

IMPROVING THE LITERARY SKILLS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD,
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

COMMITTEE ON

EDUCATION AND LABOR

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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IMPROVING THE LITERARY SKILLS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

**Thursday, November 19, 2009
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Early Childhood,
Elementary and Secondary Education
Committee on Education and Labor
Washington, DC**

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:03 a.m., in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Dale Kildee [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Kildee, Payne, Scott, Holt, Davis, Loeb sack, Hirono, Polis, Pierluisi, Hinojosa, Kucinich, Altmire, Chu, Castle, Petri, Ehlers, and Biggert.

Also present: Representative Yarmuth.

Staff present: Tylease Alli, Hearing Clerk; Calla Brown, Staff Assistant, Education; Adrienne Dunbar, Education Policy Advisor; Ruth Friedman, Senior Education Policy Advisor (Early Childhood); David Hartzler, Systems Administrator; Fred Jones, Staff Assistant, Education; Ricardo Martinez, Policy Advisor, Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and Competitiveness; Joe Novotny, Chief Clerk; Lillian Pace, Policy Advisor, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education; Alexandria Ruiz, Administrative Assistant to Director of Education Policy; Melissa Salmanowitz, Press Secretary; Stephanie Arras, Minority Legislative Assistant; James Bergeron, Minority Deputy Director of Education and Human Services Policy; Kirk Boyle, Minority General Counsel; Allison Dembeck, Minority Professional Staff Member; Ryan Murphy, Minority Press Secretary; Susan Ross, Minority Director of Education and Human Services Policy; and Linda Stevens, Minority Chief Clerk/Assistant to the General Counsel.

Chairman KILDEE. Good morning. A quorum being present the committee will come to order. Pursuant to committee rule 12a, all members may submit an opening statement in writing, which will be made part of the permanent record. Governor, how are you doing?

Mr. CASTLE. Good.

Chairman KILDEE. Before we begin, we expect our colleague, Representative John Yarmuth, a former member of this committee, and welcome back, John. You were a good member then, and you moved on to another responsibility, but your interest in this is undying, and I appreciate you being here this morning.

We welcome him to attend today's hearing, and I ask unanimous consent for him to sit on the dais to listen to testimony and to ask questions. Without objection, I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

I am pleased to welcome my fellow subcommittee members, the public and our witnesses to this hearing on improving the literacy skills of children and young adults.

Only 30 percent of our fourth and eighth grade students tested at proficient or higher in reading on the most recent national assessment of educational progress. These scores do not reflect students failing a test, so much, but an education system that is failing students.

Many of these struggling readers face a grim future without our help and certainly your help. You bring an expertise to this committee that we certainly are hungry for. Some are likely to become discouraged and drop out of school, while others will graduate unprepared for what lies ahead.

For those who do graduate high school, about 40 percent will lack the literacy skills employers seek. This creates a serious dilemma in an economy, where the 25 fastest growing professions require greater than average literacy skills. We have taken steps to address this problem at the federal level investing in a handful of programs to provide intensive reading support for students.

While many elements of these programs provide promise, we clearly have more to do. As a strong supporter of early childhood education, I believe we must start early. We know that literacy development begins early in life and is a strong indicator of student achievement.

By investing in our youngest learners, we can prevent students from falling behind at a critical point in their education. We must also strengthen existing programs targeted at our pre-k and elementary age children to ensure they benefit from the most effective practices. Challenges are not always solved by more money. Sometimes we need to realign resources, and empower our educators with the skills to maximize their impact on student learning.

And finally we need to pay attention to the needs of our adolescent readers. Researchers have documented a fourth grade reading slump for years. Yet federal investment in reading programs for grades 4 through 12 remains minimal. In order to reverse the high school dropout crisis, and prepare all students for post-secondary opportunities, we need to provide reading support far beyond the fourth grade.

During today's discussion, we will hear from a panel of literacy experts. Some who have devoted their entire careers to identifying effective reading practices and others who have worked on the front lines turning these practices into results for children.

Their perspectives are unique and cover the broad range of needs facing today's learners from birth through high school. I look forward to today's testimony and hope it provides this subcommittee with new perspectives as we work to reevaluate the federal role in literacy development.

I now yield to the ranking member of this committee, Governor Castle, for his opening statement.

[The statement of Mr. Kildee follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Hon. Dale E. Kildee, Chairman, Subcommittee on
Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education**

I'm pleased to welcome my fellow subcommittee members, the public, and our witnesses to this hearing on "improving the literacy skills of children and young adults."

Only 30 percent of our 4th and 8th grade students tested at proficient or higher in reading on the most recent national assessment of educational progress. These scores do not reflect students failing a test, but an education system that is failing its students.

Many of these struggling readers face a grim future without our help. Some are likely to become discouraged and dropout of school, while others will graduate unprepared for what lies ahead. For those who do graduate high school, about 40 percent will lack the literacy skills employers seek. This creates a serious dilemma in an economy where the 25 fastest-growing professions require greater than average literacy skills.

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As a strong supporter of early childhood education, I believe we must start early. We know that literacy development begins early in life and is a strong indicator of student achievement. By investing in our youngest learners, we can prevent students from failing behind at a critical point in their education.

We must also strengthen existing programs targeted at our pre-k and elementary age children to ensure they benefit from the most effective practices. Challenges are not always solved by more money. Sometimes we need to realign resources and empower our educators with the skills to maximize their impact on student learning.

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I now yield to ranking member Castle for his opening statement.

Mr. CASTLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much for this hearing on what I consider to be a very important subject. And I thank all the witnesses and all the other individuals who attended here today. I think hopefully we can learn a lot.

I am pleased that the committee is examining current federal literacy initiatives and ways to improve the comprehensive skills of all children from birth through high school. Today, 14 percent of Americans over the age of 16, about 30 million people, have trouble with basic reading and writing skills and cannot read well enough to fill out a job application, follow a prescription or even read a simple children's story.

Too many adults do not have the skills to find and keep a job, support their child's education or participate actively in civic life. Reading is a fundamental skill, and many of us take it for granted. Yet we know that reading is a skill that does not come naturally.

For children who do not learn to read in early educational settings can easily translate into a lifelong learning disability. Fortunately, children who are at risk for reading failure can learn to read at average levels or above if they are identified early and provided with intensive instruction.

In 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act was signed into law. The act sought to address some of these literacy issues for children in pre-K through the third grade by authorizing the Early Reading First and Reading First programs.

In 2005, Congress created the Striving Readers program, which focuses on middle and high school students as part of the fiscal year 2005 Labor HHS Education Appropriations Act within No Child Left Behind.

The success in the first 7 years of the scientifically based Reading First program in particular has been astounding. Nationally, the percentage of third graders scoring proficient on state reading assessments has grown nearly 8 percent, much faster than overall growth.

In addition, state-reported performance data released last year indicates impressive gains in reading comprehension with improvements seen by nearly every grade and subgroup of students.

Despite the clear success of the Reading First program, however, Congress has cut funding for this important program over the last 2 years and recently eliminated funding for the program. I am hopeful that we will reconsider this elimination and restore funding for this program, which continues to produce strong results for children.

In a few moments, Dr. Sandra Meyers from the Delaware Department of Education will discuss the work my home state is doing in the area of literacy, particularly within the Early Reading First and Reading First programs.

Delaware has long recognized that what children experience early in life has a direct impact on their future success in school and life, and I am pleased that the state is addressing literacy skills with several early literacy programs, such as Reach Out and Reading is Fundamental, Delaware Read Aloud and Growing Together portfolios, as well as various adult literacy services.

Each of these literacy programs have demonstrated success in helping students develop their literacy skills. However, as we all know, education is not just the responsibility of our federal, state and local governments. It is our collective responsibility whether it is a parent reading to a child or a business reaching out to those in need in their community.

We all have a role to play in helping people who lack literacy skills to overcome their difficulties. And I want to thank all of you here today and our witnesses in particular, of course, for your interest and efforts in drawing the public's attention to the problem of illiteracy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

[The statement of Mr. Castle follows:]

Prepared Statement of Hon. Michael N. Castle, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education

Good Morning. I would like to thank Chairman Kildee for holding today's hearing. I am pleased the Committee is examining current federal literacy initiatives and ways to improve the reading comprehension skills of all children from birth through high school.

Today, 14 percent of Americans over the age of 16—about 30 million people—have trouble with basic reading and writing skills (IES: National Assessment of Adult Literacy) and cannot read well enough to fill out a job application, follow a prescription, or even read a simple children's story. Too many adults do not have the skills

to find and keep a job, support their child's education, or participate actively in civic life.

Reading is a fundamental skill and many of us take it for granted. Yet, we know that reading is a skill that does not come naturally. For children who do not learn to read, an early educational stumble can easily translate into a lifelong learning disability.

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Thank you Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you, Governor. Without objection, all members will have 14 calendar days to submit additional materials or questions for the hearing record. Now, I would like to introduce our very distinguished panel of witnesses here this afternoon.

I would hope that in the history of literacy progress in this country that someday someone may cite to what we hear here today as something that was instrumental in improving our literacy. So I don't want to put you on the spot and make you nervous, but this is a very, very important hearing.

This is a very, very important issue, and we have asked the people around the country who really are expert in that. So your role is important, and these hearings do have effects and, therefore, you have a very important responsibility, and I appreciate you being here.

I would like to introduce our very first witness this afternoon. Our first witness, Dr. Dorothy S. Strickland is the Samuel Dewitt Proctor Professor of Education and the state of New Jersey Professor of Reading at Rutgers University.

She was formerly the Arthur I. Gates Professor of Education at Teachers College Columbia University. A former classroom teacher and learning disabilities specialist, Dr. Strickland is past president of both the International Reading Association and the Reading Hall of Fame.

She currently serves on two National Academy of Science panels, one on teacher preparation and the other on recommendations to the administration for educational policy. Dr. Strickland was also appointed to the New Jersey State Board of Education in 2008. She received her bachelor's degree from Newark State College and her master's degree and doctoral degrees from New York University.

I will now yield to Congressman Polis to introduce our next witness.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. It is my honor to introduce Mary Kay Doré who is a native daughter of your home state, Mr. Chairman. She is from Redford, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit.

She graduated from DePaul University in Indiana with a bachelor's degree in sociology and a minor in education. She has been involved with special education since she was in high school when she worked at a summer camp for children with special needs.

She then attended graduate school at Michigan State University where in 4 years she got a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in special education. After finishing her graduate program, she moved to Breckenridge, Colorado and began her work as a special education teacher in Summit County School District.

During her 13-year tenure with Summit Schools, she has worked at the elementary, middle and high school levels and now at the administrative level. Her positions have included resource special education teacher, severe needs special education teacher, district special education coordinator and now as a district student support services manager.

During her time in Breckenridge, Summit County has become an increasingly diverse school district. Around the time she started Summit County was about 3 percent ELL students, and it's now about 22 percent ELL students, adding a new dimension to the literacy challenges in the district.

She has played a significant role at curriculum development and response to instruction system planning and implementation and all other district initiatives, as well as working cooperatively with the Mountain Board of Cooperative Educational Services.

BOCES is a cooperative agency that delivers educational special ed services in our state and the Colorado Department of Education, as well, during which time I happened to be on the Colorado State Board of Education while our staff there spoke very highly of her efforts. Yield back.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much. You mentioned Redford. I lived on Grand River Avenue when I taught at University of Detroit High School many, many years ago.

Our third witness, Andrés Henriquez, is a program officer in the national program of Carnegie Corporation of New York where he leads the corporation's advancing literacy initiative. Prior to joining the corporation, Mr. Henriquez served as the Assistant Director for

Strategic Planning Center for Children and Technology at the New York Offices of the Education Development Center, Incorporated.

He has also worked at the National Science Foundation as an associate programming director responsible for the network infrastructure for education and assistant with the Research and Education Policy and Practice program.

He was a researcher at Sesame Workshop and a senior researcher at MTV Networks. Mr. Henriquez taught for 5 years with the New York City Public Schools. He received his undergraduate degree in psychology from Hamilton College and an masters of education from Futures College Columbia University.

I will now yield to Congressman Hinojosa to introduce the next witness. Mr. Hinojosa?

Mr. HINOJOSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is my pleasure to introduce Dr. Leo Gómez. He is a professor of bilingual, bicultural education at the University of Texas Pan American University UTPA, an outstanding Hispanic-Serving Institution we call HSI in my congressional district that serves over 17,500 students.

Dr. Gómez's research has focused on instructional practices affecting language minority students. He has been involved extensively in the development, the implementation and assessment of two-way dual language programs.

Dr. Gómez is the co-author of a dual language enrichment model that is being successfully implemented in over 60 school districts representing over 440 elementary schools across four states, which include Texas, Washington state, Nevada and Kansas. In Texas alone, this model is being implemented in 417 elementary schools.

As a nationally recognized scholar in this area, Dr. Gómez has an extensive list of publications. They include books, articles and monographs. Dr. Gómez has also made hundreds of conference presentations in Texas and across our nation.

As a prominent educator, Dr. Gómez has taught in public schools and continues his teaching assignments at the university while serving as the Assistant Dean for the College of Education at UTPA. His entire career has been devoted to literacy issues, particularly for the art of teaching and learning in both English and Spanish.

Dr. Gómez holds a B.A. in secondary education, as well as an M.A. in interdisciplinary studies from UTPA. Dr. Gómez also earned a PhD in curriculum and instruction from Texas A&M University at College Station.

Dr. Gómez, we are fortunate that you found time in your busy schedule to be with us today. We welcome you to this very important hearing. And I yield back.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Hinojosa.

I will now yield to our committee's ranking member, Governor Castle, to introduce the final two witnesses.

Mr. CASTLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will introduce first Dr. Sandra Meyers who currently serves as the Education Associate of Elementary Reading for the Delaware Department of Education where she oversees programs, such as Reading First for the state. Prior to working at the department, Dr. Meyers worked in Delaware's Colonial School District from 1991 to 2003.

During her 12-year tenure with the Colonial School District, Dr. Meyers served as the program coordinator for the extended summertime program, a Title I reading teacher and reading resource teacher, a University of Delaware instructor of the graduate level course preventing reading failure and a coach for Colonial teachers being trained in reading success from the start.

Dr. Meyers is a member of the Association for Supervision, the International Reading Association and the Diamond State Reading Association. Dr. Meyers graduated from Westchester University with a bachelor's degree in elementary education.

She then attended graduate school at Temple University where she received her master's in psychology of reading. And in 2006, Dr. Meyers received her doctoral degree from University of Delaware in educational leadership. And we welcome Dr. Meyers here today.

And Larry Berger is the CEO and co-founder of Wireless Generation, an education company that has pioneered the adaptation of emerging technologies to improve pre-K through 12 teaching and learning. Prior to launching Wireless Generation, Mr. Berger was president of Interdimensions, a Web solutions company.

He also served as the educational technology specialist at the Children's Aid Society. Mr. Berger serves on the Carnegie Institute for Advanced Study Joint Commission on Mathematics and Science Education and of the Board of Trustees to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. And we welcome you here, also, Mr. Berger. Thank you for being here.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you, Governor. Before we begin, let me briefly explain our lighting system here and the 5-minute rule. Everyone, including members of Congress, is limited to 5 minutes of presentation or questioning. The light is green when you begin to speak. When you see the yellow light it means you have 1 minute remaining. When the light turns red your time has expired, and you need to conclude your testimony.

Now, there are no ejection seats there, so you could certainly finish a reasonable paragraph to conclude your remarks. But please be certain as you testify to turn on, and speak into the microphones in front of you.

And we will now hear from our first witness, Dr. Strickland. Welcome, Doctor.

STATEMENT OF DOROTHY STRICKLAND, PROFESSOR EMERITAS, RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

Ms. STRICKLAND. Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to share some of the current thinking about literacy learning during the early childhood years. I have done a fair amount of research over the years. My primary contribution to the field has been as translator of research and practice. I have been a classroom teacher, learning disability specialist and teacher educator. I am also a mother and a grandmother, so I bring many perspectives to the table.

Before I begin, however, I would like to state that, although I believe that greater attention to literacy is extremely important, I also believe that early literacy should never be stressed at the ex-

pense of or in isolation from the other domains of child development.

In fact, all of the domains of early childhood development, physical, social, emotional, cognitive, language and literacy are inter-related and interdependent. I have organized my comments around four questions. The first two provides the research and background information, and the last two deal with recommendations,

Question one, what is known about the importance of early literacy development? And you have already expressed some of these ahead of me so I am glad to hear them. Early literacy plays a key role in enabling the kind of early experiences that research shows are linked with academic achievement, reduced grade retention, higher graduation rates and enhanced productivity in adult life.

We know that literacy learning starts early and persists throughout life. From the earliest years, everything that adults do to support children's language and literacy really, really counts. We know that all language and literacy develop concurrently. What children learn from listening and talking contributes to their ability to read and write and vice versa.

We know that children's experiences with the world and with print greatly influence their ability to comprehend what they read. True reading involves understanding. What children bring to a text whether it is oral or a written text influences the understandings they takeaway.

My second question is what is needed to support young children's language and literacy development? And I want to offer just a few examples so that you will see that these are not extraordinary experiences, certainly not skill drill, but the kind of experiences found in most middle class homes.

For example, young children need parents, caregivers and teachers who know that a child's capacity for learning is not determined at birth, who involve children's interests to local points of interest, and talk with them about what they see and do, who provide time for reading to children and talking with them about what is read. Ordinary, maybe, but too many children are denied these opportunities.

My third question is, how can we improve existing early childhood programs to better support early literacy development? Both my knowledge of the research, and my experience suggests that we have come a long way in providing quality zero to five education in the United States, but there is much more to be done.

Following are some ideas for your consideration and recommendations for policy and practice. First, we do need well-conceived standards for child outcomes, for curriculum content, and for teacher-caregiver preparation to establish a clarity of purpose and a shared vision for early literacy education.

Second, comprehensive support for all children with clear adaptations for children with special needs. Third, support for early literacy development in the English language learner must be specified. Fourth, early literacy assessment should be age appropriate, and employ multiple means of collecting, synthesizing and making use of information.

Fifth, program outreach should reflect respect for the diversity of cultures and linguistic backgrounds of children and their families,

and include parent involvement programs with a strong early literacy component.

And perhaps most important, highly capable early childhood professionals are needed to implement today's more challenging early literacy expectations. This involves knowledge of how young children learn and how they are best taught, knowledge and respect for diversity of children and their families, ability to foster all the domains of development and to work collaboratively with a variety of professionals, an effective use of technologies.

All of these are important, and we need to keep in mind the context in which this would be done. For example, many early literacy professionals have implications for their own literacy development as well. And this is a fact that we have come to grips with.

My final point has to do with my work as an evaluator of Early Reading First and the implications for federal efforts. That work largely confirms the recommendations already offered. For the most part, I saw exceptionally effective preschool programs with a high degree of emphasis on early literacy.

My hope is that we might learn from the past, learn from Early Reading First, especially in the areas of assessment, family literacy and professional development, including attention to coaching. Thank you.

[The statement of Ms. Strickland follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Dorothy S. Strickland, Professor Emerita,
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey**

Thank you for the opportunity to share some of the current thinking about literacy learning during the early childhood years. Though I have done a fair amount of research over the years, my primary contribution to the field has been as translator of research to practice. I have been a classroom teacher, learning disabilities specialist, and teacher educator. I am also a mother and grandmother. So, I bring many perspectives to the table. Before I begin, however, I would like to state that although I believe that greater attention to literacy is extremely important, I also believe that early literacy should never be stressed at the expense of or in isolation from the other domains of child development. In fact, all of the domains of early childhood development—physical, social-emotional, cognitive, language, and literacy—are interrelated and interdependent. I have organized my comments around four questions.

Question #1. What is known about the importance of early literacy development?

Early childhood professionals have long recognized the importance of language and literacy in preparing children to succeed in school. Early literacy plays a key role in enabling the kind of early learning experiences that research shows are linked with academic achievement, reduced grade retention, higher graduation rates, and enhanced productivity in adult life.

Literacy learning starts early and persists throughout life.

In the past, our field has talked about early literacy in terms of what was called reading readiness, the necessary level of preparation children should attain before beginning formal reading instruction. Key factors or predictors include oral language, alphabet knowledge, knowledge of how the sounds of our language link to the alphabet, and knowledge about print. Reading readiness largely focused on targeted instruction in kindergarten and early first grade. While the notion of certain predictors has been maintained, the way we look at their development has changed. Today's research suggests that learning to read and write is an ongoing and emerging process from infancy. This is consistent with what has been learned from neurocognitive research about young learners and learning. From the earliest years, everything that adults do to support children's language and literacy really counts.

Oral language and literacy develop concurrently.

Although oral language is foundational to literacy development, the two also develop concurrently. What children learn from listening and talking contributes to their ability to read and write and vice versa. For example, young children's phonological awareness (ability to identify and make oral rhymes and manipulate the in-

dividual sounds—phonemes- in spoken words) is an important indicator of their potential success in learning to read. Phonological awareness begins early with rhyming games and chants, often on a parent's knee.

- Children who fall behind in oral language and literacy development are less likely to be successful beginning readers; and their achievement lag is likely to persist throughout the primary grades and beyond.

- It is not enough to simply teach early literacy skills in isolation. Teaching children to apply the skills they learn has a significantly greater effect on their ability to read and write

Children's experiences with the world and with print greatly influence their ability to comprehend what they read.

True reading involves understanding. What children bring to a text, whether oral or written, influences the understandings they take away.

The more limited a child's experiences the more likely he or she will have difficulty with reading. There are two kinds of experiences that are highly influential to literacy development: background knowledge about the world and background knowledge about print and books.

Question #2. What is needed to support young children's language and literacy development?

Young children need parents, caregivers, and teachers who:

- Know that a child's capacity for learning is not determined at birth and there is a great deal they can do about it.

- Respect and build upon the home language and culture of the child
- Are aware that there are many informal and enjoyable ways that language and literacy skills can be developed at home and in pre-school settings

- Provide opportunities for children to use what they know about language and literacy in order to help them transfer what they know to new situations.

- Take time to listen and respond to children.
- Talk to and with children not at them.
- Engage children in extended conversations about events, storybooks, and a variety of other print media.

- Explain things to children.
- Use sophisticated and unusual words in their everyday talk with children, when it is appropriate to the conversation.

- Recognize that interesting concepts and vocabulary do not emerge from a vacuum and, thus, make sure to provide interesting content to think and talk about.

- Involve children in trips to local points of interest and talk with them about what they see and do.

- Establish a habit of raising and responding to children's questions about things that occur in the home environment or at trips to local points of interest.

- Provide time for reading to children and talking with them about what is read.

- Share a variety of types of literature, including lots of informational books to stimulate conversations about ideas and concepts beyond everyday experiences.

- Make books accessible for children to return to on their own to "pretend read"—a child's personal reenactment of the read-aloud experience.

Question #3. How can we improve existing early childhood programs to better support early literacy development?

Both my knowledge of research and my experience suggest that we have come a very long way in providing quality 0-5 education in the United States, but there is much to be done. Following are some ideas for your consideration with recommendations for policy and practice.

1. Well-conceived standards for child outcomes, curriculum content, and teacher/care giver preparation help establish clarity of purpose and a shared vision for early literacy education.

- States and districts should establish standards for early literacy that are articulated with K-12 programs and reflect consistency and continuity with overall program goals.

- Early literacy curricula, teaching and care-giving practices should be evidence-based, integrated with all domains of learning and understandable to staff members.

2. Early literacy programs should be designed to provide comprehensive support for all children with clear adaptations for children with special needs.

3. Support for the early literacy development of English language learners must be specified with language learning opportunities in both the home language and English provided where feasible.

4. Early literacy assessment should be age-appropriate and employ multiple means of collecting, synthesizing, and making use of information to support chil-

dren's overall development, improve the quality of care giving/teaching, and the total program.

5. Program outreach should reflect respect for the diversity of cultures, and linguistic backgrounds of children and their families as well as support for families as children's first teachers.

- Parent involvement programs should have a strong early literacy component that guides parents and care givers in providing appropriate early literacy experiences at home.

6. Highly capable early childhood professionals are needed to implement today's more challenging early literacy expectations.

- Standards for early childhood professionals—administrators, teachers, caregivers, educational support professionals—should require that staff members be qualified to meet early literacy standards according to their roles and responsibilities.

- Improved pre-service education and professional development to prepare and support professionals to meet increased demands and challenges associated with high quality early literacy education. Includes—

- Knowledge of how young children learn, (including brain research) and how they are best taught.

- Knowledge, respect, and support for the diversity of children's families, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds are important to early literacy Know:

- The ability to integrate and build on all of the domains of a child's development—physical, social-emotional, cognitive, language—to foster literacy development.

- The ability to work collaboratively with a variety of professionals and social agencies to meet children's needs

- Effective and prudent use of television, digital media at home and in school settings—area that many are still struggling to understand

- Effective use of technologies in professional development

Note: The above must be considered in terms of the context in which many early childhood educators work. Low wages, stress, and the need to support the literacy levels of some early childhood educators have implications for the success of professional development.

Question #4. What did my work, as an evaluator of Early Reading First, reveal about what needs to be done to improve federal efforts?

My work with Early Reading First largely confirmed the recommendations already offered. For the most part, I saw exceptionally effective early childhood programs with a high degree of emphasis on early literacy. Clearly, the quality of instruction was grounded in high quality professional development, effective use of literacy coaches, and the collaborative efforts of all staff members. My hope is that we might learn from ERF in the following areas:

Assessment, used wisely, can be a catalyst for positive change. Because ERF is a federally funded project, assessment received major attention. My hope is that we can distill what was learned from ERF to determine more effective and efficient ways to monitor children's ongoing progress. Particular emphasis should be placed on authentic types of assessment that help teachers and caregivers make use of what they learn and offer guidance for professional development.

Family literacy remains an area in need of more inquiry and application of what is known to be effective. What families know and do has direct impact on young children's language and literacy development. The need is particularly critical in areas where children have the greatest need.

Professional development (includes all personnel and the selection and training of literacy coaches)—Quality support for children's development rests in the hands of the adults that care for them. Effective professional development that is informed by evidence, a shared vision of expectations, and supported by sufficient resources, will produce the quality of early education that all children deserve.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much.
Ms. Doré?

**STATEMENT OF MARY KAY DORÉ, DIRECTOR OF STUDENT
SUPPORT SERVICES, SUMMIT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Ms. DORÉ. Good morning, Chairman Kildee, Ranking Member Castle, Representative Polis and members of the subcommittee.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today. First time doing this.

I am Mary Kay Doré, District Student Support Services Manager in Summit School District located in Frisco, Colorado. I am honored to share some of the work that we have done in Summit School District over the past 3 years in regards to improving instructional practices and achieving positive gains for students in literacy and learning.

Summit County is a rural resort district located 70 miles west of Denver in the 10-mile range of the Rocky Mountains. Our year-round population is approximately 25,000 residents, but during high tourist season the county's population can swell upwards of 100,000. The county has experienced growth in the past decade and an increase in diversity of our resident families.

In 1995, there were 40 students whose native language was not English. In 2009, we have 864 students who speak 24 different languages. The predominant first language for these students is Spanish. Poverty has also increased. In 2000, 354 students qualified for either free or reduced lunch. In 2009, 949 students qualified for the assistance.

As we experienced growth in our community and diversification, our district saw a decline in its standardized test scores. As school district officials examine new student data, they realized the need for change in some of their long-held practices.

They refused to attribute lower test scores to students who didn't speak English well enough or whose parents were struggling financially. It wasn't the child's fault; it was the school's practices that needed to improve.

In 2001, we formed a district instructional team or I-team, which included the district staff in areas of literacy, ELA, gifted and talented, IB, special education and technology to focus on students who continue to struggle academically even with parent involvement and school support services. We were inspired to challenge our own status quo and develop a Summit County system of multi-tiered supports for students.

Following several years of internal fine-tuning and cross-departmental process planning, we established a new system with four components we believe hold the key to improved instruction in student achievement.

Number one, using formative and summative assessment data to drive instruction and interventions. Number two, focused collaborative time for teachers to discuss data, instruction and students. Number three, discrete progress monitoring of student achievement. And number four, professional development that is linked to that identified student need.

This system, called response to instruction, instead of response to intervention, emphasized the importance of instruction. The team worked with the school's teachers to create a framework and mechanism for responding to student needs.

Once every quarter the staff reviewed a body of evidence on each student regarding their academics and assessed who was at grade level and who needed further conversation. The principal carved out time during the school day for grade levels of teachers to work with their building specialists for an hour a week rotating through

all grade levels, preschool through fifth grade in a 3-week rotation cycle.

During this grade level collaborative time, universal screening data was reviewed and the results from formative and summative assessments. This gave the team the opportunity to look at students beyond their label and flexibly group students by need, even across grade level.

This cross-departmental approach matched the professional with the best skills for addressing each student's needs. Data from benchmark assessments were critical elements of this process. Teachers learned how to use the data with confidence when discussing a student's progress with their parents.

It helped parents better understand their child's literacy skills and what parents could do at home to help. Teachers use the data with their student to share their progress and buy into their learning. Literacy resource teachers also developed a document that housed all literacy data for a class that was easy to reference as shown in Appendix F.

The school shifted to a culture of problem solving. Teachers began to load their toolboxes with research-based literacy strategies and supplemental programs for the direct student needs for universal, targeted and intensive levels of instruction. Student results were continually monitored determining if progress had been sufficient and if interventions needed to be continued or altered.

This collaborative time and multi-tiered system of support structure has helped the staff continue the educational practices that were effective and allowed them to let go of programs that didn't produce results. As shown in Appendix D, since RTI began at Upper Blue Elementary in 2007, the school has consistently seen results on the Colorado reading assessment that outpace the district and state averages.

As we continue today's discussion on literacy of children, I want to leave you with a few reflections based off my work in the field. First, I want to applaud you, and thank you for your focus on literacy and literacy instruction.

Second, I know that we need to work with teachers in preparatory programs. Teachers new to the field need to understand systems of multi-tiered support, principles of the problem-solving process and be well-versed in the five components of literacy, including oral language development and its effective instruction.

Third, schools need to shift to a systems way of thinking beginning with a strong universal tier of instruction that is linked to state standards and district curriculum. Teachers need time to look at data, discuss students and plan interventions or extensions to track their effectiveness in a continuous improvement cycle. This system must be able to discuss many computing topics. Teachers have more to complete with less time. We need to make the time they have more effective.

Finally I have also learned that just having three-ringed binders on how to do something does not change a system. Leadership that supports cultural changes and a strong instructional focus are essential for continuous improvement.

With looming budget cuts in the state of Colorado the already limited amount of time we have currently for teacher professional

development and collaborative work time will become an increasingly difficult practice to support.

We need to provide a setting that works for children, one for time and support to schools and districts so that they can focus on instruction, particularly in the area of literacy. We need to make changes if we are going to impact our children. And after all, isn't that our purpose? Thank you for the opportunity to share some of our successes.

[The statement of Ms. Doré follows:]

Prepared Statement of Mary Kay Doré, District Student Support Services Manager, Summit School District, Frisco, CO

Good morning. Chairman Kildee, Ranking Member Castle, Representative Polis and members of the subcommittee thank you for this opportunity to speak to you today. I am Mary Kay Doré, District Student Support Services Manager in Summit School District located in Frisco, Colorado. I am honored to share some of the work we've done in Summit School District over the past few years in regards to improving instructional practices and achieving positive gains for students in literacy and learning.

Background of Summit School District

Summit County is a rural resort district that is located 70 miles west of Denver in the Ten Mile Range of the Rocky Mountains. The county sits high in the Rockies at about 9,000 feet. We are home to 4 world class ski resorts and many other outdoor activities that attract year round visitors. Our year round population is approximately 25,000 residents, but during high tourist season the county's population can swell upwards of 100,000. The county has also experienced a great deal of growth in the past several decades, and with that has come an increase in the diversity of our resident families. In 1995, the district had a total of 40 students whose native language was other than English. Fourteen years later, in 2009, we have 864 students who speak 24 different languages. The predominant first language for these students is Spanish. The changes in poverty echo the same trend—in 2000, 354 students qualified for either free or reduced lunch; in 2009, 949 students qualified for the assistance.

Summit School District serves six towns and a little over three thousand students at our nine preschool programs, six elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, and three alternative programs which include diploma outreach and programming for students who are at risk of being expelled. Within our six elementary schools we have two schools that qualify for Title I Program assistance, one of which is a dual language school. The district is working toward full district authorization in the International Baccalaureate Programme. Summit County Schools has also been chosen as one of six districts statewide to participate in the Colorado Department of Education's CTAG, or Closing the Achievement Gap program, to address our higher than-state-average gap of English and non-English speaking student achievement.

Changes in instructional practice

As we experienced growth in our community and an increase in our diversity, our district saw a decline in its standardized test scores. As school district officials examined new student data, they realized a need to change some of their long held practices. They refused to attribute lower test scores to students who didn't speak English well enough, or whose parents were struggling financially. It wasn't the children's fault; it was the schools' practices that needed to improve.

The district first adopted a core literacy program K-6 and empowered literacy resource teachers to examine student performance on common literacy assessments. Two key questions surfaced:

Why were some students making progress in the area of literacy while others were not?

What could we change for the students not making the progress we would expect?

In 2001, we formed a district Instructional Team, or Iteam, which included the district staff in the areas of literacy, ELA, gifted and talented, IB, special education and technology to focus on students who continued to struggle academically even with parent involvement and school support services. After listening to national leaders and speakers in literacy and language development, early intervention for at-risk students, and Response to Intervention, we were inspired to challenge our

own status quo and develop a Summit County system of multi-tiered supports for students.

Following several years of internal fine tuning and cross departmental process planning, we established a new system with four components we believe hold the key to improved instruction and student achievement:

- Using formative and summative assessment data to driven instruction and interventions
- Focused collaborative time for teachers to discuss data, instruction, and students
- Discrete progress monitoring of student achievement
- Professional development linked to identified student need

This system, which we called Response to Instruction instead of Response to Intervention to emphasize the importance of instruction, began its implementation at Upper Blue Elementary. The team worked with the school's teachers to create a framework and mechanism for responding to student needs. Once every quarter the staff reviewed a body of evidence on each student regarding their academics. Teachers looked at students who were at grade level and those who needed further conversation. The principal carved out time during the school day for grade levels of teachers to work with their building specialists; literacy, English language acquisition, special education, counselors and their building principal for an hour week, rotating through all of the grade levels preschool through fifth grade in a three week rotation cycle.

During this grade-level collaborative time the team would review the universal screening data and results from formative and summative assessments. This gave the team the opportunity to look at students beyond their "label (special ed, ELL, ILP)" and flexibly group students by their individual needs, even across grade levels. This cross departmental approach matched the professional with the best skills for addressing each student's need.

Data from benchmark assessments were critical elements of this process. Teachers learned how to use the data with confidence when discussing a student's progress with their parents. It helped parents understand their child's current literacy skills and what parents could do at home to help. Teachers were even using data with their students so students could see their progress and buy-in to their own learning. Literacy resource teachers developed a document that housed all literacy data for a class that was easy to reference. See Appendix A.

The teachers at Upper Blue also shifted to a "culture of problem solving." One teacher reflected that it allowed her to look at all students in her classroom which impacted her daily instruction and made her differentiate and use a variety of literacy strategies, including small groups, centers, read aloud, writers workshop and other strategies based on the needs of her students. The problem solving process also held her accountable for the fidelity of interventions and student results. This contributed an increased awareness of the need for differentiated instruction based on a guaranteed and viable curriculum that was grounded in sound instructional practice. As teachers worked together they strengthened their understanding of essential learning outcomes, linked to the state standards and curriculum, and most importantly how they could support all students.

An important change that we observed was that fewer students were being referred for a special education evaluation. As the teams worked together, looking at student data, intentional interventions and their results, referrals became more focused; evaluations for learning and other disabilities now included a discussion about the need for the sustained intensity and duration of the interventions that were currently occurring with students.

Teachers began to load their "tool boxes" with research-based literacy strategies and supplemental programs that addressed students' needs through universal, targeted, and intensive levels of instruction. Student results were continually monitored, determining if progress had been sufficient, and if interventions needed to be continued or altered. This collaborative time and multi-tiered system of support structure has helped the staff continue the educational practices that were effective and allowed them to let go of the program that didn't produce results.

As shown in Appendix B, since RTI began at Upper Blue Elementary in 2007, the school has consistently seen results on the Colorado reading assessment that outpace the district and state averages. At present, reading scores are higher than the writing scores; however, the building staff has been working on common writing benchmark assessments and writing samples that will better assess student's writing needs.

District wide work

The district has also seen a great deal of success in implementing this systemic reform. For many buildings this is the first year they are formally beginning the school wide initiative. The Middle School has started to track trends, allowing it to enact innovative programs such as a group that engages Latino boys with the school, increasing their engagement and achievement. Teachers are experiencing a paradigm shift of moving from the “I taught it” point of view to the “They learned it” philosophy. At administrative team meetings principals are beginning to share their school data to help build professional development offerings for all staff members in the district. Dillon Valley, our dual language elementary school, is using its data in both English and Spanish to build appropriate interventions to increase student achievement. Also, our two Title I program assistance schools have implemented before and after school intervention groups, summer programming, and literacy and math nights for parents to help impact student achievement. The increase of systems thinking has altered the way we look at our students, our expectations for them and how we can make the difference.

Reflections

As we continue today’s discussion on the literacy skills of children, I want to leave you with a few reflections based on my work in the field.

First, I want to applaud my own Congressman Jared Polis and Congressman Yarmuth for introducing H.R. 4037, the LEARN Act, which will hopefully give districts across the nation the much-needed resources to implement intensive, multi-tiered support systems for literacy just like the one we have implemented at Upper Blue Elementary School and in other Summit County schools.

Second, I know that we need to work with teachers in higher education. Teachers new to the field need to understand systems of multi-tiered support. They need to understand the principles of the problem solving process when it comes to students. They need to be well versed in the five components of literacy, including oral language development and its effective instruction.

Third, schools need to shift to systems thinking to make any sustainable change. This process begins with a strong universal tier of instruction that is linked to state standards and district curriculum. Additionally there needs to be systems in place that allow teachers time to look at data, discuss students, and plan for interventions or extensions and track their effectiveness in a continuous improvement cycle. Even though we have placed a priority on literacy, the system must be able to discuss many competing topics: math, behavior, science, bullying, and inquiry based instruction, wellness, and 21st century skills, just to name a few. Teachers have more to accomplish with less time. We need to make the time they have effective.

And finally, I also have learned that just having binders on how to do something does not change a system. Leadership at the school building level that supports cultural changes and a strong instructional focus are the essential components to guide this difficult process of continuous improvement. With looming budget cuts in the State of Colorado, the already limited amount of time that we have currently for teacher professional development and collaborative work time will become an increasingly difficult practice to support. We need to provide the setting that works for children—one of time and support—to schools and districts so that they can focus on instruction, particularly in the area of literacy. We need to make changes if we are going impact our children and after all, isn’t that our true purpose?

Thank you for the opportunity to share some of our successes

Chairman KILDEE. Okay, thank you very much, Ms. Doré.
Mr. Henriquez?

**STATEMENT OF ANDRÉS HENRIQUEZ, PROGRAM OFFICER,
CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK**

Mr. HENRIQUEZ. Good morning, Chairman Kildee, Ranking Member Mike Castle and members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to speak today. My name is Andrés Henriquez, and I serve as Program Officer at Carnegie Corporation of New York which is a philanthropic organization established in 1911 by Andrew Carnegie to deal with real and permanent good in this world.

I am particularly proud to be serving at Carnegie Corporation as the foundation nears its 100th year as a philanthropy. Carnegie

Corporation's name has been practically synonymous with literacy for close to a century. The foundation's legacy includes over 2,000 free public libraries established by Andrew Carnegie.

We also funded the development and initial production of the PBS television series "Sesame Street," now celebrating its 40th anniversary. Today I will speak to you about our recent initiative called Advancing Literacy which is working to expand knowledge and practices in literacy beyond third grade.

Our work has shown that strong literacy skills beyond grade three is the cornerstone for success in high school and for college readiness and beyond. This insight grows out of an earlier initiative to reform high schools which we funded with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The high school reform work which was aimed at promoting systemic and district-wide reform in seven urban communities produced a critical, if unexpected, finding. Almost half of the entering ninth graders were reading several years below grade level.

It became clear that the kinds of outcomes we wanted to achieve from this initiative, higher graduation rates, more students going on to college, more students taking advanced placement courses, were going to be difficult to achieve because of students' low literacy levels.

The problem was not limited to these seven districts. In fact, I learned that eighth-grade reading scores had not improved in more than 30 years, and 70 percent of entering ninth graders were reading below grade level.

Simply put, these high school students were not understanding or engaging with text. We discovered that struggling readers represent a substantial proportion of students who are dropping out of our high schools. As fourth graders, their scores are among the best in the world. By eighth grade, their scores are much, much lower. By the time they get to tenth grade, U.S. students' score are among the lowest in the world.

The surprising conclusion from this work was that good literacy, early literacy especially instruction does not inoculate students against struggle or failure later on. And let me just say, while the issue is exacerbated by poverty and is particularly prevalent in poorer urban districts, the comprehension problem is also common in middle class suburbs, exurbs and rural areas throughout our country.

This is a problem in every single one of your districts. It is clear from our nation's report card that too few students are reading at the most advanced level. And many students who do graduate from high school are not prepared for college coursework.

This lack of strong literacy skills is so widespread that many colleges and universities have introduced remedial reading programs for the large numbers of freshmen unable to cope with the quantity and complexity of college level work.

Seventy percent of students who take one or more college remedial reading course do not attain a degree or certificate within 8 years of enrollment.

And this handicap extends into our workforce. Private industry estimates that it now spends as much as \$3.1 billion per year to bolster the writing skills of entry-level workers. President Obama

has pledged that by the year 2020, we will have the highest percentage of college graduates in the world.

We have done a great job convincing nearly every high school student in the land that with a college degree comes the promise of career success. But it is all meaningless if those high school graduates don't have the fundamental literacy skills to succeed.

So where does this leave us? We had thought, or hoped, that if you work to get a student to read with proficiency by fourth grade, you could call it success, and move on. If they weren't proficient by fourth grade, you would prevail upon that hope and that they would catch up in later grades.

Yet, it is after the fourth grade that far greater demands are placed on student's literacy skills, and far less time is spent teaching literacy proficiency. At this point, students are no longer learning to read, but they are reading to learn. And that is what led us to create the Advancing Literacy initiative.

The goal has been to target reading for young people in grades 4 through 12. Since then we have established and built research, policy and practice specifically in adolescent literacy. Our reports and our studies have created a body of work to better understand the literacy needs of our students.

So why do we have this problem of adolescent literacy to begin with? Middle and high school students must decipher much more complex passages, and synthesize information at high level and learn to form independent conclusions based on evidence. They must develop special skills and strategies for reading text in each of the different content areas including science, math and history.

The demands of literacy change and intensify quickly after fourth grade, text is longer and more complicated and vocabulary is more specialized. Additionally, students must grapple with the increasing importance of comprehending graphic representations, particularly in science and mathematics.

There is also infrastructural issues. There is a shortage of qualified literacy experts to coach and teach students and teachers in middle grades and high schools. Teachers will argue that they are not literacy teachers, but teachers of content. So it is difficult for content area literacy instruction to take place.

There is a decrease in student motivation to read as children progress from fourth grade through 12th grade. And middle and high schools are not accustomed to using assessments to identify, and target students who need literacy assistance.

So what can we do? Over the last 40 years, our nation's adolescent literacy rates have been stagnant. Recent success in improving early literacy is a very good start, but good early literacy is only a foundation, not the whole structure. We must re-engineer our nation's schools to support adolescent learning and ambitious goals for literacy for all. And this is how we can get there.

First, increase Title 1 support for middle schools and high schools. At the moment, only 5 percent of federal Title 1 funds go to middle and high schools. If the nation is to remain competitive, we must increase our high school graduation and college going rates among our most disadvantaged students. An infusion of resources at the secondary level focused on higher levels of literacy is critical to making this happen.

Second, establish fewer clearer higher common standards. This will help to increase attention to reading and writing especially focus on comprehension that can be embedded in other content areas.

Third, fully fund and expand a comprehensive pre-K through 12 literacy continuum with specific support allocated for grades 4 through 12. Last week, the LEARN Act was introduced and was the first critical step to meet recommendations at the federal level.

We acknowledge the work of Chairman Miller, Representatives Polis and Yarmuth for introducing this promising piece of legislation.

Fourth, investigate the cost and benefits of linking the nation's report card to international literacy tests. While NAEP has been indispensable in tracking America's educational progress, it provides no sense of how America stands in relation to other nations.

Funding and efforts to equate long-term NAEP trends with international literacy tests such as PISA and PROSE would allow us to get an instant snapshot of how our young people are performing vis-a-vis the rest of the world. And finally, increase federal funding for evidence-based research for adolescent literacy.

We need to intervene and individualize instruction with students as soon as they have begun to lose ground. We need increased government-funded research at NICHD and IES that could demonstrate how best to assess adolescents in order to determine their need for intervention and support.

In conclusion, the status quo in middle school and high schools in America is no longer acceptable. It is based on a 20th century vision of the literacy skills which no longer guarantee success after high school.

High school graduates today face higher expectations in the new global economy than ever before. I thank you for your time.

[The statement of Mr. Henriquez follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Andrés Henríquez, Program Officer,
Carnegie Corporation of New York**

"The generation that is in school now, and those who will follow them are the people who will envision the future of our nation and chart our course through the 21st century and beyond. We owe it to them and to ourselves to ensure that they can read, write and learn at a high level in every classroom and every school, college and university throughout the United States."

VARTAN GREGORIAN, *President,*
Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Overview

Throughout the history of Carnegie Corporation, its presidents have been engaged with literacy. Andrew Carnegie's legacy includes over 2000 free public libraries that he saw as a link "bridging ignorance and education." Access to books and the explicit teaching of reading are two ways in which literacy is fostered. From the 1930's to the 1960s reading was increasingly taught through methods that concentrated on "whole words" (or whole language), using sentences and stories that were closely geared to children's interests. Surprisingly, the teaching of reading became an intensely debated national issue in 1955, when Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read And What You Can Do about It* (Harper) moved onto a national best-seller list. Flesch charged that the neglect of phonics instruction had caused a national crisis in literacy and that "whole language" was based on a flawed theory that required children to memorize words and guess how to pronounce a word they did not know, instead of sounding out the word. The "look-say" or whole-word method had swept the textbook market, despite the fact, Flesch alleged, that it had no support in research.

Carnegie Corporation President John Gardner (1955-1967) saw the debate about reading as central to the foundation's interests, writing in a 1959 Annual Report, "The question of whether Johnny can or cannot read—if so why, if not why not—has probably given rise to more hue and cry throughout the land than any other single educational issue. There are those who claim that today's youngsters cannot read as well as their parents did at their age; others state the situation is actually reversed. Proponents of one or another method of reading argue vociferously for their method and heap scorn upon other methods. Wherever the truth lies, it's not yet obvious, and any research which may shed light on this complicated problem will be to the good." Following this logic, the Corporation soon funded a key grantee, Jeanne Chall of the City College of New York, to help "settle" the reading debate.

Chall spent three years visiting classrooms, analyzing research studies, examining textbooks and interviewing authors, reading specialists and teachers. She found substantial and consistent advantages for programs that included systematic phonics, finding that this approach was particularly advantageous for children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. In 1967, Chall collected her Corporation-supported research and published *Learning to Read: the Great Debate* (Chall, 1967), which became a classic. Later, after moving to Harvard University, Chall developed a conceptual framework for developmental reading stages that extended from the pre-reading stage of very young children to the highly sophisticated interpretations of educated adults. Chall's reading stages clearly distinguished "learning to read" from "reading to learn;" she also identified and named the "fourth grade slump."

Advancing Literacy Initiative

The Corporation's distinguished history in support of literacy—some of which is described above—has recently extended from pivotal initial support for the Emmy award-winning PBS series *Between the Lions*, to the work of the International Development Division in strengthening libraries in sub-Saharan countries in Africa. As always, our work in this area includes a concern with access to books, the search for better methods of teaching reading, and building a body of knowledge about the developmental issues associated with early childhood and adolescence. Taking all these factors into account, Carnegie Corporation came to its current focus on literacy with enormous comparative advantage. Indeed, to many people, the name Carnegie Corporation is associated with the very foundations of literacy going all the way back to the philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie himself and of the Corporation in its early years; both were instrumental in helping to create the nation's network of free public libraries.

The Corporation's Advancing Literacy Initiative was developed after an extensive two-year review that included consultations with the nation's leading practitioners and researchers. We learned that the teaching of reading in K-3 is well supported with research, practice and policy, but that these are lacking for grades beyond this point. In 2002, Carnegie Corporation commissioned RAND to convene a small group of scholars and policy analysts to discuss the then-current state of research on adolescent literacy and help lay the groundwork for a long-term effort directed toward supporting and improving the literacy skills of adolescent students in our nation's schools. The resulting task force on adolescent literacy produced a "briefing book" that identified and examined several topics relevant to adolescent literacy about which more thinking was needed.

Despite the recognized importance of specialized literacy skills for adolescents, the knowledge base on this issue was at that time relatively small, with school instruction relying more on intuition than solid evidence and the institutional dissemination of best practices. Notable earlier reports, including *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998) and the *Report of the National Reading Panel* (National Reading Panel Report, 2000), had offered strong arguments and recommendations for systematic literacy instruction in the primary grades even though international comparisons suggested that the performance of American children in the primary grades had long been comparable to that in other developed nations (Martin, Mullis, Gonzalez, & Kennedy, 2003). The specific challenges of adolescent literacy and learning had been comparatively ignored in favor of the "inoculation" model of literacy instruction, wherein later problems are avoided through early efforts at prevention.

The RAND Task Force delivered its briefing book to the Advisory Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy (ACAAL), an enlarged group established by the Corporation, in 2004. ACAAL members then took on the task of working out how to expand knowledge about the topics identified in the briefing book by overseeing (and in some cases themselves producing) synthetic reports and white papers. Some of these early reports were widely distributed and have received considerable enthusiasm. ACAAL commissioned a substantial list of reports and small studies focused

on issues as varied as comprehension assessment, out-of-school learning, second language learners' instructional needs, writing in adolescence, literacy in the content areas, and standards for adolescent literacy coaching (see Appendix A for a complete listing of books and reports from the initiative). Members of ACAAL also contributed to teams that produced a variety of guides for policy makers including governors, state school boards, principals, superintendents, district school boards, and curriculum developers, and participated in adolescent literacy summits organized and promoted by the Alliance for Excellent Education.

Therefore, we have chosen to focus our efforts on intermediate and adolescent literacy, to build research, practice and policy for literacy in students in grades 4 through 12. Our decision is informed by our grantmaking, which has helped us and the nation learn a great deal about children in their early, middle and adolescent years of development, as well as about teaching and learning and the complexity of school reform. What has become evident is that good school reform and knowledge of adolescent development are not mutually exclusive: they go together.

During the last twenty years our nation's educational system has scored some extraordinary successes, especially in improving the reading and writing skills of young children in grades K-3. Yet the pace of literacy improvement has not kept up with the pace of growth in the global economy, and literacy gains have not been extended to adolescents in the secondary grades.

Overall, we are failing to create highly literate, college-ready adults with the literacy skill sets that qualify them for employment in the new global knowledge economy. The most recent data shows poor performance by U.S. students compared to many other nations (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2007). Although U.S. students in grade four score among the best in the world, those in grade eight score much lower. By grade ten, U.S. students score among the lowest in the world.

In addition, many of our high school graduates are not prepared for college-level coursework, a widespread problem that has impelled most colleges and universities to introduce remedial reading programs for the large numbers of freshmen unable to cope with the quantity of reading assigned to them college classrooms (NCES, 2001, 2003). Likewise, estimates indicate that private industry now spends up to 3.1 billion USD (National Commission on Writing, 2004) per year to bolster the writing skills of entry level workers. Part of the problem is that societal demands for high levels of literacy have increased dramatically: "The skills required to earn a decent income have changed radically. The skills taught in most U.S. Schools have not" (Murnane & Levy, 1996)

In other words, our adolescents are not being adequately prepared for the demands of higher education, employment and citizenship in the 21st Century (American Diploma Project, 2004; Center on Education Policy, 2007; Lee, Grigg, & Donahue, 2007; Perie, Grigg, & Donahue, 2005). It is a well-publicized fact that young people who fail or under-perform in school are increasingly likely to suffer from unemployment or drastically lower income levels throughout their lives (e.g., OECD, 2007).

The Corporation is by helping to build the nation's capacity to teach and strengthen reading comprehension skills, with a special focus on grades 4 through 12, i.e., ages 9 through 17. Therefore, we refer to this effort as intermediate and adolescent literacy. The Corporation begins from a position of comparative advantage, having established a knowledge base of theory and effective practice in early learning and education systems reform.

The marketplace for employment is governed by a new knowledge-based economy, requiring better educated, highly literate and technologically fluent high school graduates. The causes of the weakness in intermediate and adolescent literacy are poorly understood, but current research suggest several reasons why students do not maintain the gains they make in earlier grades:

- A shortage of qualified literacy experts who can coach and teach literacy for students and teachers in the middle grades;
- A lack of capacity, time and will for middle and high school teachers to teach literacy within their content areas;
- A lack of reinforcement of comprehension of "informational text" in early reading;
- A lack of strategies at the end of the third grade for pupils to deal with a rapid shift from narrative text to expository text;
- A lack of systemic thinking in schools about literacy beyond age eight;
- Decrease in student motivation to read as children progress from fourth grade through twelfth grade;
- Middle and high school designs that lack the capacity to identify and target students that need literacy assistance;

- Little awareness by parents and community groups that literacy instruction needs to continue after children have learned the basic skills of decoding words and following a simple narrative.

We believe there is strong evidence that schools with a focus on literacy (reading and writing) are associated with improved academic performance and successful academic outcomes for students. At the Corporation, we are making grants aimed at having a profound influence on adolescent literacy by directing national attention to the issue, bringing together the best talent in the field to address the issue, and supporting needed research and innovative practices (See Carnegie Council on Advancing Adolescent Literacy *Time to Act: An agenda for advancing adolescent literacy for college and career readiness and other corresponding reports at: <http://www.carnegie.org/literacy/tta>*).

Good early literacy instruction does not inoculate students against struggle or failure later on. Beyond grade 3, adolescent learners in our schools must decipher more complex passages, synthesize information at a higher level, and learn to form independent conclusions based on evidence. They must also develop special skills and strategies for reading text in each of the differing content areas (such as English, Science, Mathematics and History)—meaning that a student who “naturally” does well in one area may struggle in another.

We have a strong knowledge base of reading instruction for grades K-3. However, literacy supports for adolescents present greater instructional challenges and demand a range of strategies. Middle and high school learners must learn from texts which, compared to those in the earlier grades are significantly longer and more complex at the word, sentence and structural levels, present greater conceptual challenges and obstacles to reading fluency, contain more detailed graphic representations (as well as tables, charts and equations linked to text) and demand a much greater ability to synthesize information.

Also, each content-area has its own set of literacy skills that students are required to master before they can move fully from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.” Adolescents who fail to master these more complex tasks in their learning process are likely to become unskilled workers in a world where literacy is an absolute precondition for success.

This is particularly true in mathematics and science. The Carnegie Corporation of New York—Institute for Advanced Study Commission on Mathematics and Science Education report, *The Opportunity Equation: Transforming Mathematics and Science Education for Citizenship and the Global Economy* (www.OpportunityEquation.org), advocates for expanding Science Technology Education and Mathematics (STEM) education by educating significantly more students to be STEM-capable for college readiness rather than viewing STEM as subjects offered only to the highest achievers. The Commission also recommended reframing STEM to be a catalyst for the kinds of education reform that is needed to accelerate the development of rigorous curricula, improved teaching practices, and high quality assessment and accountability measures.

However, reading scientific texts pose specialized challenges to inexperienced and struggling readers. For example, scientific research reports include abstracts, section headings, figures, tables, diagrams, maps, drawings, photographs, reference lists and endnotes. Science textbooks usually include similar elements. Each of these elements serves as a signal as to the function of a given stretch of text and can be used by skilled readers to make predictions about what to look for as they read, but consider the situation of an adolescent reader confronted for the first time by such texts and trying to make sense of them using the basic decoding tools acquired in “learning to read.”

Comprehension of scientific texts also often requires mathematical literacy, or an ability to understand what mathematical tables and figures convey. It is not uncommon for such figures and tables to invite multiple points of view or to open up questions that are not posed directly in the text (Lemke, 1998). Many scientific texts also require visual literacy, using diagrams, drawings, photographs and maps to convey meanings.

Similarly, mathematics textbooks can serve as a significant barrier for students who are struggling readers. “It is a myth that mathematics and math-dependent majors in college do not require strong reading and writing skills. Students have to be able to comprehend complex informational text so they can identify which mathematical operations and concepts to apply to solve a particular problem” (Lee & Spratley, 2010). In order to integrate reading and writing instruction successfully into the academic disciplines, district, state and federal policymakers must:

1. Define the roles and responsibilities of content area teachers clearly and consistently, stating explicitly that it is not those teachers’ job to provide basic reading instruction;

2. Members of every academic discipline define the literacy skills that are essential to their content area and which they should be responsible for teaching;

3. All secondary school teachers receive initial ongoing professional development in teaching the reading and writing skills that are essential to their own content area;

4. School and district rules and regulations, education funding mechanisms, and states and accountability systems combine to give content area teacher positive incentives and appropriate tools with which to provide reading and writing instruction.

The challenge is to connect reading and writing instruction to the rest of the secondary improvement agenda, treating literacy instruction as a key part of the broader effect to ensure that all students develop the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and careers (Heller & Greenleaf, 2007).

Re-Engineering Schools for Literacy

After the investment of millions of dollars and the talents of the best and brightest reformers over decades of educational reform, it is now clear that urban schools cannot be successfully reformed without substantially changing the way school districts operate. The Corporation considers the redesigning of urban high schools to be a daunting challenge but also a promising target of opportunity for accelerating the pace of school district reform. This requires treating urban schools as a complex system rather than an aggregation of individual schools. School districts are embedded within communities that strongly influence their mode of operation. Therefore, school districts cannot succeed in addressing the problems of educating all students to high standards in isolation and must also employ community and organizational resources.

Carnegie Corporation seeks to increase the number of promising school designs demonstrating substantial gains in student achievement and to build on those, in particular, that are addressing systemic barriers and demonstrating effectiveness at scale. New models of small, academically rigorous high schools developed with support from Carnegie Corporation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which have significantly improved graduation rates of the schools they replaced, are outstanding examples of such designs. These schools, all of which have been developed with partnering higher education, cultural or community organizations and school development organizations, also include leadership and teacher recruitment and professional development components.

New school designs aim to overcome the inherent weaknesses in urban schools and systems, which include low expectations, weak curricula, incoherent management approaches, limited talent pools and capacity-building strategies, entrenched school models that prevent innovation, poor instructional practices and systems of support, and isolation and failure to benefit from external resources. To reinforce the development and sustainability of these new designs, it's essential to build up a sector of intermediary organizations, university centers, non-profit school and design developers, and research and demonstration organizations—some of which specialize in content areas like adolescent literacy or mathematics while others focus on leadership development and turning around low-performing schools.

Without question, literacy is a critical component of learning and therefore of all new, improved school designs. In order to have “literacy for all” we must also have a comprehensive agenda for re-engineering America’s schools that will support adolescent learners. Re-engineering for change at the school level must achieve the following:

1. The school culture is organized for learning: Quality instruction is the central task that organizes everyone’s work. Thus, teachers feel personally responsibility for student learning, and trust one another and the principal to support them in their work. Because there is a sense of participation in a professional community, decisions are made collaboratively and are based upon data. The staff strives for continuous, incremental improvement of student performance over time. The school provides optimal learning conditions characterized by a warm, inviting, and low-threat learning environment for students and for teachers. Students and teachers are well-known to and by each other.

2. Information drives decisions: Student achievement data is that it drives decisions about instruction, scheduling, and interventions. District- and state-provided test data are used as appropriate for these decisions. In addition, the staff receives support in efforts to gather and analyze real-time data from team-developed formative assessments and uses that information to inform instruction and to target remediation. As a result, teaching and learning become a dynamic process based upon the current needs of all learners. Additionally, data are systematically archived so

knowledge is accumulated over time regarding the effectiveness of programs and other innovations.

3. Resources are allocated wisely: Time, energy, and materials are focused on areas deemed critical for raising student achievement. Scarce resources are distributed wisely according to student needs. The schedule allows time for teacher professional development and collaborative data analysis as part of regular work. There is also time in the schedule for supplementary instruction in smaller classes to bring struggling students up to grade level. Professional support (coaches, mentors) for promoting literacy skills is available to all content-area teachers.

4. Instructional leadership is strong: The school's leadership works tirelessly to keep student learning the primary goal. Time and attention are distributed according to consensual importance. Leaders work in partnership with subject area specialists, literacy coaches and other skilled experts to ensure successful implementation of critical programs. The principal understands assessment data, knows struggling students and their teachers by name, creates effective internal accountability mechanisms, and manages both the instructional (i.e., curriculum, assessment, professional development) and the infrastructural (i.e., scheduling, budgeting) literacy needs of the school. A literacy leadership team is centrally engaged in designing, supporting, and overseeing the school's literacy work.

5. Professional faculty is committed to student success: Teachers subordinate their preferences to student needs, participate willingly in professional development because it is focused on the challenges they are facing and is designed to improve their work, recognize the importance of literacy skills to content area learning, participate in vertical and grade-level teams, and work with colleagues and coaches in observing, describing, and analyzing instructional practice. Coaches participate in the professional community as colleagues rather than as evaluators or as administrators.

6. Targeted interventions are provided for struggling readers and writers: Multi-tiered, scaffolded instruction helps students to build the skills and strategies they need for success. A logical progression of interventions is available, to which learners are assigned based on their differential needs. Those students lagging furthest behind receive intensive courses that provide explicit instruction on critical reading and writing skills and strategies with ample opportunities for scaffolded practice. Such scaffolding allows for acceleration and helps struggling students to tackle rigorous work. Courses aimed at overcoming specific reading difficulties, whether decoding, fluency, or comprehension are taught by teachers with specific expertise in reading. These courses do not replace instruction in English Language Arts or other content area classes, and whenever possible carry credits toward graduation.

7. All content area classes are permeated by a strong literacy focus: Teachers naturally address literacy instruction as a normal part of the teaching and learning process. Core classes (math, science, language arts, social studies) have reading and writing (instruction and application) woven in throughout. Content-area teachers have a strong background in their content areas and a metacognitive understanding of the specific types of literacy skills these areas require. Teachers have strategies for teaching challenging content both to advanced readers and to struggling readers, by identifying critical course content, focusing on the big ideas, and delivering content in an explicit, learner-friendly way. The skills struggling readers learn in reading class are explicitly reinforced in content-area classrooms, and reading teachers use content area materials as a basis for practicing the reading skills they are teaching.

Recommendations

While federal legislation historically has had a "hands off approach to school-school based practices in the past, we have seen that a more active role, particularly around policies that have the potential to impact classroom practices based on sound research, can have indelible impact on teachers and a nation of readers (i.e. Reading First). Strong federal legislation, such as the LEARN Act, that support middle and high school to ensure many more of our young people graduate high schools and are well prepared for postsecondary education and the workforce are critical. A funding stream focused on middle and high schools should include the following:

- Increasing Title I support for middle and high schools or creating a new funding stream. At the moment only 5 percent of federal Title I funds go to middle and high schools. If the nation is to remain competitive we must increase high school graduation and college-going rates among our most disadvantaged students. An infusion of resources at the secondary level focused on higher levels of literacy is critical to making this happen. As we have mentioned, an "inoculation" in primary grades does not presume students will do well in secondary schools.

- In a globalized economy we need world-class common standards and assessments. Common standards in English language arts will help to increase attention

to reading and writing and especially focus on comprehension that can be embedded in other content areas. Common standards discussion will also accelerate the development of high quality assessments for secondary school students.

- Fully fund and expand a comprehensive preK-12 continuum with specific support set aside for grades 4-12 adolescent literacy so that more students and their teachers have access to federal support. The “Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation Act” or LEARN Act, specifically addresses this call to action.

- Investigate the costs and benefits of linking the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to international literacy tests, such as PISA and PIRLS. While NAEP has been an indispensable measure for tracking America’s educational progress, it provides no sense of how America stands in relation to other nations. Funding an effort to equate long-term trend NAEP test with PISA and PIRLS would allow us to get an instant snapshot not only of how today’s youth perform in relation to yesterday’s youth, but also how America’s youth perform in relation to the larger world’s youth. With the rapidly changing face of the 21st century economy, we need accurate and timely information on America’s educational standing

- Literacy demonstration sites in high poverty areas that can implement best practices and proven strategies for what works in middle and high schools. This is particularly important for districts that need to coordinate their professional development efforts to effectively work with content area teachers to embed literacy into their domain areas.

- Support states to build comprehensive preK-12 literacy plans. While almost all states have made K-3 literacy plans, we need to ensure the all states have strategic literacy plans for grades 4-12 in reading and writing and are working systemically work with school districts to ensure all schools have a way of embedding literacy with their designs. Literacy extends well beyond 3rd grade with states. Federal resources can help to establish efforts similar to those run by the National Governors Association’s Reading to Achieve: State Policies to Support Adolescent Literacy and High School Honor States—to help states develop adolescent literacy plans (Snow, Martin and Berman, 2008).

- Additional support to improve the education of middle grade students in low-performing schools by developing and utilizing early warning data systems to identify those students most at-risk of dropping out, assisting schools in implementing proven literacy interventions, and providing the necessary professional development and coaching to school leaders and teachers.

- Increase support for the National Writing Project (NWP). NWP has been one of the most coherent literacy professional development efforts in the nation for over 30 years. The NWP’s substantial network of 175 sites and in Washington DC, Puerto Rico and Guam. NWP has also begun a National Adolescent Reading Initiative to complement its work in writing. Increased support for NWP will ensure that the research-based methods used in reading and writing in secondary schools are infused in a large number of school districts across the country.

- Increase federal funding for evidenced-based research for adolescent literacy. There are a number of questions to which a robust and well-funded research effort could provide answers, with the prospect of immediate improvement in adolescent literacy outcomes. We know we need to intervene and individualize instruction with students as soon as they begin to fail. We don’t know what the best strategies are for the particular levels of failure. It is critical that funding for research in middle and high schools be increased to fund research at NICHD and IES that could demonstrate how best to assess adolescents quickly and efficiently in order to determine their need for intervention and/or support, what works for older readers, and what some of the most productive strategies are for struggling readers. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is an exciting opportunity for much of education but there is little reference to English-language learners. ELLs deserve more research attention particularly the issue of language proficiency and academic content needs. Research into the impact of different approaches to teacher education and professional development, and the best design of vocabulary and comprehension instruction for ELLs and other struggling readers is critical.

Conclusion

The Corporation’s rich history in literacy has, at its core, Andrew Carnegie’s belief that, “Only in popular education can man erect the structure of an enduring civilization.” This belief has guided the Corporation as it has moved from helping to establish public libraries, to laying the groundwork for what we know as Head Start, to its groundbreaking efforts to improve middle schools and high schools. At a the recent launch of the Time to Act report, Corporation president Vartan Gregorian encouraged us all to take action: “Today, let us set ourselves the task of helping all American students to become wealthy in knowledge and understanding by improv-

ing their literacy skills. As Andrew Carnegie said, one of the jobs of a patriot is “* * * the dispelling of ignorance and the fostering of education.” Hence, as patriots and as parents, teachers, leaders of business and government—and as Americans—let us commit ourselves to being good ancestors to the generations who follow by ensuring that each and every student can “read to learn.”

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APPENDIX A

Carnegie Corporation of New York's Advancing Literacy Initiative: Works and Commissioned Papers. Most posted on www.carnegie.org/literacy

2009

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Chairman KILDEE. The gentleman's time has just expired. I am in a very good mood today, so.

Dr. Gómez?

STATEMENT OF LEO GOMÉZ, PROFESSOR OF BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL EDUCATION, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PAN AMERICAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Mr. GOMÉZ. Thank you, and good morning Chairman Kildee and members of the subcommittee. Thank you for this invitation and this opportunity to discuss this very important issue of literacy. As we strive to achieve equity in our schools, it is more important than ever that our educators are well informed and understand the diversity they face.

I have seen firsthand how quality instructional programs have made a difference for children and how they have achieved K-12 and how the dropout rate has been reduced. I am going to speak

specifically to the issue of limited English proficient children, or often referred to as English language learners. And personally I am also going to share that I think we need to change that label.

Research steadily demonstrates that literacy development in the child's first language facilitates development in the second language. Bilingual learners are more academically successful in schools that they receive for the most formal schooling in their first language. As discussed by Mr. Henriquez, our problems in high school stem from our challenges with literacy at the elementary level.

Kids are not always leaving elementary more or less okay, but the gap begins to widen as they leave elementary school, and that is very consistent across most minority children. So it is rooted at the elementary level.

I would like to demystify to the committee this issue of this controversy of native language instruction and how native language literacy leads to English literacy. It seems counterintuitive to think that a child learning to read in his first language will learn to read in a second language, but this is exactly what happens. And I am going to share five points to present this point.

First of all, literacy comes in many languages. Kids are literate across the world in many different languages, and they learn to read, of course, in their native languages. Our English dominant children learn to read in English, and therefore, that is their native language, and it is a very natural progression.

So kids that come to school speaking a language other than English need to have the same opportunity because you learn to read only once, and you want to learn to read at a high level as possible.

Simply put, my first point, literacy transfers. Reading and writing is a skill that is common across the world and especially in the majority of minority children who are Spanish speaking. Those two languages are very similar.

So literacy transfers. Reading skills, comprehension skills are transferrable both from one language to another, mathematics, science, the water cycle, multiplication, all that transfers. The important thing is for kids to receive that content at grade level, learning and at the same time developing their second language, English.

The second point is that we change the term of limited English proficient to bilingual learners because LEP does not reflect what children are doing. It continues to promote, erroneously, that English is the purpose for these children. And therefore we abandon academic instruction and focus on the language. Kids learn the language at the set up—after sacrificing academic content. A lot of it was shared just previously.

So how do we do this? I propose dual language programs. We have seen dual language education across the country beginning to explode. It is beginning to grow exponentially because of the success of closing the academic gap because of the reduction of the dropout rate among many, many of these children, as they are educated in their first language and English, they are at an elementary education.

So these children essentially become bi-literate children by the end of fifth grade. Dual language programs serve both English and Spanish or English and dominant children and children from another language together or they can also serve as the instructional model for bilingual learners by themselves.

And that is what has been happening across the country and certainly in Texas, where one out of four schools in Texas is now a dual language school serving a lot of our children.

The fourth point I want to share is native language assessments. Since we predominately have English assessments in most of our states, it is really derailing native language programs.

English assessments, of course, are part of our accountability system, and they are affecting the move toward more first language learning or dual language type of education. We recommend the federal level to provide incentives to states for the development of native language assessments.

My last point is teacher education. It is really important that all our teachers have an understanding of the diversity that they will inherit in the schools as they become teachers and, therefore, that every teacher education and teacher preparation program provide teachers with course work or preparation on second language acquisition on understanding the benefits and advocacy for dual language education as a global opportunity for all children.

And that we begin to focus on an extensive recruitment of certified teachers and bilingual education and an ESL education that understands how to address a language difference as they come to our schools. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Gómez follows:]

Prepared Statement of Leo Gómez, Ph.D., Professor, the University of Texas Pan American; Officer, the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee. I want to thank the subcommittee for this invitation to testify on this very important issue of literacy for children and young adults. I want to especially thank Congressman Rubén Hinojosa for this opportunity to come before you and speak to the issue of literacy development for Bilingual Learners (BL).

As we strive to achieve equity in the education of all students, the need for well-informed educators is more critical than ever. Schools across the country are facing growing enrollment of BL students and many schools lack the necessary preparation for effectively educating this group. Historically, an academic achievement gap has persisted between native English speakers and BL students resulting in a persistent dropout rate in many cases greater than fifty percent (50%) for this population. Positive change requires a comprehensive understanding of the issues affecting this population.

There is over 40 years of research in second language acquisition in this country that affirms the effectiveness of utilizing a child's native language to learn academic concepts while learning the English language. My testimony today is based on this research as well as over 16 years of my own research and study of this subject, together with practical experiences in the development and implementation of successful programs and practices. I have seen first-hand how quality bilingual education programs provide long-term achievement of BL students and help close the academic gap based on standardized assessments as compared to native English speakers.

BL students are achieving in schools across the country when provided an appropriate education through a sound quality bilingual program. The list below shares examples of BL students' long-term academic success through quality bilingual programs:

- The Pharr-San Juan Alamo ISD located in South Texas has been successfully educating BL students over 10 years implementing successful dual language pro-

grams at the elementary and secondary level to over 10,000 BL students & non-BL students. At this district, an unprecedented 1,000 LEP students participate in a dual language education program at the middle and high school level boasting a zero dropout rate among this group.

- The Dallas ISD located in North Texas is implementing successful dual language programs at the elementary level (143 schools) to more than 30,000 BL students (PreK-3rd) and 3rd grade results (2009) showed an amazing 92.4% passed the state reading exam.

- The Fort Worth ISD in North Texas is also implementing successful dual language programs at the elementary level (49 schools) to more than 10,000 BL students and is currently at the 2nd grade level.

- The Spring Branch ISD located in Houston, Texas is also implementing successful dual language programs at the elementary level (21 schools) to more than 4,000 BL students and is currently at the 2nd grade level.

These are many more examples in Texas—programs I have personally worked with and studied- and hundreds more success stories across the country. In Texas alone, over 75 school districts are today implementing a form of dual language and more effectively serving BL students and non- BL students. It is projected that there are approximately 1,000 dual language programs nationwide.

Research steadily demonstrates that literacy development in a child's first language facilitates literacy development in the second language. There is overwhelming research that tells us that BL students are more academically successful in our schools if they receive formal schooling in their native language, while they learn English (Cummins, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1998). As clearly described in gap closure program effectiveness studies by Thomas & Collier's (2002), only enrichment forms of bilingual education, that provide instruction in both the native language and English throughout elementary, close the English academic achievement gap between BLs and native English speakers as they continue their schooling (see figure 1, page 5).

The education of BL students is a K-12 issue and therefore must be viewed and addressed as a part of K-12 education. Still, a K-5 elementary education is the foundation for a successful secondary education. The permanent solution to high schools in academic trouble with this population is rooted in their elementary schools. It makes sense that the learning of "on-grade level" content, knowledge and skills in a K-12 education largely depends on the clear "understanding" of classroom instruction. Academic gaps occur when children do not learn "on-grade level" certain concepts or skills (academic literacy) well or at all. If an English dominant child falls behind academically for whatever reason, the child speaks English well but is not "academically on-grade level in English."

These two points apply to BL students as well. It is critical that BL students learn "on-grade level" academic knowledge and skills, which includes literacy, at the elementary and secondary levels in order to receive an equal and successful academic and linguistic education eventually becoming "English proficient" and academically on grade level.

So how do we ensure that LEP students receive "on-grade level" (literacy) education and learn English at the same time?

The five (5) major points that follow, based on my experience, if supported in policy and carried out in practice on a national scale, would have a significant impact on the academic and literacy attainment of BL students at both the elementary, middle and high school level, based on standardized English assessments.

Point #1: Understand that knowledge and skills are transferable from one language to another

First, we must recognize that content, knowledge, and skills are not specific to any language and therefore are "transferable" from one language to another. In other words, the skill of writing, reading and addition is learned only once and once learned will transfer to a second language. For example five times five is twenty-five in the USA, and in China, and in Mexico, and everywhere else in the world. The key is to ensure that these skills are learned "on-grade level" as the BL child progresses in school while continuously developing the second language, English. If a child learns new knowledge and skills, etc. in a language he/she fully understands, the probability of learning this greatly increases. This is central to understanding literacy development for LEP students.

Point #2: Change Limited English Proficient (LEP) Label to Bilingual Learner (BL)

Over the last 40 years, non-English speaking students have commonly been labeled as Limited English Proficient (LEP), English Language Learners (ELLs), Language Minority Students (LMS), English Learners, and other terms that do not re-

spect these students as academic learners, but rather emphasize a limitation and English as the sole purpose of their education. The continued use of these inaccurate terms, not only stigmatizes these students, but also perpetuates an erroneous emphasis on English as the sole purpose for schooling. A more fitting term better suited to describe the academic and linguistic behaviors of these students in any instructional model is Bilingual Learner. After all, appropriately educated, bilingual learners are at all times engaged in and/or learning in both their native language and English regardless of instructional program.

Point #3: Schooling through Dual Language Programs

Dual language programs represent an increasingly effective strategy for educating bilingual learners. In 2001, Texas passed a state law encouraging school districts to develop and implement dual language programs for BLs and native English speakers. In 2007, the state developed clear guidelines for development, implementation and evaluation of dual language programs. Today, there are over 700 dual language schools in Texas. Dual language is increasingly the go-to program for literacy development of BLs in most southern states serving the highest and concentrated numbers of BLs.

Dual language programs are designed to educate students through two languages; English and the native language. In dual language programs, students develop literacy and learn academic content (math, science, social studies) in two languages throughout their elementary years and the goal is to produce a full biliterate child by the end of 5th grade. Dual language is a quality program for all students. For BLs, it is the ONLY bilingual education model that fully closes the academic achievement gap between native English speakers and BLs. For native English speakers, it provides tremendous opportunities for bilingualism and biliteracy. Research evidence demonstrates that for all participating students, dual language yields “cognitive advantages” and higher academic achievement. Inherent in dual language programs is an enriched, challenging, and engaging instructional paradigm (gifted and talented (GT) type of learning environment) which benefits all learners

Types of Dual Language Programs

There are two fundamental types of dual language education programs:

- Two-Way: both language groups in the classroom learn together through two languages (BLs & non-BLs)
- One-Way: one language group (BLs only) learn together through two languages (this is the recommended program for BLs)

One-Way Dual Language is increasingly being adopted by school districts and schools as THE bilingual education program serving BLs, thereby achieving stronger long-term academic literacy in English, closing the academic gap, and lowering the dropout rate.

Dallas ISD is a good example of how a literacy initiative for BLs must include dual language as the instructional model. In 2006 the district adopted One-Way Dual Language as the required bilingual program serving all Spanish speaking BLs (largest group) district-wide. This decision was based their research and visiting other successful districts, as well as the need to do something different for this group. For over 30 years, their BL population continued to perform poorly at the high school level. Although the district used many strategies to address this, years later they came to the realization that it was not the high school program that was broken for these students, but the elementary program. They brought in experts and connected the K-12 dots. A successful middle and high school student is largely based on the child’s elementary educational foundation. If students leave elementary school below grade level, they are bound to achieve poorly in high school. The district realized that the emphasis had been on English language development for BLs at the expense of academic literacy. BLs at high school level spoke English well, but could not function academically on grade level in English. The academic literacy gap began in elementary and widened in middle and high school as the curriculum became more demanding and abstract. Today, after 3½ years of dual language implementation, preliminary results are extremely positive. This spring 2009, the district recorded the highest literacy and math achievement for over 5000 BLs based on state assessments.

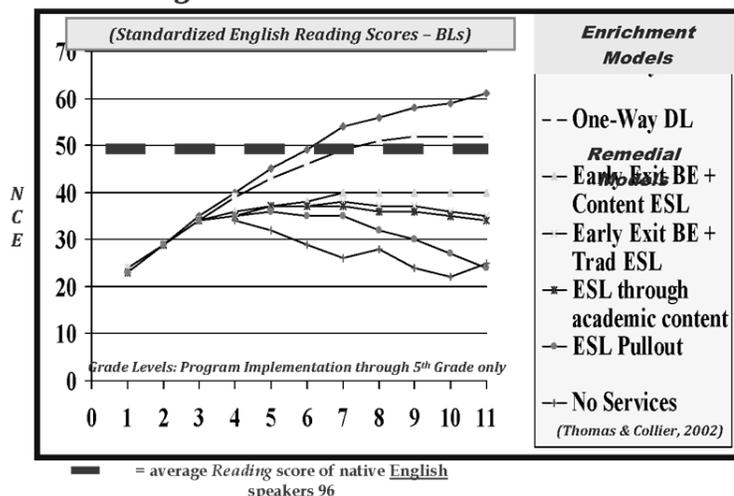
Dual Language High School Programs

Literacy development and second language development at the middle and high school level (6th-12th) for BLs can also be improved by providing opportunities for BLs to learn in their native language. Recent arrivals that come well educated from their home country can continue learning academic content (e. g. math, science) while they learn English. This simultaneous goal improves overall literacy and can

be accomplished through some coursework utilizing the native language for content-area instruction if available.

FIGURE 1.—LONG-TERM ACADEMIC ENGLISH LITERACY DEVELOPMENT OF BLS SERVED THROUGH DIFFERENT TYPES OF BILINGUAL & ESL PROGRAMS

National Data - Remedial v. Enrichment Models Long-Term Academic Achievement



Data consisted of 210,000 BLs (96% Spanish) from 23 school districts and 15 states

- In remedial programs, BLs do not close the literacy gap after reclassification. For most students, only dual language programs fully close the academic literacy gap between BLs and native English speakers
- For BLs schooled in the U. S. at the K-5 level, dual language models are the most successful (based on standardized tests across all subject areas)
- When students are schooled bilingually (first and second language), rather than focus on English, there is greater academic achievement.
- As depicted in figure above, ESL and Transitional (Early-Exit) bilingual education (TBE) programs are NOT successful literacy models for BLs

Point #4: Bilingual Learner Literacy Assessments

Successful literacy development requires appropriate literacy assessments. For BLs, lack of native language literacy assessments is in conflict with best practices for BLs. Even when there is understanding of and commitment to native language literacy through dual language, states and districts are faced with lack of congruency regarding literacy assessments. There are overwhelming costs to develop native language tests, at a minimum, at the elementary level.

Literacy assessments in languages other than English may be an area of consideration as the federal role is re-designed related to literacy assessments. For instance, the U. S. DOE could fund literacy assessments, in as many languages as the department deems appropriate, to support strong literacy attainment of BLs.

This would provide incentives for states to move toward more native language literacy, as well as promote bilingualism and biliteracy opportunities for all students, a vision for America by President Obama. Literacy assessments in languages other than English will also assist states to more accurately measure the true academic skills of BLs rather than have these skills obscured by the language of the tests.

Point #5: Support BLs through Teacher Education Programs

Providing a quality education for all students, including BLs, is the responsibility of ALL educators these children come in contact with. It is therefore imperative that ALL educators be well informed on the best practices for educating this population. To this end, all teacher education programs should provide pre-service teachers

coursework on second language acquisition (SLA) methodology and an understanding of bilingual/dual language education.

Teacher education programs would also benefit from incentives to recruit and educate more bilingual and ESL certified teachers. Increasing numbers of BLs across the country require that this area be addressed. Lack of bilingual education teachers is harmful to the successful literacy development of BLs since they will be served through English-only programs (ESL). This continues to perpetuate poor literacy achievement of BLs and inadvertently the cycle of poverty.

Another strategy to support the literacy development of BLs is to increase university-based teacher education programs collaboration with public schools, particularly high-need school districts serving concentrated numbers of BLs. As an example, the Teacher Education Program at the University of Texas Pan American in South Texas has established strong ties with local school districts that have resulted in the collaborative development and implementation of successful dual programs serving BLs.

Thank you.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much.
Dr. Meyers?

STATEMENT OF SANDRA D. MEYERS, ED.D, EDUCATION ASSOCIATE OF ELEMENTARY READING, DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ms. MEYERS. Good morning. As Delaware's Department of Education's Director of Reading First, I am honored to present testimony about the work we are doing to create a seamless, comprehensive literacy program for all children in Delaware.

We have benefited from federal support especially for Early Reading First and Reading First. Our Early Reading First Projects have made a difference for very young children who experience high levels of risk of literacy failure.

The University of Delaware was awarded two Early Reading First grants, and data for their first cohort of students indicated that these children performed as well or better than the general population of children their age in language and early reading and kindergarten.

These children were at risk when they began preschool. Many were not only low income, but also came from homes that English was not the primary language spoken. Thus, systematic explicit instruction in oral language, and beginning reading skills allowed these children to enter school prepared to succeed in the Reading First curriculum.

Reading First in Delaware has not been just a paradigm change in teaching reading, but is a model that requires systemic changes at the school and district level. For Delaware, these have included increased daily instructional time for the teaching of reading, design of assessment systems that include screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic assessment and evaluation of outcomes, differentiated instruction based on these data, additional intensive intervention for students at high levels of risk, common planning time for teachers to review data and plan instruction, full-time literacy coaches who support teachers to improve their instruction.

Enacting these components in Reading First required extensive professional development for the teachers, coaches and principals, as well as continuous monitoring and reflection. Our literacy coaches are comfortable and competent working in classrooms alongside teachers providing formative feedback.

They also have strong partnerships with building principals as instructional leaders. Our accomplishments in this area are extensive, but they have been hard won. Our professional development has evolved each year. We began with letters trainings for all the teachers which is a professional program developed by Dr. Louisa Motz. We moved to book studies and formal trainings for coaches which were then redelivered to teachers.

We then brought teachers and coaches together in teams for intense study of differentiated instruction. Along the way, we evaluated our efforts. Our state team worked school by school each year with Dr. Sharon Walpole, a University of Delaware professor who has had extensive experience in Reading First.

We learned together to analyze data, set goals and design ongoing professional support for teachers. We now have 13 schools from six districts in the program. Unfortunately, this is the last year of funding, but we have made good use of these federal dollars.

Evidence-based instruction became the catalyst for ongoing change in Delaware. We have preschool grade level expectations, the early learning guidelines, that have been nationally recognized and that are aligned with our kindergarten grade level expectations.

We revised our K-3 literacy standards so that they were consistent with the research that underlies Reading First. Many districts increased their attention to coherent professional development in early reading.

In 2007, the state chose to require a response to intervention model and based the state regulations on lessons we learned from the Reading First program. Implementation of the RTI model is now occurring in every elementary building.

The Reading First team was instrumental in the planning of much of this professional development. Reading First administrators and coaches presented at these trainings, sharing their expertise in areas such as scheduling and staffing.

This year the training is available on DVDs to reach more schools and teachers. We are offering technology-based support so that a broader group of teachers can ask questions and have their concerns addressed. We are now working to include middle and high school teachers and administrators.

We are offering trainings in an instructional framework which incorporates the strategies that most impact learning extended thinking, vocabulary, summarizing, non-digital representation and advance organizers. This model full of learning focus ensures that comprehension strategies, vocabulary instruction and writing to inform are part of all lessons.

Delaware is a small state, but the challenges of bringing teaching in line with current research and of evaluating the effects of teaching on student learning are large. Early Reading First and Reading First have provided us opportunities to design and provide professional support for teachers and administrators that is coherent and ongoing. We have leveraged federal dollars well.

Our current focus on professional support for all classroom teachers in Delaware to have the knowledge and skills to use data to design and evaluate differentiated instruction is the direct result of opportunities that federal support for high quality research-based

professional development has provided. We hope that you will consider ways to continue to support our professional development efforts. Thank you.

[The statement of Ms. Meyers follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Sandra D. Meyers, Ed.D., Education Associate,
Delaware Department of Education**

Delaware's Comprehensive Approach to Literacy

As Delaware's Department of Education's Director of Reading First, I am honored to present testimony about the work we are doing to create a seamless, comprehensive literacy program for all children in Delaware. We have benefited from federal support, especially for Early Reading First and Reading First.

Our Early Reading First projects have made a difference for very young children who experience high levels of risk of literacy failure. The University of Delaware was awarded two Early Reading First grants and data for their first cohort of students indicated that these children performed as well or better than the general population of children their age in language and early reading in kindergarten. These children were "at risk" when they began preschool. Many were not only low income, but also came from homes where English was not the primary language spoken. Thus, systematic, explicit instruction in oral language and beginning reading skills allowed these children to enter school prepared to succeed in the Reading First curriculum.

Reading First in Delaware has not been just a paradigm change in teaching reading, but is a model that requires systemic changes at the school and district level. For Delaware these have included

- Increased daily instructional time for the teaching of reading
- Design of assessment systems that include screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic assessment, and evaluation of outcomes
- Differentiated instruction based on these data
- Additional intensive intervention for students at high levels of risk
- Common planning time for teachers to review data and plan instruction
- Full-time literacy coaches who support teachers to improve their instruction

Enacting these components of Reading First required extensive professional development for the teachers, coaches, and principals as well as continuous monitoring and reflection. Our literacy coaches are comfortable and competent working in classrooms alongside teachers, providing formative feedback. They also have strong partnerships with building principals as instructional leaders. Our accomplishments in this area are extensive, but they have been hard won.

Our professional development has evolved each year. We began with LETRS trainings for all teachers, which is a professional development program developed by Dr. Louisa Moats. We moved to book studies and formal trainings for coaches which were then redelivered to teachers. We then brought teachers and coaches together in teams for intense study of differentiated instruction.

Along the way, we evaluated our efforts. Our state team worked school by school each year with Dr. Sharon Walpole, a University of Delaware professor who has had extensive experience in Reading First. We learned together to analyze data, set goals, and design ongoing professional support for teachers. We now have fourteen schools from six districts in the program. Unfortunately, this is the last year of funding, but we have made good use of these federal dollars.

Evidence-based instruction became the catalyst for ongoing change in Delaware. We have preschool-grade-level expectations, the Early Learning Guidelines, that have been nationally recognized and that are aligned with our kindergarten grade-level expectations. We revised our K-3 literacy standards so that they were consistent with the research that underlies Reading First. Many districts increased their attention to coherent professional development in early reading.

In 2007 the state chose to require a Response to Intervention Model and based the state regulations on lessons we learned from the Reading First program. Implementation of the RTI model is now occurring in every elementary building. The Reading First team was instrumental in the planning of much of this professional development. Reading First administrators and coaches presented at these trainings, sharing their expertise in areas such as scheduling and staffing. This year the training is available on DVDs to reach more schools and teachers. We are offering technology-based support so that a broader group of teachers can ask questions and have their concerns addressed.

We are working now to include middle and high school teachers and administrators. We are offering trainings in an instructional framework which incorporate the

strategies that most impact learning: extended thinking, vocabulary, summarizing, non-visual representations, and advance organizers. This model called "Learning Focused" ensures that comprehension strategies, vocabulary instruction, and writing to inform are part of all lessons.

Delaware is a small state, but the challenges of bringing teaching in line with current research and of evaluating the effects of teaching on student learning are large. Early Reading First and Reading First have provided us opportunities to design and provide professional support for teachers and administrators that is coherent and ongoing. We have leveraged federal dollars well. Our current focus on professional support for all classroom teachers in Delaware to have the knowledge and skills to use data to design and evaluate differentiated instruction is the direct result of opportunities that federal support for high-quality, research-based professional development have provided. We hope that you will consider ways to continue to support our professional development efforts.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much.
Mr. Berger?

**STATEMENT OF LARRY BERGER, CEO AND CO-FOUNDER,
WIRELESS GENERATION**

Mr. BERGER. Chairman Kildee, Congressman Castle and members of the committee, good morning. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue and for the opportunity to speak with you. My name is Larry Berger, and I am the CEO and co-founder of Wireless Generation.

We are an educational technology company that is helping to invent the future of literacy instruction. More than 200,000 teachers are teaching 3 million children to read with the help of our software. I would like to share three ideas about where the breakthroughs are in reading instruction and how enlightened public policy can accelerate them.

All over the country right now, elementary teachers are using mobile computers like this or like this to conduct scientifically valid, formative and progress monitoring assessments and to record precise data about how each of their students are learning to read. This technology is much more efficient than the paper records teachers used to keep, and teachers like it because it cuts out the paperwork and lets them focus on teaching.

The breakthrough that my company and others are working on is that the data the teacher collects using this technology can now be put to use instantaneously to personalize teaching and learning to the needs of each student.

The software that we build punches through all the diagnostic data about a given student or a class and all that researchers know about reading instruction and then immediately shows exactly where the kids are in the process of learning to read, what the teacher needs to know to reach them, and then it sends the teacher what we call a Burst.

A Burst is a 10-day mini-curriculum that is assembled automatically to differentiate instruction for what a group of students need to learn next.

So instead of teaching from a big textbook that was written with no knowledge of my particular class, I am now using a personalized packet of lessons. At the end of 10 days, the system will send me a new Burst for each group in my class.

So we still have the magic of a human teacher working with young children. The computer isn't doing the teaching. But computers in the background have done all of the paperwork and all of the analysis that makes teaching more precise and more fun.

With tools like this, the prior debates about reading practice fall by the wayside. It is no longer a matter of basic skills versus comprehension. Now, children who are struggling with basic skills will get them along with bridges to comprehension that are personalized to how that child learns. Children who are already reading on level will be challenged and accelerated.

So my three points are, we have entered the age of technology-driven personalization in every other sector of society. It is now time for our reading assessment and instruction to get there, too. I have attached to my written testimony several quantitative examples of the breakthroughs in student outcomes that this sort of personalization enables.

Two, this personalized instruction model could pay for itself by preventing unnecessary referrals into special education. Instead of falling through the cracks in the instructional cracks in the early years and eventually being classified with a specific learning disability, many children can thrive in general education if they receive early interventions that respond to their progress and their needs. This could save the system billions in special ed costs and has enormous implications for the long term success of students.

Three, tools like this mean we can raise the evidence standards in education. The new technologies have in common that they capture a steady stream of data about how students, teachers, schools, systems and instructional programs are doing. Instead of data from one test at the end of the year, these tools capture potentially thousands of data points per year about how each student is progressing.

Interventions should therefore demonstrate that they are based on scientifically valid research, that their foundations are sound and should be able to demonstrate significant outcomes in student learning.

This virtuous cycle of using the data to do more of what works, but also to remove invalid assessment and ineffective curriculum, creates continuous improvement in the products we build as an education company, and in the school systems and classrooms that we work with.

The next generation of reading policy can exist on a high standard of scientific evidence of effectiveness, but also on a process of continuous improvement that means products and practices that may be experimental have a chance to keep getting better.

Members of the committee, literacy is the foundation for all academic success and innovations of this sort I have been talking about are our great hope that all children can become readers. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

[The statement of Mr. Berger follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Larry Berger, Co-Founder and CEO,
Wireless Generation**

Chairman Kildee, Congressman Castle, Members of the Committee, good morning. Thank you for your leadership on the important issue of literacy and for the opportunity to speak with you.

My name is Larry Berger and I am the CEO and co-founder of Wireless Generation. We have been working with teachers, principals, and school superintendents on K-5 literacy instruction for the past eight years.

Today, more than 200,000 teachers are teaching 3 million children to read using new technology. We provide mobile and web software, data systems, and professional services that help teachers to use data and deliver individualized instruction. Our partner states, districts, and schools are seeing results in every state in the union—in places like Oklahoma, Montgomery County Maryland, Indiana, Washington DC, and more.

Today I would like to share with you the new model of instruction that has emerged in the classrooms with which we work. Teachers are using mobile devices like this handheld computer or this netbook to collect real-time data about their students' progress and learning needs. They use this data to customize lesson planning for each child—for instance, one small group of children might work on sounding out words while another group plays a vocabulary game. We have an algorithm that can generate custom curriculum units for ten-day "Bursts" of instruction, which adjust and adapt as teachers monitor students' progress.

We find that schools and districts using these technology tools reorganize themselves around the data. Teachers and coaches run regular grade level meetings in which they strategize around student strengths and weaknesses and share "what works" with one another. Principals and district staff engage on the teaching and learning. Professional development refocuses from "stand and deliver" presentations to active planning based on real student data. And parents find out, mid-year, whether their children are on track to read at grade level.

When teachers use this technology toolset and are able to identify and address the needs of each student, the prior debates about reading practice fall by the wayside. Children who are struggling with the foundational skills of reading get relevant lessons, along with bridges to comprehension. Children who are reading on level are appropriately challenged and accelerated.

In addition, this instructional model will likely pay for itself by preventing unnecessary referrals into special education. Instead of struggling with reading and eventually being classified with a "specific learning disability," thousands and thousands of children (a full two percent of the student population) can get back on track with the right early interventions. This is the "Response to Intervention" model, which has enormous implications for long-term student success and for cost savings in service delivery.

This instructional model depends on a high degree of confidence in the quality of the screening and diagnostic assessments used in classrooms. They must be reliable and valid, so that every stakeholder can count on the resulting information to effectively guide classroom practice. High-quality research has established the key benchmarks that we should expect assessments to meet.

When good assessment data is collected, in turn we can demand a higher standard of evidence for our instructional programs. Interventions should demonstrate that they are based on scientifically valid research—that their foundations are sound—and at the same time should be able to demonstrate valid outcomes in student learning. This virtuous cycle has already led to continuous improvement in our own toolset.

Members of the committee, literacy is the foundation for all academic success. We respect the committee's leadership on this important issue and are proud to work with thousands of schools and districts across the country, helping more children learn to read.

About Wireless Generation

Founded in 2001, Wireless Generation creates innovative tools, systems, and services that help educators teach smarter. Wireless Generation currently serves more than 200,000 educators and 3 million students.

With its mobile assessment software, the company invented a better way to give classroom assessments and make data-based instructional decisions. Wireless Generation has since broken new ground with technology that analyzes student data and produces curriculum customized to individual learning needs.

Wireless Generation also builds large-scale data systems that centralize student data, give educators and parents unprecedented visibility into learning, and foster professional communities of educators with social networking tools. As a key partner to New York City on its ARIS data system, Wireless Generation led development, including data integration, permissioning, usability and reporting, and Web 2.0 collaboration tools, and helped New York City roll out the system to more than 90,000 educators serving 1.1 million students. In spring 2009, ARIS Parent Link online walkthroughs were launched in 9 languages to give parents unprecedented ability

to engage in their children’s education with easy-to-understand access to their children’s data. Wireless Generation is also a lead partner on New York City’s School of One initiative, named by TIME Magazine as one of the Best Inventions of 2009.

The genesis of the Mobile Classroom Assessment (mCLASS) solution was Wireless Generation’s realization that educators could benefit greatly from an easy-to-use technology solution for conducting observational assessments, collecting and analyzing assessment data, and linking assessment results to appropriate instructional supports and intervention strategies. Studies have shown that Wireless Generation’s mCLASS system cuts assessment administration time in half and in a year returns approximately 3–5 instructional days per teacher.

With the launch and widespread adoption of mCLASS for K-6 literacy assessment and instruction, Wireless Generation committed itself to developing tools that help educators answer the critical questions that should be central when assessment data is presented—“So what?” and “Now What?” Helping educators answer these questions, the heart of the assessment-to-instruction connection, has since become the focus of Wireless Generation’s efforts. mCLASS ACT and Now What Tools were Wireless Generation’s first offerings to embody what we’ve come to term “SoNos,” now hallmarks of every system, tool, and service we develop and bring to market.

The significance of these tools is that they make the connection between assessment and instruction seamless by placing customized instructional routines directly in the teacher’s workflow. For example, upon completion of an assessment, mCLASS ACT immediately suggests a set of targeted skill-reinforcement activities based on individual student results and response patterns. The teacher is guided in implementing the activities by a scaffolded sequence of objectives, prompts, and detailed instructions on both the handheld device and the web. The Burst curriculum products take this even further by grouping students who share similar skill needs based upon the assessment data, and producing 10-day lesson sequences that match those needs. The teacher receives the lessons, delivers them, and then assesses again to monitor students’ progress. The Burst cycle then repeats. Even the best teachers can find it challenging to find the time to differentiate instruction each day. The Burst technology is their partner in this effort.

Partner Results

Our partner districts and state are seeing tremendous results. Examples include:

Montgomery County Public Schools

Results of the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Assessment Program show that the percentages of students in kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2 who have achieved grade level benchmarks have reached and maintained historic highs. MCPS has worked with Wireless Generation since 2004.

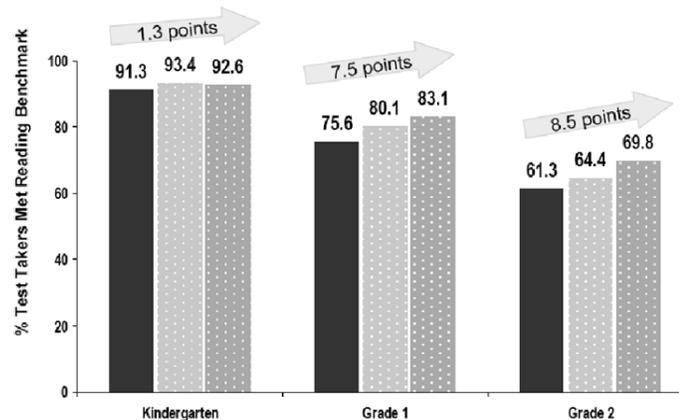


Figure 1. Percentage of MCPS AP-PR test takers who met or exceeded the end-of-year reading benchmarks in 2006 to 2008 by grade level.

District of Columbia Public Schools

DCPS selected Burst:Reading Early Literacy Intervention to assist the 37 lowest performing elementary schools in boosting student achievement. The district was undergoing major instructional reform efforts. Implementation began in February 2009 for their kindergarten and Grade 1 students. The district saw strong gains in these schools with less than one semester of Burst:Reading ELI instruction. Burst students in Burst schools regularly outperformed students in the same instructional recommendation category as students in the better performing non-Burst schools, even though Burst students had lower initial scores.

In kindergarten and Grade 1, Burst students in schools with strong fidelity of implementation gained more than non-Burst students on PSF (phonemic awareness) and NWF (phonics) across all risk levels, despite lower initial scores. In kindergarten, Burst students in the Intensive instructional recommendation category in schools with strong fidelity of implementation gained 25 points on PSF (phonemic awareness) versus gains of 17 points for non-Burst students. In kindergarten, Burst students at Intensive instructional recommendation category in schools with strong fidelity of implementation gained 20 points on NWF (phonics) as opposed to gains of 12 points for non-Burst students. In first grade, Burst students at Intensive instructional recommendation category in schools with strong fidelity of implementation gained 19 points on PSF (phonemic awareness) while non-Burst students realized gains of only 12 points. In first grade, Burst students at Intensive instructional recommendation category in schools with strong fidelity of implementation gained 24 points on NWF (phonics) whereas non-Burst students had gains of 19 points.

Oklahoma

Most schools in the Oklahoma Department of Education's Reading First program achieved significant student growth, and while the Department of Education was pleased, it was not yet satisfied, believing that all schools could perform at high levels. The Department identified a subset of 15 schools in need of additional support, and collaborated with Wireless Generation on delivering targeted, ongoing professional development at these sites during the 2007-2008 year. Teachers, principals, and reading coaches at each school received up to six monthly visits from a Wireless Generation consultant who provided customized professional development on various topics according to each school's needs.

Results:

- Based on an analysis of student data collected during the 2007-2008 school year, the 15 schools made substantial achievement gains and produced more student movement toward benchmark (grade level) than in previous school years. By the end of the year, 61% of K-3 students in these schools were reading at proficiency, compared to these schools' first year in Reading First, when only 38% reached benchmark. By comparing beginning of year 2007-2008 formative assessment scores to end of year scores, the data reveal that the customized professional development contributed to the biggest increase in students at grade level over the past four school years, a 19% increase.
- The 15 schools receiving customized professional development made significant progress toward closing the achievement gap with high performing schools in Oklahoma. Prior to receiving customized professional development, the 15 schools ended each year with 20% fewer students at grade level than the high performing schools. At the end of the 2007-2008 school year, the 15 schools finished only 13% below their peers, which represents a 35% reduction in the gap between the two groups.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much, Mr. Berger.

I thank all of our witness for their testimony, and we will now proceed with the question and answer portion of this hearing. And I recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Language is basically an oral and aural development. Writing came rather late in mankind's development. And I lived in Peshawar, Pakistan, for a year studying at the University of Peshawar, and my bearer, who prepared my tea, spoke three languages fluently. He spoke very good English, Pashtu, and Urdu. He was totally illiterate.

That seems strange here, but language basically as it develops with mankind is oral and aural and then writing and symbols came in later. What can we do to maybe accelerate or help in that period

when the person, the child, is still in an oral-aural part of language, but have not yet made a transition to the symbol part?

Anyone have any comments on that. Yes?

Ms. STRICKLAND. Well, you are absolutely right, the oral language, oral-aural it is foundational. There is no question about that. But while children are developing their listening and speaking capacities, there is every opportunity to begin to introduce print, and they learn about the functions of print.

Mommy writes down a list to go to the grocery store, on the stop sign—all those kinds of things. Print is very much a part of our consciousness, and what we do.

So what they learn about through speaking and listening, they apply to reading and writing and vice versa. And then there comes a time when the reading vocabulary and writing vocabulary really are larger than our everyday speech.

We can write more, especially when we do draft things, and convey information to others far better and with a greater deal of flexibility and coherence than we do in our regular speech. So that is why introducing print early in informal ways is so important. And those kids that have those opportunities just go a long, long way.

Chairman KILDEE. That is interesting because I have seven grandchildren from 19 months to 11 years and all of them—we have always had books for them from the very beginning, and sometimes they are only picture books but some, little by little, some print in there.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Sure.

Chairman KILDEE. And I have always felt that that was helpful in them making that transition and whether we can even research more how we can enhance that helpfulness when they are very, very young.

All my grandchildren were able to read some before they ever got to kindergarten. But we did use books a lot. But if we can maybe study and see how we can enhance that transition from the oral-aural to the recognizing symbols or signs that might be more helpful.

Yes, Dr. Gómez?

Mr. GOMÉZ. If I could add a point to Dr. Strickland. There is a natural progression as you have stated from oral to written and reading skills which means that you go from language you have developed that you speak, that you understand. Then you begin to see that language in print, and that is where the reading and then, of course, in writing.

And that is why it is so important when we think about this process, and of course we know that children are reading at the age of two when they see the McDonalds sign. The M is reading. So they know it means something when they see symbols like that.

But actual school reading or beginning to read with phonics type of, you know, of understanding and decoding, there is a natural progression to do it from the oral into print. But if you do it in a language you have not developed yet, you don't have the aural skills, you don't have those receptive and expressive skills and then it is very difficult to move toward the print.

And that is the, well, the point I guess from the value of literacy in the child's first language because that is a natural progression for all children.

Chairman KILDEE. Well, I appreciate you reflecting on that because I think it is something that we can learn from, you know, interesting. I will just conclude with this. I could read Urdu and still can read Urdu better than I can speak it.

So it was the opposite with me. And I had already went through that process so it was more I had to have more active memory when I was speaking it or my passive memory would generally jump into play when I would see the word.

But it is interesting the relationship between oral-aural and the reading symbols and just—you reflect upon it as you go through your professional growth because we are all still growing. Thank you very much.

Governor?

Mr. CASTLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am afraid the chairman is going to start having these hearings in foreign languages I don't speak if this continues. I would like to ask Mr. Henriquez a question, and then a follow-up to Mr. Berger on that.

In your testimony, you mentioned that our fourth grade students score very well as far as reading is concerned. And by tenth grade they score at a much lesser rate, perhaps among the lowest in the world.

And usually we hear that students have problems because of not having early preparation or whatever. You don't often hear that there is a fall down between, say, fourth grade and tenth grade. And I am just wondering how those results coexist, and what we could be doing—what we are not doing now, and what we could be doing to make sure that we continue literacy programs perhaps between fourth and tenth grades or whatever in this country?

Mr. HENRIQUEZ. Yes, yes, and I—yes, Congressman. The issue becomes very clear that data from UNESCO is quite shocking as it is in our nation's report card where we see our kids progressively do very well in fourth grade, and we see those very frustrating stagnant scores at the eighth grade and even worse at twelfth grade.

What is happening is that nothing is happening between grades four through twelve in terms of literacy. I think we have managed to think as a nation that once you teach children to read, they are readers for life.

But in fact, we see that youngsters are struggling with difficult academic texts in middle schools and in high schools and different than elementary schools where you have one single teacher teaching to a class of students.

You can imagine middle school, high school students that have four or five teachers. And these teachers want to teach their students their content and want to teach those students how to comprehend their content, but they lack the sort of the skills around how to imbed strategies around literacy that would allow those students to enrich their experiences with that text.

In addition, there seems to be, given the structures of middle schools and high schools, it is very, very difficult to know if a kid

is having difficulty with the content or if they are having difficulty with the language, of reading within that language.

So there is no making sense for, say, a science teacher whether that student is having difficulty with the biology of the subject or whether he or she, or the student, is having difficulty with basic vocabulary within that text or whether they are having fluency problems or much more serious problems.

Some of the strategies that I believe are suggested by the comprehensive literacy bill that was introduced last week get at some of these issues. We started doing some of that work in the Striving Readers Act where we are beginning to imbed literacy coaches that are helping content area teachers to try, and train them to imbed literacy instruction within domains.

As well as really looking at youngsters who are in the ninth grade who are way behind and doing something for them during ninth grade and doing some kind of boot camps, in a sense, that would allow those students to do the kind of catch-up that is really, really necessary.

And there are a number of models around the country that we need to learn from that are currently taking place that I think are excellent examples that we need more research on them so that we can make those kinds of choices.

Mr. CASTLE. Thank you. Mr. Berger, in your testimony about the Wireless Generation, seems to focus, as I understood, on the early in elementary education. We have heard this discrepancy of the problems later. Is anything that you are doing applicable to that or less applicable to it? How would you so help in that circumstance?

Mr. BERGER. So I think that it is helpful to think of the issue that Andrés is discussing as a compound interest problem which is to say that we are already—that we do see a gap. It is not as dramatic at fourth grade.

And then some of those children who are in fourth grade seem proficient are falling off by eighth grade. The question is, is that only because of instruction that they are not having between fourth and eighth grade, or are there in fact characteristics that we could tease out that would begin to predict that this is a kid who is at risk despite meeting the standards of proficiency at fourth grade.

And I think there is evidence on both sides. There is exactly the phenomenon that Andrés has discussed in which the falling off in the focus on literacy in the upper grades means that kids who haven't become readers don't get the support they need.

But I do think that there are characteristics that we can see all the way in the early grades that would begin to show that and that just worsen when that falling off of attention happens.

And so I think that the same idea of personalization that we have been able to do in the early grades because the science of what are the precise things that are going wrong are quite well developed, that that is beginning to happen now in the upper elementary and middle school grades as well, so we need to keep pushing on that.

The one other thing that is not a silver bullet but I think it is probably the most promising area of new research is the close con-

nection between writing and the development of more advanced literacy skills in upper elementary and middle schools

And so I think that what we are finding is that upper elementary and adolescent kids want to be able to express themselves and see language as as much a tool for expressing themselves as a tool for taking information in.

And developing those writing skills is almost synonymous with developing the skills they need to become better readers. And I think we are starting to tap into deeper motivations that young kids have. And so I think—I have been happy to see that policy recommendations recently have seen reading and writing in those upper grades as mutually supportive, and I think that is a big opportunity.

Mr. CASTLE. Thank you. My time is up so I can ask no more questions. I was going to ask Dr. Meyers about that but I don't want to get hit with the gavel from the chairman, so I will hold back.

Chairman KILDEE. I would never hammer a governor out of a—however, we are expecting a vote in about 15 to 20 minutes, so we will try to go through and—because if we go before a vote, it might be a half hour, 45 minutes before we come back, and I hate to hold you. So we will try to move along but we certainly want to hear from you and, of course, any testimony and questions can be asked or answered within 14 days.

I will call upon Mr. Polis.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank Ms. Doré for sharing with us the success story at Upper Blue Elementary. It is wonderful to hear that this year many at Summit School, Summit District schools are implementing the school-wide systemic reform that has produced such great results, and holds such promise.

The improvements in student reading performance on the Colorado Student Assessment Program after the implementation of your response to instruction approach is really impressive, but as you pointed out, the writing scores—and I will point out to my colleagues the Colorado test writing is a category even though it is not required under No Child Left Behind—the writing scores are, while higher in the district and state averages, could be higher, and you mentioned that the district has focused its attention on this area.

As you are aware, Representative Yarmuth and I recently introduced the LEARN Act which will support comprehensive state and local literacy initiatives to ensure that children from birth through twelfth grade have the reading and writing skills necessary for success and schooling beyond.

And the LEARN Act includes all language and, as Chairman Kildee mentioned, also writing as part of developing literacy competence and seeks to ensure a systemic approach to providing high quality instruction in both reading and writing from early childhood through grade 12.

Can you please describe how the legislation, if enacted, would help you and educators across the country implement and scale up effective practices that raise student achievement in both reading and writing?

Ms. DORÉ. It is all connected. So that is what helps when you are talking about the LEARN Act is how it starts to describe the picture of all of those oral language and reading and writing all being connected.

When I talked about our results, it is easy, as you see on this sheet, we have all sorts of different oral language with the CELA test and then all of the reading benchmarks. What we don't have a lot in writing are those same benchmark assessments.

We have the CSAP scores, and then we have what we are trying to develop at schools are some common assessments and some common benchmarking to see how students' writing progresses. But it hasn't been as well tuned as literacy and as reading.

So those are the pieces that we are trying to create some ourselves to try and make sure that teachers know what benchmarks students should be hitting during their writing and how that progresses.

It is also practice. As Dr. Strickland was talking I just kept thinking, students need to practice, practice, practice. Practice that writing for different purposes. So I applaud you for looking at literacy in that whole perspective. Oral language, reading and writing, that is what is going to help folks understand how those are all interconnected.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you, and I would also point out we approach reading in the whole age perspective as well from early childhood all the way through high school where the needs are. This question is for whoever would care to address it.

You have all described how professional development is a critical component of successful literacy programs and initiatives from early childhood through elementary and secondary. But I often hear from educators in my district and across the country that there is not enough time and resources available for meaningful professional development and collaborative teamwork.

So recognizing this, the LEARN Act focuses on providing high quality professional development for staff including literacy coaches and teachers of students with disabilities and English language learners that is job embedded, ongoing, research-based and data driven.

Can you please discuss, if any of you have any comments on the significance of effective professional developments programs for improving literacy instruction and outcomes and how the LEARN Act will enable districts to implement effective models?

Ms. DORÉ. I think having that support for the professional development is crucial. The time that teachers need—we talked about it a little bit—that when they are working from 7 am to 4 o'clock and then having teacher meetings after school, it is hard to do that professional development on top of a day that they have already spent with children.

Even though literacy is a cornerstone, we are also having a lot of competing 21st century skills, science, math, all those things are still—teachers need to focus on those, too. So the idea of having a job embedded in literacy coaches is crucial, without that support, it doesn't work.

Mr. POLIS. I know you shared this with me earlier, but tell me how some would count as literacy coaches, and I think you called them a different thing but tell me how that works?

Ms. DORÉ. We call them literacy resource teachers, and we have one in each elementary school, in the middle school and the high school as well as some Title 1 support. So those teachers not only do direct intervention but they also support teachers in the way of coaching, gathering data, synthesizing data, looking at big trends.

Then linking those trends to professional development needs that we have not only in the school but across the district, so they have been really crucial at that synthesizing, crunching the data that sometimes classroom teachers don't have the time to take and then don't have the time to do with that.

And then they also get the big perspective that helps them look at big district trends and what is happening with separate demographic groups and subpopulations. So they have been essential in moving us forward with literacy instruction.

Chairman KILDEE. Yes, Mr. Henriquez?

Mr. HENRIQUEZ. Yes, one of the things we were very interested in noting was the impact of literacy coaches not only on teachers but how those teachers impacted student learning. One of the things we funded was the RAND Corporation to do a study of literacy coaches in the state of Florida, which at that time, had the largest number of literacy coaches statewide.

And what they found was that the literacy coaches who used data to instruct their teachers were the ones who were able to best have the kind of results that we want for our students. So it is absolutely essential that we not just have blind literacy coaches but that they have the tools necessary to understand that data systems and also that they are using that data as a way of giving instruction.

Mr. POLIS. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman KILDEE. Gentlady from Illinois, Mrs. Biggert.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for holding this hearing. I think it is very timely and interesting.

Mr. Berger, you know, coming from a generation where we didn't have computers and all the software and all of these things and I can remember going to the library, riding my bike and filling up the basket with books and riding home to read them for the week. And then this process continued on and on.

Is there—with your software, were books involved in this as well as—I know I have seen some of the programs, and they are great because they really do customize, you know, when a child doesn't get something, it goes back so many times and gives them the tools to move ahead. But how do books fit into the picture as we have, you know, such a change in technology?

Mr. BERGER. It is a really important question. I think part of the reason why we have focused on small devices like this is that whereas in the early enthusiasm about the role that computers could play in technology, a lot of what people did was to insert the computer between the teacher and the student, and sometimes spend too much time leaving kids alone with computers.

And I think the philosophy in classrooms that really work is that kids need a lot of time alone with books. I don't know how much time they need alone with computers.

And the other thing that we need to think about is what are the ways that we can design a classroom where technology is humming behind the scenes to extend the reach of a human teacher, to extend the different kinds of interactions kids have with each other in the classroom but maybe not so central to how teaching happens, or let the computer teaching happen in after school or in special class times that allow freeing up teachers for professional development. But to see teaching as a really human process that technologies that support.

And we have made a point of in every one of the intervention programs that we have done, having the program come with a basket of additional books on top of whatever else teachers have to just keep reminding teachers, that even when you are teaching very basic skills, like what are the letters, that one of the most important ways to do that is to find the letters in a book so that you keep connecting to kids.

The reason we are teaching you these basic phonic skills is because some day you are going to be able to read a book in your backyard.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Well, what about the older, you know, there seems like there is such a drop off as we get in the middle school and then to the high school. And of course now research has done so much on the computer that, you know, there isn't—well, it is a lot of ease to find what they are looking for that we didn't have. But could this be a negative? That—not using books for a lot of these things?

Mr. BERGER. I think the question of whether the medium is paper or a computer is less important than our kids struggling with difficult texts that are at their reading level and starting to push beyond their reading level.

And are they having to have situations where in addition to struggling individually, they are forced to talk with teachers and with fellow students about big ideas that they are pulling out of text. And there is precious little of that happening in classrooms and the question of what we can do to focus teacher time and student time on what it takes to grapple with the difficult text.

And technology there can support, student attention can support student focus, can help explain difficult vocabulary words. But it still is a matter of the text, whether it is on a screen or in a book.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Thank you. And then, Dr. Meyers, I assume that you have a grant for the program that you have, the Reading First. And it is going to expire, or the program is going to expire.

Ms. MEYERS. Yes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. So you have had the coaches, and are you going to—let us assume that you won't have one, which we hope you will continue in the program. But if not, what would you do you know to keep the teachers, you know, the professional development, will you be able to—are there other teachers then that can take that role and help new teachers as they come in to the district?

Ms. MEYERS. I think from what I have seen in just the Reading First school, the districts will take on that responsibility, and they

will use other funding. For instance in one of our districts, they use their ELL funding to provide additional coaches in schools that they put in the Reading First Program so that each one of their buildings had a reading or a literacy coach.

The state does not have a plan at this point to take care of any kind of funding. We are certainly struggling with cutbacks ourselves, so it will be up to the individual school. But as we go along and put in RTI in all our schools as required in the regulation, I personally don't see how it will happen without these literacy coaches because that is the type of professional development you need.

You cannot have these one shot deals, you have got to sustain, keep it moving, build your capacity up, and you have got to go in those classrooms, and give them feedback, team—plan with the teachers.

But they are—I think those coaches are essential. They have been essential to our programs, and they are your instructional leaders as we bring on our principals to be instructional leaders. And those principals are a big piece of making these things work.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you, Mrs. Biggert.

Mr. Payne?

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. And I don't know whether the chairman thought I needed help in literacy. I wanted to introduce Dr. Strickland but as you know, she is from New Jersey and has served in Newark, and we co-chaired a literacy group back in the early 1990s. But I will forgive you this time, Mr. Chairman.

However, it is great to see Dr. Strickland and all the work that you have done for so many years with former Governor Florio and Senator Florio in the setting up in the 1970s or I guess it was in the 1990s the literacy centers in New Jersey, which after the National Literacy Act was passed in the early 1990s.

So it is really great to see you. I just would like to ask you about the fact that research as you have mentioned, demonstrates that substantial achievement gaps in literacy develop early in childhood. And that early life experiences influence reading ability.

We know that youngsters who are in more affluent communities tend to hear more words and the number in their vocabulary has increased, and therefore it helps with literacy in general. I just wonder if, you know, in your opinion how can early literacy programs successfully address this reality?

What is it that we can do, and are there promising early education models that provide the appropriate levels of family involvement and focus on family literacy because as we know that is where it begins.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Well, the final thing that you have mentioned is something that I don't think we have stressed enough here today. And that is family literacy and family involvement, both at the early childhood years and those middle school years, where very often we find very little family involvement.

They come for the assembly programs and not much of anything else. So many of us were pleased to see that as a part of the LEARN legislation. One piece of research that is astounding to me and is very important for this comprehensive look that we are ad-

dressing today, is the fact that about 50 percent of the gap at the end of high school already exists when children enter first grade.

Now, this has been done by analyses of the data across grade levels. That is profound. So it is very hard to catch up once you have had problems during those initial years. The benefit of what I believe is being proposed here is this notion of a comprehensive approach that truly addresses young children and their families and all of the things that are attendant.

The need to address children's well-being, children who aren't well-fed, who don't have a good social, emotional status, these kids aren't going to learn. It is very hard to teach them. They are not going to be able to take advantage of the teaching.

But we have got to continue that throughout. And I think that we have come to grips with that. And we have learned a lot from both Early Reading First and Reading First with the flaws, with the problems, with the issues that we have had, we need to use what we have learned, and use that to make this legislation really as good as it can be.

And I am very excited because I have been working for so long with so many different administrations. I was kidding with Andrés that I worked with every president since Abraham Lincoln but it is not quite that bad, but sometimes I feel that way.

We have learned a great deal. Our children deserve a lot better than we are giving them right now but I am so hopeful for everything that you are doing and which the Senate is doing at this point in time. And the notion of coaches has been addressed beautifully here.

One of the things we do with coaches is differentiate coaching, you know, for different teachers. We have never done that before. This is a new time, a new day, and I am extremely hopeful.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. It seems like resources would also help there. Thank you.

Ms. STRICKLAND. Glad you said it.

Ms. MEYERS [continuing]. In reading the data on our Early Reading First, it was amazing to me to see that the majority of children were of ELL, and the majority of them did succeed and perform in K and first grade as well as children who did not come from the low income families or families where English was not the primary language.

And their scores actually increased in first grade as they got good instruction in Reading First schools, where we were doing the essentials and doing the coaching.

So it is to me, and then when I look at the Reading First schools who do not have that type of preschool experiences coming to them and do not have full day kindergarten, those children start in kindergarten with approximately 20 percent at benchmark as opposed to in our high poverty schools—as opposed to the children who would come out of an Early Reading First Program.

So I support this comprehensive idea because I know that we are in bad shape as far as our adolescent literacy. But it does start in the preschool, and we have got to—and even in infancy—but we have got to work it up but it is amazing what that can do.

And the technology piece I would like to add is crucial to our children who have lacking in background experiences. We have got

to have ways in the classrooms that we can build that background knowledge to go along with that oral language. Thank you.

Chairman KILDEE. We have three votes pending. The first vote is called for 15 minutes, and then there are two 5-minute votes after that. There is a little there in between, but I think we are going to have to come back.

And but I will—Mr. Ehlers is next in line. I will call upon him. We can take the first 15 minutes they usually stretch out a little bit. So we will take Mr. Ehlers.

You are recognized, gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I will try not to use all 15 minutes.

Chairman KILDEE. Did I say 15?

Mr. EHLERS. But at any rate, I appreciate you very much for holding the hearing. Literacy is extremely important as we all know. And I do want to note that I think libraries are an extremely important part of this. And I see Mr. Henriquez smiling because Mr. Carnegie was influential in getting a great many libraries started across this land.

I personally learned to read because as a sickly child, I was not able to go to school. And I learned to read primarily with library books and read voraciously, starting with very simple Dick and Jane stories and going on up.

I would—there is a letter that was submitted to you, Mr. Chairman and to Mr. Castle, from the American Library Association regarding this issue in connection with this hearing. And if that has not already been entered into the record, I would like to see this placed in the record.

Chairman KILDEE. We will make sure that is in the record. Thank you.

[The information follows:]

November 19, 2009.

Hon. DALE KILDEE, *Chairman*; Hon. MICHAEL N. CASTLE, *Ranking Member*, *Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education*, *Committee on Education and Labor*, 2181 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KILDEE AND CASTLE: On behalf of the American Library Association (ALA), I am writing in support of your efforts to improve literacy skills and respectfully ask that you include this letter as part of the official record for the Subcommittee's November 19, 2009, hearing to highlight the contributions of librarians and library programs in improving the literacy skills of children and young adults.

In general, librarians are professionally trained information experts who help improve the literacy skills of children and young adults. They regularly aid teachers in building students' research and information literacy skills; they possess deep knowledge of adolescent literacy development; and they are the absolute best resource for ensuring that schools have a wide variety of reading materials that students both need and want to read.

The public library is the community's center for early literacy coaching for parents and child-care providers. As you know, a child's brain develops at an incredible rate during the first three years of life. A child's early experiences with language contribute to healthy brain development.

The 1998 publication *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* was a landmark report that clearly established the link between providing a rich early literacy environment in the preschool years and later success in school. After this publication, public librarians developed a program to develop children's reading skills based on six key pre-reading skills that children must have before they can learn to read: narrative skills, print motivation, vocabulary, phonological awareness, letter knowledge and print awareness. This model of service focuses on teaching the par-

ents and caregivers how to foster early learning skills. This model of library service should be available to every community in a public library with a comprehensive materials collection.

Public librarians provide many other types of resources that support early childhood literacy: children's books that are suited to various ages and interests, story-time, parenting books that provide specific information and techniques for effective parenting skills, the latest research about brain development and learning; and trained librarians who can teach parents and caregivers the most effective ways to read to children.

Public librarians have embraced their responsibility to be the first literacy coach for parents and caregivers of all children, especially children in low-income families. Some services provided to these families include bookmobile and storytelling mobiles, story-time kits, early literacy classes for childcare providers, Head Start staff and parents. Bringing books to neighborhoods in communities without many books available is an important task for bookmobiles.

School librarians are the central teachers who know the school's curriculum and effective techniques necessary to cross disciplines and integrate information and technology literacy. They have collaboration skills for effective participation in the school improvement process through involvement in curriculum development, implementation and evaluation with individual educators and departmental committees, and are well-positioned to participate in the improvement of data-based assessment systems. Every school that hires a state-certified school library media specialist employs a staff member who possesses an advanced degree or state-level certification and experience in both reading and literacy, which is ideal for complementing the learning taking place in classrooms.

In schools, libraries are both the physical and virtual hubs of learning. They provide access to a wide variety of reading materials, as well as a real and virtual space for learning and exploration, to every student and faculty member in the building. Libraries are cost effective in that they are the single place that maintains a collection of a broad-range of reading material and learning resources. We know that children will learn to love reading if they have a wide selection of materials to choose from.

It's no wonder that research repeatedly shows that a well-funded and fully staffed school library with a state-licensed school librarian is an integral component of a student's education. Across the United States, studies have demonstrated that students in schools with good school libraries learn more, get better grades, and score higher on standardized tests than their peers in schools without such resources.

Accordingly, ALA is pleased that both the House and Senate versions of the LEARN Act (Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation) contain various provisions to support libraries in the development and implementation of early learning through grade 12 literacy programs.

Specifically, we applaud provisions included in both bills that would:

- Improve reading, writing, and academic achievement for children and students by strengthening coordination among various programs and entities including public libraries;
- Authorize funds to be used to promote reading, library, and writing programs that provide access to engaging reading material in school and at home;
- Define an eligible entity to include a public library program;
- Define instructional staff to include librarians and library school media specialists; and
- Include a library media specialist on the State Literacy Team.

As the Congress moves forward in advocating for improved literacy among our children and young adults, ALA asks that you continue to recognize the integral role libraries and librarians play in achieving this goal.

Again, thank you for your focus on improving literacy skills, we look forward to working with you in completing this effort and successfully implementing the LEARN Act.

Sincerely,

EMILY SHEKETOFF,
Executive Director, ALA Washington Office.

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you. The librarians are professionally trained information experts, and I have had a lot to do with them. I served on a city library board, a county library board, state library board also at the Library of Congress.

And librarians are incredibly well-trained to deal with the literacy problems in my hometown. They are the leaders in helping people who are illiterate and helping them learn how to read. And I am talking about adults.

They regularly aid teachers in building students' research and information literacy skills, they possess deep knowledge of adolescent literacy development, and they ensure children have a wide variety of reading materials that they both need and want to read.

And I would just like reaction from the panel on this. Do you believe it is appropriate to include library programs and librarians in our efforts to improve the literacy skills of children and adults, and how do you think they can best be incorporated? It is open to anyone.

Ms. DORÉ. We have a great interface in our community with our libraries. They come and do presentations to the elementary school students, they hold book hours and book shares, and so it is a really—I know we are a small community but it is a nice way for the libraries to really connect with schools and then support parents and children. So we see it as a huge community resource piece in our area.

Mr. EHLERS. Any others?

Mr. Henriquez?

Mr. HENRIQUEZ. Yes, I appreciate you bringing up the library issue. I am a big fan obviously. It is a required part of the job. The librarians are oftentimes the individuals within schools, particularly in middle schools and high schools that can really reach out to the youngster, and engage them in a whole other world of books and in reading that sometimes doesn't exist in the school building. So when there is a lack of professional expertise around adolescent literacy, a librarian can be a real anchor within that community.

That said there are also other issues that librarians could be trained to do particularly around how to work with youngsters around very difficult expository text that a lot of our youngsters are struggling with. And that is something that we really need to get under.

Mr. EHLERS. What can you recommend? What do you think Congress should do to help ensure that all students have greater access to certified library media specialists? So is there anything specific you can recommend for the Congress to do? And that is open for anyone, too.

Dr. Strickland?

Ms. STRICKLAND. Love that question. I would love to see library media specialists in every school. They really help coordinate literacy programs. Again, Andrés mentioned earlier on about the need to have the content area teachers take more responsibility for literacy.

Well, this means schematic kinds of opportunities where they are learning content but it is in the best interest of the content area teachers, too, because after all if children can access the text that they are reading in biology or physics or anything else that they happen to be studying, then they are going to learn it better and act on it more responsibly and better.

So in many places where they have these kinds of people working together with teachers to get the kinds of materials they need and

technology, print and media of all sorts because kids today read across media.

And they need to separate fact from fiction. It is really much harder to be a competent reader today because there is so much out there. Select what you need, make good decisions about what is useful to your endeavor, and then use it in some way. So I would love to see one in every single school.

Mr. EHLERS. Any other comments? Yes?

Mr. GOMÉZ. May I add that there is a direct correlation with number or volume of children's books, reading books at all grade levels and reading performance in schools. And the more kids that have access to reading books via library, in the classrooms, there are numerous studies that point to the more books that are accessible, the higher the reading scores of that particular campus.

Mr. EHLERS. I was not aware of that.

Dr. Meyers?

Ms. MEYERS. Yes, I would like to just support that statement as well, and we have seen that in our schools as we have struggled to raise the scores, especially in our first grade. We have seen the improvement, and the improvement has come when we have gotten more text into the classrooms both—and especially the expository text.

And children have had many opportunities to practice and read and practice reading connected text. Too much time is spent sometimes on isolated skills but not only do we broaden their background and knowledge but we give them a lot of practice.

And practice is a key piece of this. So the more that we can introduce and more books we can get in classrooms, and get teachers to use those books so that their children can read and have those opportunities, the better our scores seem to be.

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you.

Mr. Berger?

Mr. BERGER. This may seem like a somewhat technical point but I think it is an important one about the collaboration between libraries and schools. As I said in my testimony, the process of education in the classroom is now generating a very detailed web of data about each child, what level they read at, what they are interested in, what things they find challenging.

Because of the nature of laws around privacy in our country, the transfer of that information to a librarian who is not a school librarian but to a municipal librarian is quite difficult and almost never happens. And the power of that data set for a certified librarian could be really effective in their ability to match kids with books, which is a fundamental task that they do.

And so whatever we can do as we look not only at reading legislation but at online privacy legislation to clear that path for certified librarians would be most helpful.

Mr. EHLERS. Are you referring to the Patriot Act or something else?

Mr. BERGER. I think the main one that applies is actually the FERPA registry laws.

Mr. EHLERS. Okay, thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HINOJOSA [presiding]. You are welcome. I believe we only have time for one more member to ask questions. And I am next on the line. So after I ask my questions we will adjourn but come right back after the votes. My question is going to be—the first one to Dr. Gómez, but before I ask that question I wanted to reiterate my great interest in early reading and writing programs that we are discussing here today.

And say that in my area of Deep South Texas, we have literacy programs that have been started in the last 2 or 3 years by bringing a coalition of three members of Congress with adjoining districts to carry out this initiative, and it is working.

And so I want to say that I heard early in the panel's discussion that the art of learning can be learned in so many different languages. And I served 10 years on the Texas State Board of Education, and our commissioner of education told us, this is between 1970 and 1980, that the art of learning can be learned in any language and then transcend or transfer onto the English language.

But we didn't learn that lesson in Texas, and we certainly didn't learn it in Washington. And so if we look at the number of children who are in need of this literacy program it is greater than 50 percent, just count the Hispanic, the Asian American, the Native American and the immigrant children, and you will see that it is way over 50 percent of the children who need this literacy program.

All children need it but especially those who come from families where English is not the first language. So I ask you, Dr. Gómez, what do you recommend that we in Congress and the federal government do to increase the number of highly qualified bilingual teachers and educators in our nation's classrooms?

Mr. GOMÉZ. Well, I think that it is really important that there be incentives supporting states for the recruitment of bilingual ESL certified teachers that understand educating children whose primary language is not English all the way through high school because these kids although we know that we have been talking about early literacy, there were some discussions about secondary, middle school, high school literacy.

And of course literacy is relative to grade level, so when we are talking kindergarten literacy, then we are talking high school literacy. Those are two very different levels of literacy.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Be specific on what you think would help to move the ball forward and score.

Mr. GOMÉZ. If we provide, if we require in essence teacher preparation programs that every teacher, every public school teacher that is certified in every state somehow has the preparation coursework, one or two courses where they understand second language acquisition.

They understand the academic value of first language literacy and how that benefits second language literacy, and they become advocates. Right now we have rifts in our schools from bilingual certified teachers and non-bilingual certified teachers that don't understand what these folks are all about and why they are doing what they are doing.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Would you give me something in writing so that you are very specific on what we in this committee can try—

Mr. GOMÉZ. Yes, most definitely, most definitely.

Mr. HINOJOSA [continuing]. In the No Child Left Behind reauthorization. And my next question and last point is to Andrés Henriquez. Can you highlight the strategies that are critical and necessary to improving adolescent literacy for African American, Latino, Native American and Asian American students?

Mr. HENRIQUEZ. Yes, as I said in my testimony is that while kids of color are certainly affected by this the most, it is not only an issue of children of color. It is many, many students. However it is exacerbated in the issues around English language learners in particular.

One of the things that we see, especially in middle schools is what we called double the work, meaning that our youngsters are acquiring their first language, in a sense, which would be English, and at the same time, acquiring another language, which is academic language. So all of the work that they are doing in middle schools and high schools in terms of acquiring knowledge around chemistry and biology that is not written in their language, so we call that double the work, they have to do twice as much work as the average student.

And in my extended testimony that I gave this morning, the report, which is called "Double the Work: Actions to Do with English Language Learners for Adolescent Literacy," outlines a whole host of recommendations that we can do for those youngsters who are way behind in reading in more English language learners.

Mr. HINOJOSA. The presentations that you all made were extremely interesting and informative. And I am looking forward to the second part of the dialogue that we are going to have with all of you.

I personally want to thank you because this is one of the most important initiatives and things that I work on on my Education Committee. And I thank you for that. I now say that we are recessed for a few minutes.

[Recess.]

Chairman KILDEE [presiding]. Again, I apologize for the break but this is the process of legislation down here. We have—Woodrow Wilson said that "Congress at work is Congress in committee," and this is really where we do our—we go over there and vote once in a while, but we learn so much in committee, and we appreciate your understanding of our process here of running over to vote on naming post offices and things like that. I am not sure I would.

And at that I think I have the governor's permission to go ahead. Have I? We were riding in the same car over here, so we will now recognize Mr. Yarmuth, the co-sponsor of the bill for questions.

Mr. YARMUTH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you and Ranking Member Castle for extending the courtesies of the subcommittee to me, but on the other hand you owe me having lured Lillian Pace away from my staff.

Chairman KILDEE. Yes, sure.

Mr. YARMUTH. And but I—

Chairman KILDEE. You know that was grand theft.

Mr. YARMUTH. I know she is doing as phenomenal a job for you as she did—

Chairman KILDEE. She is doing a great job.

Mr. YARMUTH [continuing]. As she did in my office. Thank you all for your work and for your testimony. I was just home last week and sat in on an educational forum and one of the things that was talked about more than anything else was literacy and particularly Dr. Strickland, with regard to the sociological context of early childhood and doing what we could to see that everybody started off on a sound footing.

And a lot has been talked about today in that regard. In my community we have an organization called the Seven Counties which does a lot of the social service work, particularly with regard to Medicaid families, and they have a program that they have instituted in conjunction with hospitals and actually a bank, that helped fund them, to counsel young mothers about reading and literacy and talking to their children, actually give them the books that Chairman Kildee was talking about.

But from a governmental perspective, what in your opinion can we do to try and to give parents that input and help to establish that that environment that is conducive to early childhood learning. Is that a government role, and what can we do?

Ms. STRICKLAND. It is very much a part of what early childhood professionals should be involved in, certainly zero to five and beyond as I indicated earlier on. Two very important programs that were mentioned earlier on, Reach Out and Read, which is really an initiative of pediatricians and—who do give books to parents and explain the role of early literacy and their role in it early on and then, of course, Reading Is Fundamental.

They were both mentioned early on. But parents are indeed the child's first and most important teachers. There is just no question about it. So what we do, and what they do should be reinforced. Good family literacy programs, parent involvement, can go a long way, and they also reach out to the other services which you indicated, the social services and so on, to help support families.

When families are supported they are more likely to do the kinds of things that we ask them to do. I am one who is always saying read to your child every night, talk with them, and yet I know that a lot of parents from certain communities are under such stress and have so many difficulties on their own that this may be the last thing they think of.

So it will need a comprehensive approach at that point as well. But I think it is worth it. It is worth every cent of it to get that foundation and have the whole family involved.

Mr. YARMUTH. Absolutely. Thank you.

Mr. Berger, one of the things that we, I think, all generally assume is technology is going to continue to play an increasing role in education, and I appreciate the work you are doing. I am a big fan of "Disrupting Class" by Clayton Christensen, so I kind of become a disciple of that as well.

But the question I have is, because there have been controversies in the past with Reading First about the proprietary systems, and it is great that you are doing the work that you are doing. Does government have a role here in supporting research into whether it is technology related to education or just basic research as to how kids learn and all of the techniques that we are talking about here?

Mr. BERGER. Absolutely. I think one of the statistics that I believe is in “Disrupting Class” is the interesting comparison between the amount of funding we do for basic research through the NIH and the amount of funding we do for basic research through IES, and it is a 100 to 1 ratio. And so the question of why we don’t have the basic research foundation for some of the kind of things we want to get going in literacy, may be findable in that 100 to 1.

Mr. YARMUTH. Yes.

Mr. BERGER. I think that the connection between the tools of technology and the kind of data that they can gather about student performance, and that research agenda may be the place where there is a bit of a disruption in the way things work. It used to be that an efficacy study was a 3 to 5-year endeavor with graduate students running around to try to get data out of a classroom that was otherwise hermetic.

What we have now are steady streams of data about how kids are progressing, down to individual samples of work, down to particular developmental skills and the exact day they show up in a child’s development, and I think that becomes a really fascinating foundation for new research.

And so as money is made available for research, and the key thing to understand about this sort of legislation is the level at which you set the standard of what counts as valid research drives a whole marketplace of investment in serious R&D. If there isn’t a standard of research, then it is easy for the publishing industry to just use marketing as their way to decide which one to sell.

As soon as there is a standard of what efficacy is and the higher it is, the more pressure you put on the forces of supply and demand, which have more money than the research agenda ever will to invest in real gold standard research to prove what works and doesn’t work.

Mr. YARMUTH. Yes. Mr. Chairman, I see my time is up. I would just like to make another observation that occurred to me in listening to some of the testimony earlier and that is the observation we may have made a mistake all these years in telling school kids to shut up? Maybe we should have been encouraging them to talk more in class and to each other. It might have helped.

Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you very much, and it is always to have you back here, and you are always welcome here. And again, I am glad that I have Lillian on my staff, and I know you miss her, but by the way, while I am mentioning that I want to thank both Lillian Pace and Allison Dembeck for their great work, you know, to assemble a panel like this requires some input from us.

We know something is going on, but to assemble the panel and get people who really know this in depth and various aspects of it, requires great staffing, and I want to thank Allison and Lillian for having really assembled—while I was over on the floor many of the members were saying, “That is a great hearing,” and sometimes we have other dull hearings.

This was not dull. This was very, very informative. This was—every one of you, individually and collectively, have contributed to the knowledge we need to do what this country needs very, very badly.

So let me just ask one final question. You know, we have about four basic programs running through ESEA or through the appropriations committee. One never was authorized but it is through the appropriations committee. How do we move forward to perhaps a more comprehensive program, taking the best parts of the existing literacy programs? Anyone want to just start down?

Ms. DORE. The way that we have looked at it on the ground in the school district is really that multi-tiered level support, having that good universal tier of instruction and as you heard Mr. Berger talk about research, is so that schools have that menu of things to choose from that works in their school and works in their district. But they are still using a good universal tier of instruction where at least 80 percent of the kids are proficient or above.

And then when students struggle how do you support them? Or how do you extend them if they already have those skills? So it really is helping schools change so that everybody gets the same thing so that kids what they need. And we support them through that, and we bring their families in, and we work with their families as to how they can support children at home.

It really is changing—I keep calling it changing how we do business. We need to do different work for the consumers that we have now, our kids and our families.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you. Anyone else want to comment?

Mr. HENRIQUEZ. Yes, I would just like to say that if this becomes part of the ESEA in the future, and as I said in my testimony that there is only 5 percent of resources going into middle schools and high schools in terms of literacy for middle schoolers and high schoolers. And so we hope that we can shift some resources to go to the older grades so that we can actually have a knowledge basis as to what we need to do.

We have some evidence that IES and others are doing in terms of researching this, but we need much more, and we need a lot more doing the research while we are doing the practice.

Chairman KILDEE. Thank you.

Yes, Mr. Gómez?

Mr. GOMÉZ. Well, we really need to emphasize more on the strategies to eliminate the need for interventions. There seems to be quite a bit of emphasis on interventions in the upper elementary grades and even middle school grades and by that time it is a little too late. We have dropped the ball for these kids.

So the idea of doing this early literacy, identifying these strategies that work for these kids early, working with families, is—and understanding that literacy come in different languages, will allow for making sure that no gap begins early, which is where the gaps really begin.

We fix high schools and middle schools and elementary. For the most part studies continue to show longitudinal studies that follow kids over time, show that the kids are somewhat okay in elementary but they are not okay, the same kids, in middle school and high school.

And of course for many, many kids, either from poverty issues or language differences, cultural differences and so on, so it is really an elementary discussion that we need to really focus on so that we eliminate the need to focus on the intervention which means it

is already—the problem is already there. We need to go to the root of the problem.

Chairman KILDEE. Ms. Chu?

Ms. CHU. Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is for Dr. Leo Gómez. First of all I want to commend you for your recommendation to change the name of limited English proficient students to—or English language learner students, to bilingual learners. In California we call them English language learner students, but to use such terminology only points to the limitations and not to just a state of being.

Now, in California we have had a really stormy history with bilingual education, including an initiative to end it totally. In addition we have had a state board of education that is in essence implementing a one-size-fits-all curriculum, focused just on the basics. However, there are many, including me that have advocated for a curriculum with alternatives for bilingual learners.

Do you believe that there are consequences to a one-size-fits-all type of curriculum and if so, what are they?

Mr. GÓMEZ. Yes. I think we need to look at education or what we many times refer to as mainstream education a little differently than we have 20, 30 years ago because the mainstream has changed. The type of children and what children bring to school in the past, and we still continue to some extent, we look at their differences, whether it be language, cultural as deficits, as problems we need to overcome so that they can become like the mainstream.

And I think we are at a point now in our history where we are a diverse group, a diverse America, and we need to rethink how we address these differences and look at children's assets as opportunities to enrich other children. And then, of course, properly educate them.

I believe, just to try to answer your question more directly, there is no one-size-fits-all, but there are some basic tenets that we must follow when educating children regardless of the situation. There are some fundamental pieces that we must not veer away from and one of those, as we talked about is, of course, children learn more effectively if they understand the lesson.

They learn their skills. They learn to read more effectively if they are understanding what is going on in the classrooms while they learn and develop that second language. It is not a coincidence that for over 40 years now our English speaking population outperforms our non-English speaking population.

It is because we are treating our non-English speaking population like our English-speaking population, and we have to look at this issue and say, okay, this is not the same so we can't change them.

We cannot make them something they are not. Let us look at what they bring. Let us look at that as a resource, as a tool for learning, and let us close achievement gaps by addressing our diversity versus kind of sweeping it under the rug and saying, you know, just learn English, and everything will be fine.

That has been our approach and every strategy shared here today is an excellent strategy, excellent ideas for literacy development, but until we understand that literacy development, literacy is literacy and literacy in Vietnamese, in Spanish, in Chinese is lit-

eracy, and that literacy transfers, then we are not going to get very far, and we are going to continue to see the underachievement of our children, especially in the middle school grades.

As I was pointing out to Mr. Henriquez, that I shared in my testimony, a huge study that was conducted, looking at the same results that they found in the Carnegie results that the kids look—all these minority children they look fine in elementary, but the gap widens in secondary, in middle school and high school because they really were not literate.

They were English-speaking. You know, they learned the language, but they really were not literate. If you look at our high school dropout rates there are studies out there that look at children that are dropping out, and 92 percent are English proficient.

They speak English. What they are not is academically proficient on grade level in that language, so their academics suffered along the way and of course, as we have said, it started early. So it is about getting that academic and English development at the same time to reach that goal for these kids.

Ms. CHU. And a quick question, how did Texas fund the dual language? Were federal funds used, and should literacy reauthorization include funding to address bilingual learners?

Mr. GOMÉZ. We are very fortunate in Texas that we have got, you know, our legislators are very visionary and progressive and we have a dual language law in Texas now that allows and actually encourages school districts to move toward dual language as the program, the go-to program or the program of choice for educating our non-English speaking population, but also for educating our English speaking population because dual language consistently shows that these kids that are educated through two languages develop cognitive advantages in their learning.

And are actually outperforming monolingual English children when they are educated through two languages, and of course other countries in the world have known this for years because they have been educating children through two or more languages for many, many years.

A lot of the funding is really funding from traditional bilingual funds from the state and federal government. The state is just now beginning to provide some specific funding for dual language or for dual language schools.

Right now huge school districts like the Dallas Independent School District, the Fort Worth Independent School District, are implementing dual language district-wide for all of their non-English speaking children, specifically their Spanish speaking children.

And as one way dual language, but at the same time they are offering to something over 3,000 English dominant children dual language. But what is really interesting in Dallas is, our African American population, which are being underserved in our school systems due to cultural reasons in particular, are participating in dual language in high numbers, and we are seeing some tremendous results with that group as well, which we hoped would happen in Dallas.

So it is this kind of forward thinking, you know, and moving away from traditional approaches and looking at our diversity as assets that we should be embracing as opportunities for all kids.

Chairman KILDEE. I understand that Mr. Payne has no further questions? Is that correct?

Mr. PAYNE. That is correct.

Chairman KILDEE. Again, I want to thank all of you for this hearing. It will go down as part of the history I think of really making some quantum leaps forward. You know, everything begins with baby steps, but ultimately we need a quantum leap some time.

And this has always been a bipartisan interest in this Congress and in this committee. Matter of fact, one of the bills, Even Start, is named officially after Bill Goodling when he was a minority member of this committee. Then he became chairman later on, and I have seen the program in operation in Saginaw. So it has always been bipartisan. Education generally is bipartisan. This particularly, literacy, is so basic.

So we thank you for all you do in it. We thank you for your testimony today and as previously ordered, members will have 14 calendar days to submit additional materials for the hearing record. And any member who wishes to submit follow-up questions, so you may get some follow-up questions, in writing to the witnesses, should coordinate with the majority staff within the requisite staff.

And without objection and with my thanks, this hearing is adjourned.

[A submission of Mr. Polis follows:]

Prepared Statement of the Colorado Department of Education

A BILL: H.R. 4037 (THE "LEARN ACT")

Currently Being Presented to the United States House of Representatives

The Colorado Department of Education wishes to express its support for the landmark federal literacy bill, the LEARN Act, as well as appreciation for the leadership of Rep. Polis in introducing this major legislation to fund comprehensive literacy programs spanning early childhood through grade twelve. The opportunities this legislation will afford the states in supporting the development of a comprehensive state literacy plan will be substantial and ensure a systemic approach to providing high quality instruction in reading and writing from early childhood through grade twelve.

Colorado congratulates the sponsors of the bill for proposing legislation that: (1) provides a means for scaling up pilot literacy programs that have shown promise in raising student achievement in literacy, (2) is comprehensive, thus expanding support for literacy from preschool through high school, (3) prompts states to accelerate and expand their implementation of evidence-based practices for all students, (4) proposes a multi-tier system of support to address the needs of all students, (5) includes oral language and writing as a part of developing literacy competence, (6) includes meaningful family engagement in its focus, (7) builds in safe-guards against potential conflicts of interest, and (8) has the potential of increasing high school graduation rates.

Representatives John Yarmuth (D-KY3), Jared Polis (D-CO2), and George Miller (D-CA7) might consider the following for inclusion in the LEARN Act :

- Additional criteria for the definition of "scientifically valid research" using the definition of "scientifically based reading research" found within the Title I, Part B (Reading First) legislation: "(6) SCIENTIFICALLY BASED READING RESEARCH- The term 'scientifically based reading research' means research that—

- (A) applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction, and reading difficulties; and

- (B) includes research that—

(i) employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;

(ii) involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn;

(iii) relies on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations; and

(iv) has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review.”

(See also Stanovich outlining the importance of scientific thinking and scientific research in educational decision-making: <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/ScientificallyBasedResearch.pdf>

<http://www.nifl.gov/publications/html/stanovich/index.html>)

- State Education Agency (SEA) “allowable use” of funds targeted at SEA development of partnerships with institutions of higher education for the purpose of conducting research on teacher effectiveness as measured by student achievement and for the development of pre-service literacy related courses for educators. These funds could be used for course review and reporting of review results to the public. Aligning pre-service literacy related coursework to evidence/standards-based practices is a major leverage point that has a direct influence on teacher effectiveness. In addition, this activity will help states meet the charge of Sec. Duncan’s call to improve teacher preparation to better impact student achievement.

Sec. Duncan’s Speech to Schools of Education: <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/10/10222009a.html>

- SEA “allowable use” of funds targeted at providing professional development to SEA staff in order to ensure SEA staff can effectively carry out the activities outlined in:

(Page 27, LEARN Act) Sec.6.(b)(2)(C)(ii): “ensure that eligible entities in the State have leveraged and are effectively leveraging the resources to implement high-quality literacy instruction, and have the capacity to implement high-quality literacy initiatives effectively;”

- Increase the SEA “Use of Funds” allocation of “State Activities” (see page 25, Learn Act) from 5 percent to 10 percent. Increasing the SEA state activity use of funds from 5 percent to 10 percent will provide necessary resources to support (1) SEA administration/facilitation of effective K-12 literacy programs, (2) SEA administration capacity to carry out activities required in the LEARN Act, including the review and development of improved state licensure and certification standards, (3) professional development of SEA staff, and (4) robust research studies to study the effectiveness of school-wide and state-wide literacy programs.

Note that the Title I, Part B (Reading First) SEA funds were 20%. Colorado used these funds to provide professional development, technical assistance, including on-site coaching to LEA’s from experts outside of the district and have received feedback that these state level supports made the most significant difference in improving instructional practices and ensuring fidelity of implementation at the school level. Finally, these funds were essential for related administrative tasks including professional development for staff, and data collection, analysis and reporting.

- Include language in the Act that recognizes the importance of SEAs in providing LEAs guidance on how to identify effective instructional materials and programs supported by scientifically valid research.

- Include language in the Act that recognizes the importance of SEAs in providing LEAs guidance on how to identify valid and reliable formative assessments that have a high likelihood of predicting performance on summative assessments.

- Include a definition of “extended learning time” based on scientifically valid research for accelerating the literacy skills of struggling students

- Include a definition of “developmentally appropriate” (pg. 68, lines 17-18) (<http://www.nifl.gov/publications/pdf/NELPReport09.pdf>)

- Extend implementation of a multi-tier system of support from pre-K through high school (<http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Conversations%20with%20Practitioners%20Corr.pdf>)

- Include phonic decoding instruction and fluency beyond grades K-3, as needed (<http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Academic%20Literacy.pdf>; <http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Adol%20Struggling%20Readers%20Meta-analysis.pdf>)

Thank you again for the opportunity for the Colorado Department of Education to enter a statement in the Congressional Record expressing support for the LEARN Act and to commend Rep. Polis and his colleagues for their leadership in educational reform and proposing comprehensive federal literacy legislation. We look

forward to this new initiative and the support it will give to the students of Colorado and our nation's youth.

[Questions for the record, their responses, and additional submissions from the witnesses follow:]

U.S. CONGRESS,
[VIA FACSIMILE],
Washington, DC, December 1, 2009.

Mr. LARRY BERGER,
CEO and Co-Founder, *Wireless Generation*, 500 New Jersey Ave., NW, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. BERGER: Thank you for testifying at the Committee on Education and Labor's hearing on, "Improving the Literacy Skills of Children and Young Adults," on November 19, 2009.

Representative Robert "Bobby" Scott (D-VA) has asked that you respond in writing to the following questions:

During the hearing the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs was discussed by all of the witnesses. My questions are as follows:

1. Compared to what? In other words, what was the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs compared with?
2. Are there specific studies that quantify effectiveness of programs that increase literacy, reduce D/O, and crime, etc?
3. What are the cost savings (specific numbers) of early literacy programs?

Please send an electronic version of your written response to the questions to the Committee by close of business on 12/8/09. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman.

December 8, 2009.

Hon. ROBERT C. SCOTT,
Committee on Education and Labor, 2181 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SCOTT: Thank you and the Committee again for the opportunity to testify at the November 19, 2009 hearing on "Improving the Literacy Skills of Children and Young Adults." Thank you also for your follow up questions regarding the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs. My responses follow immediately below.

Early literacy programs reduce the need to refer students to special education programs, which can lead to substantial cost savings.

As of 2006-07, about 13.6% of students received special education services—up from 8.3% in 1976-77. (See <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2009/pdf/9-2009.pdf>, at Table A-9-1.) Yet, as research presented at the National Research Center on Learning Disabilities RTI Symposium showed, some 35% to 40% of children referred to special education due to a Specific Learning Disability were in fact referred incorrectly. (For a complete listing of research presented at the Symposium, see the following website: <http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com-content&task=view&id=841>.) These unnecessary referrals come at a substantial cost: a 2003 study found that the cost to educate special education students with learning disabilities is 1.6 times that of educating general education students. (See <http://www.csef-air.org/publications/seep/national/Final-SEEP-Report-5.PDF>, at v.) Thus, if we could eliminate a substantial portion of the 35%—40% of unnecessary special education referrals, the cost savings would almost certainly be dramatic.

Early literacy programs, as part of a Response to Intervention (RTI) approach, reduce these unnecessary referrals. RTI works by identifying at-risk students early and providing appropriate reading "interventions" to help them. In our many years of working with teachers, principals, and school superintendents on Kindergarten-through-5th Grade literacy instruction, we have found that many students will get "back on track" toward reading proficiency if given appropriate support through RTI programs. I am attaching as an appendix to this testimony a white paper authored by two of my colleagues last year that demonstrates the effectiveness of the RTI approach.

By identifying students before they are referred to special education, effective early literacy programs that include RTI save money for schools, districts, and states. In addition to reducing unnecessary referrals, these programs free up special education services and dollars for the children who truly need them.

Thank you again for the opportunity to supplement my testimony by responding to Representative Scott's questions, and please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of further service to the Committee.

Sincerely,

LARRY BERGER.

[The information referred to may be accessed at the following Internet address:]

<http://wirelessgeneration.com/media/rti-white-paper.pdf>

U.S. CONGRESS,
[VIA FACSIMILE],
Washington, DC, December 1, 2009.

Ms. MARY KAY DORÉ, *Director of Student Support Services,*
Summit School District, 150 School Road, Frisco, CO.

DEAR MS. DORÉ: Thank you for testifying at the Committee on Education and Labor's hearing on, "Improving the Literacy Skills of Children and Young Adults," on November 19, 2009.

Representative Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA) has asked that you respond in writing to the following questions:

- During the hearing the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs was discussed by all of the witnesses. My questions are as follows:

1. Compared to what? In other words, what was the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs compared with?
2. Are there specific studies that quantify effectiveness of programs that increase literacy, reduce D/O, and crime, etc?
3. What are the cost savings (specific numbers) of early literacy programs?

Please send an electronic version of your written response to the questions to the Committee by close of business on 12/8/09. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman.

Response to Mr. Scott's Questions From Ms. Doré

There are many observations as a professional that I have witnessed that tell me early intervention works and therefore is a cost savings to society. I have had the fortune to work in one school district long enough to see students enter kindergarten and then watch the same students exit high school. Anecdotally, I can recount stories of students who can in with little foundation in the early years and their struggles to finish high school, some of whom didn't make it. I come from a small district of just over 3,000 students, in this size community we are able to try to leverage community supports to help students who are struggling. Sometimes that worked and other times the support was not enough to overcome their family situation, or the pull of drugs and alcohol. Discussions at school often debate the epicenter of the student's struggles; is the behavior choices of the student that is causing the issues or is the inability to read which has led to student to act out and try to mask their struggles? I know in my heart and professional experience that catching children early is the key into to starting them on the oath the life long learning.

What you wanted were numbers, which I understand and applaud. Referenced are the results of the Age 21 Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Title I Chicago Child-Parent Center Program, which I have also attached for your reference.

Results of the cost-benefit analysis indicated that each component of CPC program had economic benefits that exceeded costs. With an average cost per child of \$6,730 (1998 dollars) for 1.5 years of participation, the preschool program generated a total return to society at large of \$47,759 per participant. The largest benefit was

program participants' increased earnings capacity projected from higher educational attainment. Economic benefits of the preschool program to the general public (tax-payers and crime victims), exclusive of increased earnings capacity, were \$25,771 per participant. The largest categories of public benefits were increased tax revenues associated with higher expected earnings capacity (28%), criminal justice system savings due to lower rates of arrest (28%), savings on tangible costs for crime victims (24%), and savings on school remedial services (18%). Overall, \$7.10 dollars were returned to society at large for every dollar invested in preschool. Excluding benefits to participants, the ratio of program benefits to costs for the general public was \$3.83 for every dollar invested. The ratio of benefits to costs for government savings alone was \$2.88 per dollar invested.

The present value of benefits for preschool participation was substantially higher than the benefits for school-age participation. The school-age component provided a societal return of \$4,944 per participant. Given a cost of \$2,981 per child for 2 years of participation, benefits modestly exceeded the investment in the program. The benefit-cost ratio for society at large was \$1.66 per dollar invested (\$1.42 public benefit per dollar invested). The main benefit was savings on school remedial services.

This is a short excerpt of some of the studies that have been conducted in regards to the effectiveness of early intervention with children. There are many studies that reveal the different readiness levels that children come to school with and the ways that systems need to support children. It is important for us as an educational system to discover how we can best support students and at the earliest time possible. It is the foundation that crucial to their success in later life.

Age 21 Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Title I Chicago Child-Parent Center Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (JUNE 2001)

Arthur J. Reynolds,¹ Judy A. Temple,² Dylan L. Robertson,¹ and Emily A. Mann¹

Introduction

In this study, we conducted the first cost-benefit analysis of the federally financed Title I Chicago Child-Parent Center (CPC) Program. The major question addressed was: Do program benefits exceed costs? The CPC program is a school-based preschool and early school-age intervention for low-income children that emphasizes parent involvement and the development of literacy skills. Previous studies have indicated that program participation beginning in preschool is independently associated with higher school achievement, higher rates of school completion through age 20, lower rates of school dropout, lower rates of juvenile arrest for violent and non-violent charges, and with less need for school remedial services (see Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, & Mann, 2001, and Reynolds, 2000).

Sample and Methods

The main study sample includes 1,286 youth of the original sample of 1,539 in the Chicago Longitudinal Study. Data in this on-going, prospective study were collected from family surveys, educational records, and justice system records up to age 21 (March 2001). An alternative-program, quasi-experimental design was used in which the behavioral adjustment of the entire cohort of 989 children who attended 20 CPCs in preschool and kindergarten from 1983-86 was compared to a random sample of 550 eligible children who did not participate in the program but enrolled in an all-day kindergarten program. Less than one-fourth of the comparison group attended a preschool program. Sample recovery rates were 85% and 81%, respectively, with no evidence of selective attrition. At the beginning of the study, groups were comparable on many family background measures.

Opened in 1967 with funding from Title I of the landmark Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the CPC program provides comprehensive educational and family support services from ages 3 to 9 in neighborhood schools. The philosophy of the program is to help children develop skills in reading, math, and communication through a broad spectrum of classroom and parent activities, and field trips. Each Child-Parent Center is run by a head teacher and includes a staffed parent resource room, school-community outreach activities, and health services. After preschool and kindergarten, the school-age program in the elementary school provides reduced class sizes, teacher aides for each class, continued parent involve-

¹Waisman Center and School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

²Department of Economics, Northern Illinois University.

Reynolds and Temple also are affiliated with the Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

ment activities, and an enriched classroom environment for developing reading and math skills.

Following standard economic procedures, we estimated the present value of program benefits and costs in 1998 dollars for five main categories of benefits: (1) reductions in expenditures for the school remedial services of grade retention and special education, (2) reductions in criminal justice system expenditures for both juvenile and adult arrest and treatment, (3) reductions in child welfare system expenditures associated with child abuse and neglect, (4) averted tangible costs to crime victims, and (5) increases in adult earnings and tax revenues projected for increases in educational attainment. The present value of program benefits was estimated based on a 3% annual discount rate evaluated at the beginning of preschool participation. The distribution of benefits were calculated separately for society at large (program participants and the general public), the general public, and government savings.

Results

Relative to comparison groups and controlling for family economic disadvantage, participation in the CPC preschool, school-age, and extended intervention (4 to 6 years) components was associated, in the expected direction, with two or more of the following outcomes: school achievement at age 14, special education placement and grade retention, juvenile arrest by age 18, child maltreatment, and high school completion by ages 20/21. Relative to the comparison group, preschool participants had a 29% higher rate of high school completion, a 33% lower rate of juvenile arrest, a 42% reduction in arrest for a violent offense, a 41% reduction in special education placement, a 40% reduction in the rate of grade retention, and a 51% reduction in child maltreatment. School-age participation and extended program participation for 4 to 6 years were associated with 30 to 40% lower rates of grade retention and special education placement. Compared to children with 1 to 3 years of participation, extended program participants also had higher achievement test scores in adolescence and lower rates of child maltreatment by age 17.

Results of the cost-benefit analysis indicated that each component of CPC program had economic benefits that exceeded costs. With an average cost per child of \$6,730 (1998 dollars) for 1.5 years of participation, the preschool program generated a total return to society at large of \$47,759 per participant. The largest benefit was program participants' increased earnings capacity projected from higher educational attainment. Economic benefits of the preschool program to the general public (taxpayers and crime victims), exclusive of increased earnings capacity, were \$25,771 per participant. The largest categories of public benefits were increased tax revenues associated with higher expected earnings capacity (28%), criminal justice system savings due to lower rates of arrest (28%), savings on tangible costs for crime victims (24%), and savings on school remedial services (18%). Overall, \$7.10 dollars were returned to society at large for every dollar invested in preschool. Excluding benefits to participants, the ratio of program benefits to costs for the general public was \$3.83 for every dollar invested. The ratio of benefits to costs for government savings alone was \$2.88 per dollar invested.

The present value of benefits for preschool participation was substantially higher than the benefits for school-age participation. The school-age component provided a societal return of \$4,944 per participant. Given a cost of \$2,981 per child for 2 years of participation, benefits modestly exceeded the investment in the program. The benefit-cost ratio for society at large was \$1.66 per dollar invested (\$1.42 public benefit per dollar invested). The main benefit was savings on school remedial services.

Relative to participation for 1 to 3 years, participation in the program for 4 to 6 years (preschool to second or third grade) also was associated with economic benefits that exceeded costs. The present value of benefits to society at large was \$24,772 per participant. Given an average cost of \$4,068 per participant (above and beyond less extensive participation), the extended intervention program provided a substantial return to society at large. The benefit-cost ratio for society at large was \$6.09 per dollar invested (\$3.59 public benefit per dollar invested). The greatest benefits were savings on school remedial services, increased tax revenues, and averted crime victim costs. Extended program participants typically had the highest levels of adjustment in the study. Overall, our findings of cost-effectiveness were robust to different discount rates and alternative procedures for estimating projected earnings and criminal justice system expenditures.

Conclusion

As the first cost-benefit analysis of a federally-financed, comprehensive early childhood intervention, findings indicate that participation in each component of the program was associated with economic benefits that exceeded costs. This was accom-

plished by increasing economic well being and reducing educational and social expenditures for remediation and treatment. Similar to Head Start, the CPC preschool program is the most intensive and comprehensive component and yielded the greatest benefits by age 21. Findings for school-age and extended intervention demonstrate the benefits of reduced class sizes and enriched school environments in the early grades. Thus, contemporary, large-scale child-development programs can provide substantial long-term benefits to society.

Given limited financial and human resources for health and educational interventions, greater levels of public investments in programs with demonstrated cost-effectiveness are warranted. Unlike most other social programs, the Child-Parent Center Program provides benefits to society that far exceed costs and is routinely implemented through a large urban school district. The present value of public benefits of the preschool program for the 1,000 study children totaled \$26 million. Since 100,000 children have been served by the program to date, these benefits translate to as much as \$2.6 billion in public savings since the program opened (1998 dollars). As states and localities increase access to early childhood care and education programs, public schools appear to be the location of choice for these initiatives. The findings of this study show the long-term payoffs that these public programs can provide.

AFFILIATIONS AND FUNDING

Preparation of this report was supported by funding from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (No. R01HD34294-06), and the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education (No. R305T990477). This report was presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Prevention Research in Washington, DC on June 1, 2001.

Address correspondence to Arthur Reynolds, Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1500 Highland Avenue, Madison, WI 53705. Electronic mail: ajr@umn.edu. Voice: 612-625-4321. Fax: 612-625-6472. Web site: education.umn.edu/ICD/ReynoldsLab/.

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- Reynolds, AJ, Temple JA, Robertson, DL, & Mann, EA. Long-term effects of an early childhood intervention on educational achievement and juvenile arrest: A 15-year follow-up of low-income children in public schools. *JAMA*. 2001; 285:2339-2346.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

1. Reynolds, AJ. The state of early intervention. In *Success in Early Intervention: The Chicago Child-Parent Centers* (Ch. 1, pp. 1-21). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press; 2000.
2. Reynolds, AJ. The Child-Parent Center Program and Study. In *Success in Early Intervention: The Chicago Child-Parent Centers* (Ch. 2, pp. 22-63). Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press; 2000.
3. Temple, JA., Reynolds, AJ., & Miedel, WT. Can early childhood intervention prevent high school dropout? Evidence from the Chicago Child-Parent Centers. *Urban Education*. 2001; 35:31-56.
4. Reynolds, AJ., Miedel, WT., & Mann, EA. Innovation in early intervention for children in families with low incomes: Lessons from the Chicago Child-Parent Centers. *Young Children*. 2000; 55:84-88.
5. Reynolds, A J. (Ed.) Educational success in high-risk settings: Contributions of the Chicago Longitudinal Study. *Journal of School Psychology* (Special issue). 1999; 37(4).

U.S. CONGRESS,

[VIA FACSIMILE],

Washington, DC, December 1, 2009.

Mr. LEO GÓMEZ, PH.D., *Professor of Bilingual-Bicultural Education, The University of Texas Pan American, College of Education, 1201 W University Drive, Edinburg, TX.*

DEAR DR. GÓMEZ: Thank you for testifying at the Committee on Education and Labor's hearing on, "Improving the Literacy Skills of Children and Young Adults," on November 19, 2009.

Representative Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA) has asked that you respond in writing to the following questions:

During the hearing the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs was discussed by all of the witnesses. My questions are as follows:

1. Compared to what? In other words, what was the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs compared with?
2. Are there specific studies that quantify effectiveness of programs that increase literacy, reduce D/O, and crime, etc?
3. What are the cost savings (specific numbers) of early literacy programs?

Please send an electronic version of your written response to the questions to the Committee by close of business on 12/8/09. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman.

Response to Mr. Scott’s Questions From Mr. Gómez

During the hearing the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs was discussed by all of the witnesses. My questions are as follows:

1. *Compared to what? In other words, what was the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs compared with?*
2. *Are there specific studies that quantify effectiveness of programs that increase literacy, reduce D/O, and crime, etc?*
3. *What are the cost savings (specific numbers) of early literacy programs?*

I did not provide any testimony related to cost effectiveness of early literacy programs. And I have no first-hand knowledge of this. However, I can comment that studies do indicate that early literacy development is crucial to grade-level achievement. Children that enter school with limited vocabulary and experiential knowledge need intensive early literacy preparedness to succeed with “on grade level” academic instruction.

I would like to respond to your second question as this relates to LEP students. As shared in my testimony, lack of knowledge regarding the “academic learning value of native language instruction,” particularly among decision-makers in leadership roles, continues to negatively impact policy for quality programs for non-English speaking students. An emphasis on English (language) versus both academic content learning (schooling) in native language and English language development continues to short change the education of BLs. It is critical that leadership at the state, federal, university and public school level be advocates for BLs and knowledgeable of research-based best practices for successful long-term literacy development for these students. The following is a direct response to your first two questions:

The evidence is overwhelming against English-only (immersion) programs for bilingual learners. It is quite unfortunate that the state of Arizona adopted this approach for the education of BLs in their state. Arizona went completely in the opposite direction of research-based practices and instead adopted “opinion-based policy.” The efficacy of English immersion approaches is well documented: English-only methods do not yield strong long-term academic outcomes for BLs. Students in these programs learn English, but fall behind miserably in grade level content and skills (schooling) since they essentially receive their initial education in a second language. In other words, BLs acquire the English language, but do not learn well (on grade level) the content and skills being taught in that language, therefore creating an “academic gap” (not a language gap) early on that continues and widens in middle school and high school (as curriculum becomes more demanding) leading many to eventually drop out. I should note that most high school drop-outs speak English well, but drop out due to lack of grade-level literacy (read 2-3 grade levels below). The ineffectiveness of such English-only practices manifests itself in the upper grades (4th-12th) based on English achievement tests.

Proponents of English-only programs typically share “English language data” to support their position. Do not be fooled with English language gains data. There is no doubt that BLs will learn English and make significant English gains, since they are receiving English-only lessons. What English-only proponents cannot produce is positive long-term English academic achievement data (standardized English reading & writing tests assessing grade-level literacy) comparable to native English speakers because it does not exist.

To my knowledge, there is not one long-term effectiveness study (middle school & high school performance) that demonstrates grade-level academic achievement (literacy) in English for BLs served through English-only programs. On the other hand, there are countless long-term effectiveness studies (middle school & high school performance) that demonstrate grade-level academic achievement (literacy) in English for BLs served through dual language programs.

This is the very essence of understanding the literacy issue for BLs, both short and long-term. Policy-makers must recognize that a quality education for BLs is grade-level literacy or schooling (reading, math, science and cognitive development in native language) and simultaneously developing the English language throughout their elementary years. When both of these happen for at least 5-7 years, BLs are academically and linguistically successful both short and long-term (MS & HS) based on English academic assessments because simply put, literacy transfers! Reading, writing, math, and thinking skills transfer from one language to another. Therefore, native language instruction and English language instruction at least throughout elementary (dual language) yields higher academic achievement. This is why Dual Language Enrichment (DLE) programs are so successful for BLs. DLE programs adhere to fundamental learning principles. If native English speaking children learned only in Spanish when they entered school, they would also fail.

Thank you for your attention.

U.S. CONGRESS,
[VIA FACSIMILE],
Washington, DC, December 1, 2009.

Mr. LEO GÓMEZ, PH.D., *Professor of Bilingual-Bicultural Education,
The University of Texas Pan American, College of Education, 1201 W University
Drive, Edinburg, TX.*

DEAR DR. GÓMEZ: Thank you for testifying at the Committee on Education and Labor's hearing on, "Improving the Literacy Skills of Children and Young Adults," on November 19, 2009.

Representative Raúl Grijalva has asked that you respond in writing to the following questions:

1. Some states have very different policies with regard to students who do not currently speak English. For example, in Arizona we have four hour English emersion in segregated classes. Can you comment on the efficacy of some of these programs?
2. What do you think the federal government should do to give more guidance to states so that we can address states that are failing to provide an adequate education for students who do not speak English?
3. Can you give some insights into effective policies to address older students, say those in middle school and high school, who do not speak English?

Please send an electronic version of your written response to the questions to the Committee by close of business on 12/8/09. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman.

Response to Mr. Grijalva's Questions From Mr. Gómez

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: Thank you for the opportunity to testify on November 19, 2009, regarding the literacy skills of young children and youth. My testimony focused specifically on appropriate literacy development of Bilingual Learners (BLs), inappropriately referred to as Limited English Proficient (LEP) or English Language Learner (ELL). This memo is a response to follow-up questions submitted by Representative Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ):

1. *Some states have very different policies with regard to students who do not currently speak English. For example, in Arizona we have four hour English emersion in segregated classes. Can you comment on the efficacy of some of these programs?*
2. *What do you think the federal government should do to give more guidance to states so that we can address states that are failing to provide an adequate education for students who do not speak English?*
3. *Can you give some insights into effective policies to address older students, say those in middle school and high school, who do not speak English?*

As shared in my testimony, lack of knowledge regarding the "academic learning value of native language instruction," particularly among decision-makers in leader-

ship roles, continues to negatively impact policy for quality programs for non-English speaking students. An emphasis on English (language) versus both academic content learning (schooling) in native language and English language development continues to short change the education of BLs. It is critical that leadership at the state, federal, university and public school level be advocates for BLs and knowledgeable of research-based best practices for successful long-term literacy development for these students. The following is a direct response to your first two questions:

1. *Some states have very different policies with regard to students who do not currently speak English. For example, in Arizona we have four hour English immersion in segregated classes. Can you comment on the efficacy of some of these programs?*

2. *What do you think the federal government should do to give more guidance to states so that we can address states that are failing to provide an adequate education for students who do not speak English?*

The evidence is overwhelming against English-only (immersion) programs for bilingual learners. It is quite unfortunate that the state of Arizona adopted this approach for the education of BLs in their state. Arizona went completely in the opposite direction of research-based practices and instead adopted “opinion-based policy.” The efficacy of English immersion approaches is well documented: English-only methods do not yield strong long-term academic outcomes for BLs. Students in these programs learn English, but fall behind miserably in grade level content and skills (schooling) since they essentially receive their initial education in a second language. In other words, BLs acquire the English language, but do not learn well (on grade level) the content and skills being taught in that language, therefore creating an “academic gap” (not a language gap) early on that continues and widens in middle school and high school (as curriculum becomes more demanding) leading many to eventually drop out. I should note that most high school drop-outs speak English well, but drop out due to lack of grade-level literacy (read 2-3 grade levels below). The ineffectiveness of such English-only practices manifests itself in the upper grades (4th-12th) based on English achievement tests.

Proponents of English-only programs typically share “English language data” to support their position. Do not be fooled with English language gains data. There is no doubt that BLs will learn English and make significant English gains, since they are receiving English-only lessons. What English-only proponents cannot produce is positive long-term English academic achievement data (standardized English reading & writing tests assessing grade-level literacy) comparable to native English speakers because it does not exist.

To my knowledge, there is not one long-term effectiveness study (middle school & high school performance) that demonstrates grade-level academic achievement (literacy) in English for BLs served through English-only programs. On the other hand, there are countless long-term effectiveness studies (middle school & high school performance) that demonstrate grade-level academic achievement (literacy) in English for BLs served through dual language programs.

This is the very essence of understanding the literacy issue for BLs, both short and long-term. Policy-makers must recognize that a quality education for BLs is grade-level literacy or schooling (reading, math, science and cognitive development in native language) and simultaneously developing the English language throughout their elementary years. When both of these happen for at least 5-7 years, BLs are academically and linguistically successful both short and long-term (MS & HS) based on English academic assessments because simply put, literacy transfers! Reading, writing, math, and thinking skills transfer from one language to another. Therefore, native language instruction and English language instruction at least throughout elementary (dual language) yields higher academic achievement. This is why Dual Language Enrichment (DLE) programs are so successful for BLs. DLE programs adhere to fundamental learning principles. If native English speaking children learned only in Spanish when they entered school, they would also fail.

To respond to your second question, the federal government can:

- take a position that encourages the use of native language instruction for grade-level literacy achievement and English development.
- revise current ESEA policy that emphasizes “English-only” so that bilingualism or English Plus is encouraged through Dual Language Enrichment (DLE) programs.
- revise current ESEA policy and re-instate the Bilingual Education Act (BEA), the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA), and the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) with an emphasis on dual language enrichment. For the last 8 years, (NCLB, 2001), quality educational programs for BLs have dropped to an all-time low across the nation. Federal policy has focused on English only and academic gaps have widened.

- target funds for DLE program development and implementation and where bilingual education (dual language) is not available, support “content-based ESL” models (self-contained classroom with ESL certified teacher) and discourage English-only or ESL Pullout models (least effective approaches)
- target funds for the development of literacy assessments in languages other than English. Successful literacy achievement of BLs requires appropriate literacy assessments. This would also encourage bilingualism and biliteracy opportunities for ALL students, a vision for America by President Obama.
- target funds for higher education and other teacher preparation programs designed recruit and train highly qualified bilingual and ESL teachers
- target funds for higher education “Public School Administrator Preparation Programs” (principals, superintendents) designed to prepare highly qualified Bilingual/ESL administrative leaders (critical need in public schools)
- target funds for “rehiring” of highly qualified Bilingual/ESL certified teachers that have recently left the teaching profession due to frustration with poorly implemented or supported bilingual/ESL programs
- establish Graduate Bilingual Education Fellowships in higher education to increase highly qualified Bilingual Education leaders at the Masters and Doctoral level

3. *Can you give some insights into effective policies to address older students, say those in middle school and high school, who do not speak English?*

Fundamentally, the same principles apply as discussed earlier. A student will learn more grade-level content the more they understand the lesson. Therefore, practices for learning at the secondary level are no different than elementary. Learning academic content and developing or learning a second language (English) are two separate but interrelated goals and must be mutually addressed. One is not exclusive of the other.

First, policy for educating BLs at the secondary level (6th—12th) must recognize that there are different types of BLs:

1. Recent Arrivals (first time in a U. S. school coming with schooling)
2. Recent Arrivals (first time in a U. S. school coming with limited or no schooling)
3. Long-term BLs (students that have been in U. S. school(s) for 3 or more years and are still considered LEP because they are not academically on grade level in English. Served through a poor ESL or bilingual elementary program)
4. Native-born Long-term BLs (students that have been in U. S. school(s) since kindergarten and are still considered LEP because they are not academically on grade level in English. Served through a poor ESL or bilingual elementary program)

Obviously, policy to address the education of these students would differ. However, most school districts do not. It is common for schools to “lump” these students together simply based on their LEP status. Ultimately, the goal is to eliminate “long-term LEPs” commonly produced by poor ESL or bilingual programs at the elementary level. For groups 3 and 4, we fix the middle and high school poor LEP achievement at the elementary level. Very briefly, here are some recommended policies for each group:

1. Recent Arrivals (first time in a U. S. school coming with schooling)
 - a. Provide some academic content learning in native language if possible so that they continue learning grade-level content while learning English
 - b. Provide ESL classroom for language development with no translation
 - c. Delay English intense content coursework (e.g. SS, science) for at least one year through student scheduling
2. Recent Arrivals (first time in a U. S. school coming with limited or no schooling)
 - a. Provide ½ day of native language literacy for one year
 - b. Provide some academic content learning in native language if possible so that they learn more grade-level content while learning English
 - c. Provide ESL classroom for language development with no translation
 - d. Delay English intense content coursework (e.g. SS, science) for at least two years through student scheduling
3. Long-term BLs (students that have been in U. S. school(s) for 3 or more years and are still considered LEP because they are not academically on grade level in English. Served through a poor ESL or bilingual elementary program)
 - a. Provide in-class academic content learning support with additional school staff (use native language if needed or appropriate)
 - b. Provide English language development through additional reading course

4. Native-born Long-term BLs (students that have been in U. S. school(s) since kindergarten and are still considered LEP because they are not academically on grade level in English. Served through a poor ESL or bilingual elementary program)
- a. Provide in-class academic content learning support with additional school staff
 - b. Provide English language development through additional reading course
- Thank you for your attention.

U.S. CONGRESS,
[VIA FACSIMILE],
Washington, DC, December 1, 2009.

Mr. LEO GÓMEZ, PH.D., *Professor of Bilingual-Bicultural Education,
The University of Texas Pan American, College of Education, 1201 W University
Drive, Edinburg, TX.*

DEAR DR. GÓMEZ: Thank you for testifying at the Committee on Education and Labor's hearing on, "Improving the Literacy Skills of Children and Young Adults," on November 19, 2009.

Representative Rubén Hinojosa (D-TX) has asked that you respond in writing to the following questions:

What do you recommend Congress and the federal government do to increase the number of highly qualified bilingual teachers and educators in our nation's classrooms? Can you send us some specific recommendations as to what the federal government can do in ESEA reauthorization to support the training of bilingual teachers?

Please send an electronic version of your written response to the questions to the Committee by close of business on 12/8/09. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman.

Response to Mr. Hinojosa's Questions From Mr. Gómez

What do you recommend Congress and the federal government do to increase the number of highly qualified bilingual teachers and educators in our nation's classrooms? Can you send us some specific recommendations as to what the federal government can do in ESEA reauthorization to support the training of bilingual teachers?

In the interest of bilingual learners receiving an equal educational opportunity, it is imperative that they are all served by highly qualified bilingual education and ESL teachers and that ALL teachers are prepared with a significant understanding of second language acquisition and sheltered instruction strategies and knowledge of bilingual education. It is also critical that leadership at the state, federal, university and public school level be advocates for BLs and knowledgeable of best practices for successful literacy development for these students. To this end, the federal government can:

- revise current ESEA policy that emphasizes "English-only" so that bilingualism and bilingual education is encouraged thus increasing the number of highly qualified bilingual preparation programs and teachers
- target funds for teacher preparation programs to prepare highly qualified teachers for "enrichment models" of bilingual education programs (dual language) and where bilingual education is not available, support "content-based ESL" models (de-emphasize ESL Pullout programs that are not serving BLs well)
- target funds for teacher preparation programs to "initially" prepare K-12 content-area teachers (mainstream-non-bilingual teachers) with second language acquisition pedagogy (ESL, sheltered instruction: how to best teach content in a second language)
- target funds for professional development of "in-service" K-12 content-area teachers (mainstream-non-bilingual teachers) with second language acquisition pedagogy (ESL, sheltered instruction: how to best teach content in a second language)
- target funds for higher education and other teacher preparation programs designed recruit and train highly qualified bilingual and ESL teachers
- target funds for higher education "Public School Administrator Preparation Programs" (principals, superintendents) designed to prepare highly qualified Bilingual/ESL administrative leaders (critical need in public schools)

- target funds for “re-hiring” of highly qualified Bilingual/ESL certified teachers that have recently left the teaching profession due to frustration with poorly implemented or supported bilingual/ESL programs
 - establish Graduate Bilingual Education Fellowships in higher education to increase highly qualified Bilingual Education leaders at the Masters and Doctoral level
 - target funds to be used by public schools as “incentives” or “stipends” to support highly qualified bilingual and ESL teachers and reduce the attrition rate
- Thank you for your attention.

U.S. CONGRESS,
[VIA FACSIMILE],
Washington, DC, December 1, 2009.

Mr. ANDRÉS HENRIQUEZ, *Program Officer,*
National Program, Carnegie Corporation of New York, 437 Madison Avenue, New York, NY.

DEAR MR. HENRIQUEZ: Thank you for testifying at the Committee on Education and Labor’s hearing on, “Improving the Literacy Skills of Children and Young Adults,” on November 19, 2009.

Representative Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-VA) has asked that you respond in writing to the following questions:

You indicated at the hearing that increasing Title I support for middle and high schools or creating a new funding stream. At the moment only 5 percent of federal Title I funds go to middle and high schools. An infusion of resources at the secondary level focused on higher levels of literacy is critical. You also indicated that investments in elementary grades do not ensure students will do well later on in high school.

1. Should we be spending more on literacy programs in middle and high schools to increase educational outcomes such as graduation rates, college completion and literacy?

During the hearing the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs was discussed by all of the witnesses. My questions are as follows:

1. Compared to what? In other words, what was the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs compared with?

2. Are there specific studies that quantify effectiveness of programs that increase literacy, reduce D/O, and crime, etc?

3. What are the cost savings (specific numbers) of early literacy programs?

Please send an electronic version of your written response to the questions to the Committee by close of business on 12/8/09. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman.

Response to Mr. Scott’s Questions From Mr. Henríquez

Thanks for your follow-up questions. Answers to each of you questions are below:

Q. Should we be spending more on literacy programs in middle and high school to increase educational outcomes such as graduation rates, college completion and literacy?

A. Yes, there is a need to invest in literacy across the educational continuum. While investments in early literacy are necessary, the research shows that we also need to continue literacy instruction in the middle and high school years so that all students have higher-level literacy skills, such as writing using critical thinking and the ability to analyze diverse texts. Mastery of this type of literacy skill is associated with increased graduation rates and postsecondary success (Appendices A & B of my oral testimony: <http://carnegie.org/sub/news/2009—testimony.html>).

However, currently less than a third of eighth grade students are considered proficient in reading according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. For too many low-performing students, difficulty reading high-school level content leads to the decision to drop out. These dropouts cost the nation \$335 billion annually in lost lifetime income. Even many high school graduates lack the literacy skills they were supposed to obtain during middle and high school: each year the nation loses over \$1.4 billion providing remedial literacy education to 42 percent of community college freshmen and 20 percent of freshmen in four-year institutions. In other

words, our adolescents are not being adequately prepared for the demands of higher education, employment and citizenship for the 21st Century. It is a well-publicized fact that young people who fail or under-perform in school are increasingly likely to suffer from unemployment or drastically lower income levels throughout their lives (Please also see *Time to Act: An Agenda for Advancing Adolescent Literacy for Career and College Readiness*: <http://www.carnegie.org/literacy/tta/>).

Q. During the hearing the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs was discussed by all of the witnesses. Compared to what? What was the cost effectiveness of early literacy compared with? Are there specific studies that quantify effectiveness of programs that increase literacy, reduce D/O, and crime etc? What are the cost savings?

A. While I am not an early literacy expert, Dorothy Strickland, co-testifier, has pointed me toward the seminal work of Nobel Laureate James Heckman's *The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children* as well as Steve Barnett at Rutgers University who recently published *Lives in the Balance*. Both authors are economists and argue strongly about the cost-benefit analysis of preschool education based on a 25 year studies. Both show the long-term cognitive effects of early intervention in early childhood education. Literacy, and language development specifically in the early years, are part crucial to early childhood development and long-term success.

In addition, I would like to cite the work of Henry Levin at Teachers College who has done two studies. The first is a study of Adolescent Literacy Programs: Cost of Implementation (<http://www.carnegie.org/literacy/tta/pdf/tta-Levin.pdf>). That looks at the cost of implementing three separate programs in middle and high schools and the cost associated with implementing each of the programs. The second is analysis that Hank did on NELS 88 data that showed the power of graduating for students. His analysis shows that if you increased students reading scores by one standard deviation they are much less likely to drop out (as powerful predictor if mathematics scores were improved for these young people as well). With Hank's permission, I've attached this study for your perusal.

Bottom line, interventions at any developmental stage in a child's life, is necessary to keep young people on track which could make it less likely for them to drop out and increase the likelihood that they will be better prepared for college.

It should be noted that none of these studies are "cost effect" studies per se since little research has been done looking at the cost of a program and long-term effect of particular programs on individual student learning. These are cost analysis studies, as opposed to cost effect studies. An important distinction. A future research agenda that calls for such analysis could, however, be enormously interesting for our country.

APPENDIX B

Resources for Teachers and Principals:

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<http://www.carnegie.org/literacy/pdf/ELL3-Assessments.pdf>
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[Additional information referred to by Mr. Henríquez may be accessed at the following Internet address:]

<https://sites.google.com/site/andreshenriqueznet/testimony>

U.S. CONGRESS,
[VIA FACSIMILE],
Washington, DC, December 1, 2009.

Ms. SANDRA D. MEYERS, ED.D., *Education Associate of Elementary Reading, Delaware Department of Education, 401 Federal Street, Dover, DE.*

DEAR DR. MEYERS: Thank you for testifying at the Committee on Education and Labor's hearing on, "Improving the Literacy Skills of Children and Young Adults," on November 19th, 2009.

Representative Robert "Bobby" Scott (D-VA) has asked that you respond in writing to the following questions:

During the hearing the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs was discussed by all of the witnesses. My questions are as follows:

1. Compared to what? In other words, what was the cost effectiveness of early literacy programs compared with?
2. Are there specific studies that quantify effectiveness of programs that increase literacy, reduce D/O, and crime, etc?
3. What are the cost savings (specific numbers) of early literacy programs?

Please send an electronic version of your written response to the questions to the Committee by close of business on 12/8/09. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee.

Sincerely,

GEORGE MILLER,
Chairman.

Response to Mr. Scott's Questions From Ms. Meyers

I am responding below to the questions that Representative Robert "Bobby" Scott requested in your December 1, 2009 letter to me:

1. To determine the cost of early literacy programs, it is necessary to look at the results of these programs and compare these results with research on students who enter school with low literacy skills. In fact, a number of research studies and reviews reflect significant correlations between children's language competencies on entry to kindergarten and success in learning to read during the primary grades (Pressley, 2002; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001). Scarborough (2001), in a meta analysis of sixty-one kindergarten predictive studies for reading achievement, determined that the cognitive-linguistic strands are very stable by the age of four and, consequently, children who arrive at school with weaker verbal abilities and literacy knowledge are much more likely than their classmates to experience difficulties in learning to read during the primary grades. In fact, Dickinson and Sprague (2001) found that the receptive vocabulary scores of children at the end of kindergarten are strongly related to end of seventh grade vocabulary and reading comprehension scores. Children with larger vocabularies often have more developed phonological sensitivity, and this relationship has been found to begin early in the preschool period (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001). Vocabulary development thus becomes a crucial element in the designing of early interventions (NICHD, 2000).

Fernandez-Fein and Baker (1997) discovered that children who come from homes where they have been exposed to singing, language play, and reading activities have a higher degree of sensitivity to discrete sounds than those who have not had such experiences. Children must identify these discrete sounds in order to decode words.

Preschools, thus, need to emphasize these aspects of literacy in developing children's oral language abilities.

Language games and nursery rhymes help the child to identify key aspects of the sound patterns of English more explicitly. Fernandez-Fein and Baker further found that children from low-socioeconomic backgrounds and/or students whose mothers have less education tend to have lower levels of rhyme sensitivity skills than middle class students. They further concluded that these low-income students less frequently participated in word games or book interactions.

Moats (as cited in Lehr, Osborn, & Hiebert, 2004) also found this "word poverty" distinguished advantaged from disadvantaged children in her study of kindergarten students in a large city district. Many such children were unable to name pictures that showed the meanings of words such as sewing or parachute. This lack of vocabulary knowledge is important if that knowledge is assumed in the instructional programs that teachers are using to develop literacy skills.

Hart and Risley (1995) vividly portrayed the differences in language experienced by preschoolers from homes of different economic levels. They found that on average, professional parents spoke more than 2,000 words per hour to their children, working-class parents spoke about 1,333 words, and welfare mothers spoke about 600. At the age of four, children of professionals had vocabularies that were nearly 50% larger than those of working-class children and twice as large as those of welfare children. Children in higher SES homes engaged in many interactive discussions with their parents. There was a significant difference between the vocabulary richness and cumulative vocabulary growth of these children and their peers from the lower SES families of welfare parents. The parents of children from the higher SES homes helped build the children's language use and knowledge through extensive repetitive and interactive talk. Thus, this parent-child dialogue along with the quantity of language resulting in an increase in the quality of their children's language as demonstrated by an increased use of nouns, verbs, modifiers, and complex clauses. In contrast, Hart and Risley found that children in lower-SES families had many fewer such experiences. Consequently, the amount of language that children experienced at home affected the quantity of their oral language growth.

Socioeconomic backgrounds and a mother's educational level thus are very often predictors of a child's future success in reading. Children from families of lower socioeconomic or minority status often enter school strikingly delayed in a much broader range of prereading skills—including oral vocabulary knowledge (Whitehurst and Lonigan, 2001). Because these children are delayed not only in phonological knowledge, but also general oral language skills, they are deficient in both of the critical kinds of knowledge and skill required for good reading comprehension, identifying words and constructing meaning after identifying the words in print (Torgesen, 2000). In essence the majority of reading problems could be prevented by, among other things, increasing children's oral language skills (Snow et al., 1998).

The National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000) declared vocabulary to be critically important in oral reading instruction. Oral vocabulary holds an important place in the road to learning to read; it enables the reader to make a transition from oral to written forms. As a learner begins to read, reading vocabulary is mapped on the oral vocabulary the learner brings to the task. The benefit in understanding text by applying letter-sound correspondences to printed material only results if the decoded oral representation is a known word in the learner's oral vocabulary. If the resultant oral vocabulary word is not in the learner's vocabulary, it will not be better understood than it was in print (NICHD, 2000).

It is difficult to comprehend the meaning of a passage when many of the words are neither accurately identified nor understood. In addition, limited knowledge of a subject or lack of understanding of many of the words in a text will limit an individual's comprehension no matter how accurately the words are identified. Consequently, children with general oral language weaknesses will require additional instruction in a broader range of knowledge and skills if they are to adequately comprehend text at their instructional level (Torgesen, 2000; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001). Children who have larger vocabularies and greater understanding of spoken language have higher reading scores.

Quality preschools for students from low SES homes and homes where English is not the primary language must design their programs to incorporate the latest research so that their students do not enter school with a literacy and oral language deficit that has a strong possibility of affecting their school performance throughout the grades. Delaware's Early Reading First data has demonstrated that a student from a low SES family can enter school performing as well or better than the general population of children their age in language and early reading. In addition this performance was maintained in first grade. Unlike these students who had the op-

portunity to benefit from preschool, Reading First students in Delaware who do not have preschool experiences enter kindergarten with approximately 30% performing at the benchmark expectation. The odds of these students closing the gap and being successful in learning to read are limited.

2. Are there specific studies that quantify effectiveness of programs that increase literacy, reduce D/O, and crime, etc?

Children who do not succeed in first grade have almost a 90% probability of remaining a poor reader at the end of grade 4 (Juel, 1988). Juel's longitudinal study of children from a low socioeconomic population revealed how imperative it is to begin the intervention process early in a child's school career. These same students who do not read moderately well by the end of third grade will be unlikely to graduate from high school (Snow et al., 1998). Students who have difficulty in learning how to read very often are retained or placed in special education programs, both of which are also highly correlated with a lower possibility of graduation. Lack of graduation from high school also carries a greater risk of unemployment and imprisonment. Finding an effective method of accelerating the progress of struggling students thus becomes a top educational priority.

The window of opportunity to work successfully with these high-risk children obviously does not remain open very long. We know that most students experiencing little success and continual frustration tend to shut down early in the learning process. Reading is a difficult process for them and so they avoid it. They thus lose the opportunity to practice and to develop their proficiency in decoding, the automatic recognition of sight words, and development of vocabulary and concepts about the world. They have no intrinsic motivation to read. These struggling readers fall farther and farther behind their peers; the poor do indeed become poorer (Stanovich, 1986). Unless early, strategic interventions in reading are provided for them, poor readers lose more and more ground as they progress through the grades. The gap grows wider if we wait to help the struggling student (Hiebert & Taylor, 1994)

The Carnegie Corporation's report *Adolescent Literacy Development in Out-of-School Time: A Practitioner's Guidebook* points out that information on graduation rates is not consistent due to the lack of accurate reporting by most school districts and report a graduation rate as low as 50% or less for schools serving the urban poor (Swanson, 2001). This report also acknowledges the correlation between low reading and writing abilities and drop-out rates (Raudenbush & Kiasim, 1998)

Delaware also conducted its own longitudinal study on its state-funded Early Childhood Assistance program (ECAP) which adds to the capacity of federally-funded Head Start to guarantee a quality preschool program for every four year old in poverty and its preschool special education (PSE) program that supports children with disabilities from birth to five. This study begun in 1997 as the children entered kindergarten, compared children in poverty who had participated in the ECAP/PSE program with a like sample of poor children who had not participated and children with disabilities who were identified during early childhood and received early intervention services with children identified as special education students after entering the public school system.

In this longitudinal study, three points of measurement (3rd, 5th, and 8th grades) were analyzed for students' academic outcomes. As measured over time at all three grade levels, the students who had received early intervention services (ECAP/PSE interventions) have shown markedly better outcomes than students who did not receive those interventions. Students in the intervention groups significantly outperformed students who did not receive intervention. From the most recent analysis at 8th grade, the following results are examples of the success rates:

- 73% of the students in poverty who participated in ECAP/PSE performed at or above the standard in reading compared to 51% who had not participated in ECAP/PSE.

- 43% of the students who received preschool special education performed at or above the standard in reading compared to 31% who had not received such services.

3. I am unaware of specific cost savings (specific numbers) of early literacy programs. It would seem that if an early childhood program for students from low SES families and students from homes where English is not the primary language, such as populated Delaware's Early Reading First program, can reduce the drop-out rate and increase graduation rates, the result is a huge benefit for our growth and stability as a democratic society. However, these programs must be based on the latest scientifically based research to successfully address the gaps of children coming from low SES homes. All children should have the opportunity to begin their education on a level playing field.

I hope that this information is helpful to you. I am also enclosing the data from the Delaware's Early Reading Research first cohort.

November 10, 2009.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**FY 2007 Delaware Early Reading First Supplemental Award
The Achievement of Project Alumni***Project Directors: Martha J. Buell, Myae Han, and Carol Vukelich*

One hundred twenty nine children ‘graduated’ from the Delaware Early Reading First (DERF) project in spring 2007 and entered kindergarten in August 2007. Of these 129, 103 children entered kindergarten in the project’s partnering district and were available for testing in the spring of their kindergarten year. Of the 103 children, 97 had experienced at least one year of the Delaware Early Reading First project prior to their entry into kindergarten. These 97 children were tested in May of their kindergarten year (May 2008) to assess their language and early reading proficiency. The project directors employed two retired elementary teachers, trained in the administration of the selected tests, to administer the tests to the children. Both had extensive prior experience administering tests to young children. In addition to the standardized tests, the project directors asked the children’s teachers to report their judgment of these children’s skill development and readiness for first grade. The teachers provided the requested information on 96 of the 97 children.

Of the 97 children tested in the spring of their kindergarten year (May 2008) 69 remained in the project’s partnering district and were available for testing in the spring of their first grade year. These 69 children were tested in May 2009 to assess their language and reading proficiency by the same retired elementary teachers who had tested them at the end of their kindergarten year. Again, in addition to the standardized tests, the children’s teachers were asked to report their judgment of the children’s school-specific and social development, and readiness for first grade. The teachers provided this information on 28 of the 69 children.

The Children

Table 1 provides demographic information on the children at the end-of-kindergarten and at the end-of-first-grade, all of whom were from low-income families and all had experienced at least one year of Head Start prior to their kindergarten experience. These data were gathered by parent self-report at the time of the children’s entry into the Head Start/DERF project.

TABLE 1.—DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON THE 97 DERF 2006–2007 ALUMNI

	Number End-of- Kindergarten	Percentage End- of-Kindergarten	Number End-of- First-Grade	Percentage End- of-First-Grade
Gender:				
Male	49	50.52%	33	47.82%
Female	48	48.48%	36	52.17%
Home Language:				
English	24	24.74%	35	50.72%
Spanish	68	70.10%	34	49.28%
Other	5	5.15%	0	0%
Race:				
White	6	6.19%	4	5.80%
African American	45	46.39%	30	43.48%
Latino	39	40.21%	30	43.48%
More than one race	3	3.09%	1	1.45%
Not reported	4	4.12%	4	5.80%

The Data Collection Tools

The following language and early reading measures were used.

GPRA measures:

- Woodcock-Johnson III, Letter-Word Identification subtest is a standardized assessment. On this subtest, the tester asks the child to identify letters and read words. This subtest is a measure of children’s word recognition skills.
- Woodcock-Johnson III Story Recall subtest is a standardized assessment. On this subtest, the tester asks the child to listen to short stories and repeat them back. This subtest is a measure of children’s expressive oral language skills.
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test—IV is a standardized assessment. The tester presents the child with four pictures and asks the child to point to the picture depicting the target word. This is a measure of children’s receptive vocabulary skills.

Project selected additional measures:

- Woodcock-Johnson III Understanding Directions subtest is a standardized assessment. This subtest asks the child to listen to and then follow a set of directions. This is a measure of children's receptive vocabulary and short-term memory.
- Woodcock-Johnson III Word Attack subtest is a standardized assessment. This subtest asks the child to read non-words. This is a measure of children's decoding skills.
- Woodcock-Johnson III Reading Fluency subtest is a standardized assessment. This subtest measures the speed of reading sentences and answering "yes" or "no" to each. This is a measure of children's comprehension skills.

The project used these measures in addition to the teacher questionnaire which asked the teachers to judge the children's preparedness for kindergarten and for first grade.

The Findings

The project asked and answered the following questions:

1. What percentage of the children achieved a standard score above the "at risk" range as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson III, Letter-Word Identification (Test 1) subtest, a test of children's word identification skills?

At the end-of-kindergarten, 87.63% (n=85) of the children achieved standard scores of 90 or above on this measure. Consequently, with the standard score of 90, 12.37% (n=12) were identified as 'at risk'. Using the typical 85–115 standard score spread as the definition of "average" or "age-appropriate development," 90.72% (n=88) scored in the 85–115 range, 6.19% (n=6) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and only 3.09% (n=3) of the children were identified as "at risk" (–1 standard deviation), with one of these 3 children earning a standard score of 84.

At the end-of-first-grade, 86.96% (n=60) of the children achieved standard scores of 90 or above on this measure. Consequently, with the standard score of 90, 13.04% (n=9) were identified as 'at risk'. Using the typical 85–115 standard score as the definition of "average" or "age appropriate development," 78.26% (n=54) scored in the 85–115 range, 13.04% (n=9) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 8.69% (n=6) of the children scored below 85 (–1 standard deviation).

2. What percentage of the children ranked in the 50th percentile or above as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson, Letter-Word Identification (Test 1) subtest?

At the end-of-kindergarten, more than one-half of the children, 57.73% (n=56), achieved the criterion of performance at or above the 50th percentile on this subtest.

At the end-of-first-grade, 71.01% (n=49) of the children achieved the criterion of performance at or above the 50th percentile on this subtest.

3. What percentage of the children achieved a standard score above the "at risk" range as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson III, Story Recall (Test 3) subtest, a test of aspects of oral language, including language development and meaningful memory?

At the end-of-kindergarten, 94.85% (n=92) of the 97 children achieved standard scores of 90 or above.

Consequently, with the standard score of 90, 5.15% (n=5) of the children were identified as 'at risk'. Using the typical 85–115 standard score spread as the definition of "average" or "age-appropriate development," 96.90% (n=87) scored in the 85–115 range, 8.25% (n=6) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 4.12% (n=4) of the children were identified as "at risk" (–1 standard deviation).

At the end-of-first-grade, 98.55% (n=68) of the 69 children achieved standard scores of 90 or above. Consequently, with the standard score of 90, only 1 child (1.45%) was identified as 'at risk.' Using the typical 85–115 standard score spread as the definition of "average" or "age-appropriate development," 81.16% (n=56) scored in the 85–115 range, 18.84% (n=13) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and no children were identified as "at risk" (–1 standard deviation).

4. What percentage of the children ranked in the 50th percentile or above as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson, Story Recall (Test 3) subtest?

At the end-of-kindergarten, considerably more than one-half of the children, 72.16% (n=70), achieved the criterion of performance at or above the 50th percentile on this subtest.

At the end-of-first-grade, 81.16% (n=56) of the children achieved the criterion of performance at or above the 50th percentile on this subtest.

5. What percentage of the children demonstrated age-appropriate oral language skills as measured by the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-IV?

At the end-of-kindergarten, 84.54% (n=82) of the 97 children achieved a standard score of 85 or above. Of the 97 children, 74 (76.28%) achieved a standard score in spread typically defined as "average" or "age-appropriate development," 8.25% (n=8)

scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 15.46% (n=15) of the children were identified as “at risk” (–1 standard deviation).

Given that 70.10% of the children came from families who described their home language as Spanish, these data show that these children made considerable gains in their acquisition of

English vocabulary

At the end-of-first-grade, 86.95% (n=60) of the 69 children achieved a standard score of 85 or above. Of the 69 children, 54 (78.26%) achieved a standard score in a spread typically defined as “average” or “age-appropriate development,” 8.69% (n=6) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 8.69% (n=9) of the children were identified as “at risk” (–1 standard deviation).

6. What percentage of the children made significant gains (defined by the Department of Education as a standard score increase of 4 or more points) on the PPVT-IV between May 2007 and May 2008?

At the end-of-kindergarten, the percentage of children who made significant gains (standard score increase of 4 or more points) on the PPVT-IV between May 2007 and May 2008 was 60.82% (59 of the 97 children).

At the end-of-first-grade, the percentage of children who made significant gains (standard score increase of 4 or more points) on the PPVT-IV between May 2008 and May 2009 was 62.32% (43 of the 69 children).

7. What percentage of the children achieved a standard score above the “at risk” range as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson III, Understanding Directions (Test 4) subtest, a test which required the children to listen to a sequence of audio-recorded instructions and then follow the directions by pointing to various objects in a picture?

At the end-of-kindergarten, 68.04% (n=66) of the 97 children achieved standard scores of 90 or above.

Therefore, using the standard score of 90, 31.96% (n=31) were identified as ‘at risk’.

Using the typical 85–115 standard score spread as the definition of “average” or “age-appropriate development,” 75.26% (n=73) scored in the 85–115 range, 3.09% (n=3) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 21.65% (n=21) of the children were identified as “at risk” (–1 standard deviation).

At the end-of-first-grade, 55.07% (n=38) of the 69 children achieved standard scores of 90 or above. Consequently, using the standard score of 90, 42.03% (n=29) were identified as ‘at risk’. Using the typical 85–115 standard score range as the definition of “average” or “age-appropriate development,” 68.11% (n=47) scored in the 85–115 range, 1.45% (n=1) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 27.54% (n=19) were identified as “at risk” (–1 standard deviation), with three of these 19 earning a score of 84. This subtest was not administered to two children.

8. What percentage of the children ranked in the 50th percentile or above as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson, Understanding Directions (Test 4) subtest?

At the end-of-kindergarten, less than half of the children, 40.21% (n=39), achieved the criterion of performance at or above the 50th percentile on this subtest.

At the end-of-first-grade, 31.88% (n=22), achieved the criterion of performance at or above the 50th percentile on this subtest.

9. What percentage of the children achieved a standard score above the “at risk” range as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson III, Word Attack (Test 13) subtest, a test that measures the children’s skill in apply phonic and structural analyses skills to the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words?

At the end-of-kindergarten, 86 of the 97 children (88.66%) achieved standard scores of 90 or above. Therefore, using the standard score of 90 as the cut score, 11.34% (n=11) were identified as ‘at risk’. Using the typical 85–115 standard score spread as the definition of “average” or “age-appropriate development,” 76.29% (n=74) scored in the 85–115 range, 19.59% (n=19) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 4.12% (n=4) of the children were identified as “at risk” (–1 standard deviation).

At the end-of-first-grade, 92.75% (n=64) of the 69 children achieved standard scores of 90 or above. Consequently, using the standard score of 90 as the cut score, 7.25% (n=5) were identified as ‘at risk’. Using the typical 85–115 standard score spread as the definition of “average” or “age-appropriate development,” 88.40% (n=61) scored in the 85–115 range, 4.35% (n=3) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 7.25% (n=5) of the children were identified as “at risk” (–1 standard deviation), with one child earning a score of 84.

10. What percentage of the children ranked in the 50th percentile or above as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson, Word Attack (Test 13) subtest?

At the end-of-kindergarten, 71.13% (n=69) of the children obtained scores at or above the 50th percentile as measured by this subtest.

At the end-of-first-grade, 65.22% (n=45) of the children obtained scores at or above the 50th percentile as measured by this subtest.

11. What percentage of the Grade 1 children achieved a standard score above the “at risk” range as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson III, Reading Fluency (Test 2) subtest?

At the end-of-first-grade, 76.81% (n=53) of the children achieved standard scores of 90 or above on this measure. Consequently, with the standard score of 90, 23.19% (n=16) were identified as ‘at risk’. Using the typical 85–115 standard score spread as the definition of “average” or “age-appropriate development,” 68.11% (n=47) scored in the 85–115 range, 13.04% (n=9) scored 116 or above (+1 standard deviation), and 18.84% (n=13) of the children were identified as “at risk” (–1 standard deviation).

12. What percentage of the Grade 1 children ranked in the 50th percentile or above as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson, Reading Fluency (Test 2) subtest?

At the end-of-first-grade, more than one-half of the children, 56.52% (n=39), achieved the criterion of performance at or above the 50th percentile on this subtest.

13. How did the teachers assess the children’s preparedness for kindergarten?

The project asked the DERF graduates’ kindergarten teachers to rate the children’s preparedness for kindergarten in the domains of social development, school-specific instrumental development, reading and writing, logical thinking and the use of numbers, and perceptual-motor development. Teachers provided descriptions of their perceptions of 96 of the 97 children’s development. Teachers rated children’s readiness on questions in each domain using a 4-point rating scales, with 1 being not apparent and 4 being proficient. Table 2 provides the mean ratings for each of the domains noted above. Table 3 describes the teachers’ responses to the checklist’s items regarding readiness for and adjustment to kindergarten.

How did the teachers assess the children’s preparedness for Grade 1?

The project asked the DERF graduates’ Grade 1 teachers to rate the children’s preparedness for Grade 1 in the domains of social development, school-specific instrumental development, reading and writing, logical thinking and the use of numbers, and perceptual-motor development. Teachers provided descriptions of their perceptions of 28 of the 69 (40.58%) children’s development. Teachers rated children’s readiness on questions in each domain using a 4-point rating scales, with 1 being not apparent and 4 being proficient. Table 2 provides the mean ratings for Grade 1 for each of the domains noted above. Table 4 describes the teachers’ responses to the checklist’s items regarding readiness for and adjustment to Grade 1.

TABLE 2.—TEACHERS’ DESCRIPTION OF DERF GRADUATES—DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAIN ITEMS

Domain Description	Mean Kindergarten (Maximum Rating=4)	Mean Grade 1 (Maximum Rating=4)
Social Development: uses appropriate strategies to initiate interactions with peers and uses alternate strategies when initial attempts fail; responds appropriately to other’s expressed emotions and intentions; overall emotional tone is positive when interacting with peers and adults; displays age-appropriate impulse control and regulation during challenging situations; peer relationships are generally positive and satisfying; effectively uses adults as sources of support, comfort, and assistance	3.24	2.96
School-Specific Instrumental Development: focuses attention during large group teacher-directed activities; can work independently; demonstrates willingness to try new things; generally completes tasks in allotted time; understands and generally follows playground and classroom rules; enjoys being in school; can work effectively in a group; actively participates in class activities	3.32	3.16
Reading and Writing: chooses books and stories during free-choice activities; recognizes most upper and lower case letters and knows most of their sounds; uses some initial letter-sound associations to predict meaning; uses context clues to predict meaning; recognizes some common words; draws and paints pictures; writes name; writes using upper and lower case letters with few or no reversals; writes numerals with few or no reversals; can describe what an author does; can describe what an illustrator does; can answer questions about a story’s plot such as main character and ending; can answer questions about what a storybook character might be thinking; can identify the beginning letter of a word; can identify rhyming words; can blend phonemes to make words; can delete phonemes to make new words; adds writing to art work or projects; writes words phonetically when does not know conventional spelling	3.43	3.55

TABLE 2.—TEACHERS' DESCRIPTION OF DERF GRADUATES—DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAIN ITEMS—
Continued

Domain Description	Mean Kindergarten (Maximum Rating=4)	Mean Grade 1 (Maximum Rating=4)
Logical Thinking and Use of Numbers: actively uses all senses to examine and explore familiar and unfamiliar objects; shows interest in and understanding of the concept of comparing; uses elaborate language to describe objects and events; uses language to initiate and maintain interactions with adults and peers; uses language to gather information and solve problems; understand and uses such concepts as many, more, less, etc.; uses appropriate labels (one, two, etc.) when counting objects; uses counting reliably to quantify perceptual numbers; uses counting reliably to quantify elementary (5–12) numbers; uses counting to quantify larger numbers (20+) objects	3.35	3.08
Perceptual-Motor Development: demonstrates a positive disposition toward movement activities, enjoys, and feels confident during physical activities; demonstrates age-appropriate static and dynamic balance; demonstrates age-appropriate locomotor patterns; demonstrates age-appropriate fine motor movement differentiations; demonstrates age-appropriate eye-hand coordination	3.71	3.55

TABLE 3.—TEACHERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF DERF GRADUATES—KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Items	Ratings				
	Far below average	Below average	Average	Above average	Far above average
Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills? Some children have an easy time adjusting to kindergarten. In contrast, other children have difficulty. Based on your experience, how easy or difficult will this adjustment be for this child?	1 (1%)	14 (15%)	47 (49%)	30 (32%)	3 (3%)
Based on your experience, how intellectually ready is this child for first grade?	0	11 (12%)	51 (54%)	27 (28%)	6 (6%)
Based on your experience, how socially ready is this child for first grade?	4 (4%)	10 (10%)	50 (53%)	25 (26%)	6 (6%)
Based on your experience, how socially ready is this child for first grade?	0	12 (13%)	54 (57%)	24 (25%)	5 (5%)

TABLE 4.—TEACHERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF DERF GRADUATES—FIRST GRADE READINESS

Items	Ratings				
	Far below average	Below average	Average	Above average	Far above average
Overall, how would you rate this child's academic skills? Some children have an easy time adjusting to first grade. In contrast, other children have difficulty. Based on your experience, how easy or difficult will this adjustment be for this child?	3 (11%)	7 (25%)	11 (39%)	6 (21%)	1 (4%)
Based on your experience, how intellectually ready is this child for second grade?	1 (4%)	4 (14%)	18 (64%)	4 (14%)	1 (4%)
Based on your experience, how socially ready is this child for second grade?	2 (7%)	7 (25%)	12 (43%)	6 (21%)	1 (4%)
Based on your experience, how socially ready is this child for second grade?	0 (0%)	6 (21%)	17 (61%)	4 (14%)	1 (4%)

TABLE 5.—TEACHERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF DERF GRADUATES—ACADEMIC RATING SCALE

Academic Rating Scale	Mean Grade 1 (Maximum Rating=5)
Language and Literacy: uses complex sentence structures; understands and interprets a story or other texts read to him/her; easily and quickly names all upper- and lower-case letters of the alphabet; produces rhyming words; reads simple books independently; uses different strategies to read unfamiliar words; composes simple stories; demonstrates an understanding of some of the conventions of print; uses the computer for a variety of purposes.	3.54

TABLE 5.—TEACHERS' DESCRIPTIONS OF DERF GRADUATES—ACADEMIC RATING SCALE—
Continued

Academic Rating Scale	Mean Grade 1 (Maximum Rating=5)
General Knowledge: recognizes distinct differences in habits and living patterns between him/herself and other groups of people he/she knows; recognizes some ways people rely on each other for goods and services; uses his/her senses to explore and observe; forms explanations bases on observations and explorations; classifies and compares living and non-living things in different ways.	3.61
Mathematical Thinking: sorts, classifies, and compares math materials by various rules and attributes; orders a group of objects; shows an understanding of the relationship between quantities; solves problems involving numbers using concrete objects; demonstrates an understanding of graphing activities; uses instruments accurately for measuring; uses a variety of strategies to solve math problems.	3.65

TABLE 6.—DERF GRADUATES' ATTITUDES TOWARD READING AND WRITING

Elementary Reading and Writing Attitude Survey	Mean Grade 1 Full Scale (Maximum Rating=112)
Reading Attitude:	60
Writing Attitude:	84

Conclusions

As indicated in the demographic table, between kindergarten and first grade, a much higher percentage of children whose home language is Spanish left the partnering school district. Where at the end-of-kindergarten, children from English-speaking homes represented only about a quarter of the sample, by the end-of-first grade, 50% of the sample came from English-speaking homes. However, examination of the data reveals few differences in the percentages of children performing in the normal and above normal ranges on the various assessments or in the percentage of children performing above the 50th percentile. In other words, it appears that the children who have departed from the sample represent a range of performances; not all are the lowest performing or the highest performing children.

Whitehurst and Lonigan (1998) conceptualize children's emergent literacy development as encompassing two separate domains: inside-out skills (e.g., code-based skills like print knowledge, phonological awareness, and alphabet knowledge) and outside-in skills (e.g., comprehension-related and meaning-based skills). At the end-of-kindergarten, the children did well on all inside-out skills, and they continued their high performance on the code-based skill tests (e.g., Letter-Word Identification, Word Attack,) as illustrated by the high percentage of children performing in the normal and above range and above the 50th percentile. The findings were only slightly more mixed on the outside-in skills. The children performed well to very well on most Woodcock-Johnson III meaning-based subtests (e.g., Story Recall, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-IV, Reading Fluency), but not as well as expected on only one assessment, Understanding Directions.

Overall, based on the testing data, we conclude that the children who graduated from the Delaware Early Reading First project and experienced kindergarten and first-grade in our Reading First partner district continue to perform as well or better than the general population of children their age in language and early reading. Their kindergarten teachers thought they were well-prepared for kindergarten, and the first-grade teachers who responded similarly viewed the children as well-prepared in language and reading for first grade. The children's performance is particularly impressive when one remembers that these children, by definition, as children from low-income families, were eligible for Head Start because they were "at risk" for academic challenges and failure. Challenges to school success and performance in language arts are further possible when one considers that in kindergarten the majority of the kindergarten sample and half of the first-grade sample were not only low-income but also came from homes where English was not the primary language spoken.

In short, at least a year of Head Start programming that implemented systematic, explicit instruction in language and reading skills resulted in the vast majority of children arriving in kindergarten prepared for the developmental and academic challenges of the Reading First school's language arts curriculum. Likewise the Head Start DERF experience, plus a year of kindergarten and first-grade instruc-

tion in a Reading First school's curriculum, appears to have had a positive effect on the majority of the children's language and reading skill development.

[Whereupon, at 12:29 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

