comprehensive drop-out prevention program to allow our students to finish high school and move on to college.

We will continue our efforts until all institutions are included in the 21st Century Competitive Subcommittee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN RUBEN HINOJOSA, 15TH DISTRICT OF TEXAS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C. – SEE APPENDIX B

Chairman Castle. Thank you Mr. Owens, and thank you Mr. Hinojosa.

I appreciate your statements here today. I have no further comment on that at this time. As I indicated earlier, as you know, it doesn't pertain to this subcommittee, but let me just say something that does.

We have a distinguished group of witnesses here, and we are going to be discussing a subject entitled ``Measuring Success: Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement."

I realize the boycott, and I realize you are absolute right to do that. I would love to have you stay, though, because I think the witnesses are very good and have a lot to offer perhaps as part of what you're doing.

Mr. Hinojosa. Thank you for the invitation. Thank you for the invitation, and that's why we respect you so much. And we hope to be able to work with you very soon as this issue comes to a conclusion and is reconsidered.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, because I think we all agree on one thing with respect to what you're saying, because you want to educate kids as well as possible, and so do I and so do they. I happen to believe this is the one time in probably our political lifetimes that we can really fundamentally change and improve what we are doing in education.

So while I understand what you are doing today, and I have respect for that, please make sure that substantively we are following all this because pretty soon we are going to be marking all this if we get all these problems resolved. But thank you for your presence and your statements. We appreciate it.

Mr. Hinojosa. Thank you, Chairman Castle.

Chairman Castle. I will return to my opening statement now, and then we will go directly to the witnesses.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN CASTLE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C.

I am pleased to welcome everybody in the room here today to the Education Reform Subcommittee's hearing, as I said, on Measuring Success: Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement.

As Secretary Paige testified yesterday, holding schools, districts and states responsible for successfully educating their students is a centerpiece of President Bush's ``No Child Left Behind'' education proposal, and we are here today to better understand these issues as we work to re-authorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Although this Committee has worked to improve accountability for student achievement, many of our federal education programs still narrow their focus on process and paperwork instead of taking a broader view of program performance and its impact on learning gaps between or advantaged students and others who, because of geography, income or language skills, continue to lag behind.

Even now as students graduate from grade to grade, we spend billions of dollars a year, not because we know that our investment is improving academic achievement, but because we always have.

It is clear to me that states, school districts and teachers need better tools to identify weaknesses and address problems before the student falls behind his or her peers.

As part of this effort, President Bush asked states to test all children in grades 3 through 8 in reading and math each year. This will provide parents and teachers with timely information on how well or how poorly a student or a class is performing in these important subjects, and it will focus attention on students when they first begin to falter, not after three years of failure.

The President also asks all states to participate in the National Assessment of Education Process, NAEP, to validate state assessments and ensure that achievement gaps are closing.

I strongly believe that this concept is critical if we are serious about holding all students to high standards and ensuring that states do not dumb down tests to produce good data points.

This is especially important for those students who are not performing at grade level, because without a reliable scientifically based assessment, these students, not their

affluent peers, will be left behind on the road to opportunity.

Overall, the President's proposal seeks to strengthen accountability in a number of ways such as state sanctions and rewards based on student achievement, school choice for children of failing schools, and resources for states and districts to identify and improve low performing schools.

In addition, President Bush seeks to hold states accountable for moving limited-English proficient students to English fluency and using research-based instruction to ensure that all children read by third grade.

Over the last few years, the pendulum of education reform has begun to swing away from the focus on imports that made up the status quo. The ``No Child Left Behind'' proposal brings us even closer to our goal of putting student performance first in federal education investments. It is my hope that we will be able to use this momentum to improve the education achievement of all children.

This morning we are fortunate to have experts on reading instruction and limited-English proficiency students as well as experts in testing. I am looking forward to hearing their views and the views of our business representative on the President's proposal and how we can best implement these ideas.

Again, welcome, and thank you for taking the time to be with us. In just a few moments we will proceed with the introductions, and I am going to do that today perhaps a little differently. I am going to do them just before you speak so everybody will know who you are just before you speak, and we are ready for that moment now.

Let me just repeat for any subcommittee members that came in later that if you have opening statements, they may be submitted for the record, and we will return directly to our witnesses.

The normal course of procedure will be followed. You will each have five minutes. You will have a yellow light go on at the four-minute mark. You know then you have a minute, and then the red light goes on. At that point, about a half minute after that, the big guard comes along and removes you from the chair. It is not quite like that, but if you can start to really summarize as you get to the end of that yellow light and the red light. And then after you have all testified we will go in order of seniority of the subcommittee members who are here for their questions and answers, also confined generally to a five-minute period.

So that will be the order of business here today. I should also tell you that may be interrupted for votes at some point before the hearing is over. That normally is a twenty-minute interruption. We may try to roll through it and have one person vote and come back, but I don't know if we will or not. If not, it will be about a twenty-minute delay process that we run in to.

We'll start with Mr. Edward B. Rust, Jr., who is the co-chair of the Business Coalition for Excellence in Education, a coalition of leading United States companies and business organizations dedicated to educational excellence. He also represents the Business Roundtable and is co-chair of the Committee for Economic Development

Subcommittee on Education Policy and a chair of the Illinois Business Roundtable.

Mr. Rust, is also the Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Office of State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company in Bloomington, Illinois. So if you have any auto claims while you're here, you can get those resolved as well as hearing about education. We're delighted to have Mr. Rust here.

Mr. Rust.

WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN MICHAEL CASTLE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C. – SEE APPENDIX C

STATEMENT OF EDWARD B. RUST, JR., CHAIRMAN, EDUCATION TASK FORCE, CO-CHAIRMAN, BUSINESS COALITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Rust. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It may be dangerous for me to deviate from my prepared remarks here, but looking at the time, I would like to touch on maybe just three key points.

First of all, from a business standpoint, let me say that the business community and the group that I am here representing, The Business Coalition for Excellence in Education, which is a very broad-based group of businesses as well as business-lead organizations. But let me comment as we talk about testing and about the position of our coalition.

The coalition supports annual testing of students. I say that with great strains. We support annual testing of students in reading and math in grades 3 through 8 with assessment tools that are aligned to rigorous academic standards and that are of very high quality.

States will need time to align their tests to standards and to reach the goal of quality and coverage for all students. We feel strongly that the testing process not only measures student progress so that teachers, parents and principals know where each and every student is in relationship to the standards in their state but also target additional individual help, additional educational assistance to those students that have been assessed to need more help and assistance in meeting the standards.

A second point I would like to make, and I know there has been a good deal of discussion about what we are talking about here in terms of accountability and testing coming from Washington in the issue of local control.

I would say in many respects I am very supportive of local control and development in terms of testing and assessments, but that has to be put in context. Basically, what are the expectations? If I am a school board member, what is the goal? What is the end point? What am I looking at out there in terms of where I need to be moving our students in our school district towards achieving? What are the standards that we put in place in our state? Are they truly nationally benchmarked, world class expectations of what our students will be faced with when they enter the employment market or just seek to be productive citizens?

It is so critical that we set those standards high, those expectations where they need to be. Locally, let's determine how we can get there, but if locally we say we will make our own determination as to what our kids are expected to know, that is very short-sighted, because I can tell you that from a business standpoint, the level of expectation does not change whether you live in central Illinois, Washington, D.C., New York or anyplace else in the country.

When we look at an applicant seeking to be an employee, every applicant to be considered employee has to get across a basic hurdle in terms of aptitude, just ability to communicate, to read, to write, to be able to understand math, some degree of science is critical, and that doesn't make any difference where you are in the country. That's why I say local control is fine in figuring how do I get to this end point, to this level of excellence. But that level of excellence doesn't change strictly by where I happen to live.

Another point I would like to make is that you can almost look at this issue in terms of a consumer issue. School performance is indeed a consumer issue in my mind from the standpoint that most parents today really are uninformed and do not have the tools available to make a determination of how well their public schools are performing let alone the kinds of questions they should be asking. By this time of the school year, we know whether or not we have a good football team, basketball team, and cross country team. Is the chess team doing well? Is the debate team doing well?

But when it comes down to how well is our reading program performing, our algebra, our biology or physics, this is foreign information, unknown information to parents, to communities. And that's why it is so critical that we develop and implement good, solid metrics that help parents become better consumers of our public school system. That really drives activity, positive activity in the direction that is necessary to make sure that no child is left behind, that indeed students, as they move through the school system, are achieving at high levels of academic proficiency.

We know it from a business standpoint that you have got to measure progress or you will never know whether or not you are getting close to your goal. You have to re-evaluate your goals and directions and make sure they are in the right directions, they are high enough, they are tough enough and the expectations are there.

Measurement is essential as we try to move down this path of improving the academic achievement of all of our students. Those are the three things I wanted to stress this morning. And after my colleagues speak on the panel, I'd be glad to respond to any questions.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF EDWARD B. RUST, JR., CHAIRMAN, EDUCATION TASK FORCE, CO-CHAIRMAN, BUSINESS COALITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, D.C. – SEE APPENDIX D

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Rust. We appreciate it. Our next witness is Mr. Kurt Landgraf who is President and Chief Executive Officer of Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey. ETS is the world's largest private educational testing and measurement organization, a leader in educational research. A non-profit company, ETS develops and annually administers over 11 million tests worldwide.

Mr. Landgraf is also the Chairman of the Chauncey Group International, ETS Technologies and K-12 Works. It doesn't say it here, but he also is a high-ranking official of the Dupont Company and a good friend when we were all back in Delaware together.

Mr. Landgraf, it is a pleasure to have you here.

STATEMENT OF KURT M. LANDGRAF, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE, PRINCETON, N.J.

Mr. Landgraf. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. As you pointed out, I come from business like the President. I am a strong believer in high standards, use of data for product improvement, holding people responsible, and results in all environments.

ETS is the largest educational measurement institution in the world. We administer 11 million tests a year in over 180 countries. We are the prime contractor for NAEP since 1983. Our subsidiary, K-12 Works, offers testing in measurement services to elementary and secondary schools. We are the general contractor for the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. We are also known for the SAT, the GRE, GMAT and the TOEFL tests.

I fully support the President's proposals, ``No Child Left Behind." I believe it is doable. It will help lead this country to significant educational reform.

As requested, I will address three main issues requested by this subcommittee. First, increasing accountability and closing the achievement gap. The plan calls for high standards, strong accountability and annual standards-based assessments.

Tests have a critical role to play in this education reform. Good testing done right is a good thing. By this we mean well-designed technically rigorous tests tied to standards and curriculum. Tests help us focus on what is most important, student achievement. Without tests, we don't know how much students have learned relative to standards, relative to other students and relative to other countries. Tests give useful information to guide instruction, help students learn and to make sound policy decisions.

Such data will help us close the persistent achievement gap.

But testing is not enough. The issue before us is not simply producing more tests. We must muster the political, moral and professional will to improve student achievement. Testing is just one, albeit, key step in education reform. We must ensure that action is taken to improve achievement so the results improve the next time we test.

Second, annual testing in reading and math. The benefits of annual testing in grades 3 through 8 as children develop foundational learning skills are enormous. If we do not measure critical results accurately and often, we do not know where we are going or how we will get there. Scores must be published quickly. Users must understand them. And a plan of action must help students to meet the standards.

Quality and fairness in testing is essential. We must ensure that quality and fairness of all tests are a paramount concern. In my written testimony, I described several aspects, including assurances against biased test questions, the importance of test reliability, validity and the appropriate use of scores.

Third, the use of NAEP in the President's plan. NAEP, the nation's report card, is the most widely respected, nationally representative, continuous assessment of what American students know and can do in various subject areas. It is reasonably that the President has proposed verifying state test scores by confirming them with NAEP scores.

How best to use NAEP in a confirmatory role should be seriously considered by groups of experts in the coming months. How can we do this right? The President's testing plan should go forward. To do it right, I have stated in my testimony ten essential ingredients a state must provide. These range from unambiguous standards to curricula link to standards, to professional development for teachers, the opportunity for students' assessments aligned with standards and remedial programs for who do not meet them.

Congress also has an important role to provide the resources needed, not just for state assessments in NAEP but to help states implement the entire reform plan. Recommendations I would submit to you: I urge this Committee to balance the needed pressure for change with time needed to do this right.

I recommend that the subcommittee include in its bill proper safeguards for scores used in high-stakes situations. I recommend that NAEP be used as an instrument for confirming state assessment results after additional study.

I urge the subcommittee to remember that testing is not enough, and to provide the very significant resources needed, as promised by the President, to implement the entire reform effort.

I recommend that Congress create a challenge grant program to improve and expand the use of technology and test administration and in the management of assessment data.

I urge the Committee to authorize an ongoing research program to document the progress and outcomes of the President's plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KURT LANDGRAF, PRESIDENT, EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE, PRINCETON, N.J. – SEE APPENDIX E

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Landgraf. We appreciate your testimony. We will next go to Mr. Mark Musick. Mr. Musick is the Chairman of the National Assessment Governing Board in Washington, D.C. NAGB, as it is referred to as its acronym, is an independent bipartisan board whose membership consists of governors, state legislators, state and local school officials, educators, business representatives and members of the general public. NAGB sets policy for the National Assessments of Educational progress, the NAEP tests that we have been referring to here.

Additionally, Mr. Musick is President of the Southern Regional Education Board in Atlanta, Georgia. I've had the pleasure of working with Mark for a number of years on various subjects. I know of his interest and devoted interest to kids and education. We appreciate that.

Mr. Musick.

STATEMENT OF MARK D. MUSICK, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Musick. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Members of the Committee, I am here today to speak on basically two issues. First, as requested to say a few things about the national assessment, and then to get to the question about using NAEP in a role of confirming state results.

First of all, the National Assessment, NAEP, is not exactly a household word, but it is the only continuing nationally representative source of information about student achievement in America. It has been in business more than 30 years providing this information, for the last ten years providing comparable state results, for the last ten years providing performance standards information, that is, showing whether achievement is at the basic, proficient or advanced level across America.

Now, there is no other feasible way to get this nationally representative and state comparable information. You cannot take the SAT, ACT, Florida FCAT, North Carolina ABC, Maryland MSPAP, Kentucky CATS, Texas TAAS. You can't add all of those up and get a nationally representative picture of America, nor can you compare all of those and make sense out of them. All of those tests have their purpose. Their purpose is not to provide a nationally representative picture of America or comparable state results, and I believe that is why the President has proposed using NAEP in the role, Mr. Chairman, that you have made reference to.

Using NAEP alongside state results in a role as Mr. Landgraf has described as confirming evidence. Can this be done? Yes, it is doable. There are details to be worked out. I believe those can be worked out, but it's important going into this to make sure you are clear on two or three things, a little like when President Kennedy said we were going to the moon by the end of the decade and come back. We could have gotten to the moon

much earlier in the decade; we just couldn't get back alive. And so you need to make sure you are clear about three or four things.

First of all, this is about confirming direction. This is about seeing if achievement in America is moving in the same direction. This is about confirming that gaps are closing, particularly the ethnic and the socioeconomic student achievement gaps. This is not about prescription, and it's not about NASA-type precision. It will be a reasonably precise comparison about the direction of change. And if you're not comfortable with that, you better get comfortable with it in my view.

More than 40 states are already using NAEP in a way to unofficially confirm their state results to get an additional snapshot, to have more indifferent information about achievement, to give them an external lens to look at their results.

Now everyone claims to want high standards. I work with 16 states. I've yet to meet the first governor, the first elected official, or the first educator that's for low standards. The question is how can states internally agree on setting standards that are high enough. And this is where having the NAEP information, along with other information, is helpful.

Now, President Bush has asked NAEP to do more than it is currently doing. It already provides reading, writing, math, science, civics, history, geography, arts and soon foreign language information at 4, 8 and 12. The President wants us to provide annually this reading and math information. Again, I say it can be done.

The reason I believe the President is asking for NAEP to move from this unofficial role to official role has to do with the fact that it is providing information external to the state, it has credibility, and it is comparable across states.

Now, there are a number of issues to work out in this process. We simply don't want this testing to crowd out the important testing in other areas, but I would say to you that we can do this. We will need to provide this testing on a turnkey operation so that schools will not be burdened to have to do the testing under some other condition.

So, Mr. Chairman, my view is that we need this information. We need it because states in state accountability systems have found that just having the information is not enough, you have to have the accountability program.

Mr. Isakson I think will tell you that in Georgia where we had a voluntary program, the low performing schools don't volunteer for help. You need the information plus the accountability program at the state level to make sure these children are being served. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARK D. MUSICK, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD, WASHINGTON, D.C. – SEE APPENDIX F

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Musick. Next we will hear from Dr. Reid Lyon. Dr. Lyon is the Chief of the Child Development and Behavior Branch of the National

Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. A research psychologist, Dr. Lyon directs the development and management research programs in reading development and disorders, cognitive, social and effective development in cognitive neuroscience. He has served on the faculties of Northwestern University and the University of Vermont, has taught third grade and special education, and has served as a school and educational psychologist.

I would also add there is a great deal of respect for Dr. Lyon's research background here on this Committee, and when we are through with this bill, which is going to be a while, we are going to be turning to OERI, education and research, and you will probably be back for a few sessions on that as well. We are pleased to have Dr. Lyon here.

STATEMENT OF REID LYON, CHIEF OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR BRANCH, NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, BETHESDA, M.D.

Dr. Lyon. Let me just start out by applauding your convening this Committee that brings together experts in assessment as well as experts in what the assessment will actually evaluate. That is, when we are talking about accountability and standards, we have got to make sure that kids can meet those standards, and they meet those standards by being taught in the most effective ways by the most well prepared individuals.

You have asked me today to discuss the President's particular initiatives Reading First and Early Reading First, how those initiatives are based upon good scientific evidence and, in fact, if they are production, and how the results from these programs can interact with special education programs by actually reducing the number of kids who are identified as in need of special education.

Let me say at the outset that these initiatives, the President's initiatives and the Secretary of Education's initiatives are critical, number one, and they are also not business as usual. I think your comment earlier that for the first time there are factors coalescing that can make an astounding difference in education are upon us.

Why are these initiatives critical? At the present time, 38 percent of our school children, our fourth graders, cannot read well enough to understand a basic paragraph. Not only that, if you disaggregate those data, over 60 percent of youngsters from poverty, primarily youngsters who are African-American and Hispanic, cannot read well enough at the fourth grade to understand what they have read, and that is unconscionable. It's unconscionable particularly when we have the evidence that say we know how to do better than that.

As you all know on this Committee, as we have testified many times, the NICHD research has taught us that we can identify with good accuracy youngsters at about five years of age who are at risk for reading failure. We can bring to bear scientifically based instructional modalities. And because of that, what is 38 percent of children's failure rates now decreases to 5 percent if we do that well.

The Reading First initiative stands on this research very strongly. Briefly, the Reading First initiative that has been proposed by the President asks that states apply for money via a formula-based mechanism but, in contrast to previous times, once those states have that application in, it must be reviewed by the most rigorous peer-reviewed scientific standards we can bring to bear such that as money flows in the Reading First initiative, only about 50 percent, given our experience of the states, will be able to acquire that money initially.

What is critically important is that peer review, that analysis of how well the states have incorporated the scientific in their assessment programs and in their teaching programs, they will be provided with extensive information that allows them to improve what they are trying to do. Not only that, local school districts and states that show that they are raising reading rates above grade level in the third grade can then compete for additional money to be able to ensure that all children are going to be reading above grade level.

So in contrast to the past, educational funding is now tied to strong research accountability, the use of scientific evidence in determining how to assess kids and how to apply programs, and also rewarding states in local districts on the basis of actually improving achievement in reading. This is the first time we have seen this happen, the first time we have seen these kinds of mechanisms based upon scientific research. And we feel that if the Department of Education has the necessary talent and infrastructure to move this, that we will see a tremendous difference in the number of youngsters who do not learn to read, and that will be a downward spiral, that is, many fewer kids will have that kind of difficulty.

That is still not good enough. Early Reading First is a program designed to help three to five-year-olds, also from poverty, to acquire those basic skills via scientifically-based early interventions, and that in fact is going to be critical for the kids most at risk from poverty in order to even enter kindergarten with a leg up so that they can succeed in school.

I would be glad to answer questions that you have after these discussions.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF REID LYON, CHIEF OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR BRANCH, NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, BETHESDA, M.D. – SEE APPENDIX G

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much, Dr. Lyon. We appreciate that.

Our final witness, our clean-up hitter today, is Dr. Rosalie Pedalino Porter. Dr. Porter is a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development (READ) and the editor of READ perspectives in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Porter has experienced the various aspects of bilingual education. She has served as a Spanish-English bilingual teacher at the Armory Street School in Springfield, Massachusetts and was Director of Bilingual English As a Second Language programs at

Newton Public Schools in Newton, Massachusetts, and we're delighted to have Dr. Porter here as well. Dr. Porter.

STATEMENT OF ROSALIE PEDALINO PORTER, MEMBER, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, EDITOR, READ PERSPECTIVES, INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN ENGLISH ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT (READ), WASHINGTON, D.C.

Ms. Porter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very much in support of the parts of President Bush's education policy initiative that deal with limited-English proficient students.

We have given thirty years of special programs for this population of about 3.5 million children who enter our public school classrooms without a sufficient command of English to do regular classroom work. However, the research that has been done has been of a poor quality, and the great lack has been in accountability for bilingual children.

President Bush's initiative emphasizes that performance standards will be applied, that local districts will have flexibility in the kind of education they provide for these children but will be held accountable for results.

Why is testing LEP students so important? Primarily, it has been neglected. We have not charted the progress of these students either in their learning of the English language or in their learning of school subjects.

I would like to address three particular states in which I have done a great deal of work in the past ten years where they are using different approaches but they are heading in what I believe is the right direction. The trend they are following is to take account of LEP students, to assess their progress, to provide new money to fund the kinds of interventions that are needed to help them.

Without the testing, we cannot identify the students, the grade level, the particular school, the subject area in which more help is needed. I will start with Texas because Texas has done a great deal since 1985 in defining the standards of what children should learn, and in designing tests to assess that this is actually being accomplished.

Testing occurs every year. New resources have been put into the schools where students are having the least success. And the proof of the wisdom of this policy is in the results that Texas has demonstrated.

The Rand Corporation published a study just within the past year in which they showed minority student achievement in Texas has made the greatest strides in closing the gap with white students. This is an admiral accomplishment, and it compares favorably with many other states.

The Texas accountability system was challenged in court on the claim that minority students could not achieve the standards of the 10th grade test for high school

graduation. I was an expert witness in that case on behalf of the State of Texas, and the State of Texas was ruled to be doing what it should be doing. We won the case on the grounds that year after year, minority student achievement was improving and that resources were being applied to help this to happen.

The next state I would like to describe is my own state of Massachusetts where we wrote the first law on bilingual education, but we have been incredibly negligent in collecting data on student performance until 1993, when Massachusetts funded a 10-year program to design frameworks for what students are responsible for learning and related assessments to see that these kinds of learning are taking place.

Starting in 1998, we began statewide testing that included LEP students. The results are not very encouraging, but at the beginning we will not always see very good results. We have to have the patience to persist to continue these efforts.

I would like to mention California, although I see that I am up to my summing up time, because I do believe that in California, the coming together of the passage of Proposition 227, which mandates that immigrant children are to be taught English as quickly and efficiently as possible, and the new state accountability system have come together, and the first two years' results are very encouraging. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ROSALIE PEDALINO PORTER, MEMBER, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, EDITOR, READ PERSPECTIVES, INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN ENGLISH ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT (READ), WASHINGTON, D.C. - SEE APPENDIX H

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Dr. Porter. Thank you all very much. Let me explain the circumstances here. We are liable to run into some votes here in 15 minutes to half an hour. When we do, it is going to be six votes in a row. When it is votes in a row, we have to suspend the hearing because we have to be over there in the chambers, which would cost us about an hour.

So what I am going to try to do is to get in as many questions and answers as we can. So I am going to impose what we call the five-minute rule strictly. I need your help. If somebody asks you, as the red light goes on, if all of you would answer a question, I am not going to allow that to happen. And I am going to ask a question right now that three or four of you may answer. If you could each answer it in 30 seconds or less, that would be very helpful to as far as that is concerned.

So I'll start by yielding, I am trying to get everybody in if I can, and you can see the interest in the subject matter at this subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Rust, I am not going to ask you a question, but I am going to say something, and then I am going to ask you not to say anything back, and maybe we can talk about it later.

I am very interested in dealing with the business community to try to get the business community to cooperate with each other, and I understand business communities are private and we cannot tell you what do and we do not want to. That is not our goal at all. But I have visited many, many programs and have seen literally billions of dollars

being put into education directly, not just commenting on what you need, by the business community. I am sure State Farm does, others do as well. And yet, I do not see a lot of coordination of all that in terms of talking to each other and understanding what works or does not work.

I would hope that in the Business Roundtable, and it is usually the larger companies that can afford to do this, we can get more discussion and coordination of that. I would love to talk to you about it at some point. If you can say something in 15 seconds, and then I have got to move on to my next question.

Mr. Rust. I would agree wholeheartedly with you on that point. In fact, the Business Coalition for Excellence in Education is just that, in bringing for the first time, many of the business-led organizations within Washington with one voice, and it is something that we are working hard on.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Rust. It is something we need to work hard on.

I am going to ask the other four, this is going to be a broad question, I will need brief answers. I think I heard you say this. I heard, I think Dr. Porter say it and the others. But I am very concerned that the program that we are working on, and we are clearly working on the President's program, ``No Child Left Behind,'' that is the starting point, and we are marking it up as we go along. We could have a mark-up here at this full Committee level within a couple of weeks, three weeks, something of that nature. It's going that quickly.

My concern is to make sure that we are helping those students who I consider to be disadvantaged. Disadvantaged can be a student, obviously, who is bilingual or perhaps not bilingual but lingual in a subject other than the one they are being taught in. Obviously, it usually includes poor children that do not have the same opportunities. It includes poor, more disadvantaged school districts that do not have the same ability to fund to do things or a variety of other reasons, maybe exempting those who are truly so learning disabled that we have to have special programs for them.

I am very interested in that. I think that Dr. Lyon addressed this somewhat when he talked about Reading First and Early Reading First, but as a whole, it is my judgment that this program has made a very special effort to reach out and making sure that we are raising the bar, particularly for those lower income students.

So I am very interested if you can make brief comments about that, and if you would do that starting perhaps with Mr. Landgraf and run right through the four of you, and maybe I'll have time for one more question, maybe I will not.

Mr. Landgraf. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that you are exactly correct. We are fully supportive of testing based upon local standards in a curriculum. The President's proposal is very intensely aware of the fact that we have varying degrees of ability in school systems, that we have to tie this to local standards. I believe it is very important to recognize that the testing can be fair and equitable and taken to a broad heterogeneous group of students.

We must look at the total picture, not testing, and provide resources to local school systems to ensure that no student is left behind.

Chairman Castle. Mr. Musick?

Mr. Musick. Yes. We have seen it in Texas, North Carolina and Kentucky especially. States are now ready, I think, to deal with this issue. We have known in NAEP for 10 years that on average, an 8th grade white student reads at the average level of a 12th grade African-American student, but I think the country is now ready to do something about this.

We will have to boost the NAEP sample a bit I think in order to get the precision needed for those scores for African-American and Hispanic students, but it is the right thing to do, and NAEP can be helpful in this way.

Chairman Castle. I have a lot of NAEP questions we may never get to.

Dr. Lyon?

Dr. Lyon. The President's initiatives go directly to those kids in the third grade who are reading below grade level in addition to those youngsters who live in empowerment zones or enterprise communities and go to schools that are designated for school improvement. Clearly, this is targeted towards those youngsters most at risk, children from poverty, and children from a variety of different ethnic groups that, by no fault of their own, are mostly at risk.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Dr. Lyon. And Dr. Porter?

Ms. Porter. Very recently there have been some very good studies charting the excellent results in schools with mostly children coming from families of poverty.

A successful school study published last year looked at eight schools across the country. So it can be done. But lowering the standards is not the way to do it.

Chairman Castle. Thank you all. I do have other questions. We may have a second round, I do not know, but I want to give everyone a chance, so I am going to go to Mr. Schaffer of Colorado next.

Mr. Schaffer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of course the centerpiece of the Bush plan is school choice, and that is the ultimate value of testing. Mr. Rust, you mentioned that parents really hunger for information about the performance of their students, and they seem to know how the basketball team is doing but they do not know where they stand in relation to reading or physics and all the rest.

And I do think parents do want to know that, do want that information. And the ultimate expression of the value of that for parents is the ability to use that to select the appropriate school that earns the confidence of their child, and the Bush plan makes that really the central feature and the defining feature of our education reform efforts.

But I am curious as to when it comes to some other value for testing, finances, for example. I would like you to speak to the notion of having cash flowed to districts or

states that seem to perform well on criterion reference tests and perhaps a norm reference test versus funds flowing away from or a smaller amount of cash, I guess, the sanction being imposed on states that may not respond with positive trends on perhaps a different set of tests. What impact does the cash have, this cash flow issue? That is an important question I think many of us have on the impact of the cash being tied to the test.

Mr. Rust. Let me first say that it would be from a business perspective, our opinion is we want to get all schools performing at higher levels. The testing assessment is a way of giving us diagnostic tools that we can point and tell what schools, what students, what classes need more work.

Frankly, the cash flowing with one direction or another is long-term. You would not have that as a need if all schools were performing well, but we have got to find ways, incentives out there to really get the attention within the education establishment, within communities to drive necessary change. If we do not have something out there, there is not a consequence for continued low expectations and rewarding low expectations. We will never make the kind of movement up in terms of achievement that all of our kids must have.

Mr. Schaffer. Well, school choice would be the best consequence I think. The notion that the customer can choose, just as in your business. I am a State Farm customer. I picked you because I like the way the ratings look, and I my return on it.

Mr. Rust. I appreciate that.

Mr. Schaffer. But if those measurements prove to suggest that there was a better way to do business, I assure you, I would walk way and go there, and I think that same kind of pressure needs to be available to the institutions involved in education that responded. Customers and the cash flow come from the bottom up rather than the top down.

Mr. Rust. Well, along the point you make, we try to look at the same kind of metrics in terms of customer satisfaction. And if we see something turning in a negative trend, then we want to take immediate steps to address that.

The same thing in an academic setting as I look at my school. If I have some performance problems, if I have a problem with my professional development with some of my teachers or particular subject areas, I need to be addressing that right away.

You look at some of the experiences in Chicago that have given a number of schools an opportunity to change. And unless after a couple of years they did not change, then there were some rather severe consequences, but it is a matter of driving in the direction that we feel we need to go in terms of achieving high academic levels for our students.

Mr. Schaffer. I do not know whom the right person is to ask the question, but probably whoever knows the most about NAEP. In terms of measuring student growth on a year-to- year basis, how suitable is NAEP for measuring that? It is my understanding it is more of a cross-sectional snapshot of student progress in a state, or general progress in a state rather than measuring actual student growth from year to year.

Mr. Musick. At the present time, NAEP provides only national and state level information. So to that extent, you are correct. And it also is a sample. The information that you are getting has a bit of a measurement error in it of course. So but when you do it over time, and if you did it annually, is it precise enough to give you meaningful results year to year for the students in your state? I would say yes.

Mr. Landgraf. Also keep in mind that the President's reading initiatives carry with it a strong performance-monitoring component here at the federal level. And in order for a state and its local districts to indicate that what they are using is in fact effective year by year, those data have to be collected. And again, the technical assistance and how you do that should be part and parcel of this initiative, and it will be.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Bob.

We will now go to the distinguished gentleman from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Mr. Greenwood.

Mr. Greenwood. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have two questions, one that goes to issues concerning the schools at the top of the performance and one at the bottom, and they come from two meetings that I had last week, one with superintendents in my school districts. And their question is, since the fundamental point of requiring the annual testing of these schools is to identify the schools that need the most work, need the most resources and may need ultimately to have some other options available, since that is a fundamental purpose, would it make sense for us to allow those schools that do the very best, consistently report that in each grade the kids are doing the best, to essentially test out from the federal requirement, to do the tests one year or two years or three years if they have across-the-board excellence results? Does it make sense for us to say okay, you can test if you want, but it is no longer a federal requirement? And I'd like any of you to respond to that.

Secondly, at the bottom, for those who consistently do the poorest, it seems to me that ultimately the tool that is going to be the most useful to bring those kids up is to have more hands on deck. If you can have more people in the classroom, reducing the ratio of student to teacher, you are going to probably be the most effective.

Someone talked about a new focus on teacher quality and support a new model of teacher preparation and professional development. Mr. Rust said that.

The second meeting I had last week was with teachers. And I said for those schools that are doing the worst, and of course they are not fond of vouchers of any kind, what would you recommend? Their recommendation was there are a lot of kids, a lot of really smart kids in teacher colleges that, according to the teachers, spend a lot of time that is not very productive in relatively obscure, abstract academic processes on campus. If you could get those kids, particularly the best of the kids, in the teaching colleges into classrooms of the worst schools sooner, it would be a 2 for 1. The kids would probably learn to teach a lot faster there, frankly, with very challenging on-hand situation than they would reading textbooks in the library back on campus.

Two, you would have more hands on deck, energetic, eager, young people that could take some of these kids and help bring them along. I would be interested in the

response to either of those questions, at the top of the scale and bottom.

Mr. Landgraf. Mr. Greenwood, I'd like to answer the first question quickly. I think that for both schools that perform at the top of the scale and those schools that perform at the bottom of the scale, one of the greatest benefits in the President's proposal is incremental examination of improvement. So I would argue that looking at testing in conjunction with other input and output factors in the school systems is very important to do on a year-to-year basis and would help the education system in the United States improve.

Dr. Lyon. Even the highest performing schools have students who can learn more, and there are a variety of assessments, obviously, that can be carried out. But teachers, in the context of your second question, have to know how, in fact, their kids are learning and what specifically they have not learned no matter how bright they are. So ongoing assessment is critical from a learning perspective.

With respect to low performing schools, we have got to do a number of things to provide teachers with the power to be able to make those changes, and you put your finger clearly on it, and that is providing teachers with the content that lets them know how kids learn to read, what goes wrong when they do not, and what you do about it, the opportunity to watch masters at work and the opportunity to be given guided feedback as they themselves try to carry out those complex interactions.

But those low performing schools will remain low performing unless we get to those children very, very early with the right stuff, with strong teachers and strong research-based programs.

Mr. Rust. Let me make two quick observations. One is you look at even the high performing or low performing in testing. To individually break that out by individual students who you can diagnostically tell if I have got one or two students even in the best performing schools that need help and I can rifle in and target and take care of that individual's needs.

The other is, you look at high performing or low performing schools and the quality of teaching in that classroom and the investing and teacher papers that you reference, what we were looking at there was really re-thinking the whole teaching profession continuum from schools of education to early entry into teaching.

Mr. Greenwood. The yellow light is on. Does anybody like the idea of having the students get in the classrooms to add value to that experience?

Mr. Rust. I would be selective in the classroom because some of your newer students may indeed have trouble and some of them most challenging. You may want to find ways to put incentives for your true master teachers to help them get in the more difficult areas and have them monitor or mentor the newer teachers.

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much, Mr. Greenwood.

The gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Souder.

Mr. Souder. Thank you. I apologize for being here late. I have two other hearings going on simultaneously, and I tried to go through your testimony. I did not get a chance to

make a opening statement. I want to address a couple of comments off of your written testimony that I just went through. One is, and this is just in general, I find it somewhat insulting in a lot of our debates that there is an implication that those of us who have concern about the national standards on tests do not understand the importance of accountability. I have an MBA. I am very much into accountability. I favor local and state testing. I do not favor national testing.

Now let me get into a couple of questions. I am particularly concerned about Mr. Rust's testimony where he says, and I presume you are here on behalf of the Business Roundtable, that you would favor NAEP being a benchmark. And I wonder if in the insurance industry, which often works by commission and makes individual decisions, whether you would like to have a national benchmark on commission standards coming out of the Federal Government.

I wonder if, for example, the average consumer in the United States finds the trade-offs in health insurance, car insurance, and house insurance very difficult? Would you like to have a national standard that is one size fits all on insurance? And that the business community, because you are concerned legitimately about what is being produced in our schools and the ability of our workforce to compete in an international market may be looking at a principle by having a second guess on the state's accountability that is going to spill into our health insurance debate and all of our other business debates, because the medicine that is being proposed here has consequences far beyond just an education debate. It's a question of should Washington be the ultimate arbitrator?

Now, I want to follow up because in the testimony of Mr. Landgraf, he specifically says that state curricula ought to be linked to state standards. And I understand that in NAEP, it rotates with schools. It is a test that is not given to everybody, but is available on the home page and everybody can figure out what the questions are. I mean it is many, many pages. It is a very comprehensive test and different standards, and it is naive to think that if NAEP becomes the ultimate standard for state tests, and if it is generally believed that what is being tested ought to be what is studied, and that ought to be what is in the curriculum, it is inevitable that if there is a NAEP check on state standards, that what questions you are asking on the NAEP test, if that becomes a federal mandate, it is inevitable that that will lead eventually to schools responding and trying to address those questions.

For example, you also had in your written testimony you are looking for a benchmark, but the benchmark will become the standard. That is what many of our concerns are. And that by not having competition in how the states are going to be benchmarked, one of the other concerns is that so we can measure this, it would be very interesting to hear which state standards are in the view of those who favor a national benchmark are failing, not general allegations, but the names of the states.

Now we can look at the home page and see which states in fact are not doing as well compared to NAEP. One of those states is Texas. We heard the last witness say that Texas, for example, had great achievement under Governor Bush in reaching minority students. But on the NAEP home page, according to comparing Texas to when Governor Richards was Governor of Texas, the fact is, that in one category it is up one point, and in the other category it is down two points. That is the danger of using any one standard,

rather than a Rand study or others.

Chairman Castle. Mr. Souder, we are enforcing the five-minute rule, so if you want to respond, maybe you should ask a question.

Mr. Souder. I've got one minute left.

Chairman Castle. The five-minute rule includes their answers.

Mr. Souder. I said in effect I was going to make a statement because I read that.

I want to point out also that in the NAEP, in Mr. Musick's statement that you express concern that just by taking math and science in NAEP standards, we might undermine some of the others. And some of us are very concerned that, for example, on the NAEP home page, for example, in the history standards, there are questions that are unacceptable to some people because you get into more ideological decisions than you do, for example, in math and English. And so some of us find that particular argument to be even more disturbing that NAEP, for example, foresees the expansion of the standards beyond where the President even has the proposal.

So I do not oppose testing. I think testing is extremely important, but I have concern with the national component to double-check the states. I think they are doing a reasonable job.

Chairman Castle. Mr. Souder, In think in fairness we should let Mr. Musick have one minute to respond and then move on from there. Thank you, sir. Mr. Musick.

Mr. Musick. The term NAEP as a benchmark, and I do not want to get into some semantic gymnastics here, but my view as Chair of this Board, and I think the Board's discussion of this is that NAEP provides important additional information. It is not about using NAEP to say this is the standard or this is the benchmark, it is about is the information we are getting from NAEP telling us that we are moving in the same direction that our state tests are telling us. If not, what does that mean? And there is some important historical evidence.

If you look at the Texas information, for example, if in fact African-Americans across this nation were reading as well as African-Americans in Texas, we would cut by one-half the gap in reading between white Americans and black African-Americans. So there is some dramatic evidence even in states where the NAEP scores look comparatively low because the NAEP standards are comparatively high.

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much. The gentleman from Tennessee, Mr. Hilleary.

Mr. Hilleary. Mr. Chairman, thank you for this hearing. I am sick that I was so late getting here. This is what I have been looking forward to for a while now, and now everything just kind of exploded on me this morning, but I am sure it was a great hearing and I am going to read with relish the comments that were printed.

I guess to pick up a little bit on Mr. Souder's comments, I do not know we can actually have a national standard unless we have some kind of standard test around the country. Conservatives, we have always had some concerns about a national test,

especially if it is driving dollars one way or another because then people really start paying attention to that test.

You all probably saw the color-coded county-by-county map of where the votes came from and who won which counties, Mr. Gore or Bush, and it was a stark map. I mean, it showed the coastlines were for Mr. Gore and the inner cities were for Mr. Gore. Everything else was for Mr. Bush. It seemed to me that the whole thing came down to almost a values thing. It was not about the economy, it was not about anything. I may be right or wrong about that, but that is what I thought. And it shows that there is a distinct difference in how people think about what the values ought to be between the coastline and the inner cities and in the heartland and in the rural areas.

Those of us who happen to be from the heartland and the rural areas sometimes get a little concerned that those from the coastlines and inner cities sometimes would like to have a different set of values, and we are concerned that those values would be thrust upon us possibly potentially through a national test if rewards are driving from how one does on that test.

I do not know how likely that is, but it is sometimes the sun and the moon and the stars all line up in a certain way. It may not happen very often, but in 1993 we had a Democratic president, I am not really slamming on them, I am just stating a fact here, a Democrat majority in the Senate and the House and we got the biggest tax increase in history. Maybe it was, maybe it was not, that is what we called it all the time. It would not have happened if that confluence of events had not taken place, all branches being in the same party.

Well, by the same token, some of us have a concern at a future date when something similar like that might happen, those people being elected from the coastlines and the inner cities, they might drive a national standard that has values seeping into that national test that we do not agree with. Now some people kind of roll their eyes and say well, gosh, that is silly, that is stupid, they are Neanderthal, 50's people, what are you thinking? I do not know how likely it is, but we think there is potential there. But I keep thinking we have to have some national standard, so I open up the question to anybody, how can we get local accountability?

Now, I know on NAEP you have folks who are elected officials on your board and all those kinds of things, but how do we get local accountability and also have a national standard that relieves our fears, whether we should have those fears or not, but relieves those fears, yet, we have the national standard. Anybody?

Mr. Rust. Let me maybe take a first cut at that. I think you could probably come to the conclusion that there are certain subject areas, math, science, to a degree reading, writing, some of these that regardless of where you are in the country, be it in the heartland, be it in the inner city, be it on either coast, that everybody ought to be achieving or performing at a very high level. You know, I think that would be readily agreed to even by local school boards in saying that is what we need to be shooting for.

And in my earlier verbal comments, that is, as a school board member, that is the goal. That is where we want our students to be exiting our public schools with the skill level. So that when they go into the job market, they can compete with people from elsewhere around the state or around the country. I think that is very important

particularly at that cut.

Mr. Landgraf. Mr. Hilleary, let me just add to that. I think two things. First, the NAEP exam has been offered for 30 years. As I said previously, a great value comes to policymakers like you in having an incremental look over a period of time at how states do perform.

The President's proposal is to link NAEP with local state assessments tied to local curricula and standards.

Second point I would make to you is that prior to this job I was the Chief Operating Officer and Chairman of Dupont Europe. As a policymaker, I would urge this Committee to be cognizant of the fact that on a global basis, unless we measure education in the United States, vis-à-vis other countries, we stand the risk of falling behind economically in the global worldwide economy.

Chairman Castle. Thank you. We are going to go to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Ehlers. We are still racing the clock a little bit here.

Mr. Ehlers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly second that last comment made because much of my effort the past few years have been improving our educational system so we do not fall further behind other countries, which we are doing.

Also, Mr. Rust, you have received some comments about State Farm Insurance, I believe. I should just say that State Farm Insurance is a fine company. I used to use it until you canceled my policy. I think that is what you call accountability.

I remember my family had a few fender-benders. In any event, I appreciate your accountability methods work.

My real questions, however, are for Dr. Lyon. I have read your entire testimony and, as usual, I appreciate it perhaps because of my background as a research scientist. I am just intrigued with the ideas you are presenting there. I understand we are talking here more about accountability, but what is striking in your research is what we can actually accomplish. Maybe we should put a little less emphasis on what we are measuring and more emphasis on getting results out of this and however we measure those results.

Am I to understand from your evidence, your experimental evidence, that unless there is a learning disability, virtually ever child in this country should be able to be taught how to read and write without any great difficulty?

Dr. Lyon. Precisely. Yes, sir. Before I answer in more detail, Dr. Langenberg sends his regards and would like you to come teach physics in his system here in Maryland.

Mr. Ehlers. Thank you.

Dr. Lyon. The data clearly showed that if we can, number one, identify children who are at risk for reading failure at five to six, even seven years of age and bring to those youngsters interventions or instructional programs that are scientifically driven, that is, we have done trials on those and found those effective, that 90 percent or more, actually

about 96 percent of children with reading difficulties no longer will have those difficulties. We can cut the prevalence rates of youngster who require compensatory education and some youngsters requiring special education dramatically. There's no doubt about it.

That is contingent upon making sure that teachers, as was eluded to earlier, have the proper training and that school systems, in fact, are assessed from an accountability perspective to make sure that that proper training is administered or taught appropriately, and that those children are monitored on a very frequent basis. But there is no doubt about it that all of this discussion about measurement and accountability and state testing and so forth actually becomes secondary if, in fact, we have done our homework and minded our Ps and Qs on the preparation side and the implementation side.

And sometimes it seems assessment is driving the horse, and it should not be.

Mr. Ehlers. That is precisely the point I was trying to bring out. We do know how to do it, but it involves a great deal of teacher training. I think personally it is going to require a considerable change in our schools of education and the way they interact with the other departments and the universities.

Even though assessment is very important, and particularly in terms of the programs we are developing, we have to keep in mind the goal. Everyone knows I am a strong advocate of improving math and science education here, and I continually preach that. I do not say much about reading, but I feel as passionately if not more passionately about reading, but I do not have to argue that here, 434 other Congressmen will do that. I am the only one advocating the math and science education to any great extent.

I really think that is a crucial point that this country has to be aware of, that we can do it. It is just a matter of appropriate programs, appropriate training of teachers and we can do it.

Chairman Castle. Mr. Ehlers, can I ask you to yield back. We have two other individuals who would like to get four minutes each, and the vote is going to start, and it is going to take an hour to go through all the votes if you do not mind.

Mr. Ehlers. Just one quick question.

Chairman Castle. Can you do it very quickly, sir?

Mr. Ehlers. Dr. Lyon, can the same be said about those with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia? Do we know how to do that? Can we do it?

Dr. Lyon. At the present time, we still have 2 to 4 to 5 percent of youngsters not responding to the most effective interventions we have at this time. You will have to give us another five years and we will figure that out I think.

Mr. Ehlers. Thank you.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Ehlers. I am going to call on the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois, Ms. Biggert, who has agreed to go four minutes so we can

give Mr. Osborne four minutes.

Ms. Biggert. Thank you. Mr. Rust, it is nice to see a fellow Illinoisan in this. I traveled to the Illinois General Assembly. I drove through Bloomington, and that was always a stop-off point for everybody that went from the Chicago area down to Springfield.

My concern, and it might tie in a little bit to Congressman Ehlers', the purpose I think of in what we want to do and what we want as far as accountability is to really ensure that our kids are able to read. They are able to read at a certain level proficiently.

Now when I have asked teachers, and I am a former school board member too, so I have some concerns what we want to do on the local level and believe strictly in the local level as far as control. When I would ask the teachers, do you ever take a test and do you go back and do you look at it to see how a child performed on that test, and it is all in various categories, to see if a child missed division, and they go back and they always respond no, I do not have time to do that. To me, that is the whole purpose of the test, really to see exactly what has been learned and what has not been learned and to go back and do that.

Now, the accountability that we seem to be talking about with the NAEP test is accountability of the schools to show how they rate with other schools throughout the nation and they have been able to accomplish that. So we are really talking about two different kinds of tests, are we not? Am I wrong?

Mr. Landgraf. Well, if I might answer that. I think one of the things to be greatly concerned about is that this whole initiative of the President is not about testing, it is about putting in place a measurement tool that will allow public policymakers to provide appropriate resources to improve schools at the local level. That means giving teachers better salaries, giving school systems better resources to do a better job. I would urge you not to get bogged down in the logical mindset that this proposal is about more testing. It is about measuring the outcomes of a better school system.

Ms. Biggert. All right.

Dr. Lyon. Not only that, Congresswoman, when we are talking about assessing kids, we have got to figure out which kids need something and which ones do not. That hones the instruction. That is a part of testing, but it is a very functional part of making sure the kids know what they do not know to begin with, and the teachers know what they do not know.

Ms. Biggert. So really when we say ``No child left behind," it really has to be both of them.

Ms. Porter. May I address this also? One of the great things about reporting test results to teachers is that, and I am a former teacher, year after year teachers are able to see which particular types of questions, which content areas their students are not measuring up to. The reporting of test results is so important. And with time, it becomes more valuable also in modifying tests from year to year to make them better. Without this kind of reporting, we would not be able to improve the tests. So there are all of those elements that are essential.

Ms. Biggert. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman Castle. I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois very, very much and particularly Mr. Osborne thanks you for giving him the opportunity before we have to run and vote. The problem is we are down about eight minutes on a vote and want to give Mr. Osborne the full opportunity. And about the gentleman from Nebraska, probably nobody here exceeds his ability in working with young people, whom we have seen over the years, so we are delighted he is on our subcommittee. Mr. Osborne.

Mr. Osborne. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to be very brief. I am going to have to be brief or awfully fast running over there.

First of all, I have a little concern with NAEP in that I do know that when you throw rewards and punishments in there, there is going to be a real temptation to teach the test. And as the President has said, well, what is so bad if kids know how to read and they know how to do basic matters, that is great. But we do have nuances in the curriculum, and there are certainly geographical differences in what needs to be emphasized. Can you give me any indication as to what might be done to make sure that some of the strengths in our present system, and there are some, do not begin to be diminished by a focus on a specific test.

Dr. Lyon. Mr. Osborne, about four years ago the state superintendent of schools in your fine state visited NIH to try to understand how best teachers in Nebraska could learn how to teach reading. And they went home and put in place in Nebraska a reading initiative that, in fact, no matter how you might measure it is starting to show that if you teach kids extremely well, they are going to learn to read. They are not teaching to any test, they are teaching those kinds of components that the youngsters have to be able to bring together to do their job just as you did extraordinarily well on the football field.

People have to bring together, children have to bring together enormous numbers of complex skills in an integrated fashion, apply them and learn. And it goes to those core issues, if you teach children, and I understand the concern about narrowing a curriculum to get after a test result so you have the reward, but if our teachers are prepared strongly enough, they know what they are doing, that becomes somewhat of a secondary issue.

Mr. Osborne. One last thing very quickly. Sometimes I hear reference made to African-American scores and Caucasian and so on, and I guess my experience is more there are differences in socioeconomics more than racial issues. So it may be that a specific ethnic group does not score as well, but I think it has more to do with their socioeconomic class than that. So one thing I am really concerned about is the cultural fairness of the test, because I frequently saw people in certain socioeconomic groups testing poorly. But we would find when we got them in a college, they could perform much higher than what their test would indicate. So I know some of you are testing experts, and I am really interested in the cultural fairness of the test.

Mr. Musick. I would like to say something.

Chairman Castle. Quickly respond.

Mr. Musick. In the two areas, first in the NAEP, if there are rewards and sanctions, I agree that does change it somewhat, but these 40 states are already seeing the value of this. This is the NAEP framework for mathematics. Here is a state framework for mathematics. I do not believe that this is going to absolutely sink the ship. I suspect it is a little like if your opponents knew some of your play calling styles, but they did not have your play book, and the NAEP playbook is not going to be something that is going to be out there that folks can teach to all of those.

Finally, your point about race ethnicity is right. It is a green thing, not a black and white thing. And what NAEP has been trying to do, we now use the free and reduced lunch measure to try to get at that.

Mr. Landgraf. And finally, Dr. Osborne, I would just add to this it is not the test that is not fair and equitable. The test merely measures a school system that does not provide fair and equitable access to education.

Mr. Osborne. Thank you.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Osborne. And let me thank all the witnesses a great deal. We were hustling to get all this in so you would not have to wait another hour while we were voting. We are quite late to the vote. We are down to about three minutes, so this is going to be a very fast goodbye.

We do thank you. We also made some written questions to you. Obviously, there are a lot of issues around testing that we all have to answer, so that may be as a follow-up.

You have been an excellent panel. We appreciate your attendance today. And with that, we stand adjourned. Thank you.

Whereupon, at 12:20 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.

APPENDIX A - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN MAJOR OWENS, 11TH DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASINGTON, D.C.

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Statement by Representative Major Owens
Addressing the Education Reform Subcommittee
March 8, 2001

I regret to say that no Democratic Members of the Committee will be participating in this subcommittee hearing today, as a protest against the unfair way the Majority has created our subcommittees.

When the Education and Workforce Committee adopted its organizational rules last month, the Republican majority voted unanimously to remove programs for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribally Controlled Colleges from the subcommittee that handles higher education issues. Every single Democrat on the Committee opposed this ill-conceived idea.

Every Democratic member of the Committee - black, Hispanic, Asian-Pacific and Native American - has spoken out against this separation. The message should be clear and it should not be ignored.

We have received an overwhelming number of letters and communications from Presidents of minority serving institutions expressing their strenuous objection to the Committee's action. These include a letter of opposition from our former distinguished colleague, William H. Gray, III, who now serves as President of the United Negro College Fund.

The Committee should include all colleges in the new "21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee"–which was designed to expand higher educational opportunities and emphasize lifetime learning. No colleges should be relegated to a subcommittee that deals predominantly with issues like juvenile justice, child abuse, and the arts.

We pledge to continue our efforts to reach a fair compromise with our Republican colleagues on this issue–one that insures all colleges and universities have the opportunity to grow and prosper in the 21st Century.

APPENDIX B - STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN RUBEN HINOJOSA, 15TH DISTRICT OF TEXAS, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C.

March 08, 2001

Statement of Congressman Rubén Hinojosa
on Continuing Boycott of Subcommittee Assignments
within the House Education and the Workforce Committee

I am here on behalf of the Hispanic higher education community to echo the sentiments of my colleague Mr. Owens, and encourage the Majority to continue to work with us on resolving this issue expeditiously.

As of today, Democratic members of the House Education and the Workforce Committee are still boycotting any subcommittee assignments. We are still receiving letters opposing the jurisdictional split from Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) presidents, and the overwhelming majority of them agree with us that this situation must be immediately remedied.

At a time when the most recent Census numbers indicate a 60 percent increase in the Hispanic population, we can no longer afford to dismiss or downplay Hispanic education concerns. On Wednesday, February 28, 2001, the Democratic Caucus unanimously adopted a resolution that urges the House Leadership to consider stepping in to help us reach a compromise in this situation. The Education Committee minority staff, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and Congressional Black Caucus are jointly drafting legislation that will be introduced in the near future. This legislation *addresses five or six primary issues impacting minority higher education,* such as increased funding for HSI programs and a comprehensive dropout prevention program to allow our students to finish high school and move on to college.

APPENDIX C - WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN MICHAEL CASTLE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C.

OPENING STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE MIKE CASTLE
CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM

HEARING ON
MEASURING SUCCESS: USING ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO RAISE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2001
10:30 A.M.

RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 2175

Good morning. I am pleased to welcome you all to the Education Reform Subcommittee's hearing on ***Measuring Success: Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement.***

As Secretary Paige testified yesterday, holding schools, districts and states responsible for successfully educating their students is the centerpiece of President Bush's *No Child Left Behind* education proposal, and we are here today to better understand these issues as we work to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Although this committee has worked to improve accountability for student achievement, many of our federal education programs still narrow their focus on process and paperwork instead of taking a broader view of program performance and its impact on learning gaps between our advantaged students and others who, because of geography, income or language skills, continue to lag behind. Even now, as students graduate from grade to grade, we spend billions of dollars a year -- not because we know that our investment is improving academic achievement -- but because we always have.

It is clear to me that States, school districts and teachers need better tools to identify weaknesses and address problems before the student falls behind his or her peers. As part of this effort, President Bush asks states to test all children in grades 3-8 in reading and math each year. This will provide parents and teachers with timely information on how well -- or how poorly -- a student or a class is performing in these important subjects, and it will focus attention on students when they first begin to falter -- not after three years of failure. States have already made strides toward testing students in these crucial areas, and this proposal builds on the work they have already done.

The President also asks all states to participate in the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) to validate state assessments and ensure that achievement gaps are closing. I strongly believe that this concept is critical if we are serious about holding all students to high standards and ensuring that states do not "dumb down" tests to produce good data points. I believe this is especially important for those students who are not performing at grade level because, without a reliable, scientifically-based assessment, these students -- not their more affluent peers -- will be 'left behind' on the road to opportunity.

Overall, the President's proposal seeks to strengthen accountability in a number of ways, such as state sanctions and rewards based on student achievement, school choice for children in failing schools, and resources for states and districts to identify and improve low performing schools. In addition, President Bush seeks to hold states accountable for moving limited English proficient students to English fluency and using research based instruction to ensure that all children read by third grade.

Over the last few years the pendulum of education reform has begun to swing away from the focus on inputs that make up the status quo. The *No Child Left Behind* proposal brings us even closer to our goal of putting student performance first in federal education investments, and it is my hope that we will be able to use this momentum to improve the education achievement of <u>all</u> children.

This morning, we are fortunate to have experts on reading instruction and limited English proficiency students as well as experts in testing. I am looking forward to hearing their views -- and the views of our business representative -- on the President's proposal and how we can best implement these ideas. Again, welcome and thank you for taking the time to be with us. In just a few moments I will proceed with introductions, but, at this time, I will yield to ____ (probably Dale Kildee) for any statement he may wish to make.

APPENDIX D - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF EDWARD B. RUST, JR., CHAIRMAN, EDUCATION TASK FORCE, CO-CHAIRMAN, BUSINESS COALITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Statement of

Edward B. Rust, Jr.

Co-Chairman
Business Coalition for Excellence in Education
Chair
The Business Roundtable Education Task Force

Before the
Subcommittee on Education Reform
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives

On "Business Views of Assessments and Accountability in Education"

March 8, 2001

Mr. Chairman, and members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the invitation to testify today on the business view of assessments and accountability in education.

I am Edward B. Rust, Jr., Chairman and CEO of the State Farm Insurance Companies. State Farm has more than 75,000 employees in offices across the nation and more than 16,000 independent contractor agents who operate significant small business operations in the communities they serve. Our employees and agents, including many who serve on local school boards, are committed to supporting quality education in their communities.

I am co-chair of the Business Coalition for Excellence in Education, an ad hoc coalition that brings together leading U.S. companies and business organizations to support federal education legislation that satisfies a defined set of principles for education excellence so all children will have an opportunity to succeed. I also represent The Business Roundtable, a group of CEOs of leading companies, where I serve as chair of the education task force. I also co-chair of the Committee for Economic Development (CED) sub-committee on education policy and chair the Illinois Business Roundtable. I am a member of the boards for the National Alliance of Business and Achieve, Inc., an organization formed after the 1996 National Education Summit and governed by a board of Governors and corporate chief executives. I am also vice-chair of the Business-Higher Education Forum, an organization of business leaders and university chancellors and presidents.

As you know, business leaders understand the impact education has on our current and future workforce and our customers, and we share many of your concerns about the best ways to improve education so all students have the skills necessary to be successful. I am here today speaking on behalf of many of the groups representing employers who wish to have a positive impact on this issue.

Context for Education in the 21st Century

Today, more than ever, we live in a global economy where competition and technology are changing the workplace and impacting economic success for all Americans. U.S.

schools must change if they are to prepare all students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. This is not a partisan issue.

The clearest predictor of success for college, for the workplace, or for participation as an informed consumer is a high quality education. In a knowledge-based economy, the advantage given to those who are well educated will only increase. That is why the business community is so passionate about ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed by insisting that school systems adopt higher standards, use high-quality assessments aligned to these standards, hold schools accountable for results, and provide supports to help students and teachers reach the standards.

As business leaders, we must constantly monitor our progress against projected results and actual returns. And we've learned that we can't improve what we don't measure. One of my colleagues at State Farm has a saying: "The checker gets what the checker checks." In other words, what you measure, and how, sends a very clear signal about what's important to you, and what you value.

Quality companies regularly set goals (our equivalent of academic content standards in education). They measure progress in all operations. And they use the information gained from assessments to make continuous improvements. Just as business must constantly monitor and make adjustments for progress, schools focused on performance and student achievement cannot succeed unless they know what they are trying to accomplish and can measure their progress towards these goals.

As important as assessments are, we understand that simply measuring educational performance is not the same as improving it. For this reason, business also strongly supports:

Standards. Describing what students need to know and be able to do is a necessity. We would be the first to acknowledge that not all of the state standards in place today are of high enough quality or rigorous enough. But, we continue to support further development of standards-based education systems in the states and a federal role in providing states with information and resources to develop, improve, and benchmark rigorous academic standards that can be used to raise individual student performance to world-class levels.

Accountability. States, districts, principals and teachers must be held responsible for student learning and must develop teaching methods and strategies with the goal that all students meet high academic standards including disadvantaged and under-performing students. States should have policies of rewards and consequences to hold systems accountable over time for clear performance results.

Focus on teacher quality. The National Alliance of Business, The Business Roundtable, The National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce recently released a report focusing on the need to invest in teacher quality. *Investing in Teaching* recognizes that high quality teachers are crucial to any efforts to improve student achievement. We support a new model of teacher preparation and professional

development, a model of pay tied to performance that includes a new employment compact with teachers, and a school environment that provides teachers the freedom and flexibility needed to achieve results.

An Increased focus on math and science. We strongly urge additional resources targeted towards math and science education with a strong emphasis on the effective use of technology to help improve student achievement.

Professional development. Teachers and administrators require meaningful preparation and continuing education focused on content knowledge, improved teaching skills and school management.

School autonomy. School autonomy provides individual schools the responsibility and accountability to make decisions needed to achieve high performance and accountability.

Parental involvement. Involved parents support the learning process, influence schools and make choices about their children's education.

Learning readiness. Learning readiness recognizes the importance of preparing children to be able to learn before they come to school. Learning barriers caused by poverty, neglect, violence or ill health are addressed through strong partnerships between public and private agencies and by providing meaningful, high-quality pre-kindergarten education for disadvantaged children.

Technology. Technology is a tool that should be used to improve learning and productivity, broaden access to knowledge and help teachers, parents and students maximize the opportunities for students to achieve their expectations.

Safety and Discipline. An environment where physical security and a structured, well-managed program are maintained is essential. Student learning is best achieved in a safe, well-disciplined and caring environment.

My testimony today focuses on testing and assessments. Yet it's important to remember that in order to have a vital testing and assessment program, a school system focused on performance and achievement must have these initial building blocks to succeed. With this understanding, the business community endorses the following recommendations:

Business Recommendations

The **Business Coalition for Excellence in Education** recently released a statement of "Principles for K-12 Education Legislation" including specific recommendations for systemic change in our K-12 education system and identifying areas of special focus we believe are necessary to help all children succeed in school. These principles were developed based on many of the examples of successful state and local education reform efforts in which The Business Roundtable, the National Alliance of Business and others have been key participants. We believe that our statement of Principles outlines the

central components that must be included in meaningful education reform and hope that our recommendations will be considered.

Aligning Systems to Standards. One of the key issues we face is how all the pieces of a strong educational system are aligned. The federal government has a role in helping states develop and maintain rigorous academic standards in all core subjects and stressing the importance of benchmarking these standards to international levels. States should be provided specific support for the joint planning and design among education authorities to help them align systems of teacher preparation, professional development, curriculum development, assessments, and accountability to high state academic standards.

Supporting Annual State Testing. We strongly support annual assessments of student academic progress in the core subjects of reading and math in grades 3-8. Well constructed, academically sound tests aligned to state standards can be a useful diagnostic tool for teachers to help students meet their highest academic potential. The assessments must measure student progress and provide disaggregated data that will help identify points of intervention for schools, teachers, and individual students who need additional educational assistance. The Business Roundtable, the National Alliance of Business, and now the Business Coalition for Excellence in Education have all taken strong positions in support of annual testing in reading and math.

The Committee for Economic Development's recent report entitled *Measuring What Matters: Using Assessment and Accountability to Improve Student Learning* points out

that tests are a means, not an end, in school reform. Assessment and accountability systems must be a part of the educational plan that provides the data and information necessary to make informed decisions about student progress. Continuous review of assessment systems must be part of school improvement plans. As the report notes, although there are valid concerns about some testing practices, we cannot wait for the "perfect" test. Instead, we must continue to evaluate and improve the existing assessment systems because they provide the best means for charting our progress in improving student achievement. The debate over testing should not be about whether to rely on tests, but how best to improve and use them to enhance educational outcomes.

As business leaders, we are often faced with the need to relocate employees. We know that one of the first things employees consider when making a decision about taking a new job or relocating to a new area is the strength and vitality of the school system and whether their child will be provided a comparable education to the one they are leaving behind. Annual assessments aligned to state standards that measure individual student progress allow parents to be informed consumers of their child's education. And most importantly, assessments provide the information necessary to help determine that their child will not miss critical skills and competencies simply because they've moved to another school or district. We are not calling for a national test. However, there is strong merit in having a benchmark for comparison by encouraging states to use tests such as NAEP to allow parents and communities at large to make informed comparisons. At the same time, we need to allow states and districts the flexibility to develop an assessment system that best meets the needs of their students.

We recognize there is a cost for implementing annual testing. However, the cost in not doing so is far greater. Achieve recently did a survey of the 50 states to determine the current cost of state assessment programs. There's a wide range of costs associated with testing. Texas spends around $1.2 million to test a typical grade of 300,000 students in reading and math. Michigan spends nearly $2.5 million per grade to test approximately 130,000 students but their students are tested in 4-core subjects once in elementary, middle and high school. Maryland spends approximately $1.8 million to test a typical grade of 60,000 students in 4-core subjects. Development costs appear to be a small portion of the overall costs involved in the assessment process with scoring and administration costs accounting for the highest amount of the total cost for an assessment system.

But just mandating annual state testing is not sufficient. The business community in Illinois has joined with superintendents from the 54 largest school districts in the state to propose legislation that will call for a thoughtful implementation of state testing requirements. The process includes a transition period for implementing the new tests, including time for professional development for teachers in both standards and assessment literacy. We can't hold teachers accountable for both teaching to the level of the standards and for assessment results if we haven't provided time and development for them to truly become standards and assessment literate.

In states where there isn't a current system of annual state assessments in all grades 3-8, many school districts have adopted their own protocols for annual testing. The problem

with relying on non-standard tests is that there is little consistency from district to district in the rigor and alignment of tests and a lack of information as to whether an individual student has mastered the same material at the same level as peers in other schools, districts and states. One way to demonstrate the need for standards aligned testing is to compare scores on spelling tests involving two fifth-graders from different districts. On the surface, if both students earn a grade of 100%, you would assume that they are equally good spellers. But if you later determine that one student's spelling list included the words "cat, dog and ball" and the other student was assessed based on his spelling list of "punctual, excellence and efficiency," it's clear that the level of achievement is different. If an assessment system aligned to standards is developed by states to test students annually in grades 3-8, some of the additional cost that one might expect with annual testing may instead become a reallocation of money that is currently spent on non-standardized tests.

We believe that implementation of an effective system of annual testing must include:

- The development of assessment systems aligned to state standards with provisions for continuous review and improvement.

- Dedication of resources for the professional development for teachers and administrators in standards and assessment literacy.

- Development of tests that provide the diagnostic information needed by teachers to remediate deficiencies in student learning and help identify schools and districts requiring additional resources or assistance in order to fulfill the promise that no child be left behind.

- Federal aid, particularly under the current Title I program, directed primarily at providing additional educational assistance for students identified through assessments as needing help to reach standards and for low-income areas.

- The federal government should also provide states with high quality, research based data, including international data, to benchmark standards, curricula and assessments to those in other states and world-class programs.

Basing state accountability on increasing student performance. Superintendents, principals, and teachers should be held accountable for increasing achievement and be supported by aligned systems of assessments, standards and curriculum for academic content. Performance data should reflect student progress toward high standards. Accountability systems should have clear rewards for increasing achievement and consequences for persistently failing schools.

- Establish rewards. States should design accountability systems that offer financial rewards for high performing schools, principals, and teachers who improve student

achievement, especially for schools located in areas of high concentrations of poverty.

- Establish consequences for results. States should establish accountability systems with clear consequences for schools, principals, and teachers who persistently fail over time to meet standards. Consequences may include replacing personnel, restructuring or closing schools, and providing options for students to enroll elsewhere.

A New Compact with the States

We recognize that the approach we are recommending is not provided for in the current Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and that the Act needs to be rebuilt to include increased accountability for student achievement. The ESEA should offer states greater flexibility in return for greater accountability for results, including annual testing to effectively measure student academic progress. Real rewards and consequences are needed with the support and flexibility states require to achieve the results.

Federal funds provided to states should be expected to help improve student achievement. States should be given flexibility to make decisions and not be overburdened by detailed processes nor be evaluated based on success in filling out forms rather than success in educating children. All federal funding should be linked to state investments based on a common agenda of priorities with clear accountability for achieving results. One method

of effectively using federal funds to achieve the result of higher student achievement is to encourage groups of states to collaborate on the development of high quality assessments properly aligned to strong state standards.

I can't emphasize enough that the course we need to take is uncharted in current ESEA structures. The requirements of the 21st century will mean changing some practices of the past. I urge you to take on these challenges, and be assured of our support.

I would be happy to answer any questions you have.

Business Coalition for Excellence in Education

Companies:

3Com Corporation
3M Company
Agere Systems
Agilent Technologies, Inc.
AOL Time Warner
Apple Computer, Inc.
Applied Materials
AT&T
The Boeing Company
Broadcom Corporation
Caterpillar, Inc.
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National Organizations

Advanced Medical Technology Association
AeA
American Business Conference
Association for Competitive Technology
The Business Roundtable
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The Council of Growing Companies
Council on Competitiveness
Electronic Industries Alliance
Industrial Research Institute
Information Technology Association of America
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National Association of Manufacturers
The National Council on Economic Education
National Association of Partners in Education
National Commission on Entrepreneurship
National Venture Capital Association
Semiconductor Industry Association
Society for Human Resource Management
Software & Information Industry Association
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Technology Workforce Coalition
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Regional Business Coalitions

Berks Business Education Coalition (PA)
Delaware Business/Public Education Council
Indiana Chamber of Commerce
Inland Empire Economic Partnership (CA)
Northern Virginia Technology Council
Pittsburgh Technology Council
Southwestern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center

Business Coalition for Excellence in Education*

Principles for K-12 Education Legislation

In a world of global competition and rapid technological advances, U.S. schools must prepare all students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. **To achieve this goal, our school systems must adopt higher standards, use high-quality assessments aligned to these standards, and hold schools accountable for results, so that all students have the opportunity to succeed.** Federal investments must help each state implement a standards-based, performance-driven education system that is carefully aligned to the goal of higher student achievement. The Business Coalition for Excellence in Education urges Congress to enact bipartisan legislation that embodies the following principles.

Achieving Systemic Reforms

- **Standards:** All states should have high-quality, rigorous academic standards that reflect the levels of student achievement necessary to succeed in society, higher education, and the workplace. The federal government should provide all states with the information and resources to develop, continuously improve, and benchmark rigorous academic standards that can be used to raise individual student performance to world-class levels.
- **Assessments:** All students should be tested annually with high-quality assessments aligned to state standards. The purpose must be to measure the progress of school, teacher, and student achievement against standards and to identify where additional support is needed for students to reach them.
- **Student Achievement:** Assessments should be used as diagnostic tools to ensure that all students, particularly those identified as under-performing, receive the assistance they need to succeed in reaching high academic standards. Similarly, federal leadership should ensure that pre-school aid focuses on helping prepare children to enter school ready to learn.
- **Accountability:** States, districts, and principals should ensure that all students, including disadvantaged and under-performing students, meet high academic standards. States should have policies of rewards and sanctions to hold systems accountable for improving the performance of students, teachers, and principals. Such policies should be based on performance, including student achievement.
- **Flexibility:** States, localities, and schools should have flexibility for their educational organization, innovation, and instruction while being held accountable for raising student achievement.
- **Alignment:** States must ensure that high quality assessments, accountability systems, teacher preparation and training, and curriculum are aligned with high state standards so that students, teachers, parents, and administrators can measure progress against common expectations for student achievement.
- **Data, Research, and Best Practices:** Student achievement data should be collected regularly, and made public in formats that can guide the decision-making of teachers, parents, and students to improve performance. Research must be pertinent to standards-based education systems to enable teachers to apply proven findings in the classroom.

Areas of Special Focus

- **Math and Science Excellence:** Efforts must be undertaken to increase significantly the number of skilled math and science teachers in K-12 by substantially improving the quality of their preparation and professional development and by expanding recruitment incentives. Investments must focus on raising student achievement in math and science by encouraging the use of world-class educational materials and instructional practice.
- **Teacher Preparation and Training:** It should be a national priority to increase significantly the quality, professionalism, and career opportunities within teaching. States should ensure that teachers have the necessary skills and expertise in the content areas in which they teach. They should ensure that teacher preparation and professional development programs include training to integrate relevant technologies into the classroom. Professional development programs should include principals.
- **Technology:** Technology and the Internet must be integrated into all appropriate aspects of teaching and learning to improve students' 21st century skills as well as educational accountability and administrative effectiveness. Aid should be provided to states and districts to help identify, acquire, and utilize the best available technology and to help teachers integrate it into the curriculum.

* An ad hoc coalition of leading U.S. corporations and business organizations that support these principles in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

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BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE: EDWARD B. RUST JR.

Edward B. Rust Jr. is chairman of the board and chief executive officer of State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, Bloomington, Ill. He is also president and chief executive officer of State Farm Fire and Casualty, State Farm Life, State Farm Life and Accident Assurance, State Farm Annuity and Life Insurance, State Farm County Mutual of Texas, State Farm Lloyds, Inc., State Farm Companies Foundation, State Farm Investment Management Corp. and State Farm International Services.

A native of Illinois, Rust joined State Farm in 1975 at the Dallas, Texas, regional office. He moved to the corporate law department in 1976 as an attorney, became senior attorney – agency later that year and was named assistant vice president in 1978. He was elected vice president in 1981. He was elected executive vice president, chief operating officer and a director in 1983. He became president and chief executive officer in 1985 and was elected to the additional post of chairman of the board in 1987.

A graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, Rust holds both juris doctor and master of business degrees from Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. Rust is chairman of the American Enterprise Institute, chairman of the Illinois Business Roundtable and vice chairman of the Financial Services Roundtable.

He serves on the board of directors of BITS, the Technology Group for the Financial Services Roundtable; Helmerich and Payne, Inc., Tulsa, Okla.; and McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., New York.

Nationally recognized as a leader of the business community's efforts to improve the quality of education in the United States, he is co-chairman of the Business Coalition for Excellence in Education and served on President Bush's Transition Advisory Team committee on education. He is chairman of The Business Roundtable's Education Task Force, vice chairman of the Business Higher Education Forum, co-chairman of the Committee for Economic Development's subcommittee on education studies, a director of Achieve, Inc., and served on the National (Glenn) Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21st Century.

He is past chairman of the National Alliance of Business, past chairman of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and serves on the board of directors of the American Council of Life Insurance.

He is a trustee of Illinois Wesleyan University and a member of the Business Advisory Council of the University of Illinois College of Commerce and Business Administration. He is a former member of the advisory council of the Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

He is a former trustee of The American Institute for Property and Liability Underwriters and a former member of the board of overseers of The Institute for Civil Justice. Rust is a member of the Texas and Illinois bar associations.

In addition, Rust is active in his community. He is a former member of the board of the McLean County United Way and the YMCA of McLean County.

jp/sv/2/01

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Edward B. Rust, Jr.		
1. Will you be representing a federal, State, or local government entity? (If the answer is yes please contact the Committee).	Yes	No X
2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1998: NONE		
3. Will you be representing an entity other than a government entity?	Yes X	No
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you will be representing: BUSINESS COALITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION THE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE		
5. Please list any offices or elected positions held and/or briefly describe your representational capacity with each of the entities you listed in response to question 4: CO-CHAIR, BUSINESS COALITION FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION CHAIR, EDUCATION TASK FORCE		
6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract: NONE		
7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing? If so, please list: NONE	Yes	No

Signature: Edward B. Rust Jr. Date: 3-5-01

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

APPENDIX E - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF KURT LANDGRAF, PRESIDENT, EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE, PRINCETON, N.J.

Testimony

of

Kurt M. Landgraf

President and Chief Executive Officer

Educational Testing Service

before the

Education Reform Subcommittee

of the

House Committee on Education and

the Workforce

on

Measuring Success:

Using Assessments and Accountability

To Raise Student Achievement

March 8, 2001

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee. My name is Kurt Landgraf and I am the President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Educational Testing Service (ETS). ETS, a nonprofit organization, headquartered in Princeton, New Jersey, is known for its leadership in testing, measurement and research. We administer over 11 million tests a year worldwide. We have been the prime contractor for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) since 1983, and we serve as the general contractor for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). ETS also develops and administers the SAT for the College Board, the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE), the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

We have three for-profit subsidiary corporations. The Chauncey Group International develops and administers occupational certification and professional assessment programs. ETS Technologies is devoted to developing and advancing technologies to support on-line learning and assessment applications. Our third subsidiary, called ETS K-12 Works, was created to provide testing and measurement services to the nation's elementary and secondary schools.

As the president of the nation's largest educational measurement institution, I understand the value of testing and the vital role it should play in education reform. Well-designed tests that are tied to standards and curriculum can provide useful information to guide instruction and help students learn. Test results can also provide

useful data to guide sound education policy decisions. The issue before us is not producing and administering just another test. The challenge before us is to muster the political, moral and professional will to improve student learning and achievement. We need to provide resources and supports to help teachers teach and help students learn and to monitor progress via well-designed assessments.

Today I would like to provide some remarks on President Bush's education reform proposal, "No Child Left Behind." I believe in the President's plan. It is the right thing for our country, and it is doable. It calls for high standards, strong accountability, and annual standards-based assessments. Results from these tests will provide important information that the American people and policymakers need to move this nation forward and ensure significant education reform. Most importantly, the President's plan homes in on closing stubbornly persistent achievement gaps among different groups of students.

Without solid and frequent information gathered from student assessments, it will be difficult for us to know if each child is mastering the material appropriate for his or her age and grade. Yearly assessments will help provide teachers and school administrators with the critical information they need to enable each and every student to learn.

ETS supports the 3rd through 8th grade testing plan, but testing alone is not enough. It is just one step in education reform. It is a misuse of tests when nothing is done to change poor results. If we take no action to improve teaching and learning, we would just be using children as "extras" in a high profile political drama while undermining the social and economic prospects of the nation in the process. In addition to giving tests, we must take the necessary steps to help teachers and students improve classroom achievement so that the results improve the next time we test.

Today, I want to talk about how to help move the President's plan forward. As requested, I will address the following three issues: (1) increasing accountability in closing the achievement gap, (2) annual testing in reading and mathematics, and (3) using NAEP in conjunction with state assessments. I will conclude with some recommendations.

Increasing Accountability in Closing the Achievement Gap

The "achievement gap"—the difference in school performance tied to race/ethnicity—does not appear to be closing. Data over a period of thirty years from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)[1] show that achievement among students overall has gradually increased in math and remained about the same in reading and science. But the gap between White and Black students has been widening over the

[1] U. S. Department of Education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. National Center for Education Statistics. *NAEP 1999 Trends in Academic Progress: Three Decades of Student Performance*, NCES 2000-469, by J.R. Campbell, C.M. Hombo, and J. Mazzeo. Washington, DC 2000.

past 10-15 years in mathematics and reading in middle and high school. The gap between Hispanic and non-Hispanic students also persists.

It is unconscionable that in the United States of America—where people from around the globe come to find the "land of opportunity"—we have a test score achievement gap. There are many theories as to why it exists and what it will take to end it once and for all. One of the keys to closing the gap is having the data to understand it, helping teachers use test results appropriately, providing schools with well-targeted systems, tools and resources, and holding schools accountable for eradicating the gap.

The President's plan calls for school-by-school report cards with mathematics and reading test results disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, poverty, students with/without disabilities and English proficiency. These results—linked to school factors, such as subject time on task, teacher qualifications, preparation and placement, alignment of curriculum and standards, and instructional practices—will help diagnose problems and design remedies to improve student achievement across all groups.

I think the President got accountability right when he based his sanctions and rewards on closing achievement gaps and improving English proficiency. Like any good executive, he has focused attention on the areas where change must take place. Thoughtfully designing incentives and sanctions and targeting resources to identified needs—this is how we can make a difference.

As the highly respected researchers associated with CRESST[2] argue, creating an accountability system does not automatically produce a productive learning environment. The rewards/sanctions system needs to be carefully planned if it is to avoid being trivial, counterproductive or corrupted.

Annual Testing in Reading and Math

Good testing, done right, is a good thing. Without standardized testing, parents and taxpayers can't know how much their students have learned relative to standards or to other students. Test results, used in conjunction with other information, help us make informed decisions about best practices in teaching. They can also help us compare our students' achievement with that of students in other nations. We often focus on "inputs" to education: how many books, how much money, how many teachers. These are very important. But the result—student learning — is what this enterprise is all about. If we are not measuring critical results accurately and often, we cannot know where we are going or how we are going to get there.

I believe the benefits of annual testing of children in grades 3-8, as they develop foundational learning skills, are enormous. The key is to develop tests that measure the curriculum and for schools to use the results to improve student learning. This means that scores must be published in a timely manner and that parents, teachers, and

[2] Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing

administrators must understand how to interpret the results. In addition, the test results should lead to a plan of action to help students build toward mastery of standards. The real challenge in the President's plan is to do what needs doing to truly achieve educational reform. The testing exercise must become a "learning event" for students, teachers and parents.

Given sufficient resources from Washington and the states, I think this will happen. Test results will help promote learning. The ultimate effect of clear standards, relevant curricula, well-trained educators, and valid assessments working in concert, will be an upgraded education system, increased student achievement, closing of the achievement gap, and yes, assurance that no child is left behind. I agree with President Bush that there is no greater purpose than this.

Its "Doability": What It Will Take

President Bush's plan will require testing some 22 million students in grades 3 through 8 every year in reading and math. That's 12 tests —one each in reading and math for each of the six grades — per state, or 600 tests per year. Fifteen states already have tests for students in these subjects in those grades. But the President's plan requires—and rightly so—that such tests be aligned with the state's academic standards. Only seven states currently use tests aligned with the state's standards in those subjects for those grades. Eleven more states test in all but one of those grades, and three others test in all but two of those grades. But 21 states test in three or fewer of the six grades and would

have to at least double the majority of students they test annually. Thus, a major test creation and administration effort will be required by a number of states. This is an ambitious undertaking, but it is doable given sufficient time and resources.

How Tests are Developed

Developing a high quality test, even in just one subject for one grade, is a lengthy multi-step undertaking. Unreliable data and costly mistakes keep reminding us that we should spend what it takes to get it right the first time. It is a process that usually takes about 18-24 months, including refinements to the test form. There are eight basic steps in the test development process.

1. *Defining purpose and objectives.* Careful consideration must be given to the students who will be taking the test and for what purposes the test is being developed. This information will affect the content, the types of test questions, the length of the test and difficulty, and thus the time and cost.
2. *Convening Development Committees* to write test specifications. At ETS, our technical experts work jointly with state officials and their designated experts on the subject standards to determine not only the content of the test but the form it will take, the types of questions to be included, the number of each type of question, and their level of difficulty. These specifications are based on the state's content standards and its initial statement of target performance levels.
3. *Question-Writing and Review.* Test questions are usually written by a combination of state-designated experts, testing company staff, teachers, and outside experts, depending on the state's requirements. Each question must be reviewed to ensure that it is clear and unambiguous, that reviewers agree on the intended correct response, or the number of points to be given to

constructed-responses to an open-ended question, that the question is fair to all test takers, and that it is in appropriate editorial style.

4. *Pretesting* for fairness and reliability and to ensure accuracy is conducted before tests are administered on a large scale. Results of the pretest indicate the difficulty of each question and whether questions are ambiguous and therefore should be revised or discarded, or whether any answer choices should be revised or replaced.

5. *Data Analysis, Test Assembly, and Publication.* During this phase, test makers select questions that assess the required subject matter or skills. Both content and difficulty are considered in choosing items to match the requirements of the test specifications. After the test is assembled, other specialists, committee members, and outside experts ensure that the intended answer is the correct answer for each question and that the specifications for the test have been met.

6. *Test Administration.* Security of testing materials and standard testing procedures are very important. Special accommodations are provided, according to specified guidelines, for students with disabilities. Make-up tests for absentees must also be planned for.

7. *Scoring.* Establishment of score ranges and cut points associated with proficiency levels is undertaken based on the state's earlier specification of performance levels in conjunction with score data from a real test administration.

8. *Analysis and Reporting.* Test specifications and questions may be readjusted or realigned. Assessment reporting requirements vary. In this case, the President's plan calls for parents to get a report of how well their child is learning and for school-by-school report cards. Mathematics and reading results must be disaggregated by specified sub-groups. Test analysis results determine the extent to which statistical specifications for difficulty, reliability, intercorrelations of subparts, etc. have been met. Discrepancies between desired and actual results lead to improvements to be made for the next form of the test.

Any testing program is only as good as the weakest link in this process. These new proposed tests and uses of the results will demand validity, reliability and greater measurement precision than ever before.

Quality and Fairness in Testing

Ensuring the quality and fairness of tests is essential to test development and has many aspects. It includes the characteristics of the questions on the test, the validity and reliability of the test, and the way in which the results are used.

- *All tests and test questions* should be subjected to thorough, professional reviews to eliminate symbols, words, phrases, art, and content that may be considered to have a gender or ethnic bias. Questions should reflect the multicultural nature of our society, with all groups represented with appropriate, positive references. In addition, statistical analysis should be used to identify specific questions on which minority group test-takers and majority test-takers, who are matched according to their similar knowledge/skills on the subject tested, perform significantly differently. Such questions should be reviewed by outside experts as to their fairness and removed if judged unfair.
- *Reliability* – the consistency throughout the test and from one edition of the test to another – is a critical indicator of the accuracy of a test. Performance on one version of the test should reasonably predict performance on any other version of the test. If reliability is high, results will be similar, no matter which version a test-taker completes or which scorer of an essay is used.

- *Validity* is the essential measure of whether the test is doing what it is supposed to do for a particular purpose. It is the extent to which inferences and action made on the basis of the test scores are appropriate. Validity is based on logical and empirical evidence.
- *How test scores are used.* The President's plan creates a testing landscape where test results will not just sit in a file folder. These results should be used to diagnose a student's needs, to help determine promotion to the next grade, or to suggest remediation. The test score data should inform subsequent action. This means that score data must be reported in time and in a format to serve these purposes. ETS is concerned that adding more volume to test score data, without the means to manage the data, will not inform instruction. Therefore, we suggest that Congress encourage states and districts to undertake the development of data management systems that will support serious analysis of the test results by the professionals responsible for advancing student achievement. Specifically, we recommend that Congress authorize and fund a challenge grant program to utilize technology in the service of test administration as well as the management of assessment data.

Consequences are good, and essential to accountability. However, in high-stakes situations, it is important that guidelines for safeguards established by the profession are followed. These include the following basic principles relative to students:

- *Information on testing content.* Students should have adequate notice of the skills and content to be tested along with other appropriate test preparation material.
- *Opportunity to learn.* Students should have access to the curriculum and instruction that gives them the opportunity to learn the content and skills that are tested.
- *Access to preparation.* Students should have equal access to any specific preparation for test taking.
- *Repeated testing opportunities.* If the high stakes affect individual students, they should be given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their capabilities through repeated testing with alternate forms or through other construct-equivalent means.
- *Multiple measures.* Scores from large-scale assessments should not be used alone if other information will increase the validity of the decision being made.

Cost Issues

The cost of developing tests is of paramount interest. The President's plan calls for the federal government to cover the development costs for new K-12 state tests. ***Attachment A*** includes references to several recent studies that address cost issues from several perspectives. These studies illustrate the very wide range of costs associated with existing state assessments.

Factors that affect testing costs. A number of factors influence the cost associated with developing tests. These include:

1. *Type of test.* The test may be multiple-choice, open-ended, or a combination of both. It costs a few cents to score a multiple-choice answer sheet and from one to two dollars to score an essay.
2. *Security issues.* A state may decide to use the same form of a test every year for five years or to use a new test every year for five years.
3. *Administration procedures.* A state may decide that teachers should administer the test, or that outside professionals should do this. Sometimes unannounced visits by proctors may be made to observe the test administration.

The greatest variable related to costs of tests concerns quality. Factors associated with the quality of a test include:

- Test design
- Development of the test questions including who writes the questions, the procedures for review of the questions and pilot testing
- Test forms including the number of forms, how the forms are assembled and field tested
- Scoring accuracy involving multiple quality control checks for electronic scoring and rigorous training and quality control procedures for essay scoring

- Data analysis including multiple quality control checks for data files and programs for analyses
- Reporting which should provide understandable and useful information to students, teachers and parents

The stark reality of school and state budgets inevitably forces trade-offs. The availability of federal assistance will enable greater attention to quality and therefore improve the chances for valid, reliable and useful results. The availability of federal funds might also be used to harness the tremendous power of technology in the delivery and management of school assessments.

Economies in Testing. The cost of testing can be lowered through economies of scale, scope, and experience. The more students tested, the lower the cost. The per-student cost is expected to decline as fixed costs (e.g., for test development, distribution, and test preparation and scoring) are divided by a larger test population. When the same test administration is used for several purposes, such as to test the same students in more than one subject, the cost of tests per subject declines as more subjects are included. Testing costs may also decline as simpler and less expensive processes are discovered.

How to Do It Right

I believe the President's testing plan should go forward, but it should be done right and it should be done well. In order to do it right, I recommend the following:

1. Continued development of unambiguous standards in each state that the education community and the public accept as meaningful
2. State curricula that are linked to state standards
3. Instructional materials that are linked to the curricula
4. Professional development for teachers and administrators to understand the standards, know the curriculum, and skillfully use the learning materials
5. The opportunity for all students to learn the curriculum's material
6. Prior notice to students of testing requirements
7. Assessments linked to the standards
8. Alternative assessments for students with disabilities and those students who are non-native speakers of English
9. Effective remedial programs for students who fail, and a policy of non-retention if remediation is no better than promotion
10. Communication with the public for support and understanding
11. Resources to support the whole learning enterprise, not just the tests

The President's plan allows states three years to develop and implement the assessments. For some states, this will be insufficient time to do all that needs to be done. In fact, taking more time to expand the range of experts and stakeholders involved in the process can make the difference between success and failure. *I urge the Committee to balance the needed pressure for change with the needed time for doing it right.*

Recent history tells us that developing standards and creating new tests aligned with those standards is a time-consuming process. The fresh evidence of states' recent experience in implementing the testing requirements of Title I, mandated in 1994, is instructive. Only about 10 percent were able to comply in six years' time. [3] Of the 34 states whose testing systems the Education Department has now evaluated, only 17 have received full approval for meeting the Title I requirements. Fourteen states have been granted extra time, and three states must agree to make changes by a specified deadline. The testing systems of 16 other states, DC, and Puerto Rico are still under review, with decisions expected by this spring.

The Use of NAEP In the President's Plan

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), often called the "Nation's Report Card," is the most widely respected nationally representative, continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. NAEP provides a comprehensive measure of students' learning at critical junctures in their school experience. ETS is extremely proud to have served as the prime contractor for NAEP since 1983.

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[3] The law called for states to develop challenging content and student performance, the latter of which describe three levels: partially proficient, proficient, and advanced. It also required states to develop a set of high-quality, yearly student assessments in at least math and reading as the primary means of determining the yearly performance of each district and school in enabling children to meet the state's student performance standards. Such assessments must be aligned with the state's content and student performance standards, involve multiple up-to-date measures of student performance, and provide individual student interpretive and descriptive reports. Like President Bush's plan, results were to be disaggregated within each state, district, and school by gender, each major racial and ethnic group, by English proficiency status, by migrant status, by students with disabilities compared to non-disabled students, and by economically disadvantaged students.

This assessment has been conducted regularly since 1969. Until 1990, NAEP was solely a *national* assessment. Because the national NAEP samples were not, and are not currently, designed to support the reporting of accurate and representative state-level results, in 1988 Congress authorized a voluntary Trial State Assessment (TSA). Separate representative samples of students are selected for each jurisdiction that agrees to participate in TSA, and these jurisdictions receive reliable state-level data concerning the achievement of their students. In 1996, "Trial" was dropped from the title, based on numerous evaluations of the TSA program.

President Bush has proposed verifying state test scores by "confirming" them with NAEP results. For that to happen, all states would participate in the National Assessment, and NAEP 4th and 8th grade reading and math tests would be given every year instead of every two to four years. The meaning of "confirm" is operationally a complicated matter that will have to be considered by groups of experts in the coming months and must take into account the relationship between the contents of the NAEP assessments and state assessments.

Because NAEP is a Congressionally mandated and widely respected broad survey of student achievement in the U.S., it is reasonable for the President to propose using NAEP as part of his plan. NAEP is a broad measure of content and skills and therefore

provides invaluable information on what our children know and can do. However, how best to use NAEP in a confirmatory role deserves serious consideration.

As occurred with the TSA, I would suggest that the use of NAEP in its new proposed confirmatory role be conducted on a trial basis until such time as an independent evaluation certifies the rigor of the confirmations and the fairness of the process.

Most recently, 40 states ultimately participated in NAEP although 48 had signed up initially. Thus, the President 's proposal that all states participate in NAEP's annual reading and math assessments, and that Congress fund administration of those tests, seems doable.

Recommendations

- I urge the Committee to balance the needed pressure for change with the needed time for doing it right.
- I recommend that the committee include in its bill proper safeguards for test scores used in high-stakes situations.
- I recommend that NAEP be used as the instrument for confirming state assessment results, after additional study.
- I urge that technical assistance to help schools, districts, and states, in implementing this plan—including that provided through comprehensive regional assistance centers—be authorized and provided prior to the imposition of consequences.

- I urge the Committee to include in the bill an authority for a program of on-going research to document the progress and outcomes of the "No Child Left Behind" plan. We need to know whether students as a whole and among various subgroups did learn more, whether the achievement gap was closed, what factors increased those outcomes and at what cost.
- I urge the Committee to include in its ESEA reauthorization bill a new 21st Century State Assessment Challenge Grant program to support efforts of groups of states, working in collaboration with one another, to develop prototypes for the electronic delivery of state assessments. Such a program will help move existing state-of-the-art assessment technologies into state K-12 systems, expediting the provision of assessment results to students, parents, teachers, administrators and policymakers. Appropriate interventions could thus be applied sooner and more effectively to help assure that no child is left behind.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts as you proceed with considering this very important plan to re-invigorate education reform in our country. The education of all our children is the nation's top priority and ETS wholeheartedly endorses this goal.

ATTACHMENT A

Studies of Testing Costs

1. *Special Report on States' 2001 Testing Costs by the Pew Center on the States*[4]

Stateline.org conducted a survey of 50 states from February 5-14, 2001 via telephone calls to state departments of education. Data reported are for Fiscal Year 2001 unless otherwise indicated and represent only the costs of developing, administering and scoring the state test. The report indicates that states building new, aligned exams can spend from $25 to $50 per student. It includes a table of testing costs by state, although different states are testing different grades, not necessarily grades 3-8. The report notes that Texas this year is spending about $26.7 million to develop the test, administer and score it in grades 3-8 and one year in high school. California is reported as spending the most ($44 million) for testing in grades 2-11. Other high-spending testing states were: Florida ($22.4 million) for testing in grades 3-10; Massachusetts ($20 million) for grades 4, 8, 10, and a high school exit exam; Indiana ($19 million) for testing students in grades 3, 6, 8, 10, and a high school exit exam); Virginia (about $18 million) for 3, 5, 8, or end-of-course testing; and Maryland (about $17 million) for testing in grades 2-6, 8, and a high school exit exam. The lower-spending states, according to the study, included Montana ($282,000) for testing in grades 4, 8, and 11; West Virginia ($400,000) for K-11 testing; and New Mexico ($650,000) for testing in

[4] Tiffany Danitz. *Special Report: States Pay $400 Million for Tests in 2001.* Stateline.org: http://www.stateline.org/story.cfm?storyid=116627, February 27, 2001. A survey by the Pew Center on the States, a Washington, DC-based research group affiliated with the University of Richmond.

grades 3-9 and a high school exit exam. Iowa does not have a statewide assessment.

2. *A Review of State Testing Studies and Estimation Procedures, 2000*

A recent study by Richard Phelps reviews data on K-12 state assessment costs from several sources and discusses methods of estimation. He noted that from a school district's or state agency's point of view, there are five general cost categories: (1) purchased test materials and services (i.e., cash expenditures); (2) time of school, district, or state personnel; (3) time of the students taking the test; (4) administrative overhead, and (5) building overhead. [5]

3. *The Annual Survey of State Student Assessment Programs, Fall 1999*[6]

This annual survey of the Council of Chief State School Officers (Fall 1999) asked states to provide their total budget for 1997-98 assessment programs, plus related developmental projects. Figures ranged from highs of $27.4 million for Texas, $14 million for Indiana, $10.7 million for Massachusetts, $10.6 million for Ohio, and $9.3 million for Florida, to lows of $130,000 for Arkansas, and $150,000 for Montana. Data from some states, including New York and California, were missing.

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[5] Unless otherwise indicated, the information in this section is excerpted from: Richard P. Phelps, "Estimating the Cost of Standardized Student Testing in the United States," Journal of Education Finance v. 25 No. 3 (Winter 2000), p. 343-80.

[6] Council of Chief State School Officers, Data from the Annual Survey. State Student Assessment Programs. Volume I, Fall 1999. Data on the 1997-1998 Statewide Student Assessment Programs.

4. *Reports on North Carolina and Kentucky from the mid-late 1990s*

Two studies examined in detail the costs of developing and initially implementing assessments aligned with curriculum standards in Kentucky and North Carolina.[7] The state-level costs of developing and implementing a new assessment aligned with state standards are as follows:

For NC, the total 3-year state-level costs were $4.0 million ($1.34 million per year) for "test development" and $27.5 million ($5.5 million per year) in total (including not only development but also test administration, scoring, evaluation, etc.). As noted above, NC is one of the states that assess pupils' achievement in English and mathematics each year in grades 3-8. State-level expenditures of $4.59 per student/test were calculated for a test that combines multiple-choice, short answer, and open-ended essay responses.

For KY, the total 5-year state-level costs were $9.55 million ($1.9 million per year) for "test development" and $33.3 million ($6.67 million per year) in total (including not only development but also test administration, scoring, evaluation, etc.). KY tests pupils in different subjects for different years for grades 3-8, English achievement is tested every year except grades 5 and 8, while mathematics achievement is tested every year except grades 4 and 7. State

[7] Lawrence O. Picus and Alicia Trill, "Alternative Assessment Programs: What Are the True Costs", CRESST Technical Report 441, Feb. 1998; and Lawrence O. Picus, "Estimating the Costs of Student

expenditures of $6 and $9 per student/test were calculated for a multi-subject test with a larger proportion in performance-based format than North Carolina's.

5. *General Accounting Office Report on Student Testing, 1993*

A GAO study included interviews with testing firm officials and state agencies in 1990-1991 to learn more about one-time-only test development costs. [8] Testing officials reported their start-up development costs for large-scale, off-the-shelf, commercial tests ranged from one to a few dollars per student. However, costs for initial test development when a test is created from scratch averaged $10 per student when test questions are written to fit a state's curriculum or guidelines, when the draft is then tested on pilot groups of students and when revisions are made in the text, procedures, etc.

Assessment in North Carolina and Kentucky: A State-Level Analysis", by, CRESST Technical Report 408, Feb. 1996.

[8] U. S. General Accounting Office, *Student Testing: Current Extent and Expenditures, With Cost Estimates for a National Examination.* (Washington, DC: PEMD, 1993).

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Kurt M. Landgraf		
1. Will you be representing a federal, State, or local government entity? (If the answer is yes please contact the Committee).	Yes	No X
2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1998: None		
3. Will you be representing an entity other than a government entity?	Yes X	No
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you will be representing: Educational Testing Service Chauncey Group International ETS Technologies ETS K-12 Works		
5. Please list any offices or elected positions held and/or briefly describe your representational capacity with each of the entities you listed in response to question 4: Educational Testing Service -- President and CEO Chauncey Group International -- Chairman ETS Technologies -- Chairman ETS K-12 Works -- Chairman		
6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract: Please see Attached Sheet		
7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing? If so, please list:	Yes	No X

Signature: Kurt M. Landgraf Date: March 6, 2001

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

Committee on Education and the Workforce
Witness Disclosure Requirement — "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule CI, Clause 2(g)

6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:

Educational Testing Service:

Agency	Issuer	Contract Number	Award Date	Award Amount
Department of Education	National Center for Education Statistics	R902B990016	5/1/99	$96,167
	Office of Educational Research and Improvement	R902B99002	5/1/99	$88,421
	National Center for Education Statistics	R902F980001	5/1/98	$36,649,354
	National Center for Education Statistics	---------	4/15/98	$12,107
National Science Foundation		ESI-9731282	5/1/98	$1,742,334
Subgrants	Polaris Joint Vocational School District: Department of Education	---------	10/1/99	$140,045
	University of Southern California: Department of Education	R902B70006	4/1/98	$36,553
Subcontracts	University of California at Los Angeles: Department of Education	R305B960002	5/2/98	$281.043
	California Institutes of Technology: National Science Foundation	PC287265	11/10/98	$37,381
	Stevens Institute of Technology: Department of Education	R215U70021	10/1/97	$62,432
	Boston College: Department of Education	ED-98-CO-0009	5/1/98	$351,729
	Boston College:	ED-99-CO-0100	2/1/00	$169,813

Agency	Issuer	Contract Number	Award Date	Award Amount
	Department of Education			
	Boston College: Department of Education	----------	2/1/00	$54,554
	University of Southern California: Department of Education	R902BH990007	7/1/99	$8,200
	American Institutes for Research: Department of Education	RN94004001	3/11/99	$165,000
	Temple University: National Science Foundation	DUE-9951418	7/1/99	$33,633

Chauncey Group International:

Contract: N00140-98-C-H162 (DSST97); Issued by: FISC Norfolk Detachment Phila.; Value $4,400K; Term: Base Year plus 4 Option Years; Start Date: October 1, 1997.

Contract: 102592-00B02502; Issued by: U.S. Postal Service; Total amount $110,000; Term: November 2000 through March 16, 2001.

Contract: 2650-00-0170; Issued by: Social Security Administration; Amount $25,010.00; Term: September 29, 2000 through April 30, 2001.

ETS Technologies: None

ETS K-12 Works: None

APPENDIX F - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARK D. MUSICK, CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL ASSESSMENT GOVERNING BOARD, WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD naep

National Assessment Governing Board

National Assessment of Educational Progress

Testimony of

Mark D. Musick
Chairman
National Assessment Governing Board

Before the
Committee on Education and the Workforce
Subcommittee on Education Reform

"Measuring Success: Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement"

March 8, 2001

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Good Morning. Chairman Castle and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify before you today on "Measuring Success: Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement." My testimony today will address generally the accountability provisions in President Bush's education proposal *No Child Left Behind* and specifically the provisions affecting the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

My name is Mark Musick. I am President of the Southern Regional Education Board. This morning I will speak from the perspective of my role as Chairman of the National Assessment Governing Board—the citizen's group that oversees the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

TESTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The members of the Governing Board believe in the value of measuring and reporting regularly on student achievement as a basis for authorities responsible for education to take action to improve learning. Elementary and secondary education in the U.S. represents an annual investment of more than $300 billion. It is prudent and wise to measure and report the outcomes of that investment in appropriate ways, to interested audiences. Improving achievement is the aim, whether at the student, school, state or national levels.

For thirty-two years, the congressionally authorized National Assessment has been the only regular, periodic source of information for answering the question—how well are U.S. elementary and secondary students achieving? Prior to the creation of the National Assessment in 1969, there was no nationally representative information about student achievement. The many different tests administered by states and schools are not comparable and cannot be "added up" to get national data. In addition to its national results, the National Assessment is the only source of comparable state results. Congress authorized state-level assessments beginning in 1990, as a trial. Today, 40 or more states and jurisdictions participate in state NAEP.

The National Assessment provides periodic snapshots of student performance. These snapshots of student achievement taken periodically enable us to track change over time. NAEP tells us whether overall performance is improving and how well subgroups of students are doing.

While it is true, as some may say, that "weighing cattle more often" does not make them fatter, it is also true that weighing cattle periodically can give farmers needed information that they may use to help their cattle get fatter.

Similarly, the purpose of student assessment is not to increase <u>what</u> students know and can do, but to provide a measure of <u>how much</u> they know and can do, so that teachers, parents, administrators and policymakers can determine whether it is "good enough" and whether corrective action is needed. The assumption is NOT that academic achievement

is raised as a result of testing. The assumption is that by testing, we will have data to inform decisions about whether action is needed and what steps to take to help students improve their academic achievement.

If we do not know how well students can read, write, compute, and apply scientific and technical knowledge, whether there has been progress or stagnation in achievement, and whether there are differences between sub-groups of students, on what basis would we know that a problem exists and that some action is needed, or that some students indeed are being left behind? From a societal perspective, having information on academic achievement provides an indicator of our nation's students' readiness for work, service in the armed forces, and higher education.

Without such information it is too easy to be lulled into complacence about the sufficiency of human capital in our society.

Complacence about the status of educational achievement can be dangerous to our national well-being. Senator John Warner, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, is a new member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. In his questioning of Secretary Paige two weeks ago on President Bush's education proposal, Senator Warner focused on the connection between education performance and national security. He noted that our education system produces too few citizens with technical and scientific proficiency, the rising number of HB-1 visas to permit foreign workers to fill technical jobs that our citizens can't perform, the vulnerability of sensitive

information systems—whether in the business world or the Pentagon—to unauthorized intrusion, and the grave potential risk to economic stability and defensive capability that these observations suggest.

NAEP is an indicator of the capacity of rising generations of citizens and workers. It provides information relevant to our nation's current and future well-being as crucial for policymaking as the data on the age of our population is for social security policy, health statistics are for setting priorities for medical research and development, and data on gross domestic product are for fiscal forecasting.

In 1963, then U.S. Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel, testified before a congressional committee much like today's. That committee was concerned that Russia's science and mathematics program was much more rigorous than ours. They viewed the perceived Russian educational advantage in science and mathematics as a partial explanation for the Russians having beaten us into space with the earlier launch of Sputnik. The committee made the connection that the outcomes of the U.S. education system have a significant and direct bearing on America's position in the world. In this light, Commissioner Keppel was asked, but was unable to answer the very reasonable question—how well are our students achieving? The inability to answer that question, and the recognition of the absolute importance of doing so, is what gave rise to the National Assessment. Today, NAEP can answer the question—how well are our students achieving—and answer it with credibility and public trust. We must never lose sight of the importance of being able to do so.

COULD NAEP BE USED TO CONFIRM STATE RESULTS?

I think that the answer is yes to the question—Could NAEP be used to confirm state results?

NAEP already is broadly used as one external measure of state education performance. About 40 states have participated in the six administrations of state NAEP from 1990 to 2000, although the specific number and particular states have varied somewhat. This high level of participation suggests that states view NAEP content and results as a fair representation of what students in their state know and are able to do. That states view NAEP content and results as fair is not surprising, since states actively participate in the design of NAEP and review the NAEP test content before deciding to sign up for state-level NAEP.

Some states view NAEP as a component of their state assessment system. About 19 have state legislation or regulations that require schools that are selected for the sample to participate in NAEP. States use their NAEP data in a variety of ways, including as an external point of reference for their state assessments and standards. State NAEP results are reported annually by the National Education Goals Panel and in the Edweek publication "Quality Counts" as valid, comparable indicators of state achievement; this reporting of state NAEP results is done with tacit approval of and without objection from the states.

These are some of the reasons why it is logical to consider using NAEP to confirm state results. NAEP's credibility and integrity are additional reasons.

Some states, on an informal basis, are already using NAEP to confirm state results. Using NAEP in a formal way to confirm the state results that would serve as the basis for federal rewards or sanctions would place higher stakes on NAEP than it has had in the past. This new role would introduce challenges for NAEP. There are numerous issues to address having to do with definitions of terms (e.g., disadvantaged student, achievement gap, and adequate yearly progress), criteria or standards for "confirmation," and procedures for submitting and reviewing state test results. I believe that these issues can be successfully addressed. President Bush's *No Child Left Behind* education proposal provides states two to three years to complete their grades 3-8 testing systems. With the extensive expertise available to NAEP, a two to three year time period for development should be sufficient to address many of the technical, policy and operational issues that can be anticipated now. Once operational, it would be normal to expect additional "fine-tuning" of the accountability system to be needed from time-to-time as well. We know that states have made adjustments in their accountability programs as they have developed and improved, and I am sure this would be true here also.

The Governing Board is developing "mock-ups" to illustrate what it might look like for NAEP to be used to confirm state results. This is a work in progress, using somewhat modified data from NAEP and from a state assessment program. Appended to my

testimony are charts that illustrate our work to date. We are doing this work to help surface issues and questions about how NAEP confirmation might work in the real world. What we have found so far is that NAEP results, if used with a "reasonable person" standard and "informed judgment" as the approach toward interpretation, could confirm the general direction of state results. However, NAEP alone should not be used to make determinations about a state's progress toward state standards on its own assessment program. Nor should NAEP alone be used to judge the rigor or quality of the state assessment program.

The *No Child Left Behind* proposal recommends that states be required to participate in annual state-level NAEP testing in grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics in order to provide for confirmation of state results. President Bush has not suggested that NAEP do less, or that assessments in science, writing, U.S. history, geography, the long-term trend, or any of the other subjects that are scheduled through the year 2010 be canceled. President Bush is asking NAEP to do more. It is important to be mindful, therefore, that a possible consequence of making one part of NAEP required for virtually all states may be to reduce the willingness of schools to participate voluntarily in these other assessments. We would want to work with you on incentives for schools and other approaches that would help maintain the high levels of school cooperation we have seen in the past.

In conclusion, with time and expertise to address the various challenges that lie ahead, and with the application of reasonable judgments, NAEP can be a useful source of information to use in confirming state results.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM?

The idea of using NAEP to confirm state results raises in the minds of some the potential that such use of NAEP could lead to a national curriculum.

From the time it was first proposed in 1963, and each time there has been a major change since, the National Assessment has been confronted with, acknowledged, and addressed fears that it would lead to a national curriculum. That such concerns are raised is no surprise in a society in which local control is the basic value in education governance. It is appropriate to raise such concerns and it is expected that such concerns will be raised. As the history of the National Assessment program attests, concerns about a national curriculum, national control of education, or the evolution of a national school board have been a part of the debate on NAEP and always are addressed effectively.

After more than thirty years of administering the National Assessment, more than a decade of state-level NAEP, and the advent of standards-based reporting for NAEP—all of which at their inception prompted voices of concern about national control—there is no evidence that we are any closer to a federally directed national curriculum at the beginning of the 21st century than we were at the beginning of the 20th century.

It may be true that 8th grade mathematics on the East Coast is more similar to 8th grade mathematics on the West Coast in 2001 than in 1901, and that Algebra I in North Carolina and North Dakota share more similarities than dissimilarities. However, this seems natural (and desirable) in a mobile society and is not a function of the National Assessment or of an effort to produce a national curriculum.

Checks and balances are built into the design of the National Assessment and its governance to ensure against encroachment on local control by the federal government. These checks and balances involve the design of the assessment, the governance of the assessment, the test development process, and test security procedures.

Design

The National Assessment tests only a sample of schools and, within schools, a sample of students. NAEP tests only in grades 4, 8, and 12. No individual, school, or district results are reported as a part of the regular NAEP program. Because there is not certainty that a school will be in the sample, because only one grade or at the most two are covered within a sampled school, and because results are reported at the national, regional and state levels only, there is no incentive for teachers to design their teaching plans to prepare students specifically for taking NAEP. With no incentive from NAEP that would affect teaching, there is no direct effect of NAEP on the curriculum.

Governance

The Governing Board is an essential part of the check and balance system that guards against encroachment on local control. The Board, by virtue of its legislatively determined composition, has a decidedly state and local orientation: two governors, two state legislators, two chief state school officers, a state and a local school board member, three teachers, two principals, a representative of the business community, curriculum and testing experts, and 4 members of the general public. The only federal member of the Governing Board—the Assistant Secretary for Research and Improvement—is non-voting.

A board with this composition will not be inclined to centralize or federalize control of education; is unlikely to miss or overlook even subtle usurpations of local authority over education; and will be competent in representing state and local interests.

The Board, by virtue of the authorizing legislation, is to perform its duties "independent of the Secretary and the other officers and offices of the Department of Education" and is to protect the assessment from "special interests and inappropriate influences." This independence helps ensure the integrity and credibility of the National Assessment. It is self-evident as well that the independence of the Governing Board from the Department of Education is an important part of the check and balance system that protects against the use of NAEP leading to a national curriculum or any erosion of local control.

As I have testified previously before Members of this committee, there is some ambiguity in the governance of NAEP. This ambiguity is based in part on the fact that the NAEP appropriation is made to the Department, which is thereby accountable for NAEP expenditures, and on the fact that day-to-day oversight of the NAEP grants resides within the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Basically, under the current arrangement, the Governing Board has responsibility for setting policy for NAEP but no line authority to ensure it is carried out.

While this has been working reasonably well, it is solely because of the personalities involved, not because of the logic of the organizational relationships. When there is a change in leadership, there will always be a risk to the degree of cooperation between the Board and NCES. This is an area of potential vulnerability; the system of checks and balances in the National Assessment should rely on clear and meaningful roles and responsibilities, not on personalities and goodwill.

Overall, however, the history of the National Assessment attests to the wisdom of Congress in codifying the categories of membership to the Board, in calling for the Board to be independent of the Department of Education, and in assigning the Board the special responsibility of protecting the National Assessment from special interests and inappropriate influences.

Test Development

Congress assigned the Governing Board the job of deciding what should be covered in each NAEP test and of approving every test question before it can be administered to a student. This sensitive work is thus assigned to an independent citizens' group that represents a clear state and local perspective. This is one more check against NAEP advancing a national curriculum.

To help decide what should be covered in each NAEP test, the Governing Board conducts a large-scale consensus process, consulting with teachers, principals, state and local curriculum specialists, and knowledgeable members of the public from across the country. Consensus is a "bottom up" process. It results in what is called a test framework, or "blueprint," in the subject to be assessed. Based on the recommendations from the consensus process, the test framework describes the subject and subcategories if any, the test objectives for each grade to be tested (i.e., 4, 8 and 12), and the mix of question types—whether multiple choice or essay style. Once a draft of the framework is prepared, the draft is given wide public review, including review by each state. A final framework is developed based on this review and put before the Governing Board for approval.

The final test framework represents a very broad consensus of what NAEP should test in grades 4, 8, and 12 in a particular subject. It represents agreement on what should be in NAEP for assessment purposes. If there is broad agreement in the field about what is fair

and appropriate to include in NAEP, there is every reason to view NAEP as consistent with state and local aspirations for the curriculum as locally determined, not to view NAEP as an outside intervention counter to state and local interests. The fact that forty-eight states voluntarily signed up to participate in NAEP in 2000 is another indicator that NAEP does not represent a threat to state sovereignty and local control over education.

However, more to the point is the fact that a NAEP framework in a subject does not constitute a curriculum. A curriculum in a subject provides a coherent scope and sequence across grades. A curriculum describes in detail what to teach in each grade; a philosophy of pedagogy in the subject; suggested lesson plans, texts, and materials; suggestions for within-class testing; and cross-references to state/local content and performance standards and assessments.

Although NAEP frameworks describe what should be tested, this can only be a sub-set of the content of a curriculum. NAEP frameworks, set at grades 4, 8, and 12, do not provide a scope and sequence across the grades, implied or otherwise. NAEP does not promote any particular approach to pedagogy or educational philosophy; its emphasis is on assessing what students know and can do, not how they are taught. Nor do NAEP frameworks make suggestions about lesson plans, texts, or materials to use in instruction.

Just compare the size of a state mathematics curriculum, with hundreds of pages, to the NAEP mathematics framework, a slim volume of just forty-six pages.

While it is true that states on their own may choose to examine NAEP frameworks when they develop their own curricula, and we know that many have, there is a "chicken and egg" aspect to this, since the consensus process uses state curricula as a source of input for the NAEP frameworks.

In sum, the assertion that a NAEP framework is the basis for a national curriculum just does not withstand scrutiny.

Test Security

Another source of the idea that NAEP could lead to a national curriculum is the possibility of "teaching to the test." However, due in part to rigorous security procedures, "teaching to the test" has not occurred with NAEP and is not likely to occur.

NAEP test booklets are delivered to sampled schools only a few days before testing. They are wrapped in plastic and are not to be opened until the time of test administration. For state testing, one-third of the schools are subject to unannounced on-site monitoring. The schools are told in advance that they may be monitored. In ten years of state NAEP, there has been no evidence that test booklets have been unwrapped early and test items revealed or taught to students prior to test administration. For national testing, NAEP contractors administer the tests, and there have been no instances of security breaches under that procedure. Although the Governing Board recommends that the use of contractors for test administration be expanded to state NAEP to reduce burden on

schools, doing so also would help assure test security. The tight security in NAEP prevents teaching to the test.

The design, governance, test development procedures, and test security protocols used in the National Assessment comprise an effective system of checks and balances that protect against NAEP leading to a national curriculum.

CONCLUSION

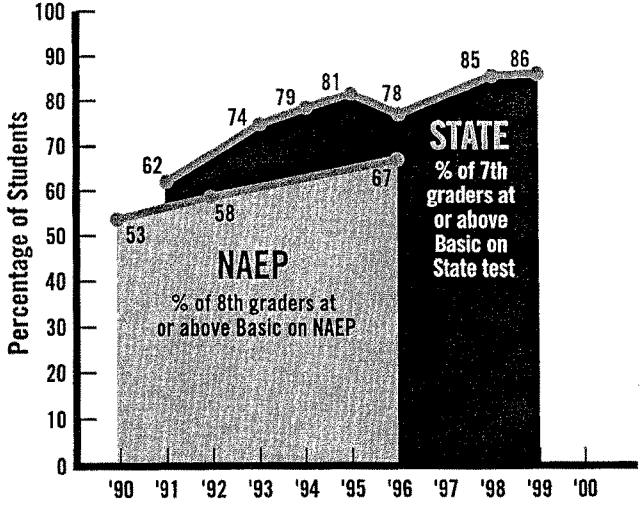
Measuring and reporting student achievement results, a pivotal part of the President's education plan, is a necessary component of efforts to improve student academic achievement. The National Assessment of Educational Progress already performs a crucial role in regularly informing the American public about national and state student academic achievement at the elementary and secondary levels. I believe that the National Assessment also can be used effectively to confirm the results of state assessments employed as a part of the President's education proposal.

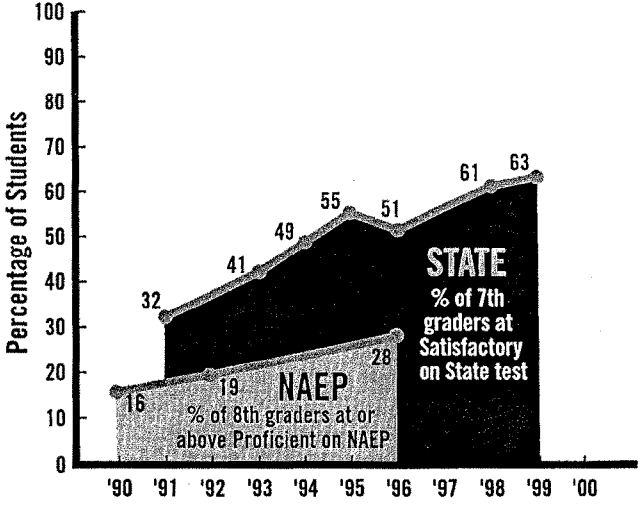
Appendix A

Using NAEP to Confirm State Results: A Simulation

State A – Mathematics, Grades 7 & 8

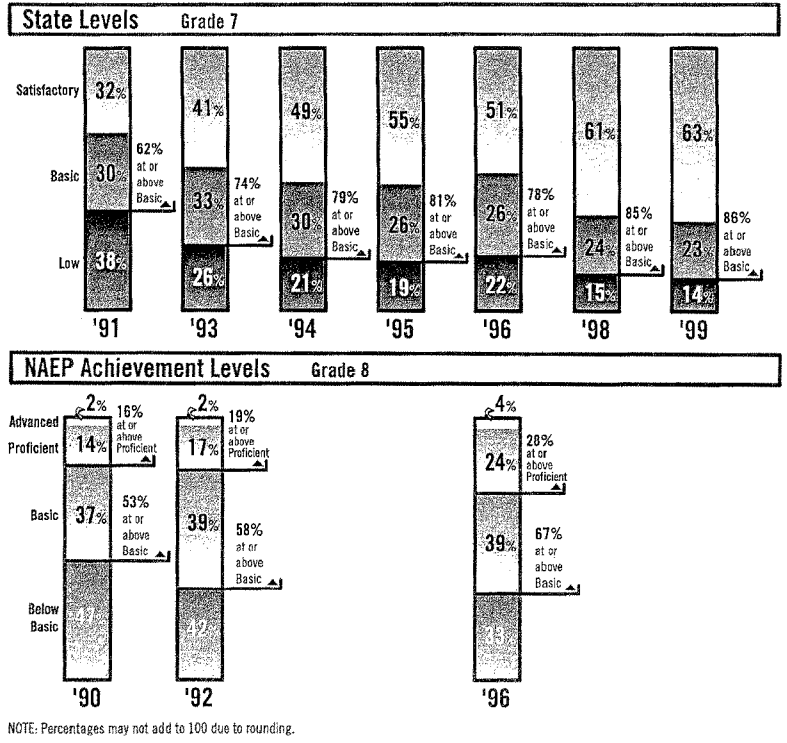
All students





State A – Mathematics, Grades 7 & 8

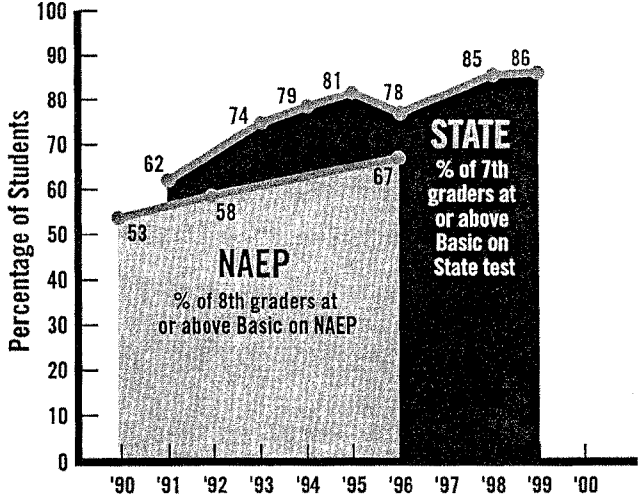
All students

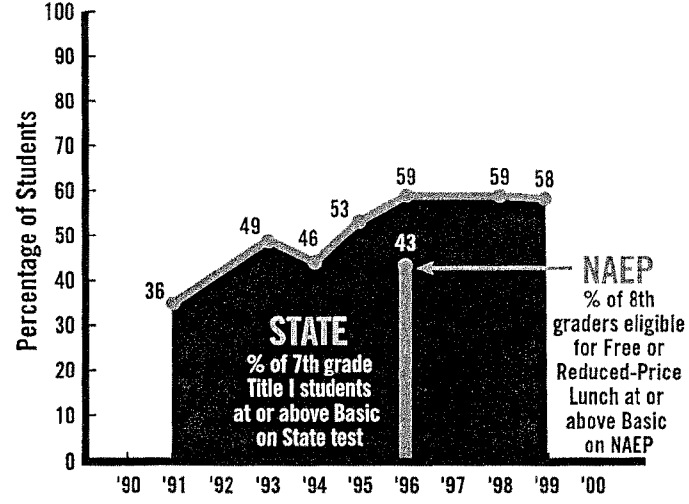


NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

State A – Mathematics, Grades 7 & 8

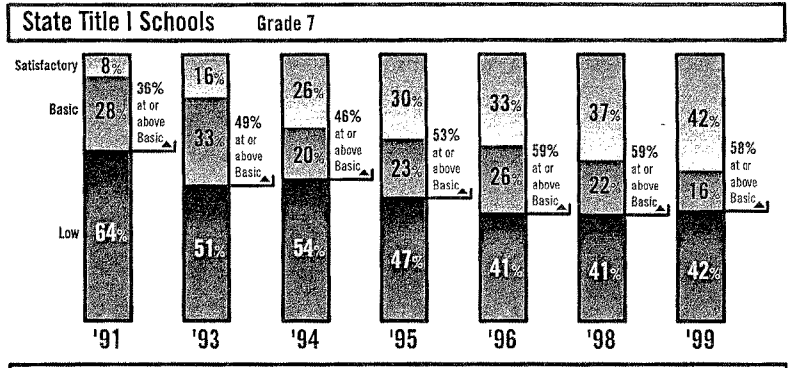
All students and disadvantaged students

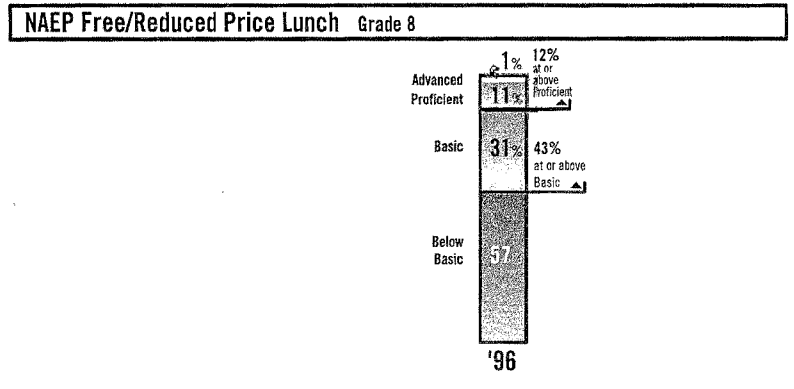




State A – Mathematics, Grades 7 & 8

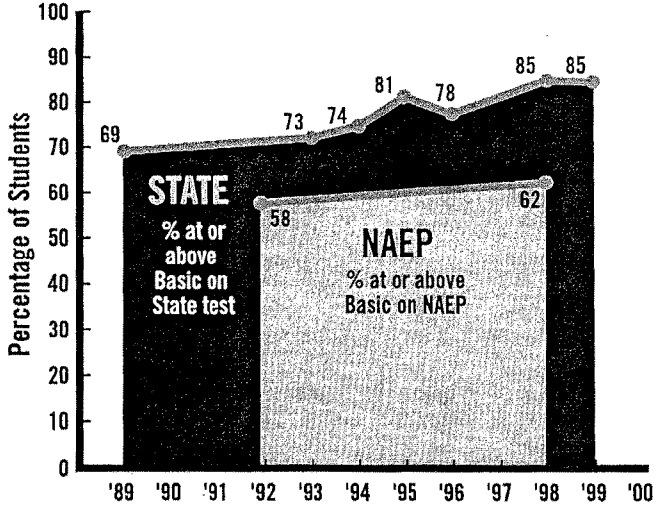
Disadvantaged students

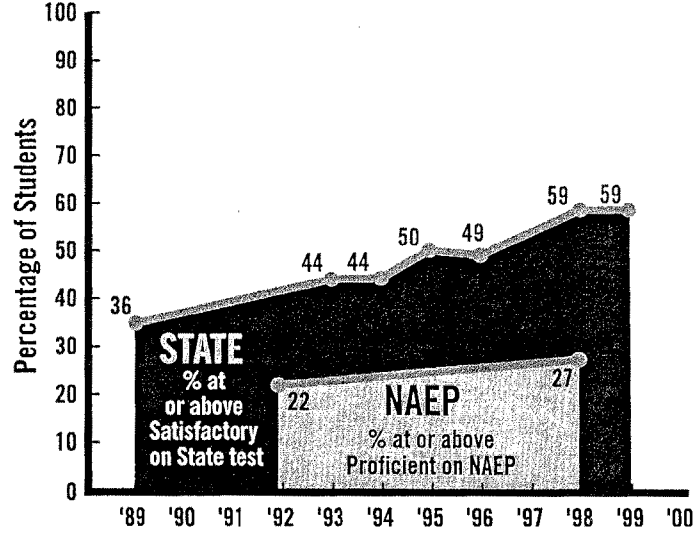




State A – Reading, Grade 4

All students

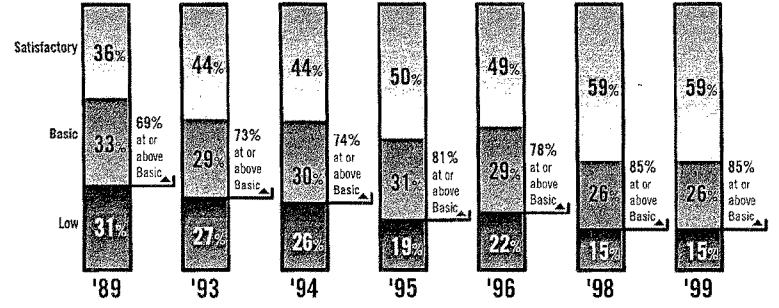




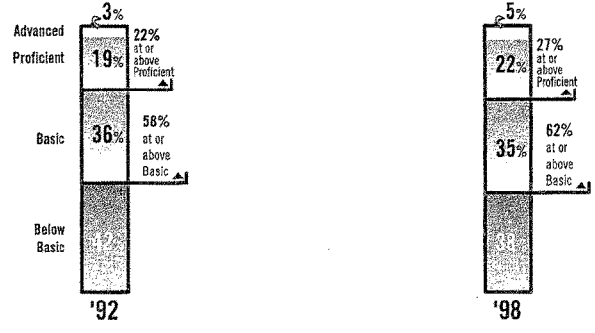
State A – Reading, Grade 4

All students

State Levels

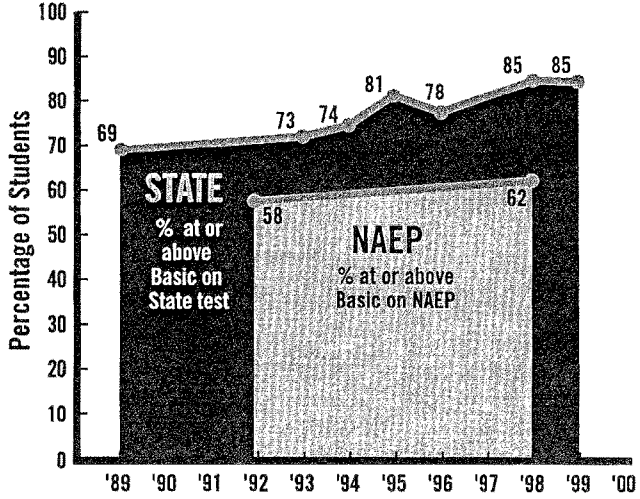


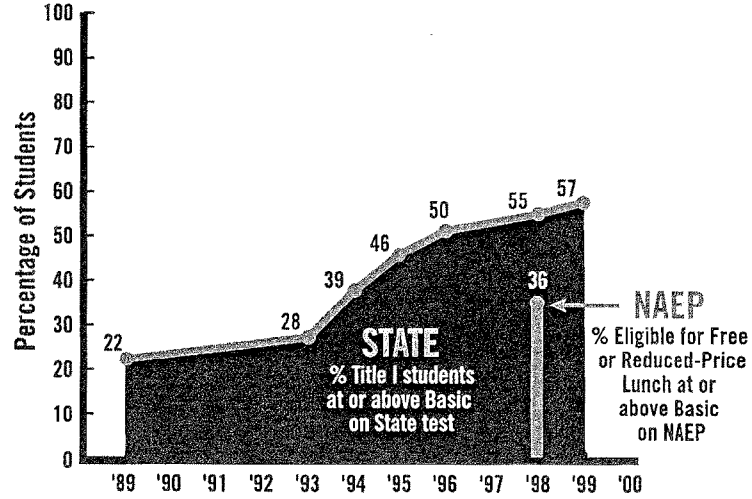
NAEP Achievement Levels



State A – Reading, Grade 4

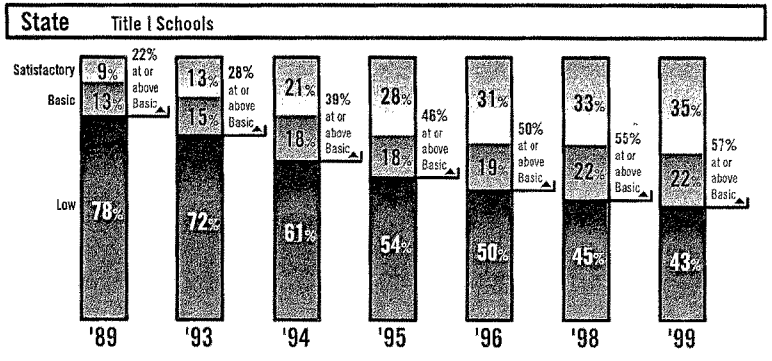
All students and disadvantaged students

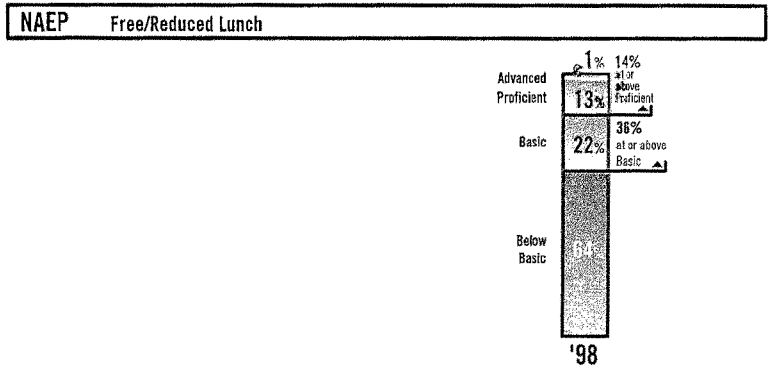




State A – Reading, Grade 4

Disadvantaged students





APPENDIX G - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF REID LYON, CHIEF OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND BEHAVIOR BRANCH, NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH, BETHESDA, M.D.

Statement of Dr. G. Reid Lyon
Chief
Child Development and Behavior Branch
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
National Institutes of Health

Subcommittee on Education Reform
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Measuring Success:
Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement

March 8, 2001

Introduction

Good morning, Chairman Castle and members of the Subcommittee. I am Dr. Reid Lyon, Chief of the Child Development and Behavior Branch of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) at the National Institutes of Health. I am pleased to have been asked to address the Subcommittee on issues relevant to the use of assessments and accountability to raise student achievement, particularly with respect to how these issues and our NICHD reading research findings are reflected in President Bush's reading initiatives. It is also timely that you have requested information about how scientifically based early reading instruction will reduce the need for special education. Recently, Dr. Jack Fletcher of the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston and I completed such an analysis. I am happy to share those findings with you today.

As you know, the NICHD considers that teaching and learning in today's schools reflect not only significant educational concerns but public health concerns as well. Our research has consistently shown that if children do not learn to understand and use language, to read and write, to calculate and reason mathematically, to solve problems, and to communicate their ideas and perspectives, their opportunities for a fulfilling and rewarding life are seriously compromised. Specifically, in our NICHD-supported longitudinal studies, we have learned that school failure has devastating consequences with respect to self-esteem, social development, and opportunities for advanced education and meaningful employment. Nowhere are these consequences more apparent than when children fail to learn to read. Why? Simply stated, the development of reading skills

serves as *THE* major foundational academic ability for all school-based learning. Without the ability to read, the opportunities for academic and occupational success are limited indeed. Moreover, because of its importance, difficulty in learning to read crushes the excitement and love for learning, which most children have when they enter school.

As we follow thousands of children with reading difficulties throughout their school careers and into young adulthood, these young people tell us how embarrassing and devastating it was to read with difficulty in front of peers and teachers, and to demonstrate this weakness on a daily basis. It is clear from our NICHD research that this type of failure affects children negatively earlier than we thought. By the end of first grade, children having difficulty learning to read begin to feel less positive about themselves than when they started school. As we follow children through elementary and middle school years, self-esteem and the motivation to learn to read decline even further. In the majority of cases, the students are deprived of the ability to learn about literature, science, mathematics, history, and social studies because they cannot read grade-level textbooks. Consider that by middle school, children who read well read at least 10,000,000 words during the school year. On the other hand, children with reading difficulties read less than 100,000 words during the same period. Poor readers lag far behind in vocabulary development and in the acquisition of strategies for understanding what they read, and they frequently avoid reading and other assignments that require reading. By high school, the potential of these students to enter college has decreased substantially. Students who have stayed in school long enough to reach high school tell

us they hate to read because it is so difficult and it makes them feel "dumb." As a high school junior in one of our studies remarked, "I would rather have a root canal than read."

It is important to note that this state of educational affairs describes an extraordinary and unacceptable number of children. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (1998), 38 percent of fourth graders nationally cannot read at a basic level--that is, they cannot read and understand a short paragraph of the type one would find in a simple children's book. Unfortunately, reading failure is disproportionately prevalent among children living in poverty. Indeed, in many low income urban school districts the percentage of students in the fourth grade who cannot read at basic level approaches 70 percent.

The educational and public health consequences of this level of reading failure are dire. Of the ten to 15 percent of children who will eventually drop out of school, over 75% will report difficulties learning to read. Likewise, only two percent of students receiving special or compensatory education for difficulties learning to read will complete a four-year college program. Surveys of adolescents and young adults with criminal records indicate that at least half have reading difficulties, and in some states the size of prisons a decade in the future is predicted by fourth grade reading failure rates. Approximately half of children and adolescents with a history of substance abuse have reading problems. It goes without saying that failure to learn to read places children's futures and lives at risk for highly deleterious outcomes. It is for this reason that the NICHD considers reading failure to reflect a national public health problem.

How Reading Develops, And Why So Many Of Our Children Have Difficulty Learning To Read

Converging scientific evidence obtained from studies supported by NICHD, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) of the Department of Education, and the National Science Foundation (NSF), indicates that learning to read is a relatively lengthy process that begins very early in development and clearly before children enter formal schooling. Children who receive stimulating oral language and literacy experiences from birth onward appear to have an edge when it comes to vocabulary development, developing a general awareness of print and literacy concepts, and the goals of reading. If children are read to from their earliest days, they become exposed, in interesting and entertaining ways, to the sounds of our language. Oral language and literacy interactions open the doors to the concepts of rhyming and alliteration, and to word and language play that serves to begin to build the foundation for the development of phonemic awareness--the critical understanding that the syllables and words that are spoken are made up of small segments of sound (phonemes). Vocabulary and oral comprehension abilities are facilitated substantially by rich oral language interactions with adults that might occur spontaneously in conversations and in shared picture book reading.

However, the experiences that help develop vocabulary and general language and conceptual skills in preschoolers are different from the experiences that develop specific types of knowledge necessary to read, including knowledge about print, phonemic awareness, and spelling. These skills need to be explicitly taught. Preschool children

who can recognize and discriminate letters of the alphabet are typically from homes in which materials such as magnetized letters and alphabet name books are present and are the source of teaching interactions with parents. Clearly these children will have less to learn when they enter kindergarten. The learning of letter names is also important because the names of many letters contain the sounds they most often represent. With this knowledge, the child is oriented to what is termed "the alphabetic principle"--a principle that explains how sounds of speech (phonemes) become associated with letters of the alphabet (phonics). It is this principle that stands at the core of learning and applying phonics skills to print. Ultimately, children's ability to comprehend what they listen to and what they read is inextricably linked to the depth of their background knowledge. Very young children who are provided opportunities to learn, think, and talk about new areas of knowledge will gain much more from the reading process.

With understanding comes the clear desire to read more and to read frequently, thus ensuring that reading practice and the development of new vocabulary takes place. Through these early interactions and the explicit instruction provided by parents, caregivers, and teachers, skilled readers learn to apply phonemic and phonics skills rapidly and accurately to the text they are reading, practice reading sufficiently to develop fluency, automaticity, and the ability to read with expression, and apply comprehension strategies to what they are reading to facilitate understanding. But it all starts early, with those initial language and literacy interactions that expose the child to the structure of our language and how print works. Unfortunately, few children who later have difficulties learning to read, and particularly children from poverty, come to kindergarten and the

first grade with these advantages. We know for example, that the average middle class child is exposed to approximately 500,000 words by kindergarten; an economically disadvantaged child is exposed to half as many, at best.

In essence, children who have difficulties learning to read can be readily observed in the initial stages of their literacy development. They approach the reading of words and text in a laborious manner, demonstrating difficulties linking sounds (phonemes) to letters and letter patterns. Their reading is hesitant and characterized by frequent starts and stops and mispronunciations. Comprehension of the material being read is usually extremely poor. Usually, it is not because he or she is not smart enough. In fact, many children who have difficulty learning to read are bright and motivated to learn to read--at least initially. Their difficulties understanding what they have read occur because it takes far too long to read words, leaving little energy for remembering and comprehending what was read. Unfortunately, the slow and inaccurate reading of words cannot be improved in any appreciable way by using the context of what is read to help pronounce the words correctly. Consequently, while the fundamental purpose of reading is to derive meaning from print, the key to comprehension starts with the rapid and accurate reading of words. In fact, difficulties in decoding unfamiliar words and learning to recognize words rapidly are at the core of most reading difficulties. These difficulties can be traced systematically to initial difficulties in understanding that the language that is heard by the ear is actually composed of smaller segments of sound (e.g., phonemic awareness). And here we come full circle--many of these early difficulties in developing phonemic awareness are due to a lack of literacy and oral language interactions with adults during infancy and early

childhood. Thus, because the environments most bereft of these interactions are those characterized by poverty, the cycle continues.

Can Children With Reading Problems Overcome Their Difficulties?

Yes, the majority of children who enter kindergarten and elementary school at-risk for reading failure can learn to read at average or above levels, but only if they are identified early and provided with systematic, explicit, and intensive instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension strategies. Substantial research supported by NICHD and OERI shows clearly that without systematic, focused, and intensive interventions, the majority of children rarely "catch up". Failure to develop basic reading skills by age nine predicts a lifetime of illiteracy. Unless these children receive the appropriate instruction, over 70 percent of the children entering first grade who are at risk for reading failure will continue to have reading problems into adulthood. On the other hand, the early identification of children at-risk for reading failure coupled with the provision of comprehensive early reading interventions can reduce the percentage of children reading below the basic level in the fourth grade (e.g., 38 percent) to six percent or less.

Are Certain Early Intervention Approaches More Effective Than Others?

Yes. On the basis of a thorough evidence-based review of the reading research literature that met rigorous scientific standards, the National Reading Panel (NRP), convened by the NICHD and the Department of Education, found that intervention programs that provided systematic and explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, guided

repeated reading to improve reading fluency, and direct instruction in vocabulary and reading comprehension strategies were significantly more effective than approaches that were less explicit and less focused on the reading skills to be taught (e.g., approaches that emphasize incidental learning of basic reading skills). The NRP found that children as young as four years of age benefited from instruction in phonemic awareness and the alphabetic principle when the instruction was presented in an interesting and entertaining, albeit systematic manner. Likewise, the National Center for Educational Statistics recently reported data from its Early Childhood Longitudinal Study involving 22,000 children showing that, after controlling for family income, youngsters who attended more academically oriented preschool programs had significantly higher scores in reading, math, and general knowledge when tested in the fall of their kindergarten year than children attending less academically oriented preschools. In addition, five NICHD longitudinal early intervention studies examining the effectiveness of different early intervention approaches provided in kindergarten and first and second grades for those children most at-risk for reading difficulties strongly suggested, if implemented appropriately, such programs could reduce the number of children who fail to learn to read well below the 38 percent rate currently observed nationally. It is also important to note that the majority of children composing this unacceptably large group of poor readers ARE NOT provided special education services, as is discussed next.

Will Proper Reading Instruction Reduce the Need for Special Education?

Yes. But it is important to understand at the outset that the number of children with reading difficulties served in special education reflects only a fraction of the number of

school age children who fail to learn to read. Recall from the previous discussion that 38% of fourth grade students read below the basic level. Keeping in mind that the majority of these children will continue to have reading difficulties throughout their school career if they do not receive systematic and focused early intervention, we can estimate that at least 20 million school age children suffer from reading failure. Among these 20 million children, only approximately 2.3 million school-age children are served in special education under the category of learning disabilities (LD). The remaining 17.7 million poor readers not meeting the eligibility requirements for the LD category are either provided some form of compensatory education or overlooked all together.

We have taken care in our NICHD early intervention and prevention studies to identify **ALL** children who are at-risk for reading failure within a given sample and to identify the instructional approaches that are the most effective for the majority of these students, irrespective of whether they are eligible for special education as an LD student or eligible for compensatory education services. As noted earlier, these studies have indicated that with the proper early instruction, the national prevalence of reading failure can be reduced significantly. Thus, by putting in place well designed evidence-based early identification, prevention, and early intervention programs in our public schools, our data strongly show that the 20 million children today suffering from reading failure could be reduced by approximately two-thirds. While still a totally unacceptable rate of reading failure, such a reduction would allow us to provide services to the children who are in genuine need of special education services with substantially greater focus and intensity.Thus, not only can the President's proposal lead to tremendous savings in

human capital, but the cost savings will also be significant – savings that can be applied to other pressing educational issues within States and local districts.

How the President's Early Reading First and the Reading First Educational Initiatives Build On The Most Trustworthy Scientific Evidence Available

President Bush has proposed a major reading initiative to: (1) provide assistance to States and local educational agencies in supporting local efforts to enhance the school readiness of children ages three through five, particularly those from low-income families, through scientific evidence-based strategies and professional development designed to enhance the development of verbal skills, phonemic awareness, pre-reading and basic reading skills, and early language development necessary for optimal reading development in kindergarten and beyond (Early Reading First); and (2) to provide assistance to States and local educational agencies in establishing scientific research-based reading programs for all children in kindergarten through grade three and the necessary professional development and other support to ensure that teachers can identify children at-risk for reading failure and provide the most effective early instruction to overcome specific barriers to robust reading development (Reading First).

The President's reading initiatives have been developed on the basis of the best scientific evidence and knowledge relevant to reading development, reading difficulties, and reading instruction currently available. The initiatives are also noteworthy for the attention given to (a) the early identification of children at-risk for reading failure; (b) the development and implementation of evidence-based prevention and early reading intervention programs at the local level; (c) the critical need to provide support to States

to ensure that schools and teachers have the necessary professional development to identify and/or develop the most effective instructional materials, programs, and strategies; (d) the critical need to provide support to States and local educational agencies to identify and/or develop the most reliable and valid screening and diagnostic reading assessment instruments that can be used to identify at-risk children and to document the effectiveness of the instructional materials, programs, and strategies; and (e) the need to strengthen coordination among schools, early literacy programs, and family literacy programs, and to ensure that these programs use evidence-based materials, instructional interventions, and strategies.

Of particular importance within the President's reading initiatives is the requirement that funding for State and local educational agency Early Reading First and Reading First programs is contingent upon objective and rigorous peer review of the grant applications that are submitted. Equally important, the President has stressed the need for States and local educational agencies to monitor and assess funded programs to ensure continued progress and accomplishment of stated objectives for student reading achievement. This review and monitoring process is critical to the development and continuous improvement of these reading programs, and serves an essential capacity-building function by providing extensive feedback to the States and local educational agencies via systematic and objective summaries that serve to hone and elevate the quality of the programs.

In essence, the President's reading initiatives are designed to provide the critical early identification and early reading interventions necessary to prevent reading failure among our Nation's children and to ensure that all children are skilled readers by the end of the third grade. His Reading First and Early Reading First proposals require that participating States and local educational agencies identify and/or develop and implement the necessary screening, assessment, reading intervention approaches, and program evaluation systems on the basis of the highest quality scientific research available. The President's proposals also provide resources for professional development and technical assistance to ensure States and local educational agencies develop the capacity necessary to accomplish this implementation and systematically evaluate the effectiveness of the programmatic efforts. In short, his proposals are predicated on a science of reading development and reading instruction, rigorous peer review and monitoring to ensure high quality program design and implementation, the provision of technical assistance when indicated by peer review, and the systematic assessment of clear and measurable achievement goals to ensure accountability.

The Issue of Assessment

The President's proposed reading programs recognize both the importance of assessment and the fact that assessments have multiple purposes, including early identification, diagnosis, program evaluation, and accountability. A single test cannot address all these purposes. For example, a so-called "high-stakes" test can be useful for accountability purposes, but does not provide teachers the information they need to plan instruction, particularly in kindergarten through the second grade. Consistent with the NRC report on

high stakes testing, accountability is hard to assess before Grade 3, but if schools and teachers are doing a good job, this should be reflected in accountability assessments in Grade 3.

Let me review four purposes of assessments and how they line up with different types of assessments.

- Early identification – NICHD researchers routinely screen large numbers of children to identify those most in need of systematic, focused, and intensive early instruction. Administration of these screening instruments does not require a great deal of time, but it does a good job of informing teachers and schools about those children who are most at risk for subsequent literacy problems. Screening is not diagnostic. That is, it does not provide the teacher with a detailed indication of the child's specific reading problems and needs, but it can certainly save resources that would have to be provided later by identifying those children at greatest need for immediate intervention.
- Diagnosis – Identifying instructional needs, which is the purpose of diagnosis, helps the teacher plan instruction. It is closely linked to early identification, as extensive instructional planning is not necessary for every child. Therefore, teachers have more time for instruction by identifying those students most in need. Neither screening for early identification nor diagnostic assessment provides detailed information about how well a program is working or whether a teacher is providing proper instruction. Teachers need better tools for making educational decisions in light of students' performance on these "progress

monitoring" assessments. If one seeks to meet the goal of "leaving no child behind," then teachers must know at the earliest possible moment that a student is falling behind, and at the same time, must know how to intervene to prevent the student from falling further behind. The assessment of risk status and educational progress in young children is frequently ignored on the premise that early educational progress is driven largely by maturational factors which dissipate with time, such that differences observed early in development will disappear with age. We know, however, that children do not outgrow reading problems. This attitude toward assessment and early systematic and focused intervention and prevention efforts produces devastating consequences for many young children, particularly children from poverty.

- Program Evaluation – States and local educational agencies need to know whether programs introduced in their local schools are effective. Within this context, norm-referenced tests can play a critical role, particularly if they are incorporated within research designs that will support inferences relevant to the specific effects of the intervention or program on student achievement. Norm-referenced tests assess transfer of learning. They essentially rank children within their grade level on how well they read. An assessment designed to rank individuals will not generally be effective for diagnosing problems, or providing prescriptive information to inform and guide instructional practices and the specific focus of an intervention. However, such norm-referenced assessments can help determine the "value-added" contribution of specific instructional programs and/or strategies by assessing whether we achieve the ultimate purpose of the reading programs,

which is to literally alter the distribution of reading skills in our country and improve the reading of every child.

- Accountability – States and local educational agencies may consider developing assessments that assess mastery of the educational content they deem critical to their academic, economic, and civic success. This type of assessment is usually done through mastery assessments, also known as criterion-referenced tests. Effective assessment in this domain demands clarity in the specification of educational objectives, both with regard to the content to be learned and the skills to be acquired, and the ways in which students must be able to demonstrate content and skill mastery. However, an assessment designed to evaluate mastery of key skills will not generally be effective for distinguishing between students whose performance exceeds a criterion and those who fall short of the mark. As noted earlier, norm-referenced assessments perform this task. Similarly, a norm-referenced assessment that ranks children doesn't address whether teachers are teaching effectively and whether children are mastering what the State and/or the local educational agency deems important. Such assessments should be done yearly beginning in Grade 3 so that we know how well our schools are performing. It is important to keep in mind that mobility rates are very high in inner-city schools, and this degree of mobility must be taken into account when analyzing the results of the assessments. It is also important to keep in mind the concern that this type of assessment leads to schools interpreting accountability as mandating a need for "teaching to the test." In fact, if the standards are good, the curriculum designed to achieve the standards is rich and comprehensive, and

> the test assesses the standards, this should not be a problem. It certainly is a problem if the test does not assess the standards or results in a narrowing of the curriculum. But that reflects decisions about accountability that should not condemn its importance or the assessment itself – just how it is implemented. And these decisions to teach to a test usually occur at the building level.

The President's reading initiatives ensure that locally determined and implemented programs for the assessment and evaluation of programmatic effectiveness are at the core of this critical program. Indeed, the success of this comprehensive early reading program depends on our knowing what works and what is ineffective, and modifying our efforts as quickly as possible when the latter is identified.

This is a time of great opportunity for the Federal and state governments, local educational agencies, teachers, and parents to work together toward the common objective of eliminating the reading deficit in America. Through scientific inquiry, we have identified the elements of an optimal reading program. We know how to measure a child's progress toward reading with fluency and comprehension. We know how to assist teachers in acquiring the skills necessary to teach reading effectively. We know how to reach the most vulnerable children in our nation with the essential skills they need to learn to read. All that remains now is to apply what we have learned in America's classrooms.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify on these important topics. I am happy to provide the Subcommittee with references for the research cited in my statement, and will be pleased to respond to any questions you and the members of the Subcommittee may have.

PERSONAL INFORMATION: Please provide the committee with a copy of your resume (or a curriculum vitae). If none is available, please answer the following questions:

a. Please list any employment, occupation, or work related experiences, and education or training which relate to your qualifications to testify on or knowledge of the subject matter of the hearing:

G. Reid Lyon, Ph.D. is a research psychologist and Chief of the Child Development and Behavior Branch of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at the National Institutes of Health. He is responsible for the direction, development, and management of research programs in reading development and disorders, cognitive, social, and affective development, and cognitive neuroscience. Dr. Lyon has served on the faculties of Northwestern University (Communication Science and Disorders; Neuroscience) and University of Vermont (Neurology); and has also served as a third grade teacher, a special education teacher, and a school and educational psychologist.

Dr. Lyon has authored, co-authored, and edited over 100 journal articles, books, and book chapters addressing learning differences and disabilities in children. On numerous occasions, he has been asked to translate NIH scientific discoveries relevant to these topics to the White House and to the Congress.

b. Please provide any other information you wish to convey to the Committee which might aid the members of the Committee to understand better the context of your testimony:

Please attach to your written testimony.

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: G. Reid Lyon, Ph.D.		
1. Will you be representing a federal, State, or local government entity? (If the answer is yes please contact the Committee).	Yes X	No
2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1998: none		
3. Will you be representing an entity other than a government entity?	Yes	No X
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you will be representing: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services		
5. Please list any offices or elected positions held and/or briefly describe your representational capacity with each of the entities you listed in response to question 4: Chief, Child Development and Behavior Branch of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at the National Institutes of Health		
6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract: none		
7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing? If so, please list:	Yes	No X

Signature: _____ Date: March 6, 2001

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

APPENDIX H - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ROSALIE PEDALINO PORTER, MEMBER, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, EDITOR, READ PERSPECTIVES, INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN ENGLISH ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT (READ), WASHINGTON, D.C.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM HEARING
March 8, 2001
Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2175

Written Statement of Testimony
Dr. Rosalie Pedalino Porter,
The Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development (READ), Washington, DC

Summary:

Providing an equal educational opportunity for the three and one-half million children who do not have a sufficient knowledge of the English language when they enter U.S. public schools, and helping them to participate fully in mainstream classrooms, is a growing challenge for educators and policy makers. Education reform and accountability initiatives in several states are beginning to include English Language Learners (generally designated Limited-English Proficient [LEP] students) in their assessment efforts. My testimony will focus on recent developments in Texas, California and Massachusetts, states whose policies represent different approaches.

Accountability for the academic progress of English Language Learners requires periodic, objective measures of student performance in order to identify the under-performing schools and allocate additional resources where needed. It is essential now, after thirty years of concerted special efforts on behalf of LEP students, that school districts maintain rigorous standards and high expectations for this population. The first crucial step in education reform for LEP students is the annual evaluation and reporting on their progress in English-language

literacy and in their learning of school subjects, followed by the documenting of steady growth in successful performance on state tests.

My Background:

My professional involvement with school children speaking languages other than English began in 1974 when I was a bilingual teacher (Spanish and English) in the Springfield, Massachusetts, Public Schools. I directed a city-wide program for LEP students from 1980-1990 in the Newton, Massachusetts, Public Schools, where students from thirty different language backgrounds were enrolled in the schools. Although Massachusetts enacted the first Transitional Bilingual Education law in the country in 1971 (Chapter 71-A) which mandated annual testing and reporting on the progress of LEP students, this provision of the law was not enforced. Since 1990, I have concentrated my scholarly and professional activities in writing, lecturing, researching effective programs, and advising school districts across the country on educational improvements and accountability for English Language Learners. I have also been retained as an expert witness in court cases in California, Texas, Colorado, Washington, and New York.

Requirements for LEP Student Testing:

The decision in *Castaneda v. Pickard* (648 F. 2nd 989, 5th Circuit, 1981) established the requirement across the nation that school districts must not only give LEP students special support to overcome the language barrier and invest resources for their needs, but that, "After a sufficient length of time, proper evaluation of the special program shows results indicating that language barriers are actually being overcome." (Rebell, p. 365) It is this Castaneda standard that mandates accountability. It requires that at some point, in a few years at most, there must be

clear evidence that students have benefited from the special help, that in fact they have progressed academically both in learning the English language and in their ability to learn school subjects taught in English.

The school reform and accountability movement has witnessed the investment of new education money in many states. These new funds are being used to develop more challenging curriculums, set higher standards for student achievement, retrain teachers, allocate more resources to under-performing schools, and measure student progress with rigorous assessments. Finally, educators noticed that English Language Learners had largely been left out of state tests that were routinely administered to all other students. Very little objective data had been collected to show the benefits of fifteen years of special programs for LEP students in California, for example, the state with 43% of all the LEP students in the country, where a 1992 state study declared:

> California public schools do not have valid and ongoing assessments of the performance of students with limited proficiency in English. Therefore, the state and the public cannot hold schools accountable for LEP students achieving high levels of performance. (Rossier, p. 46)

That is a stunning statement. If the schools are not to be held accountable, then who is responsible for students' learning?

Similarly, in Massachusetts, the first state to require transitional bilingual programs and annual student testing, a statewide survey published in 1994 reported:

> The Commission found that adequate and reliable data has never been collected that would indicate whether or not bilingual programs offer language minority pupils a superior educational option. This report strongly endorses the 1993 Education Reform

> Act's emphasis on accountability of educational outcomes for all pupils, including the development of appropriate assessments of pupils in bilingual programs and the collection of data specific to bilingual pupils. (Massachusetts Bilingual Education Commission, p. 2).

Since the publication of these reports, both states have designed and implemented comprehensive testing of all students, with results of student progress collected and reported annually.

The State of Texas, which also enrolls a large number of language minority students in its public schools, began its reform and accountability efforts much earlier (1985) and has reported achievement gains gradually but steadily each year. I am focusing on the three states just cited as representative examples of accountability efforts on behalf of English Language Learners. Each state has adopted different guidelines, different assessment instruments and different rules for participation, but their overarching goals are similar—to promote assessment as the driving force for improving academic achievement for all students and to make extra efforts to close the gap between minority and majority student performance, not by excusing minority students from higher standards but by doing what is necessary to help all students reach their highest potential.

Texas Faces Down Challenge to Accountability:

Texas is perhaps the best example of what can be accomplished in a relatively short period of time in improving student performance on objective measures of curriculum and skills taught in all schools. Not only has student performance improved across the board since the statewide testing program began in 1985, but minority students—African-American and Hispanic students—have achieved higher rates of improvement and are closing the gap with their White classmates. In the Spring 1999 10th grade test administration, for example, the test of

reading, writing and mathematics that is required for high school graduation, 95% of White students passed the test compared with 84% of Hispanic and African-American students. Such a result is noteworthy as it compares very favorably with minority student achievement in other states such as New York and Massachusetts. (Kronholz, 1999) Texas students in grades 2-10 are tested annually in all subjects in English, with LEP students in the elementary grades allowed to take the tests in Spanish (if that is their primary and dominant language) in their first three years. The 10th grade test of reading, writing and mathematics is administered only in English and LEP students are allowed a one-year grace period before being required to take the test.

The Texas graduation test requirement for all students was challenged on behalf of minority students on the grounds that it is discriminatory in various ways. When the case was heard in San Antonio in 1999 *(G.I. Forum et al vs. Texas Education Agency, et al, No. SA 97-CA-1278, 1999 U.S. District Court, W. D. of Texas, San Antonio, TX)* the ruling favored the Texas Education Agency. Judge Edward Prado determined that the State of Texas had, through the TAAS program, identified the students and schools needing to improve their performance and had invested heavily in helping to realize improvements each year. Students are given eight chances to retake part or all sections of the 10th grade test; remedial courses are offered; tests are reviewed and modified annually by teams of Texas teachers and test specialists. The court's decision in the *G. I. Forum* case provides educators and policy-makers with a road map for creating legally defensible graduation tests.

It is important to recognize the distinction between Hispanic students and LEP students. The majority of Texas schoolchildren in Spanish-speaking families are native-born, English-language speakers when they enter the schools. Those labeled LEP are children of immigrant or migrant families more recently arrived in Texas. Many considerations affect the rate of English

language learning and academic progress on state tests for these children: age at arrival in the U.S., previous level and quality of schooling in their land of origin, educational level of their parents, economic status, whether the family moves often (especially common for migrant worker families), and the type of schooling the children receive, i.e., Spanish bilingual instruction, English as a Second Language (ESL) or no special help at all. These considerations apply to English Language Learners across the country and are not particular to Texas.

By charting the progress of LEP students since the 10th grade test became a requirement for high school graduation (1994), it is useful to compare the number of students who took the test and the percentage who passed all three parts. For all Hispanic students, 187,618 took the test in 1994 and 52% (including LEPs) passed; by 1999, 213,959 were tested and 78% passed. The record for LEP students alone is not as impressive, but there is clear evidence of steady improvement. In 1994, 19,167 LEPs were tested with only 14% passing all tests; in 1999, participation had increased to 23,120 students and the percentage of students passing all parts had more than doubled to 31%. (An article providing a full account of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills [TAAS] program, the court challenge in *G.I. Forum,* and its application to English Language Learners is attached to this statement.)

Although the Texas results indicate substantial room for improvement, they are by no means unusual. When statewide assessments of academic performance are first instituted, results are often less satisfactory than anticipated. New York, for example, is in an early stage of measuring student achievement with more rigorous tests. In 1999, the first year of testing, New York reported that at the eighth grade level, 52% of all students were below standards in reading and 62% in mathematics. (Hartocollis, 1999, pp. 1, 14)

On the central question of the Texas court challenge—whether all high school students should be expected to demonstrate competency in reading, writing and mathematics on an objective measure such as the 10th grade test to obtain a high school diploma—I am firmly convinced, as an expert witness in the case, that this testing program is urgently needed. To suggest that students should graduate from high school without demonstrating minimal knowledge and skills on a uniform measure is simply not acceptable for the current requirements of the technological and information age job market or for pursuing higher education.

Massachusetts Finally Includes LEP Students:

Until the 1993 Education Reform Act which instituted the development of learning standards and mandated the state-wide testing of all students starting in 1998, Massachusetts collected no uniform data on LEP student performance and published no research studies in this area. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) now takes account of all students and reports test scores annually in four separate categories: all students, regular students, students with disabilities, and Limited-English Proficient students. Such a reporting system allows schools to be evaluated on the basis of distinct group scores and not penalized for the lower performance of special populations. Massachusetts is now one of 26 states that require a uniform test for high school graduation, and its 10th grade test requirement will go into effect in 2003.

MCAS requires student testing in grades 4, 8 and 10 in English language arts, mathematics and science (with a social studies/history test in grade 8). For English language learners, MCAS participation is not required until children have completed three years in a U.S. school. Those LEP students who are Spanish speakers in grades 4, 8 and 10 with less than three

years in a U.S. school may take the math and science tests in a Spanish/English version. Since the MCAS is not a timed test, students may take all the time they require and students with learning disabilities are given other accommodations, according to their needs. I have served on the English Language Learners Focus Group, and am currently a member of the State Bilingual Education Advisory Council and the governor's Education Reform Review Commission. Developing the testing guidelines for LEP students has been and continues to be a source of disagreement, but no one can evade the fact that for the first time since 1971 there is a documented record of LEP student achievement and the first three years' test scores reveal a serious need for improvement.

In August 2000, Professor Ralph E. Beals of Amherst College and I published a study analyzing the first two years' data on LEP students participation and performance on the MCAS tests in grades 4, 8 and 10. The main conclusions of our study are the following:

1. Data collection and reporting on LEP students is inconsistent and needs improvement, especially at the 8th and 10th grade levels.
2. LEP students scored higher, on average, on the 4th grade tests than on the 8th and 10th grade assessments. Also, a higher percentage of students took the test in grade 4 than in the higher grades.
3. In all subjects and on all grade levels tested, LEP scored lower than regular students.
4. Comparing LEP students to each other by districts revealed the districts in which LEP students are achieving the highest scores on the MCAS, and provides demographic data on these groups. (Beals, p.1)

Massachusetts more than doubled its education spending each year since 1993—from 1 ½ billion to 3 ½ billion per year—to develop curriculum frameworks, write assessments linked to the frameworks in each subject and grade level, raise teachers salaries to attract better candidates, and introduce a teacher exam for new candidates. Early results of MCAS show where the greatest improvements are needed and a range of supports are being offered by the Department of Education, i.e., funds for after-school tutorials, summer school remedial classes, teacher training workshops. Research is on-going with surveys of teachers, parents, administrators, to determine how MCAS is affecting classroom teaching, changes in curriculum, and allocation of resources.

At the same time, there is some public resistance to the idea of the high stakes 10th grade test as a graduation requirement, with efforts being made to delay its implementation in 2003 or to allow other measures to have equal weight. In my professional opinion, if the one uniform measure of student mastery of the most basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics is not upheld, then Massachusetts' mighty efforts of the past eight years will not bear the intended fruit.

California—The 900 lb. Gorilla in U. S. Public Education:

It is conventional wisdom among educators to acknowledge that the winds of change blow from west to east, with new ideas, new textbooks, new testing fashions, often starting in California and spreading east across the country. In regard to English Language Learners, California now enrolls 1.4 million students who started school without a sufficient mastery of the English language, one of every four California school children. Until 1998 when the new statewide system began (Standardized Testing and Reporting System [STAR]), LEP students had largely been excused from state testing until they had been in California schools thirty months or longer. Now the state requires that all students in grades 2-11 take the Stanford 9 test. All

students, including English Language Learners, who are in the first year in a California school are tested and their test scores are recorded but not counted in the district and state totals. At the end of a second year of schooling in California, all test scores count in evaluating schools and districts.

The beginning of STAR coincided with the approval by California voters of Proposition 227, the English for the Children initiative, in June 1998. Suddenly the public schools of California were required to provide LEP students with an intensive year of English immersion with the goal of rapid learning of English and early inclusion of these children in mainstream classrooms. There are provisions in the law for more years of special help, when needed, and, in certain instances, parents may request native language instruction classes to continue.

In the two years following the passage of Proposition 227, contrary to the dire predictions of bilingual education advocates that LEP children would surely fare poorly on state tests, the opposite has been the case. As reported in two studies published by the READ Institute, each year LEP students have shown improved performance across the state, and greater gains have been registered in the districts that have adopted the English immersion approach than in the districts (Los Angeles Unified School District, for one) that have retained much of their Spanish language instruction based on parent requests. For example, in 1999 after one year of the new policy, STAR reported that LEP 2nd graders across the state rose from the 19th to the 23rd percentile, while the average for English speakers rose from the 39th to the 43rd percentile. Improved performance was reported for LEP students at all grade levels. (Hakuta, 1999)

The San Francisco Unified School District challenged the State Department of Education, refusing to test LEP students who had been in school for less than thirty months. The California Department of Education brought suit against the San Francisco Unified School District and San

Francisco brought a counter suit against the State. The case was joined by the Oakland, Berkeley and Hayward school districts who had tested their LEP students but objected to the public reporting of LEP student test scores. In November 2000, just days before the trial was to begin, (*California Department of Education, et al vs. San Francisco Unified School District, et al., Case No. 994049, Superior Court of the State of California, City and County of San Francisco*) a settlement was reached. Faced with the loss of hundreds of thousands in state funding under the Governor's Performance Award Program and other grants or awards linked to the Academic Performance Index for evaluating schools, the four districts agreed to include all English Language Learners in the annual testing. I obtained a copy of the Settlement Agreement, since I participated in the case as an expert witness on behalf of the State of California.

California is implementing a comprehensive assessment program with serious consequences for under-performing schools that do not improve over time. The State is investing heavily in the effort to improve student learning by identifying problem areas and giving students extra support and monitoring, and identifying districts with unusually high improvement and rewarding those efforts. A high priority for all California schools is not only to show higher student achievement, but to show steady improvements in the test scores for special populations, with the ultimate goal of reducing substantially or eliminating the achievement gap between minority and majority students.

It should be known that, in regard to all students including LEP children, parents have the right to request that their children not be tested and school personnel have the responsibility to inform parents of the importance of including all students. There are no penalties to the students for low test scores, i.e., no student is retained in grade on the basis of the test score alone; nor is any student referred to Special Education on the basis of the test score alone.

Recently, the Rand Corporation released a study announcing the welcome news that math scores are rising across the country, showing more progress in this decade than in the previous twenty years, based on testing conducted by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). The study finds that "education reforms in the late 1980s and early 1990s have paid off in terms of higher math scores for public school students, especially among black and Hispanic students," and attributes these gains principally to "...state-sponsored pre-kindergarten programs, targeting more resources for schools in lower-income areas, and using test scores to highlight differences in performance between schools." (Fialka, p. A28)

This is the crux of the matter: Without a statewide, annual, consistent, universally applied program of assessment, the next logical step of improving student achievement cannot be accurately addressed. Certainly there are many forms of assessment that are valuable, including portfolios, classroom work, and teacher evaluations. However, these evaluations are not consistent from school to school or district to district. For English Language Learners, participating in state-wide assessments in English is the optimal way to determine whether the special programs are actually benefiting them. It is crucial to determine whether they are indeed gaining the essential language skills and learning the subject matter they need to know to be competitive with their English-speaking peers in the mainstream classroom and to avail themselves of the abundant opportunities in our larger society.

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Committee on Education and the Workforce

Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)

Your Name: Rosalie Porter

	Yes	No
1. Will you be representing a federal, State, or local government entity? (If the answer is yes please contact the Committee).		X

2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1998:

NONE

	Yes	No
3. Will you be representing an entity other than a government entity?	X	

4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you will be representing:

The Institute for Research in English Acquisition & Development (READ) , Washington, DC

5. Please list any offices or elected positions held and/or briefly describe your representational capacity with each of the entities you listed in response to question 4:

I have served the READ Institute as Executive Director, as Chairman of the Board of Directors, and as Director of Research, and Editor of its scholarly publication, READ Perspectives, at different times between 1990 and now.

6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1997, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:

None

	Yes	No
7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing? If so, please list: The Center for Equal Opportunity (CEO) in Washington, DC, is the READ Institute's parent organization. I will not be representing CEO.	X	

Signature: Rosalie P. Porter Date: March 5, 2001

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

PERSONAL INFORMATION: Please provide the committee with a copy of your resume (or a curriculum vitae). If none is available, please answer the following questions:

a. Please list any employment, occupation, or work related experiences, and education or training which relate to your qualifications to testify on or knowledge of the subject matter of the hearing:

see Curriculum Vitae attached

b. Please provide any other information you wish to convey to the Committee which might aid the members of the Committee to understand better the context of your testimony:

Please attach to your written testimony.

Rosalie P. Porter December 1999

Accountability is Overdue:

Testing the Academic Achievement of

Limited-English Proficient (LEP) Students

Since the 1960s, the United States has received the highest number of new arrivals in the nation's history—legal and illegal immigrants, migrants, and refugees. Consequently, U. S. public schools have seen a rapidly increasing enrollment of immigrant children, and of native-born children of immigrant parents, who have little or no fluency or literacy in English. Providing these three and a-half million children with an educational opportunity equal to that of English speakers is the challenge, and legislation, court decisions, and education policies have been attempting to meet this challenge for the past thirty years.

It was a Texas senator, Ralph Yarborough, who filed the first federal legislation to address the problem: the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The goal at the beginning was to help poor Mexican-American children learn English, although this was later expanded to include non-English speaking children of any language background. Yarborough said at the time, "It is not the purpose of the bill to create pockets of different languages through the country...but just to try to make those children fully literate in English." (Chavez, 1991, p. 11-12) Starting with Massachusetts in 1971, state laws were enacted that required bilingual schooling for a few years to help children overcome the language barrier to an equal education. The U.S. Supreme Court in its Lau v. Nichols decision in 1974 declared that non-English speaking children have a right to special help:

> There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education... Teaching English to the students of Chinese ancestry who do not speak the language is one choice. Giving instruction to the group in Chinese is another. There may be others." (Chavez, pp. 14-15)

The decision in *Castaneda v. Pickard*, (648 F. 2nd 989, Fifth Circuit, 1981) established a three-pronged test for determining whether a school district is taking appropriate action to overcome language barriers, as follows:

1. The school district is pursuing a program informed by an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field.

2. The programs and practices actually used by a school system are reasonably expected to implement the educational theory adopted by the school, that sufficient resources are provided, i.e., trained teachers, textbooks.

3. After a sufficient length of time, proper evaluation of the special program shows results indicating that language barriers are actually being overcome. (Rebell, 1992, p. 365)

It is the third Castaneda standard that spells out the necessity of accountability in the national effort to help Limited-English Proficient (LEP) students. It requires that at some point, in a few years at most, there must be clear evidence that students have benefited from this special help, that in fact they have progressed academically both in learning the English language and in their ability to learn school subjects taught in English.

Texas is perhaps the best example of what can be accomplished in a relatively short period of time in improving student performance on objective measures of curriculum and skills taught in all schools. Not only has performance improved across the board for all students since the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) program began in 1985, but minority students—African American and Hispanic students—have achieved the highest rates of improvement and are gradually closing the

performance gap with their white classmates. In the most recent 10th grade test, Spring 1999, 95% of white students passed the test compared with 84% of Hispanic and African American students—a commendable result compared to minority student achievement in other states, such as Massachusetts and New York, for example. (Kronholz, 1999, p. 20)

The history of achievement testing in Texas is amply described in an earlier chapter of this volume. Suffice it to say that the amount of human capital invested--in developing curriculum standards, training teachers, developing and annually reviewing and modifying tests, and in collecting and reporting student performance data—is impressive and presents a practical model for the rest of the country. Although the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is administered in grades 2-8 and in grade 10, I am restricting my discussion to the 10th grade only, as it is the "high stakes" test that is challenged in the *G. I. Forum vs. Texas Education Agency* law suit.

I am confining my remarks further to the sub-group of Hispanic students that is defined as LEP. It is important to understand the distinction. The majority of Texas school children of Spanish-speaking families are native-born, English-language speakers when they enter the schools. Those labeled "LEP" are children of immigrant or migrant families more recently arrived in Texas. For this particular group of children, there are many considerations that affect their rate of English language learning and academic progress as it is reflected in their test scores: age at arrival in the U. S., previous level and quality of schooling in their land of origin, educational level of the parents, economic status, whether the family moves often (especially common for migrant worker families), type of special program in which children are enrolled (Spanish Bilingual instruction, English as a Second Language, or no special program).

It matters greatly, for instance, if an LEP child entered a Texas school in Kindergarten with some knowledge of English and then completed eleven years of schooling before taking the 10th grade exams, or if the student arrived in Texas at the 8th or 9th grade level with few years of schooling in his or her native land and no fluency in English at all. However, this important data does not appear on the report summarizing test scores. Performance is reported in groups by ethnic category and, for language minority children, under the further headings *Migrant, Limited-English Proficient, Bilingual Program Participant*, and *ESL (English as a Second Language) Program Participant.*

By charting the progress of LEP students since the 10th grade test has been required for high school graduation, it is revealing to compare the percent who met the minimum expectations on all tests (reading, mathematics and writing) in 1994 and 1999, as illustrated in Table 1. In 1994 a total of 187,618 students were tested at that grade level of whom 52% (including LEPs but not students in Special Education) met the minimum expectations on all tests taken. In 1999, 213,959 took the 10th grade tests and 78% were successful in all tests taken. Clearly, more students are participating in the assessments and more and more are at least meeting minimum expectations for high school graduation. The record for LEP students as a separate group is not as impressive, but there is steady improvement documented.

Table 1.
LEP Students Meeting Minimum Expectations on All Tests

	1994		1999	
	# Tested	% Passing All Tests	# Tested	% Passing All Tests
LEP	11,127	14%	12,903	31%
Bilingual Participants	95	18%	50	35%
ESL Participants	7,945	9%	10,167	27%
	19,167		23,120	

(Chart compiled by the author from data reported by Texas Education Agency, December 30, 1999)

The number of limited-English students participating in the 10th grade test has increased from 19,167 to 23,120 and the percentage of students passing all parts of the test has more than doubled in this five-year period. What is not reported is how many of the students in the three categories who did not score at the minimum expectation level took advantage of the remedial classes offered and of the multiple opportunities to retake the test. Also, the reason for separately listing the three categories is not clear and needs fuller explanation. All the students in these three categories are limited-English to some degree. Some are participating in bilingual classes, some in ESL classes.

In the states with large enrollments of LEP students, evaluation of LEP student achievement has been very little attended to in the past thirty years. Two representative examples, California and Massachusetts, serve to illustrate this lack of accountability. California enrolls 43% of all LEP students in the country, 1.4 million children who start

school without the ability to do regular classroom work in English. *Meeting the Challenge of Language Diversity*, published in 1992, is the first state-wide report on the outcomes of bilingual education programs and it reveals a serious lack of consistent student testing or data collection by the California State Department of Education. Conclusion 6 of the report asserts: "California public schools do not have valid and ongoing assessments of the performance for students with limited proficiency in English. Therefore, the state and the public cannot hold schools accountable for LEP students achieving high levels of performance." (Rossier, p. 46) It is reasonable to question this stunning assertion by asking, if the schools are not accountable for student learning, then who is?

In 1998 California instituted the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program that requires all students to participate at every grade level from 2nd to 12th grade, including LEP students. For those LEP students who have been in California schools less than twelve months, a comparable test may be taken in the native language, if available. At this writing, standardized tests are available in Spanish. Finally, it is now possible to identify the students, schools and districts that need improvement at particular grade levels and in certain subject areas, so that appropriate additional resources can be provided for those needs. After two test administrations, California reports improved performance for limited-English students at every grade level although the average performance is disappointingly low. For example, the reading scores for LEP second graders across the state rose from the 19th to the 23rd percentile, and all students tested at that grade level increased scores from the 39th to the 43rd percentile. (Porter, 1999)

Massachusetts, the first state to enact legislation on bilingual schooling in 1971 had not met its legal responsibility to document the progress of LEP students, until very recently. Not one recognized research study evaluating bilingual programs has been published in this state. *Striving for Success*, a state-wide survey published in 1994 reported,

> The Commission found that adequate and reliable data has never been collected that would indicate whether or not bilingual programs offer language minority pupils a superior educational option. This report strongly endorses the 1993 Education Reform Act's emphasis on accountability of educational outcomes for all pupils, including the development of appropriate assessments of pupils in bilingual programs and the collection of data specific to bilingual pupils. (Massachusetts Bilingual Education Commission Report, p. 2)

Massachusetts is now one of 26 states that not only mandate annual testing of students but also require a passing grade on the 10th grade assessment for high school graduation. Passing the 10th grade test will be essential for all students in Massachusetts, starting in 2003, ten years after the Education Reform Act began financing the development of curricular frameworks in all subjects and related tests to evaluate student learning. The legislature has allocated generous new education funding every year, especially to urban districts with high enrollments of minority students from low income families. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is administered to 4th, 8th, and 10th graders. After only two test administrations, early results show these highlights:

- Test participation is high with 96% of all students being tested, including students with disabilities and limited-English students.

- The tests on which the highest percentage of students performed at the two top levels, *Advanced* and *Proficient:* Grade 4 Science & Technology - 56%
  Grade 4 Mathematics - 36%

Grade 8 English Language Arts - 56%
Grade 10 English Language Arts - 34%

- The tests on which the highest percentage of students performed at the *Failing* level:
  Grade 8 History and Social Science - 49%
  Grade 8 Mathematics - 40%
  Grade 8 Science & Technology - 45%
  Grade 10 Mathematics 53%

- Especially disappointing are results on the 10th grade tests for students classified as LEP. Although these students are not required to take the MCAS tests in English until they have been in U. S. schools three years or longer, the percent of LEP students scoring at the *Failing* level in English Language Arts was 66%; in Mathematics, 92%; and in Science and Technology, 80%.

- In both 1998 and 1999 students at grade 4 had the highest average scaled scores overall and the lowest percentage of students at the *Failing* level. (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, pp. 3-4)

While these results indicate substantial room for improvement, they are by no means unusual. New York State is at the same early stage of measuring student achievement with new, more rigorous, tests. New York State reported more than half of fourth graders failed the new English test and 33% were below standard in mathematics. At the eighth grade level, 52% were below standard in reading and 62% in mathematics. (Hartocollis, 11/6/99, pp. 1, 14)

One of the major reasons for the low percentage of Hispanic high school graduates, both in Texas and across the country, is the highdrop out rate for this population. In spite of special programs for Hispanic students, the dropout rate has not appreciably improved over the past 25 years. According to a recent report, the Hispanic dropout rate has remained between 30 and 35% during this period, two and a half times the rate for African Americans and three and a half times the rate for white non-Hispanics. (Hispanic Dropout Project, 1998, p. 5) This dropout disproportion is part of

the problem in Texas as well. The Texas Education Agency reports that 2.3% of the state's Hispanic students drop out of school each year between grades seven and twelve, compared to a .9% rate for white students. Consequently, although Hispanics make up 37% of the state's students, they only account for 29% of its high school graduates. (Kronholz, 1999, p. 20)

On the central question of this law suit—whether high school students should be expected to demonstrate competency in reading, writing and mathematics on an objective measure such as the 10th grade TAAS test in order to obtain a high school diploma—I am firmly convinced of the correctness of the position of the Texas Education Agency that this testing program is urgently needed. In my professional opinion, it is sound educational policy to require one objective, uniform measure of student achievement as a prerequisite for high school graduation, an assessment closely based on the material taught in the schools. To suggest that students should graduate without demonstrating minimal knowledge and skills on a uniform measure is not acceptable for the current requirements of the technological/ information age job market or for pursuing higher education. Delia Pompa, Director of the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs in the U.S. Department of Education, commented pointedly on the need for LEP students to be held to reasonable learning standards and assessments: "I'm not sure it's O.K. for our kids to dance out something where other kids have to write on a subject to show mastery." (Porter, 1994)

Exempting whole groups of students from state-wide assessments on the expectation that they will not perform adequately is unfair to the students who are excluded as well as to their classmates. It has been my experience as a teacher and

program administrator that the majority of English language learners want to be included in the same educational and testing programs as native English speakers and that they feel demeaned when they are left out. A policy of separating language minority students, many of whom are native born, from the rest of the student population when the TAAS is administered is more likely to stigmatize and negatively impact the self-esteem of these students than is their inclusion in the tests.

In the case of minority students and especially LEP students, the TAAS program reported the urgent need for extraordinary efforts to be directed to these populations. Texas has well documented the educational improvements implemented and the steady growth in successful performance on state tests. A past history of discrimination against Mexican-American and African-American children is not justification for holding these students to lower standards. Dr. Jose Cardenas, a witness for the plaintiffs in the Texas case, has stated, nevertheless, that Texas has done much to eliminate discriminatory practices in the education of minority students in the past two decades. Maintaining rigorous standards and high expectations for minority students requires that periodic assessments of each student's progress be conducted and reported. The useful data collected annually not only play a part in improving teaching and learning but are used to modify the TAAS program itself.

In my twenty-five years of work in the bilingual education field, one of the major themes stressed continually to teachers and administrators is the importance of communicating to our students that we have high expectations for their ability to meet the same standards as other students. We expect them to reach high levels of achievement with our help. Discontinuing the process of accountability for Limited-English

Proficient students in Texas would be a disservice to a group of students whose academic progress has not been monitored heretofore in a consistent, longitudinal manner. As an expert witness in this case on behalf of the Texas Education Agency, I applaud Judge Edward C. Prado's ruling on January 7, 2000 that the TAAS "is not perfect, but the Court cannot say that it is unconstitutional." He recognizes that the test "does not perpetuate prior educational discrimination....Instead, the test seeks to identify inequities and to address them." On February 8, 2000, MALDEF announced that it will not be appealing the ruling of Judge Prado. (Washington Post, 2000, p. 9)

This is the crux of the matter: without a state-wide, annual, consistent, universally applied program of assessment, the next logical step of improving student achievement cannot be accurately addressed. Had Judge Prado ruled otherwise, it would have set an unfortunate precedent for other states with large numbers of LEP students where accountability is still in the early stages.

Certainly there are many forms of assessment that are valuable, including portfolios, classroom work, teacher evaluations. However, these evaluations are not consistent from school to school or district to district. At some point, and the 10th grade tests of basic skills is, in my opinion, the time for this assessment, students must be able to demonstrate on a universally applied measure that they can read, write and do mathematics at least at a minimal level if their high school diploma is to have any validity.

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Rosalie P. Porter December 1999

Biographical note - Rosalie Pedalino Porter is the author of *Forked Tongue: The Politics of Bilingual Education* (Basic Books, 1990; 2nd edition Transaction Publishers, 1995) and the editor of *READ Perspectives*, a refereed journal published by the Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development (READ) in Washington, DC. She has lectured on education policy for language minority students on behalf of the U. S. State Department in Bulgaria, Finland, Israel, Italy, Japan and Turkey.

APPENDIX I – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, STATEMENT OF THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Subcommittee on Education Reform

FROM: Learning Disabilities Association

DATE: March 20, 2001

SUBJECT: Hearing on "Measuring Success: Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement"

Currently more than 2.8 million American children with learning disabilities ages 6-21 (22nd Annual Report to Congress on IDEA, 2000, Table AA11, p. A-51) are served under IDEA. With 48 of the 50 states already requiring scores on state-wide tests as a criteria for promotion, graduation, and/or a "regular" diploma, these tests have become an important fact-of-life for students with learning disabilities. As such, the tests present both important opportunities for many students with learning disabilities and new difficulties and barriers for others.

The Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) represents more than 50,000 individuals with learning disabilities, including children and adults with learning disabilities, their families, and the professionals who serve them. It is in this capacity, that LDA wishes to place the following comments in the hearing record for "Measuring Success: Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement."

1. **Support for Access**. LDA recognizes the potential value of statewide assessments as one way to raise academic achievement and document educational accountability. LDA applauded the Department of Education throughout the reauthorization of IDEA, particularly the new emphasis on access to the general education curriculum and to state-wide assessments that permit many students with learning disabilities to demonstrate the intelligence, abilities, knowledge, and skills possessed by their non-disabled peers.

2. **Opportunity to Learn.** LDA strongly believe that students with learning disabilities must be given the opportunity to learn academic content in areas such as science, social studies, and the humanities. It is only then that students faced with high stakes testing on curriculum content can logically be expected to demonstrate their actual ability to achieve. No high stakes-testing plan should allow students with learning disabilities to be penalized for the lack of opportunity to learn.

3. **Availability of Accommodations.** For many students with learning disabilities, the opportunity to learn is not sufficient. These students

must also be able to use accommodations when they 1) do not alter the specific content and skills being tested, 2) are a continuation of accommodations provided over a period of time through Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), 3) have access to fair, neutral, and clear processes by which decisions about accommodations on assessments can be appealed.

4. **Test Norms and Reporting.** Since state-wide tests will be taken by students with learning disabilities, either with or without accommodations, it is important that 1) students with learning disabilities are included in the normative sample, 2) test results are reported at state, district, and building levels, but not for individuals or classrooms, 3) neither a "cut score" nor a single test score alone, should determine the educational future of students, and 4) state-wide testing results report both aggregated and disaggregated data. Such data will enable development of a useful database that encourages research on the effects of high stakes testing on all children, including those with learning disabilities.

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The issues of assessment and accountability are important ones that the disability community takes very seriously. LDA believes students with learning disabilities must receive an appropriate education with the same educational expectations and positive outcomes as their non-disabled peers. Not only can state-wide assessments help students with learning disabilities achieve, but conversely, demonstrated improvements in achievement of those students can contribute to improved accountability in districts, states, and the nation. **The challenge for educators and legislators is to ensure that the positive effects that CAN result from such assessments, DO INDEED OCCUR.** LDA looks forward to working with you to achieve this important goal for both our children and for their future.

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APPENDIX J – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, STATEMENT OF MICHAEL H. KEAN, VICE PRESIDENT, PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, CTB/McGRAW-HILL, MONTEREY, C.A.

Testimony of Michael H. Kean

"Education Accountability & the Feasibility of Annual Testing"

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Subcommittee on Education Reform

March 8, 2001

(SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD)

****

My name is Michael Kean. I am vice president for public and governmental affairs at CTB/McGraw-Hill in Monterey, CA. I also serve as chair of the Test Committee of the Association of American Publishers, which is based in Washington, DC.

I am very pleased to provide testimony on three topics:

1. The importance of strong accountability measures in education reform.
2. Annual testing at grades 3-8.
3. The feasibility of annual testing, and the capacity of the nation's test publishers to assist states and local school districts in undertaking such an initiative.

Part I – Accountability & Reform

Testing plays a vital role in today's education environment. Assessment results often are a major force in shaping public perceptions about the capabilities of our students and the quality of our schools. As a primary tool of educators and policy makers, assessment is used for a multitude of purposes. Educators use assessment results to help improve instruction and learning. Educators also use tests to evaluate programs and schools. And, assessments are used to generate the data upon which policy decisions are made.

Because of the important roles it performs, educational assessment is a foundation activity in every school, in every school district and every state. Along with standards, assessment is a vital component of educational reform.

Educational assessment is a technical field, but in its simplest terms it is about *information*. Accountability is established through accurate and consistent information.

Educators use a variety of tests or "multiple measures" to capture the information they need to demonstrate results with federal, state and/or local education dollars.

In the past 10 years, we have seen nearly all the states implement new assessment programs. In most cases, the states have done so in order to measure student progress against new state curricular and performance standards. Ten years ago when I testified before this Committee, few states had mandatory assessment programs and few -- if any states -- had established curricular and performance standards. What a difference a decade has made. Today, 49 states have academic standards and statewide assessments. In addition, most of the nation's 15,600 school districts also assess students in the grades in which their state tests are not administered.

In sum, there is now the clear understanding in the states that without strong assessment programs, we have no real information. ***Without information we can have no accountability and thus, no real reform.***

Part II -- Annual Testing

Against this backdrop of enhanced state and local assessment, President Bush has proposed annual testing at grades 3-8 in English/language art and mathematics. The President's plan represents sound measurement practice.

Annual testing enables parents and teachers to know who is falling behind and who needs help. Without yearly testing, how can schools identify failing students in a timely manner? The President's testing proposal recognizes the importance of *information* about individual student performance in the classroom. Parents support this notion. According to a national survey released in July 2000 by the Association of American Publishers, *two-thirds of all parents want their children tested in every grade*. In addition, a survey from the Business Roundtable released last fall found that 83 percent of parents agree that tests are helpful in informing them of how their children are doing in school.

The best way to make Title I a more effective program is to assess growth in student achievement on an annual basis. Returning to actual individual student growth would create valuable "pre-test" and "post-test" comparisons that would help students, parents and teachers. These changes would give parents the up-to-date information they need to

make decisions to ensure each student is progressing toward learning in a school that is not failing. Annual testing will also produce more accurate and timely disaggregated data for districts and states. These data will determine progress in narrowing the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged children, minorities, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency.

Finally, annual testing by the states and districts in grades 3-8 will provide new and more comprehensive data so that Congress and the Administration can determine if Title I really is working. Currently, Title I requires assessments to be administered at least once in each of three grade groupings, grades 3-5, 6-9 and 10-12. As a consequence, individual student progress is typically assessed only once every three years. In fact, it is possible to go as long as five years between tests. In addition, the information gathered is only focused on how students do in the one grade every year in order to measure how the school or district is performing. This approach ignores consecutive year information about specific student growth that would be available under President Bush's plan. These data would also enable states and districts to report annual student progress on an improved basis. Prior to 1994, students were tested annually, but the focus was more on student eligibility. However, the pendulum has swung too far towards school and program accountability.

Title I -- as well as other federal, state and local education programs -- could also be strengthened by early childhood assessment activities. The publishers strongly endorse President Bush's "Reading First" proposal, which calls for a new focus on early literacy. A significant focus of this effort would be the use of reading evaluations for students in grades K-2 to determine where students need help. The importance of early childhood education is well established. Indeed, half of the children served by Title I are at the K-2 level. It is too late to start measuring reading skills for the first time in grade 3. Early intervention and assistance, matched with annual diagnostic and achievement information, are core components for creating an environment where every child is reading by the end of grade 3.

Part III – The Feasibility of Annual Testing

The importance of annual testing is only one half of the equation. The other half is the feasibility of the plan. Can it work? How can it be developed? What will it cost?

Annual testing in grades 3-8 is feasible and can be implemented cost-effectively within the proposed timeframe. As I understand the proposal, the tests would continue to be selected by states and local school districts -- not the federal government. The initiative would build on the current flexibility in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which assures that the requirements for a state assessment system can be met by using statewide tests, locally selected tests, or combinations of state and local tests.

The President's annual testing initiative should be built on what is already in place at the state and local level. In fact, existing testing systems are designed for, or are readily capable of, providing information on the year-to-year growth of individual students.

Where precisely do the states stand today with grades 3-8 assessments in English/language arts and mathematics?

Grade 3	29 states have implemented assessments in both subjects
Grade 4	38 states have implemented assessments in both subjects
Grade 5	28 states have implemented assessments in both subjects
Grade 6	26 states have implemented assessments in both subjects
Grade 7	18 states have implemented assessments in both subjects
Grade 8	42 states have implemented assessments in both subjects

(Source: *Quality Counts 2001*)

Furthermore, by using assessments already in place, Congress and the Administration can "jump start" annual testing. The costs and development of annual testing will vary significantly depending upon the type of assessments chosen. For example, existing tests, which include both multiple-choice and constructed response items, are available immediately at costs ranging from at a cost of $6 to $14. On the other hand, customized

assessments would take two to four years to develop and would cost between $25 to $125.

Obviously, more precise costs or estimates of development time cannot be projected until there is a clearer definition of what will be tested and what type of assessment will be used. Of course, all tests must comply with current Title I requirements specifying that assessments be valid, reliable and fair.

If Congress authorizes the Administration's plan, I am confident the nation's large-scale test publishers can carry it out. We are already engaged nationwide in the development, publication, scoring and reporting of tests in all the states.

I appreciate this opportunity to share my views with you. As Congress moves forward in reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we can provide you and your staff with research data, expert advice and answers to your questions.

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APPENDIX K – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, STATEMENT OF RICHARD L. FERGUSON, PRESIDENT, ACT INC.

Measuring Success: Using Assessments and Accountability to Raise Student Achievement

A Comment to the House Subcommittee on Education Reform

ACT Inc.
Richard L. Ferguson, President

Introduction

Almost everything about U. S. education policy has changed since the 1989 Education Summit, when then-President George Bush and the governors met to respond to the challenges identified in *A Nation at Risk* (National Committee on Excellence in Education, 1983). A central catalyst for this change has been the evaluation requirements for Title I as stipulated in the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act. With encouragement from the federal government, virtually every state has developed standards in core academic areas that are intended to define what students should know and be able to do by the end of their K-12 education.

More change remains to be made, however. The states' standards are, in many cases, fundamentally disconnected from statewide assessments and from instruction. Many states need to overhaul their systems to ensure that their assessments directly address their standards while, at the same time, providing technically sound results. What is perhaps most important is that many teachers may feel ill-equipped to teach what the state standards define. Thus, their students may not have the opportunity to learn the very skills and proficiencies on which they will be tested.

President George W. Bush's education plan, "No Child Left Behind," contains significant elements essential to improving the quality of our nation's schools. The plan empowers states and schools to take important steps toward achieving educational excellence. We at ACT commend the president for coming forward with priorities that will allow the states to design their own programs to help each child reach his or her full potential.

The president's plan is a call for fairness in the educational enterprise, a call that -- if embraced by all students, parents, teachers, and administrators -- can result in meaningful gains in student achievement across the socioeconomic spectrum. Well-designed and thoughtfully used assessments are indispensable to effective monitoring of student and school progress. In the hands of skilled teachers, they can have a significant positive impact on classroom practices.

We at ACT appreciate this opportunity to delineate what we believe are the four essentials for making President Bush's plan a success. These necessary elements are: well-defined standards, high-quality assessments, multiple measures, and direct ties to instruction.

Well-Defined Standards

Much has been written in the past few years about the strengths and weaknesses of state standards. There is little question that the 49 sets of standards developed to date vary greatly in their specificity and in their emphases. We believe it is critically important that the standards defined by each state be clear and specific in their expectations of students.

A well-written standard should articulate both what is to be measured and the ways in which it can be measured. Otherwise, states will be vulnerable to assessments that do not measure what their state standards intend, and teachers will not necessarily be instructing students in the skills and proficiency domains defined by the standards. We should not hold teachers and schools accountable for ambiguous or vague standards.

In regard to students in grades 3-8 specifically, we also strongly believe that the standards the states identify ought to position the students well for acquiring subsequent skills and proficiencies in high school, in postsecondary education, and in the workforce. Because the skills students attain in these early years will form their foundation for lifelong learning, these skills must lead toward longer-term goals like readiness for college and the world of work. If we fail to establish a firm foundation of skills and knowledge in our children, we will limit their opportunities in later life.

High-Quality Assessments

If schools and states are to be held accountable for raising student achievement, they must also have high-quality assessments to measure their results. This means, first, that the assessments must be designed specifically for these uses. They must also provide scores that have been validated for use in making the kinds of decisions the states will make about students and schools. Test forms must be created specifically to measure growth one year to the next. For this type of annual assessment, new tests must be made available each year, and these tests must be equated to previous forms to ensure that the scores from year to year will be comparable.

In addition, we must provide states more options than they currently have. Existing tests will not serve the needs described in President Bush's plan. And the nation cannot afford to try to get by on the cheap. If we use the same test forms year after year, the overexposure will result in inflated, and thus misleading, scores. And we will run the risk of constricting the education of our children, who will be taught and will learn only what is on the tests rather than the entire domain of important proficiencies that they need to learn.

Multiple Measures

The president's plan does not prescribe the number or types of measures to be used to assess student progress. We at ACT encourage the use of multiple sources of information to support decisions, particularly those arising from evaluations of student progress. Improvement decisions need to be informed by all relevant available information. They should, for instance, take into account students' levels of proficiency before instruction; that is, while we maintain the expectation that all students will improve, we must allow for the fact that students will be at different points when they start to learn. Multiple measures will better inform us regarding the gains students are making and will support important judgments about the quality of the education they are receiving.

Annual administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress is included in the president's plan as an additional source of information about student achievement. If NAEP scores are to be added to the mix, we should recognize some qualifications on their use: 1) that NAEP, because it does not provide individual scores, can be used only as a measure of group progress; and 2) that NAEP scores may or may not measure a particular state's standards. If a NAEP test significantly covers a state's standards, then the test scores could provide information relevant to the decisions being made. But if a NAEP test does not align with a state's standards, then NAEP and the state assessment will be measuring different things. The NAEP measure won't be consistent in indicating changes relative to the state standards. Thus, we recommend that NAEP results be used only in those cases where the tests align with state standards.

Direct Ties to Instruction

If schools are to be held accountable, they must have access to resource materials that incorporate the standards of their state into the curriculum. Teachers and curriculum leaders will need support so they can understand and be ready to teach to students the knowledge, skills, and proficiencies defined by the state

standards and measured by annual assessments. Teachers should also have ready access to the intended goals of their instruction. They must understand that their responsibility is to teach to the broader domains of proficiency as defined by state standards, not to questions or problems contained in a single, isolated test form.

"Improving Teacher Quality" is another part of the president's plan that speaks to a vitally important element of teaching and learning. Effective teaching is a key to improving student achievement. In the final analysis, assessment and instruction must mesh, and only teachers can ensure that this happens.

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