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ESEA REAUTHORIZATION: THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S ESEA REAUTHORIZATION PRIORITIES

HEARING

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

EXAMINING THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY ACT (ESEA) REAUTHORIZATION, FOCUSING ON THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S ESEA REAUTHORIZATION PRIORITIES

MARCH 17, 2010

Printed for the use of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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C O N T E N T S

STATEMENTS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2010

	Page
Harkin, Hon. Tom, Chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, opening statement	1
Enzi, Hon. Michael B., a U.S. Senator from the State of Wyoming, opening statement	3
Duncan, Hon. Arne, Secretary of Education, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC	4
Prepared statement	10
Dodd, Hon. Christopher J., a U.S. Senator from the State of Connecticut	13
Prepared statement	14
Reed, Hon. Jack, a U.S. Senator from the State of Rhode Island	18
Burr, Hon. Richard, a U.S. Senator from the State of North Carolina	19
Murray, Hon. Patty, a U.S. Senator from the State of Washington	21
Murkowski, Hon. Lisa, a U.S. Senator from the State of Alaska	24
Sanders, Hon. Bernard, a U.S. Senator from the State of Vermont	26
Prepared statement	29
Coburn, Hon. Tom, M.D., a U.S. Senator from the State of Oklahoma	30
Hagan, Hon. Kay R., a U.S. Senator from the State of North Carolina	32
Roberts, Hon. Pat, a U.S. Senator from the State of Kansas	35
Franken, Hon. Al, a U.S. Senator from the State of Minnesota	37
Alexander, Hon. Lamar, a U.S. Senator from the State of Tennessee	40
Bennet, Hon. Michael F., a U.S. Senator from the State of Colorado	42

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

Statements, articles, publications, letters, etc.:	
American Association of University Women	51

VerDate Nov 24 2008 16:49 Mar 30, 2011 Jkt 035165 PO 00000 Frm 00003 Fmt 0486 Sfmt 0486 S:\DOCS\55620.TXT DENISE

ESEA REAUTHORIZATION: THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S ESEA REAUTHORIZATION PRIORITIES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2010

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:27 a.m. in Room SH–216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Tom Harkin, Chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Harkin, Dodd, Murray, Reed, Sanders, Hagan, Franken, Bennet, Enzi, Alexander, Burr, Murkowski, Coburn, and Roberts.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HARKIN

The CHAIRMAN. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will please come to order.

Today, we are honored to be joined by the U.S. Secretary of Education, Mr. Arne Duncan. As the former Superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools, he brought to Washington an enormous amount of experience and credibility, along with a strong vision for public school reform.

Today's hearing on the Obama administration's Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization priorities provides an opportunity to learn more about the details of the President's Blueprint for Reform, which just came out 2 days ago. In his introduction to the blueprint, President Obama said, and I quote,

> "A world-class education is a moral imperative—the key to securing a more equal, fair, and just society. We will not remain true to our highest ideals unless we do a far better job of educating each one of our sons and daughters. We will not be able to keep the American promise of equal opportunity if we fail to provide a world-class education to every child."

Those are very fine words, and I could not agree more. Right now, we have an opportunity to shape our educational system to do what is right for every child in this country.

When we passed the original ESEA in 1965, it was based, in part, on the principles of civil rights and equity for all. At that time, although the U.S. Supreme Court had integrated the schools 11 years earlier in 1954, extreme inequalities still existed between affluent suburban schools on the one hand and low-performing schools in many urban and rural districts on the other. Unfortu-

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nately, more than 55 years after ESEA's initial passage, these inequities persist.

For its flaws, No Child Left Behind has done an excellent job of shining a light on the achievement gaps that still exist, and this is something that we want to preserve—shining that light. However, there is still a lot of work to do to close these gaps and to better prepare our children for college and careers.

One thing that needs to be fixed is the way that the current law has caused some people to only focus on kids in the middle, the ones who might just barely pass or barely fail the test. That ignores the kids at the top who might get bored and fall behind if they are not challenged. It also writes off the kids at the very bottom. We cannot abide by any educational system that says there are some kids that can be written off.

By building on prior reforms and re-envisioning the Federal role as it relates to accountability, teachers and leaders, and the types of carrots and sticks that are used to push innovation and reform, the reform agenda has five overarching goals: college- and career-ready students, one; great teachers and leaders in every school, two; equity and opportunity for all students, three; raising the bar and rewarding excellence, four; and promoting innovation and continuous improvement, five.

This is a set of goals that should invite broad bipartisan agreement. Those of us sitting at this dais may have different ideas on the best way to achieve those goals, but the vision laid out by the President has given us a well thought out starting point for our deliberations.

I will take this time, as we reauthorize ESEA, to lay out some of my guiding principles as the chairman. Here are some of my goals for reauthorization, based upon what I have observed and have heard in recent years and having spent 22, 23 years now on this committee.

First, I believe we need to ensure that all students—no matter their background, community, family, or ability—have equitable access—I emphasize those two words, equitable access—to a quality public education.

Next, we need to reform the accountability structure of No Child Left Behind while continuing to focus on the success of all students. We should give schools and teachers credit for growth and rewards for success, but we must do something about schools that are chronically failing large numbers of students.

Next, we need to ensure that we are offering a well-rounded curriculum that prepares students to be engaged citizens who understand and appreciate the world around them, but also have the academic skills to succeed in college and the workforce. Our students must have the best possible teachers and academic leaders, and those teachers, principals, and superintendents should have the support they need to do their jobs with excellence.

Next, we must safeguard the rights of students with disabilities and ensure that they have every opportunity to succeed academically.

Next, we must make sure that we are focusing on all the needs of America's students, all the needs, including their need for good health, nutrition, and physical fitness.

And finally, we need to ensure that the policies we write into law are flexible enough to meet the needs of diverse students and schools, including rural schools, but consistent enough to ensure high standards for all students.

I have some policy ideas about how we can achieve those goals. For example, we need to bite the bullet and get beyond our outdated, 19th century agrarian school calendar, giving adequate time for students to have a well-rounded education by extending the school day and the school year. We also need to recognize that education begins at birth, and children need a solid foundation for learning before they ever get to kindergarten.

Without these and other changes, we cannot hope to be successful in the 21st century.

As the chairman of the Senate HELP Committee, I look forward to working with the President, the Secretary, and my congressional colleagues on both sides of the aisle to write an education law that maintains our focus on the success of all students, while giving States and districts the support they need to succeed.

With that, I will turn it over to our Ranking Member, Senator Enzi, for his opening statement. Then I will introduce our witness.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR ENZI

Senator ENZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for holding this hearing.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for being with us today to discuss the Blueprint for Reform for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or ESEA. This blueprint will help the committee move forward to develop legislation that builds upon what we have learned from the latest version of ESEA, called No Child Left Behind, and fix what isn't working.

In 2001, when No Child Left Behind was enacted, legislators from both sides of the aisle saw little, if any, return on investment in K through 12 education, despite over 35 years of Federal funding. Many felt that a strong Federal hand was called for because States and local school districts were not getting the job done. There was little flexibility given to the States or school districts in how they implemented the requirements of No Child Left Behind.

So fast forward to today. What we have learned is that a better balance is needed between prescriptive Federal mandates and State and local flexibility. The blueprint seems to reflect this belief with the Administration's "tight on goals, loose on means" philosophy.

Overall, the blueprint contains a lot for us to think about and use as we deliberate how to be sure our investment makes a difference in the education our children receive. I want to mention just a few issues today, but I believe this is just the beginning of an extended conversation.

As we work through the reauthorization of ESEA, I will be paying close attention to the impact of the changes we make on rural schools, districts, and rural States. No Child Left Behind has been criticized for being a one-size-fits-all law, a claim that has rung especially true in the rural areas.

I appreciate the blueprint tries to recognize the unique nature of rural schools and districts. However, despite these good efforts, I believe additional adjustments will likely be needed.

One thing I have heard consistently from teachers, principals, superintendents, and parents across Wyoming is the need to utilize a growth model in accountability systems. I believe that student academic growth measurements can be used for accountability and as part of what States consider as they develop teacher effectiveness metrics.

The Federal Government's role should be to encourage and support States and school districts so that more students graduate from high school on time and with the knowledge and skills they need to attend college and enter the workforce without the need for remediation. This is a critical goal as economic growth depends on an educated and skilled workforce.

Secretary Duncan, thank you for appearing before the committee today to discuss your ideas for the reauthorization of ESEA. I am anxious to listen to the dialogue today and look forward to working with you to fix the law to make it work better for superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, and especially the students.

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Enzi.

The Honorable Arne Duncan is the U.S. Secretary of Education, confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2009. I was pleased that the first time I chaired this committee was to confirm his nomination.

Prior to his appointment as Secretary of Education, Mr. Duncan served as the chief executive officer of the Chicago Public Schools from 2001 to 2008, where, during his tenure, a record high number of elementary school students met or exceeded the State standards in math and reading.

Also during his tenure, ACT scores for Chicago Public School students rose at three times the national rate. These are among the many successes that led to Mr. Duncan's becoming the longest-serving big-city education superintendent in the country.

Mr. Secretary, we are pleased to welcome you back again today as a partner in our effort to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Thank you for joining us, and we look forward to your statement and the question-answer period outlining the blueprint that you sent out just 2 days ago.

Welcome back, Mr. Secretary.

STATEMENT OF HON. ARNE DUNCAN, SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Secretary DUNCAN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, Senator Enzi, and members of the committee. It is a true honor to be here with you today.

I want to thank each of you for your hard work and commitment in education. As I was looking around the room, I have been able to visit schools with almost all of you in your States and see firsthand that remarkable commitment.

I believe that education is the one true path out of poverty. It has to be the great equalizer in our society. As the President said

in his weekly address on Saturday, there are few issues that speak more directly to the long-term prosperity of our Nation than education. Education is the one issue that must rise above politics and ideology. We can all agree that we have to educate our way to a better economy.

We currently have an unprecedented opportunity to reform our Nation's schools so that they are preparing all our students for success in college and careers. Today, the status quo clearly is not good enough. Consider just a few statistics.

Twenty-seven percent of America's young people drop out of high school. That means 1.2 million teenagers are leaving our schools for the streets. That is economically unsustainable and morally unacceptable.

On a recent international test of math literacy, our 15-year-olds scored 24th out of 29 developed nations. In science, 15-year-olds ranked 17th out of 29 countries.

Just 40 percent of our Nation's young people earn a 2-year or 4-year college degree. The United States now ranks 10th in the world in the rate of college completion for 25- to 34-year-olds. A generation ago, we led the world, but we are falling behind. The global achievement gap is growing. If we are serious about preparing our Nation's young people to compete in a global economy, we must do better than this.

Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we have built the foundation for reform. All States are reporting the progress they are making on four areas of reform—raising standards, developing and recruiting excellent teachers and leaders, using data to inform instruction, and turning around our lowest-performing schools.

In the Race to the Top fund, we have identified 16 finalists for the first phase. We have invited all of the finalists to present about their plans and will be announcing the winners in the first week of April. The winners will blaze the trail on reforms that will improve student achievement for decades to come.

To promote reforms in every State, I am committed to working with you in 2010 to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It has been more than 8 years since Congress last reauthorized ESEA through the No Child Left Behind Act. That is the longest gap between reauthorizations in the 45-year history of ESEA.

We all recognize that NCLB has its flaws. The time to fix those problems is now. My staff and I have reached out to listen and learn from people across the country and to hear what they think about NCLB.

My senior staff and I visited every State on our "Listening and Learning Tour." We met with parents, teachers, and students themselves. We have engaged in hundreds of conversations with stakeholders representing all sections of the education community.

In all of our conversations, we heard a consistent message that our schools aren't expecting enough of our students. We need to raise our standards so that all students are graduating prepared to succeed in college and in the workplace.

We have also heard that people aren't looking to Washington for all the answers. They don't want us to provide a prescription for

success. Our role should be to offer a meaningful definition of success, one that raises the bar and shows teachers and students what they should be striving for.

With those lessons in our mind, we have developed our blueprint for ESEA reauthorization. We have shared that with you, Mr. Chairman, and I ask that the blueprint be entered into the record of this hearing.

[The Blueprint for Reform referred to above may be found at *http://www2.ed.gov/policy/edsec/leg/blueprint/*.]

In this blueprint, you will see that everything is organized around our three major goals for reauthorization—first, raising standards; second, rewarding excellence and, as both of you have mentioned, focusing on growth and gain; and third, increasing local control and flexibility while maintaining a laser-like focus on equity and on closing achievement gaps.

All of these policy changes will support our effort to meet the President's goal that by 2020, America will once again lead the world in college completion. In particular, the ESEA will set a goal that by 2020, all students will graduate ready to succeed in college and in the workplace. We will build an accountability system that measures the progress that States and districts and schools are making toward meeting that goal.

We have a comprehensive agenda to help us meet that goal. It starts with asking States to adopt standards that truly prepare students for success in college and careers. Governors and State school chief officers of 48 States are doing the tough job of setting these standards in reading and in math. The leadership at the local level has been absolutely remarkable, and their effort is supported by both major teachers unions and by the business community.

In our proposal, we call on States to adopt college- and career-ready standards, either working with other States or by getting their higher education institutions to certify the standards are rigorous enough to ensure students graduate ready to succeed in college-level classes or to enter the workplace.

Standards by themselves aren't enough. We will need a new generation of assessments that measure whether students are on track for success in college and careers. We will also support the effort to develop those assessments so they will measure higher-order skills, provide accurate measures of student progress, and give teachers the information they need to improve student achievement and differentiate instruction. These standards and assessments are key parts of our effort to redefine accountability.

Under NCLB, the Federal Government greatly expanded its role in holding schools accountable. It did several things right, and I will always give NCLB credit for its important contributions to education reform. It required all students to be included in the accountability system, including minority students, students with disabilities, and English language learners. It required States, districts, and schools to report test scores disaggregated by student subgroups, exposing achievement gaps like never before. We know the achievement gap is unacceptably large, and teachers and school leaders throughout the country are working and mobilizing to address that problem.

NCLB was right to create a system based on results for students, not just on inputs. NCLB's accountability system needs to be fixed, and it needs to be fixed now. There are far too many perverse incentives in the current law. It allows, and it actually even encourages, States to lower standards. It doesn't measure growth. It doesn't reward excellence.

It prescribes the same interventions for schools with very, very different needs. It encourages a narrowing of the curriculum and focuses on test preparation. It labels too many schools with the same "failing" label, regardless of their challenges.

It encourages schools to focus their efforts, Mr. Chairman, as you said, on only that tiny percent of students close to that proficiency bar and neglect the vast majority of students either above or below that line. We need all adults focused on every single child, not just that small handful in a classroom or in a school close to that bar.

We can't sustain momentum for reform if we don't have a credible accountability system that addresses these issues. Our proposal will make significant improvements on accountability. The biggest and most important one is that it will use student academic growth as the most important measure of whether schools and districts and States are making progress. I am much more interested in growth and gain than in absolute test scores, as long as students are on a path to meet standards.

Under our plan, we will reward schools, districts, and States that are making the most progress. At the same time, we will be tough-minded in our lowest-performing schools and schools of large achievement gaps that aren't closing. All other schools will be given flexibility to meet performance targets working under their State and local accountability systems. If we get accountability right, we will provide the right incentives to increase student achievement, and I am confident that America's students, teachers, and principals will deliver.

I would like to focus on the critically important work of our teachers and our leaders. The teaching and learning that happens in schools every single day are what drives American education.

We spend a lot of time talking about reform—about the proper Federal role, about the cost of education and the need for more funding, about competitive versus formula—and all those are absolutely important debates to have. We can never, never lose sight of the impact our decisions have on classrooms where teachers are doing the hard work every day of helping our children learn. Every decision must be viewed through the framework of improving instruction for our Nation's children.

We believe that there is a lot in our proposal that teachers will like. We know that there is a lot under the current law that teachers don't like. We heard that in every State we visited.

Most teachers believe that we have a broken system of accountability. Many teachers believe their evaluation and support systems are flawed. We need a system of accountability that is fair. I have never met a teacher yet who is afraid of accountability. All they ask for is a system that measures each child's progress, not this year's students against last year's students. We need better evaluation systems that are honest and useful and elevates, rather than diminishes, the teaching profession.

All told, we are requesting a record $3.9 billion to strengthen the teaching profession, an increase of $350 million. We begin with the understanding that teaching is some of the toughest and most important work in society, and we are deeply committed to making it a better profession for teachers.

To start with, we are encouraging the development of high-quality teacher preparation programs. Today, too many teachers tell us that they are underprepared for what they face in the classroom. They have too much to learn on the job.

We are encouraging the development of meaningful career ladders and stronger efforts to retain the great teachers we have. We lose far too many great young teachers due to a lack of support. From newly hired teachers to tenured teachers to master teachers, and mentors, department heads, and principals, we need to rebuild education as a profession with real opportunities for growth that sustain a teacher's craft over a career, not just for a couple of years.

We want to encourage schools and districts to rethink how teachers can best do their jobs—how they collaborate, how they use their time outside the classroom, and how they shape professional development programs. When adults have time to collaborate and solve school problems together, they are going to be much more productive, and they will get better results for our children. Teachers must be at the center of those efforts.

We are also investing in principals to create better instructional leaders, so that teachers have the leadership they need to do better work. Historically, we think our department has significantly underinvested in principal leadership, and we are looking to have a five-fold increase in that funding. I think there are no good schools in this country without good principals. We know great principals attract and retain good talent. We know bad principals run off good talent. So principal leadership is huge for us.

As for teacher evaluation systems, our goal is a system that is fair, honest, and useful, and built around a definition of teacher effectiveness, developed with teachers, that includes multiple measures, never just a single test score. Teachers need great principals for support, and we will also ask for fair evaluation systems for principals.

We want to use these systems to support teachers in their instructional practice and to reward great teachers for all they do, including advancing student learning. We also want to reward them for working in high-need schools. If we are serious about finally closing the achievement gap, we must close the opportunity gap far too many of our children face.

As I mentioned, we will change the accountability system to make it fairer. For the first time, we will be holding not just schools and teachers accountable for student success, but districts and States as well. This must be a shared responsibility. Teachers can't teach and principals can't lead when they are not well supported at the local and State level.

We want to stop mislabeling thousands of schools as failures. Instead, we want to challenge them to close achievement gaps with targeted strategies designed by teachers and principals together.

Similarly, everyone should get credit for helping students who are behind catch up, even if they do not yet meet standards, as long as they are on the path to get there. A sixth grade teacher whose students start the year three grade levels behind and their students advance by two grade levels should be applauded, not labeled as a failure.

That teacher is not a failure. That teacher is not just a good teacher. That teacher is a great teacher. She is accelerating student learning, and we must learn from her example, not stigmatize her. The same is true for districts and States as well.

We want to give many more schools and districts the flexibility to improve by focusing much more on the chronically lowest performing schools and those with the largest achievement gaps that aren't closing, while giving teachers and principals of the other schools more flexibility and incentive to succeed.

We are also calling for assessments that measure deep learning, not just test-taking skills—assessments that can engage and encourage learning and provide teachers with meaningful, quick feedback.

We want students, parents, teachers, and communities working toward a meaningful bar, and to support them in getting there. The goal of the K to 12 system has to be to prepare students for the next step on their journey, either college or in a good career. The system needs to be focused on those goals. Dumbed-down standards mean we are actually lying to children, giving them false hope and undermining the high standards that teachers have for their students. That must end.

We are calling for over $1 billion to fund a complete education because a whole child will be a successful adult. We want schools investing in the arts, history, sciences, languages, physical education, and all of the learning experiences that contribute to a well-rounded education. That is critically important.

Finally, we are also seeking $1.8 billion to support students by encouraging community engagement and support and exposure to other positive adults. Teachers cannot do it alone. They need parents, community leaders, social service agencies, and other supportive adults in the schools helping to reinforce a culture of learning and respect. A parent will always be a child's first teacher and will always be that child's most important teacher.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to discuss our comprehensive reform of ESEA. This will be one of the most dramatic changes in the law's history. It will fundamentally change the role, the Federal role in education. We will move from being a compliance monitor to being an engine of innovation.

The urgency for these reforms has never been greater. Our children and our future are at risk. Let us together do the difficult, but necessary things our schools demand and our children deserve. We know that schools can transform the lives of children. We have literally thousands of examples of schools serving high-poverty populations that are accelerating student achievement. We need to reward them and hold them up as examples for others to follow.

I thank you for all that you have done and all you will do to make education America's highest priority and greatest legacy. We

need to work together to continue that legacy and deliver a world-class education for every child.

Thank you so much.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Duncan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ARNE DUNCAN

Thank you Chairman Harkin, Senator Enzi, and members of the committee. It's an honor to be here today.

I want to thank each of you for your hard work on education. I believe that education is the one true path out of poverty. It is the great equalizer in our society. As the President said in his weekly address on Saturday, there are few issues that speak more directly to the long-term prosperity of our Nation than education. Education is one issue that can rise above ideology and politics. We can all agree that we need to educate our way to a better economy.

We currently have an unprecedented opportunity to reform our Nation's schools so they are preparing all of our students for success in college and careers.

Today, the status quo clearly isn't good enough. Consider the following statistics:

- 27 percent of America's young people drop out of high school. That means 1.2 million teenagers are leaving our schools for the streets.
- On a recent international test of math literacy, our 15-year-olds scored 24th out of 29 developed Nations. In science, our 15-year-olds ranked 17th out of 29 developed countries.
- And just 40 percent of young people earn a 2-year or 4-year college degree.
- The United States now ranks 10th in the world in the rate of college completion for 25- to 34-year-olds. A generation ago, we were first in the world but we're falling behind. The global achievement gap is growing.

Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we have built the foundation for reform. All States are reporting the progress they're making on four areas of reform: raising standards, developing and recruiting excellent teachers and leaders, using data to inform instruction, and turning around our lowest-performing schools. In the Race to the Top fund, we have identified 16 finalists for the first phase. We've invited all of the finalists to present about their plans and will be announcing the winners in the first week of April. The winners will blaze the trail on reforms that will improve student achievement for decades to come.

To promote reforms in every State, I am committed to working with you in 2010 to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It's been more than 8 years since Congress last reauthorized ESEA through the No Child Left Behind Act. That's the longest gap between reauthorizations in the 45-year history of ESEA. We all recognize that NCLB has its flaws. The time to fix those problems is now.

My staff and I have reached out to listen and learn from people across the country, and to hear what they think about NCLB. My senior staff and I visited every State on our Listening and Learning Tour. We met with parents, teachers, and students themselves. We've engaged in conversations with stakeholders representing all sections of the education community.

In all of our conversations, we've heard a consistent message that our schools aren't expecting enough of students. We need to raise our standards so that all students are graduating prepared to succeed in college and the workplace. We've also heard that people aren't looking to Washington for answers. They don't want us to provide a prescription for success. Our role should be to offer a meaningful definition of success—one that shows teachers and students what they should be striving for.

With those lessons in our mind, we have developed our Blueprint for ESEA reauthorization. We have shared that with you, Mr. Chairman, I ask that the Blueprint be entered into the record of this hearing. In this Blueprint, you'll see that everything is organized around our three major goals for reauthorization.

1. Raise standards.
2. Reward excellence and growth.
3. Increase local control and flexibility while maintaining the focus on equity and closing achievement gaps.

All of these policy changes will support our effort to meet the President's goal that by 2020, America once again will lead the world in college completion. In particular, the ESEA will set a goal that by 2020 all students will graduate ready to succeed in college and the workplace. We will build an accountability system that measures the progress that States, districts, and schools are making toward meeting that goal.

We have a comprehensive agenda to help us meet that goal. It starts with asking States to adopt standards that prepare students for success in college and careers. Governors and chief State school officers of 48 States are doing the tough job of setting these standards in reading and math. In our proposal, we call on States to adopt college and career ready standards—either working with other States or by getting their higher education institutions to certify the standards are rigorous enough to ensure students graduate ready to succeed in college-level classes or enter the workplace.

But standards aren't enough. We'll need a new generation of assessments that measure whether students are on track for success in college and careers. We will support the effort to develop those tests so they will measure higher-order skills, provide accurate measures of student progress, and give teachers the information they need to improve student achievement.

These standards and assessments are key parts of our effort to redefine accountability.

Under NCLB, the Federal Government greatly expanded its role in holding schools accountable. It did several things right—and I'll always give NCLB credit for its important contributions to education reform. It required all students be included in the accountability system—including minority students, students with disabilities, and English learners—and held schools, districts and States accountable for educating all of their students. It required States, districts and schools to report test scores disaggregated by student subgroups, exposing achievement gaps like never before. We know the achievement gap is unacceptably large—and teachers and school leaders throughout the country are working and mobilizing to address that problem. NCLB was right to create a system based on results for students, not just on inputs.

But NCLB's accountability system needs to be fixed—now. It allows—even encourages—States to lower standards. It doesn't measure growth or reward excellence. It prescribes the same interventions for schools with very different needs. It encourages a narrowing of the curriculum and focuses on test preparation. It labels too many schools with the same "failing" label regardless of their challenges. We can't sustain momentum for reform if we don't have a credible accountability system that addresses these issues.

Our proposal will make significant improvements on accountability. The biggest and most important one is that it will use student academic growth as the most important measure of whether schools, districts, and States are making progress. I'm more interested in growth than absolute test scores, as long as students are on a path to meet standards.

Under our plan, we will reward schools that are making the most progress. At the same time, we will be tough-minded in our lowest-performing schools and schools with large achievement gaps that aren't closing. All other schools will be given flexibility to meet performance targets working under their State and local accountability systems. If we get accountability right, we'll provide the right incentives to increase student achievement and I'm confident America's teachers and principals will deliver.

I would like to focus on the important work of teachers and leaders. The teaching and learning that happens in schools every day are what drives American education. We spend a lot of time talking about reform—about the proper Federal role—about the cost of education and the need for more funding—about competitive versus formula—and those are all important debates to have.

But we can never lose sight of the impact our decisions have in classrooms where teachers are doing the hard work every day of helping our children learn.

We believe there is a lot in our proposal that teachers will like. We know that there is a lot under current law that teachers don't like. Most teachers believe that we have a broken system of accountability. Many teachers believe their evaluation and support systems are flawed. We need a system of accountability that is fair. We need better evaluation systems that are honest and useful and elevates rather than diminishes the teaching profession.

All told, we are requesting a record $3.9 billion to strengthen the teaching profession—an increase of $350 million. We begin with the understanding that teaching is some of the toughest and most important work in society and we are deeply committed to making it a better profession for teachers. To start with:

- We are encouraging the development of high quality teacher preparation programs. Today, many teachers tell me they are underprepared for what they face in the classroom. They have to learn on the job.
- We are encouraging the development of meaningful career ladders and stronger efforts to retain the great teachers we have. From newly-hired teachers to tenured teachers to master teachers, mentors, department heads and principals—we need to

rebuild education as a profession with real opportunities for growth that sustain a teacher's craft over a career, not just a couple of years.

• We want to encourage schools and districts to rethink how teachers do their jobs—how they collaborate, how they use their time outside the classroom and how they shape professional development programs. When adults have time to collaborate and solve school problems they are going to be more productive and they will get better results for our kids. Teachers need to be at the center of those efforts.

• We are also investing in principals to create better instructional leaders, so that teachers have the leadership they need to do better work.

• As for teacher evaluation systems, our goal is a system that is fair, honest and useful—and built around a definition of teacher effectiveness, developed with teachers, that includes multiple measures—not just a single test score. Teachers need great principals for support, and we will also ask for fair evaluation systems for principals.

• We want to use these systems to support teachers in their instructional practice and to reward great teachers for all they do—including advancing student learning. We also want to reward them for working in high-need schools.

• As I mentioned, we will change the accountability system to make it fairer. We will start by holding not just schools and teachers accountable for student success, but districts and States, as well. Teachers can't teach and principals can't lead when they are not well supported at the local and State level.

• We want to stop mislabeling thousands of schools as failures. Instead we want to challenge them to close achievement gaps with targeted strategies designed by teachers and principals together.

• Similarly, everyone should get credit for helping students who are way behind catch-up, even if they do not yet meet standards—as long as they are on a path to get there. A teacher whose students start the year three grades behind and their students advance by two grade levels should be applauded—not labeled as a failure. That includes districts, principals and teachers. This is a shared responsibility.

• We want to give many more schools and districts the flexibility to improve by focusing much more on the lowest-performing schools and those with the largest achievement gaps that aren't closing, while giving teachers and principals of the other schools more flexibility and incentives to succeed.

• We are also calling for assessments that measure deep learning, not test-taking skills—assessments that can engage and encourage learning, and provide teachers with meaningful, quick feedback.

• And we want students, parents, teachers, and communities working toward a meaningful bar, and to support them in getting these. The goal of the K–12 system has to be to prepare students for the next step—college and a career. The system needs to be focused on that goal. Dumbed-down standards means we are lying to children—giving them false hope and undermining the high standards teachers have for their students.

• We're calling for over $1 billion to fund a complete education, because a whole child is a successful adult. We want schools investing in the arts, history, science, languages and all of the learning experiences that contribute to a well-rounded education.

• Finally, we're also seeking $1.8 billion to support students by encouraging community engagement and support and exposure to other positive adults. Teachers cannot do it alone. They need parents, community leaders, social service agencies and other supportive adults in the schools helping to reinforce a culture of learning and respect. A parent is a child's first teacher.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our comprehensive reform of the ESEA. This will be one of the most dramatic changes in the law's history. It will fundamentally change the Federal role in education. We will move from being a compliance monitor to being an engine for innovation.

The urgency for these reforms has never been greater. Our children and our future are at risk, so let us together do the difficult but necessary things our schools demand, and our children deserve. We know that schools can transform the lives of children. We see examples of schools serving high-poverty populations that are accelerating student achievement. We need to reward them and hold them up as examples for others to follow.

I thank you for all you have done and all you will do to make education America's highest priority and greatest legacy.

We need to work together to continue that legacy and deliver a world-class education for every child.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for a very thought-provoking statement and your leadership. I use the word "provocative" in its best sense. We need to provoke some thinking. We need to provoke new ideas and a new approach.

And you are right. We have an opportunity this year to make a really profound, historic change in elementary and secondary education. I also want to repeat what you said. This is an issue that rises above politics and partisanship. We have a great committee here, and we are going to work together to get this job done.

Now, I am going to recognize Senators for 5-minute rounds. I know some Senators have meetings they have to go to, and because of the vote, everything is backed up a little here.

I will defer my questions and recognize Senator Dodd, again, someone who has been one of our champions, one of our leaders all the time that we have been here, going back 25, almost 30 years on education, on child care, families—anything dealing with the development of the child has Chris Dodd's fingerprints on it.

Senator Dodd.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Senator DODD. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize to my colleagues. I have different meetings coming along.

Mr. Secretary, thank you. We are very excited about your stewardship at the Department of Education. As the chairman pointed out in his introductory remarks, you bring a wealth of experience and background to this position. It has already been exciting to talk with you.

We have had numerous conversations about the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and I thank Tom Harkin for his leadership on this issue as well. We have members of this committee that have dedicated parts of their lives to exactly the jobs that you have been involved in.

I am going to ask consent, Mr. Chairman, that some opening comments be included in the record.

And then just quickly ask, if I can, to give the time, really, for you to respond, Arne. I am going to be following three principles as I look at fixing No Child Left Behind as we move forward.

The first is the question of involvement of far more people in the development of education. This is everyone's job. As we talked about the other day, I'll begin with parents. We pointed out earlier with Head Start programs, that we have a requirement for programs to encourage parental involvement. We know that parental involvement drops, as children get older, from 33 percent in first grade to less than 8 percent by the seventh grade.

While it is not the only answer, I think we need to start a conversation always with the fact that, first, learning begins at home with parents and families. And to the extent we can provide that kind of support is critical, and then, obviously, the larger context of accountability, principals, superintendents, the communities-at-large, and everyone involved in this job of educating our children.

Second, is to get rid of the notion somehow that we identify failing institutions—and you have addressed this—and let us start talking about rewarding success because there is a lot of success in this country. In schools every single day, people do remarkable

jobs, and obviously, the media's job is not to report about planes that fly. Obviously, the attention focuses on those that are struggling or failing in too many instances. I am not suggesting we disregard that, but I think if we spent some more time talking about success, we might do a better job of actually succeeding where institutions are not doing as well as they should.

And third, is getting rid of the notion that a test score constitutes an education. We have all heard over and over again over the last several years that measuring growth models here, rather than test scores, is obviously the way that will, I think, give us better results, maximizing a child's potential. That ought to be the determination of success, whether or not the potential of that child is being reached or not. And not whether or not someone scored more or a higher mark on a test score some place. It seems we need to get rid of that.

I would like you just to address, if you could quickly, in the remaining 3 or 4 minutes here those three points—the involvement of everyone in education, the idea that, obviously, we need to reward success, and the notion of a test score as a judgment of whether or not education is succeeding.

[The prepared statement of Senator Dodd follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

I'd like to thank Secretary Duncan for joining us today, and for his leadership as the Obama administration follows through on its commitment to American education.

We need to reform ESEA this year, and the administration's proposal serves as a useful first step, giving stakeholders something to consider and respond to as we move forward.

As I've said before, no education policy—not No Child Left Behind and not any of the proposed reforms—will work without adequate funding. And I want to commend you and the Administration for your commitment to providing our schools with the resources they need.

My time here is limited, but I wanted to take a moment to lay out three principles that will guide me through this process, and that I believe must guide all of our education reform efforts.

First, we need to make education everybody's job. Parents, students, teachers, school administrators, local officials, civic leaders, and the government all have a stake in the success of our schools. That means they all have a role to play, and they all must work together.

And, while I have sincere confidence in your leadership, Mr. Secretary, I urge you to continue to bring the education community to the table as part of this debate.

Second, while our system needs accountability, our goal shouldn't be to punish shortcomings but to encourage success. Every American child has the potential to excel. We need to equip schools with the tools and flexibility necessary to help each child reach that potential. And to those whom we assign responsibility, we must also grant authority. We have to let educators do their jobs.

Third, we need to disabuse ourselves of the notion that a test score constitutes an education. Our kids need rigorous training in the fundamentals—but a real education prepares kids for a wide

range of opportunities and requires a well-rounded approach, both to the curriculum and to the way we measure success.

I look forward to our discussion and thank you, again, for joining us today.

Secretary DUNCAN. Really thoughtful questions and comments, and I agree with every point you made, that we have to engage parents. It is interesting to me that so often we talk about parental involvement. We talk about it with our young children, our 3- and 4- and 5-year-olds.

I will tell you one of the most troubling things that we have found in the Chicago Public Schools. We surveyed our teenagers, our high school students, and the biggest thing they were asking for is for more parental involvement. We have to think about not just those early years, but what are our parents doing for our 14- and 15- and 16-year-olds to stay involved and engaged in their lives? And teenagers, rather than looking for more freedom and flexibility, were actually literally asking for parents to be more involved.

And again, there are great programs out there. We want to learn from them, reward those, and continue to spread that.

We have a couple major buckets that we are focused on. One is called student supports. We have $1.8 billion in there, a $245 million increase. That is afterschool programs. That is extended day and year programs. That is a series of things we are going to do around safe and healthy students.

It is $210 million to build upon Geoffrey Canada's work in the Harlem Children's Zone, recognizing that when schools are islands in the community, when the whole community isn't supporting that school, that job is very, very tough for the adults, and it is demoralizing for the students. When entire communities rally behind a school, great things can happen. We are trying to absolutely invest in those places that have demonstrated a community-wide commitment, and a chance to replicate the Harlem Children's Zone through our Promise Neighborhoods initiative we think is very exciting.

On your second point, we have so many extraordinary teachers, extraordinary schools, extraordinary school districts in States that are beating the odds every single day. Despite huge poverty, despite a lack of funds, remarkable work is going on. Not just one Herculean teacher, one phenomenal student, but year after year, class after class, people are beating the odds.

We have to recognize it. More importantly, we have to learn from it. We don't have to come up with any great ideas here in Washington. I always say the great ideas are always out there. Great local educators are leading the way for us. We haven't captured that knowledge. We haven't shared it. We haven't built upon it.

We haven't replicated it, and that is the entire focus of what we want to do. We want to put these scarce resources we have behind those places that are making a difference and taking it to scale. What I worry about so much, Senator, is there are so many great programs that are making a difference in 200 students' lives, but due to a lack of resources, they can't go to scale, or they are making a difference in 500 and can't go to scale.

We want to help those places that are demonstrating the ability to raise the bar for all children and close the achievement gap. We want to put a lot of resources behind them and have the country learn from what they are doing.

And finally, this is all about growth. I just keep going back to that example. That teacher that takes a child 3 years behind and leaves her classroom a year behind, that is not a bad teacher. That is a phenomenal teacher. That child had 2 years' growth for a year's instruction.

We need to shine a spotlight on that. We need to learn from it at the teacher level, at the grade level, at the school level, at the district level, at the State level, where we are accelerating the rate of student achievement, and it is happening all over our country. That is what this game is about.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Dodd.

Senator Enzi.

Senator ENZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you, Secretary Duncan, for all the work that you have put into reviewing the law, and it is an extensive act. The blueprint covers a lot of areas, and we won't have time to get into them all today.

I want to also thank you for coming to Wyoming so you could truly see a rural school district. I appreciated the way that you listened to the wide variety of people that we had there.

The blueprint clearly mandates that the States implement one of four turnaround options in the lowest 5 percent of all schools in the State. As you know, this is a clear departure from the history of ESEA. Historically, the Federal Government only mandated action in schools that are either receiving or eligible to receive Federal title I dollars.

Could you explain your justification for this vast increase in the Federal role in the schools?

Secretary DUNCAN. I don't really see it as a vast increase in the Federal role. What was said repeatedly is that we had the vast majority of schools that are getting better and proving to be world-class schools. We want to see that growth.

But what we are asking the country to do is take a hard look at that bottom 5 percent of schools. And in every State, in every district, the bottom 5 percent—not the 95 percent. And of that bottom 5 percent, just take 1 percent of those a year, and let us do something very, very different.

And where we have schools where 50, 60, 70 percent of students are dropping out, where students are falling further and further behind each year, unfortunately, what happened under No Child Left Behind was nothing. Nothing changed for those children.

We want to see real change and do it with a sense of urgency. Where we have an ability to have pretty dramatic change and do it with a sense of urgency, not a 10-year plan, not a 15-year study, but for children right now, today, that need a better opportunity, we want States to start to do that. States, districts, teachers, parents, communities working together to transform the opportunity structure for those children.

Senator ENZI. I want to switch over a little bit to reforming high schools in the country. The blueprint doesn't seem to talk about

that much. However, high schools are not meeting the needs of students, and too many are either dropping out of school altogether or graduating students without the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in college and the workforce.

I have heard a lot about and support for career institutes or academies and appreciate how they provide the same academic content to all students but deliver it in ways that are relevant to the students. Do you support a federally funded high school reform program, and if so, would you envision maintaining the Administration's "tight on goals, loose on means" philosophy?

Secretary DUNCAN. Yes. All of these initiatives are, sort of, big buckets of work around innovation, around teachers and leaders, around a well-rounded education, supporting students. Title I, we are calling college and career ready. Supporting diverse learners. All of those have huge high school components.

Whether it is making sure we have STEM educators at the high school level. We want to put $100 million in new money to make sure that we have more opportunities for students to take dual enrollment classes, college-level classes in high school. We have $3.5 billion in school improvement grants to turn around chronically underperforming schools. Many of those are high schools.

We are trying to put a huge amount of resources to increase the quality of instruction, to make sure those courses are more rigorous, to make sure students have a chance to experience that college experience while they are still in high school. All of our efforts, all of our buckets of work have significant high school pieces to it.

Senator ENZI. I am also concerned about the potential impact the legislation has on rural schools, school districts, and States, and particularly the turnaround models that are detailed in the blueprint as they seem to be urban-centered. Many of the rural school districts aren't able to implement, I don't think, any of the four models because it is difficult to replace a principal, fire half the staff, close the school, or convert the school to a charter school when the next closest school is over 60 miles away.

I appreciate the need to reform schools that have not provided an excellent education, but I think there are limited options that may not work in many areas of Wyoming. Are there other options or flexibility that would be provided to those rural areas?

Secretary DUNCAN. Absolutely. One of the models is a transformation model, which is simply working with existing staff, trying to make sure they are having the quality time they need to collaborate, making sure we are lengthening school days where we need to. We think that model could be applicable in an urban area or suburban or rural.

I am happy to continue that conversation with you. There are multiple models, and we think every community can figure out what the right fit is for their children and their neighborhood.

Senator ENZI. OK. As a last question, I did ask in a letter that was dated January 25th about some contact information, the subject of which was the student loan program and the elimination of the FFEL program. I haven't gotten any answer to that yet. Do you have any idea on how soon I will get that?

Secretary DUNCAN. I think you have received that.

Senator ENZI. Pardon?

Secretary DUNCAN. You should have received that. We sent that last week.

Senator ENZI. OK. I will check. Yes.

Thank you very much. My time has expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Enzi.

I will have more to say about rural schools, since there were six of us in my eighth grade class, anyway, in my rural school. But technology, I want to get technology and high-speed connections to a lot of those rural schools, which can be very helpful. I am going to forego that question for now.

Senator Reed, I know, has to go to another meeting, so I will recognize Senator Reed.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR REED

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good to know that you were in the top 10 of your class.

[Laughter.]

You have important responsibilities. That is a good sign.

Mr. Secretary, I understand that—and you talked about engagement of parents and community, which I think we all recognize is essential. As I understand it, only the transformation model explicitly requires family and community engagement. The turnaround model, the closing model, and the charter model don't require that explicitly. Is there an incongruity here?

Secretary DUNCAN. We can check on that. Again, whether it is looking at turnaround or high-performing schools, I don't know how you have high-performing schools without parental engagement, community engagement. That should be a backbone of everything we are doing.

Senator REED. Would you check that? Because I think that the other models are not explicit in requiring parent and community engagement.

Secretary DUNCAN. Explicit on it, yes.

Senator REED. The turnaround model requires the dismissal of all the instructional staff. Under your regulations, would it require the dismissal of everyone in the school? Could a local community do that?

Secretary DUNCAN. These would be decisions made at the local school level, local community level.

Senator REED. Well, but they are doing it under the color of Federal law, of your proposal, or at least they will if we adopt these proposals. Is it just instructional staff, or is it everyone?

Secretary DUNCAN. Instructional staff.

Senator REED. OK. I think that is something else that you might clarify, too, in terms of the scope of dismissals.

The other aspect of the proposal, not just in terms of the authorization that we will consider, but also the appropriation of the budget, is a consolidation of many programs. There has been a debate for as long as there has been a Congress about flexibility and innovation versus accountability, transparency, ensuring that we are funding things that, collectively, we think are important.

I think your approach is going to raise these questions again. One of the areas has been school libraries. It was an exclusive program in the 1965 act. It was eliminated under the Reagan adminis-

tration. As a result, when I got here in 1990, you could still find library books on the shelves of most schools that said, "ESEA 1965" with copyrights dating from about 1955 and 1945.

We began to put more emphasis on it. That was reversed under Speaker Gingrich's leadership, among others. Now we are back trying to fund libraries. That is just one example. But the history of these block grants is that they become so amorphous that opponents—not supporters, but opponents find ways under the budget pressure to grind them down.

No. 1, how are you going to ensure that doesn't happen, since we all agree this is a major national priority? And No. 2, as you go forward, I would presume that you are going to try to reinforce success, which might mean more resources going to successful programs. So how do you do that?

Secretary DUNCAN. These are really, really powerful questions. The unique opportunity we have—so, yes, we are trying to do less things and do them well. We did push for some consolidations. We think that it is much easier for our schools and districts and States to interact with us because the President is asking for historic increase in funding.

As you know, most times when folks consolidate, they cut money. It is sort of an excuse to cut. In every bucket we are doing, there are actually increases. In innovation, a big increase. Teachers and leaders, a $350 million increase. Well-rounded education, $100 million increase. Student supports, $245 million increase. Right down the line.

We actually have more resources, not less, if the fiscal year 2011 budget passes. All those things that you talked about, whether it is libraries, whether it is STEM education, whether it is technology, we know we have to invest there. We want to invest there. We have more resources than ever before.

I think that should help us guard against libraries which have been dramatically underinvested and that are hugely important. Not just school-based libraries, but classroom-based libraries, particularly in the primary grades, are very, very important. We have an opportunity with increased funding to increase resources, not decrease them.

As we look at the competitive versus formula, that is another debate. The bulk of our money, almost three-quarters of our money will still be formula-based. We are going to be more competitive than before. We are not just going to reward excellence. We are going to look to go to places where there is great need.

It is not just about rewarding success so the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. We want to use those competitive resources in communities that have been historically underserved where there is great need, and we are going to strike that balance.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator Burr.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BURR

Senator BURR. Mr. Secretary, welcome.

Secretary DUNCAN. Thank you, sir.

Senator BURR. I have a general comment at the beginning. If the quality of education is determined by how much we spend, Washington, DC would be the best school system in the country. I caution us against concentrating too much on how much we are talking about investing to overcome the deficiencies and that we all focus more on how to fix the system, whether that requires additional funds or whether it doesn't.

Nearly 50 percent of the math classes in high-poverty high schools are taught by teachers with neither a math major, a math minor, or a related field—engineering, physics, or math. A major study by the Urban Institute using students' achievement data in the high school level in North Carolina found that Teach For America Corps members had a positive effect on student achievement relative to other teachers, including experienced teachers, traditionally prepared teachers, and those fully certified in the field.

The impact of having Teach For America members was more than twice the impact of having a teacher with 3 or more years experience. Unfortunately, the budget and the blueprint does not fund Teach For America. How does your blueprint assure us that the top college graduates are going to find their way to this field?

Secretary DUNCAN. I am a big fan of Teach For America. As in other areas, what we try to do is not just fund a single program, but create a competitive pool of resources and grow that. We have $235 million in money for teacher recruitment and retention. That is huge—a doubling of resources there, and we hope and expect Teach For America and other high-quality programs to compete vigorously there. There is an opportunity again not for them just to get their current levels of funding, but potentially significantly more.

There is also the Investing in Innovation Fund, i3, which is trying to take to scale programs that have demonstrated the difference they make in students' lives. We understand there is some heartburn there. There are many great programs that aren't going to get their little slice of the pie. If they can demonstrate to us the difference they are making, they can not just get what they historically received, they could get significantly more.

Your basic point is a huge one, Senator, that I keep saying. We can't close the achievement gap if we don't close the opportunity gap. So your fundamental point, how do we get more great math teachers? How do we get more great science teachers into underserved communities, be those rural or inner-city urban? We want to put a huge amount of resources.

This is a little controversial. I think math and science teachers, we should pay them more money. There is a shortage there. You pick a number in the local community to make a difference, and we need to pay them to go into tougher communities. We have, again, flexibility and the ability for folks that want to create, that want to be innovative, that want to bring talent to communities where historically there hasn't been enough, enough of critical mass. There has never been a larger opportunity to reward that local district and State innovation.

Senator BURR. You said in your opening statement that we needed to have a laser focus on equity. In your blueprint, there is a discussion around funding equity at every level of the system. While

we all agree that high-poverty schools should receive their fair share of State and local funding, the blueprint says nothing about ensuring Federal funding equity.

Now title I does not have funding equity. As a matter of fact, on this committee, you have 6 of the bottom 10 States from a standpoint of title I funding—Utah, Iowa, North Carolina, Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Arizona. They pull up the bottom.

Mr. Secretary, it is not even close from the standpoint of the range from $1,238 for a poor child in one State to $3,576 in another State. The disparities only grew worse when we did the stimulus dollars. The ranges went from $2,125 per poor child in one State to $6,344 per poor child in another State.

In ensuring that there is funding equity at every level, what in the proposal for eliminating these egregious inequities in title I do you have in ensuring that the Federal Government has equity in funding?

Secretary DUNCAN. It is a fair question. I beg to differ. I don't know if the stimulus money increased inequities. We funded existing formulas. I don't know if we made those worse.

Senator BURR. Well, in essence, what it did was that it provided for my Ranking Member, he went from $3,576 to $6,344, but in Tennessee, we went from $1,339 to $2,280. In other words, the people at the top of the list were rewarded. It is not necessarily where the greatest need might have been.

Secretary DUNCAN. Well, the formula, as you know, is based upon concentrations of poverty. I am happy to have that conversation with you. But, just to be clear, the stimulus money didn't go by some new formula or some more——

Senator BURR. No, my point was stimulus money highlights the flaw in our formula.

Secretary DUNCAN. Yes, I hear the concern.

Senator BURR. I look forward to working with you on it.

I thank the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Burr.

Senator Murray.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MURRAY

Senator MURRAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Duncan, I know that you and I agree that effective literacy instruction is really a critical educational tool that keeps kids engaged in school and on track to succeed in college and in their career.

We also know that children who are not at least modestly skilled readers by the end of third grade are far less likely to graduate from high school, and they are far less likely to be successful today. And we know that literacy can be a critical component in turning around some of those schools who are struggling today.

I wanted to start by thanking you for your enthusiastic support of the Striving Readers program, and I am looking forward to continuing to work with you on the concepts behind that program, as well as the LEARN Act, which is the legislation I have introduced to improve comprehensive literacy instruction in every State in the country.

I wanted to talk with you about one major difference between our proposals because I strongly believe that with content area like literacy, which is really at the base of all learning—if you can't read, you can't learn—every State, every State should have the support of the Federal Government in meeting the literacy needs of all of our students. In the Administration's 2011 budget, you create a competitive literacy program for just some States, rather than a formula program for all the States.

If we want every State to have a comprehensive plan in place to address the literacy needs of its students, why would we only support the efforts of 15 or maybe 20 States to help students get those skills?

Secretary DUNCAN. It is a very, very fair question, and to be clear, we haven't said we will just support the work of 15 or 20 States. Obviously, we wanted to make sure folks were breaking through. We have about a 10 percent increase in funding for literacy.

Your point is well taken. It is one I am happy to work with you on.

Senator MURRAY. OK. I would like to work with you because I want to make sure we don't leave out States in this important area.

I also wanted to ask you about the issue of competitive funds. Look, your budget proposal, the ESEA blueprint, put additional emphasis on teacher evaluation, on educator preparation, professional development. I agree those are all absolutely critical. Our students, our communities have to make sure we have got the best educators preparing them for success.

In my home State of Washington, they are working on legislation right now to improve teacher evaluation systems and raise student achievement, and I want all of our States to have the resources they need to prepare our teachers and school leaders.

I have some serious concerns about how the Administration is proposing to allocate those funds again because States, all the States, every one of them is struggling. It takes significant resources at the State level to do a good job of evaluating and supporting our teachers. I am really worried about the Administration's proposal that cuts $450 million from our Teacher Quality State Grants.

If that funding is cut, my State is going to get a cut of $15 million a year for a very important program. You know all States depend on those grants to revamp their teacher evaluation systems and to increase opportunities for teachers. They provide opportunities to make sure our school leaders really are ready to take on the challenge that they have in front of them.

My question to you is—what is the rationale behind cutting those formula grants to our States in one of the toughest budget climates we have had, at a time when we are asking our States to make major changes in teacher and leader preparation and when teachers and principals are taking on really significant added responsibilities today?

Secretary DUNCAN. Again, let me just be clear for the committee and for the record that the overwhelming majority of our money, almost three-quarters of our money, will continue to be formula-

based. So title I money, $14.5 billion continue that way. IDEA money, $11.8 billion, up $250 million, will continue to be based on a formula way. And teachers and leaders, that large pool of money we have, there is about a 10 percent increase, up $350 million to $3.86 billion.

The challenge, Senator, I think we face as a country is that we have invested billions of dollars in this, and teacher evaluation in our country is broken. I went before the NEA's national convention with 5,500 teachers and talked about how evaluation doesn't work for any of the adults, and everybody cheered. I went to the AFT's convention with 2,500 members and talked about teacher evaluation being broken, and everyone cheered.

We have spent as a country billions and billions of dollars on something that doesn't work for high-performing teachers. It doesn't work for teachers in the middle, and it doesn't work for teachers at the bottom who, after support and improvement where it is not working, should be doing something else.

So, we have haven't broken through——

Senator MURRAY. OK. Maybe some of the States aren't using it in a way that is currently effective. If we take the fund of Teacher Quality State Grants, and put it into a competitive fund, what I fear is that there is going to be an even bigger gap between the States that are ahead today and moving ahead and States that are just beginning these reforms.

Secretary DUNCAN. To be clear, nothing precludes us from funding every State. What we are saying is that States have to take a close look in the mirror. States and districts, and a lot of this should be done at the district level, within the State's parameters. This needs to be worked out at the local level between unions and between the local management there and the boards of education.

There is nothing that precludes us from funding everybody. Honestly, what we don't want to do is just continue to fund the status quo. When it doesn't work for any adults, it is not working for children either.

Senator MURRAY. I can understand requiring States to undertake activities to improve their teacher quality grants. If we make this into a win or lose or a competitive thing, we are going to create a bigger gap.

Secretary DUNCAN. Yes. Again, to be very clear, it doesn't have to be winners or losers. What we are saying—and people can agree or disagree—we are saying that the status quo is broken. It is absolutely broken after billions of dollars of investment. We have to fund in a different way.

Senator MURRAY. OK. Be careful, what you don't do is say, OK, you guys who are really starting to make progress and making progress, you get the money. Those of you who are struggling, we are just cutting you out—because that won't help the States.

Secretary DUNCAN. Right. Let me be clear, that has never been our interest. It has never been our intent. We are not interested—you know, it may be broken today. We are interested in are you willing to move? Are you willing to improve?

So that State where the system is absolutely broken, OK, we all agree on that. Frankly, that is virtually every State in the country. It is not like anyone is knocking this out.

I had a great conversation the other day with Randi Weingarten. I said, "You tell me one place that is doing this impeccably well." She couldn't think of one off the top of her head. It is not where you are at, but it is where you are willing to go.

If folks are willing to move, that is where we want to invest. Again, a 10 percent increase in investment. We want to put resources there. I promise you that. But if folks say, "we are fine," status quo, don't change.

Senator MURRAY. I don't think anybody is saying status quo. What we are saying is—don't create a competitive grant where if you have already got the capability to win, you win more. And I want to work with you on that, Mr. Chairman.

Before I lose my turn, I just wanted to thank you, Mr. Chairman, as well as you, Secretary Duncan, for really pushing to fix the Pell Grants and student loans as we move forward in the next week. With all of our States struggling, cutting back budgets, students not being able to meet their financial demands, this is an issue that is critical. Thank you to both of you on that.

Secretary DUNCAN. It is a huge one. One other quickly before you go. You had talked in the previous year on your concern about the inability to use title I money to fund the transportation of homeless students.

Senator MURRAY. Correct.

Secretary DUNCAN. In our proposal, we will have that flexibility.

Senator MURRAY. I appreciate that very much. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Transportation is a big issue.

Senator Murkowski.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MURKOWSKI

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary. Good to see you.

I know you made it up to the State. You mentioned that you had an opportunity to visit just about everybody's State and get into the schools. We do look forward to your visit to Alaska where we can get you into the schools.

You had some issues with weather and mechanical, and that is travel in Alaska. But we'll welcome you back.

Secretary DUNCAN. No. We went to schools.

Senator MURKOWSKI. You didn't get into the classrooms.

Secretary DUNCAN. Hooper Bay.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Well, I want to talk about Hooper Bay.

Secretary DUNCAN. That was a fascinating learning experience.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Because I do understand that you had an opportunity to spend a little bit of time with the principal there. This is how a community, like Hooper Bay, in a very rural part of the country would deal with how we anticipate we would move forward with these school turnarounds and how you take a school that is in a real difficult situation.

As you know, they have been in need of improvement. They are at Level 5. They have been there for 6 years. Well, they haven't been there for 6 years, but it is their sixth year of needs improvement status. It is a very difficult situation up there.

The school proficiency—fewer than 30 percent were proficient last year, 50 percent graduation rate. Teacher turnover is, as you

know, absolutely impossible. The geography challenges everything that we do there. You are 153 miles by air from Bethel. There are no roads.

When we look at, OK, how do you take a community, how do you take a school like Hooper Bay that is faced with not only the academic challenges, but the fact that you don't have teacher housing. There is no place for anyone to live. When they get there, there is no running water, no sewer. You basically move your own human waste down a boardwalk in a 5-gallon bucket. These are not conditions that most teachers will be able to handle.

When we talk about the options, replacing the principal, rehiring no more than 50 percent of the school staff, this is our problem. We can't keep good people there.

How much flexibility will there be to deal with? The Ranking Member addressed it from another very rural perspective. How do we deal with this realistically?

Secretary DUNCAN. It is one we need to continue to work through together. Obviously, that is one model you referred to. The transformation model is another one.

I want to get to the core because whether—I have got to tell you, that visit impacted me deeply. That, and a visit to a school in Indian Country in Montana, in northern Cheyenne, are—I have had some extraordinary days over the past year, but those are two that are always going to stick with me.

To see the struggles of those communities, to see the lack of resources and what we need to do, I just want to give you my personal promise that I want to do everything I can to help those children be successful. In both those communities and I heard it in Senator Enzi's, in Wyoming, teacher turnover is a huge challenge.

Teachers come for a year or two, do great work, and leave. So, I can't push this hard enough. We want to put a huge amount of resources on the table. I think teachers who go to Hooper Bay or go work on an Indian reservation, we should pay them more money. It is not just about money. We need to do lots of other things. We need great principals. We need to pay principals more money and keep them there.

We treat all these jobs equal. When you go to a place like that that literally doesn't have running water, that doesn't—they actually in Hooper Bay did have teacher housing, but huge, huge challenges there. The school I visited in northern Cheyenne country with massive teacher turnover, how can students learn when every year, every 2 years, it is a whole new team there.

Senator MURKOWSKI. You are never able to build a relationship or any kind of trust with a teacher or anyone within the Administration.

Secretary DUNCAN. Exactly. I think we haven't—Senator, I just want us all to think about this. I think, as a country, we have lacked total creativity in this area. We need to be very, very innovative about how we attract and retain great talent to underserved communities, be that rural, be that very rural, isolated rural, be it at the heart of the inner-city.

We have had virtually no incentives and lots of disincentives. I keep coming back. If we are serious about closing the achievement gap and giving your children there a chance to be successful, we

have to close the opportunity gap. So, we want to put, again, unprecedented resources out there to people who are willing to do some things differently.

We are not going to get it all right, and we will make some mistakes. We can't just keep doing the same thing. Those students will never have a chance as a child where there is a much more stable workforce, will never have the same opportunity. So, we want to work——

Senator MURKOWSKI. Well, you say unprecedented resources, and yes, money is certainly an issue. If we are able to pay teachers more, perhaps we are able to see that. Actually, in some of the school districts up north where they are able to pay their teachers more, you would think that we would not have the turnover issues that we do. They are still there. It is still a difficult environment, and you saw for yourself.

In addition to significant resources, I think, again, we have got to have the ability to be flexible. To look at different things and to say what might work in Iowa or Wyoming, even though they are real rural, doesn't necessarily translate to Alaska. I would hope that we have, within your blueprint, a level of flexibility and ability to resolve things like this.

Secretary DUNCAN. Absolutely. I give my commitment we will absolutely try and do that. That is the right thing to do.

Let me be clear, it is not just about more money. It is about creating a climate and environment in which teachers and principals want to go there. What about, as a country, what if we had some schools of education specifically training teachers to go to rural communities, specifically training teachers to go to the heart of the inner-city. What is our pipeline of talent of folks where this is their heart, this is their dedication?

What are we doing creatively to get a great, great principal and say, "You go to this community for 5 years, 10 years, whatever. You transform it." That is the capstone of your career. That is not some—you know, we are not sending you out as a punishment. We are sending you to these communities because you have done such an extraordinary job, and we want to reward you for doing that, and we want to help you build a great team around that.

There is so much, again, that we could do in a much more creative and thoughtful way. As a country, we haven't touched that. Right now, we are selling our children short.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Well, I would like to work with you on that. I know that we have some great administrators that have some good ideas. We have some good parents. We have a couple PTA folks from Alaska here that are listening to you this morning, and I know that they would like to be participants in giving you some good feedback.

Secretary DUNCAN. Thank you. That visit impacted me deeply.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you. Look forward to the next one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Murkowski.

Senator Sanders.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR SANDERS

Senator SANDERS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thanks for being with us.

Let me begin by looking at this issue of enormous consequence in a broader context. One of the points that we don't make often enough is that in our country, we have by far the highest rate of childhood poverty of any other country on Earth. Last week, Chairman Harkin did a very good thing, something that is unusual, he brought somebody from the OECD to us. We are not just talking about Iowa versus Vermont. More importantly, we are talking about the United States of America versus the rest of the world.

What Mr. Schleicher told us, an expert in education from the OECD, is not good news. What he is saying is that in terms of the number of our kids who graduate high school, we are now behind every other country in the OECD other than New Zealand, Spain, Turkey, and Mexico.

In terms of the percentage of our young people who graduate college, we have gone from 2d to 14th in the world between 1995 and 2005. He didn't talk about it, but we all know we have more people in jail than any other country on Earth, and I suspect that many of those people are high school dropouts.

Secretary DUNCAN. Almost all of them.

Senator SANDERS. Furthermore, and an issue that I want to touch on, I don't know how we can expect kids to do well in school if the first 4 or 5 years of their lives, they don't have their intellectual or emotional needs addressed. Today, our child care system, and I raise this because it has to be dealt with, is nothing less than unmitigated disaster.

We are still operating like we were in the 1950s, where dad went out to work and mom stayed home with the kids. Well, let me just mention to people that is not the reality anymore. Well over 70 percent of women are out in the workforce. Now how in God's name—in my State to get good child care costs $350 a week. How do you pay that? A, if you are a single person, it is impossible. And B, if you are a working couple, it is very, very difficult.

I think that in needs of our priorities, we have got to get our act together and start changing our priorities. If we talk about family values, if we talk about children being the hope and the future of this country, we have got to pay attention to the youngest and most vulnerable among us. We need a revolution in child care—every kid in this country, as is the case in many European countries.

I know some of my Republican friends denounce Europe. Well, I am not so sure. They have quality child care virtually in every country for their kids. College education is free in many cases. I don't think that is such a bad idea myself.

I would like to ask you, Mr. Secretary, I want you to talk about child care, talk about making college more affordable, talk about extended education, which means strong afterschool programs, Saturday morning programs, and summer programs, mixed recreation and academic.

Secretary DUNCAN. Thank you so much, Senator, for your passion and for your leadership.

I think we have a President who intuitively gets this, and this 0 to 8 agenda is hugely important. If we want children to be college and career ready graduating from high school, they need to be kindergarten ready.

Senator SANDERS. Exactly.

Secretary DUNCAN. For our children to be kindergarten ready, it is not just pre-K, 3, and 4, it is birth. It is birth through 5 and, really, birth through 8.

Senator SANDERS. Do you agree that our current system is a disaster?

Secretary DUNCAN. We have a long, long way to go. We have a long, long way to go. I think some children are served well. What we see—it is fascinating, Senator—is we look at the data, we see sort of kindergarten through eighth grade, we see students learning, but we see this stubbornly large achievement gap.

What I keep saying in education, Senator, is we have to stop playing catch-up. We are all playing catch-up. How do we stop playing catch-up? We level the playing field for children and——

Senator SANDERS. Let's get back—I know there is a lot to talk about. I don't have a lot of time. Get back to child care. How are we going to revolutionize child care in America?

Secretary DUNCAN. I think we have to make sure—and again, the President has proposed almost $10 billion in this early learning challenge fund for the next decade, historic investments. We are going to work with HHS on this. We want to make sure that we dramatically increase access, and we dramatically increase quality.

If this is glorified babysitting, it doesn't get us where we need to go. If children are entering kindergarten with their literacy skills intact, with their socialization skills intact, ready to read, ready to learn——

Senator SANDERS. To do that, you are going to have to pay child care workers commensurate salaries to what we pay teachers. Is that right?

Secretary DUNCAN. You have to increase investment there. You have to increase training. You have to focus on outcomes. There is so much that we have to do. But yes, we have to invest, and we have to make sure, to your point, that the most disadvantaged children have access to the opportunities that they need.

Senator SANDERS. Would you argue that a child care—and I don't know if that is the right term. Specialists who work with young children are as important in our society as college professors? I mean, you know, we say college professor is a big deal. Yet you work with little children who are 2 or 3, you are shaping their lives. You leave that job to get a job at McDonald's for a pay increase.

Secretary DUNCAN. Anyone who works with our children in this country is undervalued, under supported, under resourced, and we need to increase those——

Senator SANDERS. Well, I look forward to working with you. I don't know how we are going to make great advances in elementary and secondary education, lest we address child care as well.

Secretary DUNCAN. Again, the President has this unprecedented proposal on the table, almost $10 billion over the next decade, for an early learning challenge fund.

Senator SANDERS. Is that tied up in the reconciliation package?

Secretary DUNCAN. It is part of the higher education——

Senator SANDERS. We are going to lose that, aren't we? We are going to have to rethink that.

Secretary DUNCAN. I hope not. I know this is being discussed by the hour and by the minute. I hope it stays. If it doesn't, we need to find another vehicle.

Senator SANDERS. OK. Thank you.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Sanders follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR SANDERS

Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing today, and thank you, Secretary Duncan for coming to testify on your blueprint for the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The blueprint for reauthorization that we have received from the Obama administration is a step in the right direction. Over the past decade, under the Bush administration's "No Child Left Behind Law," schools have been lowering their standards, the government has imposed unfunded mandates, teachers have been punished and worst of all, students have been left behind. Although well-intentioned, No Child Left Behind puts too much emphasis on testing, therefore narrowing the curriculum of many classrooms and putting the focus on "teaching to the test." In addition, it punishes schools that are failing with penalties and lack of funding instead of helping them overcome obstacles so that those schools could be successful. Too often those failing schools are the ones that are servicing the students who need the most help.

We have the chance to do much better with the reauthorizing of this law. The blueprint that you are sharing with us today from the Department of Education and the Obama administration certainly puts us on the right track. I commend you on moving towards using progress and growth to measure our students. In addition, I applaud your taking some emphasis off standardized testing by using other measures of accountability such as graduation rates, attendance rates and school climate measures. It is often these types of indicators that show what is truly successful at a school rather than standardized tests.

There are however, some concerns I have with the blueprint. Most importantly, we need to remain aware of the concerns of small and rural States. The shift towards competitive funding that you emphasize does not represent progress in educational funding. In fact, it is the opposite. Many small and rural States do not have the resources to write large, comprehensive grants, especially in the current economic climate. The smaller States are then at a competitive disadvantage to receive this funding. The purpose of Federal education programs in the United States is to provide equity in our education system, by ensuring that disadvantaged communities have access to the same resources as wealthy ones. I am concerned that a shift toward competitive funding would be counterproductive to this goal.

Recently, I wrote a letter to you with some of my colleagues, some of whom are represented on this committee, highlighting the concerns of rural States. Perhaps most importantly addressed was the issue of innovation. What is innovative in some States may not work in others. Requirements that emphasize the creation of charter schools are not always the best way to serve the needs of iso-

lated or low-density populations. Vermont has explored some extremely innovative practices in education, including the opening of two magnet schools in Burlington, the Integrated Arts Academy and the Sustainability Academy, which is the Nation's first K–5 magnet school with a sustainability theme. I hope that as you explore innovation in education you look towards examples such as these from rural States.

The task of reauthorizing this legislation will not be easy; however we have much work to do. Again, I thank you for your efforts, Mr. Secretary, and look forward to working on this with other members of the committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Sanders. I will talk to you about some of this.

Senator Coburn.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR COBURN

Senator COBURN. Thank you.

Mr. Duncan, welcome.

Secretary, as you know, I am a big believer in a lot of your philosophy. I am supportive of a portion of it. I wanted to ask you a couple of questions. One is a hard question, and I think you owe it to the American public to explain it.

We have 1,500 kids in Washington, DC that are going to lose their vouchers. Seventy-six percent of those kids are going to go into failing schools. How in the world can we let that happen?

Secretary DUNCAN. Very, very fair question. I have talked about it repeatedly. We worked very hard to make sure students currently in that program could stay in it.

Our research team did a pretty thorough analysis of what was happening, and I will get my numbers a little backwards. Over a 3-year period, it was either reading or math, one of them there was no significant gain. One of them gained about 3 months over 3 years. That is basically a month a year. That is a good tutoring program, but the results were mixed at best.

The big thing, Senator, that I think folks don't understand is how serious we are about if private philanthropy wants to help or individuals want to help with scholarships, I am all for that. I think we at the Federal Government level, at the local government, we need to be much more ambitious. What I don't want, Senator, is to pull 2 children out and leave the other 98 to drown.

When we talk about $3.5 billion in school improvement grants and what we want to try and do to turn around entire schools for every single child, that, to me, is where we need to be putting our efforts. We have a huge opportunity to break through there.

Senator COBURN. Thank you.

We had the good fortune to listen to Bill and Melinda Gates, and all the money that they put into education and what they found. As we have had teacher-pupil ratios decline in this country and not seen a significant difference in outcomes, it was revealing to me their statement.

Class size doesn't make any difference. The only thing that makes a difference is the quality of the teacher, and they not only have confirmed that with the spending of their own money. They have actually done studies that will support that view.

The question, and some of it comes back to what others have raised is, is creating an incentive system in this country where we highly value great teachers and we get rid of bad ones. I am not sure—first of all, I am not sure, as somebody who is probably more stuck on the Constitution. I am not sure of the role of the Federal Government here. I think we have not seen a tremendous positive impact, whether it is a Republican administration or a Democratic administration in the differences.

I was just wondering now that you have been into your position for over a year, I know we have the blueprint—and the bell is going off. We have the blueprint, but the point is, is what really needs to change? If you weren't within the constraints of us and the President, what would be coming forward here?

Maybe that is an unfair question. I know you have the knowledge, and I know you have the heart.

Secretary DUNCAN. It is a great question. I think I couldn't agree more there is nothing more important than great teachers. Again, let me emphasize not just great teachers, but great teachers in historically underserved communities. Children in disadvantaged communities where all too often—not always, but all too often—talent flees, and we haven't created incentives there.

You have a lot of opinions. I have a lot of opinions. Senator Bennet has been an absolute champion on this issue and gets it. The luxury we have, the opportunity we have that I want folks to understand is we don't have to come up with the good ideas here in Washington.

What we have now, if this budget passes, historic increases, we have a chance to invest in what is working at the local level. And so, ideas in your State, ideas around the country, where folks can demonstrate that they are doing things differently, that they are identifying effectiveness effectively, which is hard to do, that they are getting those effective teachers to the students who need the most help in the communities in your State or in Hooper Bay. We can put huge resources behind that.

I don't think we have to come up with a great policy idea. All the facts are out there. What we need to do is invest in excellence, invest in success, and we have a chance to do that. I think that is a game-changer. I am very optimistic on that.

Senator COBURN. Which brings me to another question. During your confirmation hearings, I asked you about the highly qualified provision for special ed teachers, and you said you would look into it. Then when I read the blueprint, what I see is more requirements in that area rather than less.

What concerns me is, in Oklahoma, what you have done with the highly qualified mandate, and it really wasn't yours—you have inherited it. The fact is, our best teachers for our kids with significant problems are gone because they are not going to spend the money to get a master's degree in every one of those areas so they can be qualified when they have 25 years of experience and tremendous outcomes to show what they have done.

In this blueprint, you are actually expanding that rather than restricting it. That actually goes against what you just said.

Secretary DUNCAN. Yes. I beg to differ. I don't think we are expanding it. If we are, we will reverse that. What we are actually

doing, and I will be very clear on this, is we want to move from highly qualified based on paper credentials to highly effective based on the difference that teachers are making in students' lives.

Senator COBURN. We have actually eliminated a bunch of highly effective teachers in Oklahoma to meet the requirements of what the Federal Government has said you have to meet.

Secretary DUNCAN. I understand that. We will work with you to try and fix that. We inherited this——

Senator COBURN. Let me go back in to what your blueprint says.

Secretary DUNCAN. What we want to do here is, and this is not just in Oklahoma. It is in Alaska. We heard it loud and clear in Wyoming. It is a big rural issue that where you have a teacher teaching four or five different subjects, how are they going to get the paperwork?

Frankly, I don't care if you have four advanced degrees, if your students aren't learning, you are not that effective. If you don't have any advanced degrees, but your students are really improving, that is the kind of teachers we want.

Senator COBURN. That is exactly what I wanted to hear. In your blueprint, you require to develop the definitions of "effective teacher, effective principal, highly effective teacher, highly effective principal." Well, that is another Washington mandate that we are going to develop those, and we are going to say whether you measure it, when, in fact, outcomes are what count.

Secretary DUNCAN. Let me just be clear. We want to define effectiveness based on outcomes. We will work with you on this, but we are not adding paper credentials to where we are going. That is absolutely not where we are going.

Senator COBURN. All right. Well, listen, I appreciate the job you are doing. I look forward to working with you and excited about you being in the position you are in.

Thank you.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Coburn.

Senator Hagan.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR HAGAN

Senator HAGAN. Thank you, Chairman Harkin.

Secretary Duncan, thanks for your testimony today. I appreciated your quote, "that we are going to be moving from a compliance monitor to a creative innovator." I think that is a good setting for reforming No Child Left Behind.

I am pleased that the Administration's blueprint represents significant improvements to No Child Left Behind, and I especially appreciate the focus on having our students college-ready and career-ready. I think we are now the only developed Nation with a younger generation that has a lower level of high school or equivalent education than the older generations. This is certainly an unacceptable position to be in.

It is my hope that the clearly stated and obtainable goal that the United States will lead the world in college completion by the year 2020 is the impetus that we need to move forward and reform our education system.

One of the areas that I have been focused on quite a bit is financial literacy education. When I was in the State senate in North Carolina, I championed legislation dealing with that. I am very concerned, especially when looking at the financial situation that we have been in recently in our country, that we really focus on teaching financial literacy to our students so they understand how to manage credit, mortgages, student loans, and living in the world today.

You have acknowledged the importance of ensuring that every student receives a well-rounded education, but does the Administration believe that financial literacy education can be a part of that?

Secretary DUNCAN. Not only do we believe it, it is part of that. In our bucket, which you called well-rounded education—trying to get away from this narrowing of the curriculum that I heard complaints about all over the country—we have $1 billion. A $100 million increase is a part of that. We have a $265 million set of money, a 17 percent increase. In that is history, arts, financial literacy, languages, and other things.

We absolutely want to address the financial literacy crisis. We talk about educating our way to a better economy. Yes, it is reading and math and language arts. It is financial literacy. Our country would not be in the situation it is today, we would not have gone through that crisis, I think, if we had done a better job of this going back 10, 15, 20 years ago.

We are committed to doing it. This is one that we are not going to do alone. We are partnering with Secretary Geithner and the Treasury on some really interesting programs and trying to raise the level of awareness. I will tell you this is a personal passion of mine. I got my start in public education by starting a small public school on the south side of Chicago, a pre-K through 8 school.

The focus of that school's curriculum is financial literacy. What the students are doing there is absolutely remarkable, starting with kindergarten. And guess what? Because you are teaching those things, math scores take off. Reading scores take off. It is one of the highest-performing schools in the city in a very, very poor community.

I think a huge reason for the success of that school is because financial literacy has been ingrained, embedded in everything that school is doing. That is how I started in public education.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you for that. We certainly need to replicate that in every school in our country. If our students had had that knowledge, I don't think we would be where we are today. We have got to enforce that.

Another issue that I am concerned about is what is happening to our kids outside of school. The fact that so many of our children today don't have adequate nutrition. They don't have adequate healthcare. They don't have parental involvement in their day-to-day lives and the resources that they need.

As you discuss your vision for school turnaround models, what thoughts do you have on ways that we can address these out-of-school factors when restructuring our schools?

Secretary DUNCAN. Yes, hugely important. Again, it goes back to Senator Sanders' comments on early childhood education. We have

to be part of the solution, and we have to partner in very new ways with HHS.

On your question, I will just take one of those issues, child nutrition. We have to partner in very different ways with the Department of Agriculture, and Secretary Vilsack is, I think, doing an extraordinary job of pushing to get more nutritious food into schools, more of the junk food out of the vending machines.

Let me just take a step back. We are going to make a massive investment, $1.8 billion, in what we are calling student supports, extending the school year, extending the school day, making sure we have safe and healthy students, the Promise Neighborhoods initiative I talked about. There are some foundational things that if we don't get right, I don't think our children can learn.

If our children are hungry, it is hard to concentrate in class. I grew up as part of my mother's afterschool program, and the first thing she did every day when the children came to her is she fed them. She fed them. Then we started doing some academic work.

If children aren't safe in school or coming to and from school, it is hard to concentrate in algebra, trig, or biology. We have to create communities in schools and around schools, and one of the things we want to do which we haven't talked about is really ask schools what is the climate? And survey students, "Do you feel safe? Are there high expectations?" Ask parents how they feel about it.

We have to get at those environmental things. If students can't see the blackboard, they can't learn. So, we need to find those partnerships. In Chicago Public Schools every year, we gave away free tens of thousands of eyeglasses. If you don't do that, you are kidding yourself.

There are some foundational things around safety, emotional, physical, psychological safety, that if we are not hitting those, we are not in the game. We are going to do everything we can ourselves to do a much better job. We have to partner, again, with HHS, with the Department of Agriculture, attorney general's office. Attorney General Holder is helping me think about violence in communities. I worry tremendously about the violence that so many of our children are experiencing not in school, but to and from school in their neighborhoods.

We have to address all those things if we are serious about students not just graduating from high school, but being prepared to do something else afterwards.

Senator HAGAN. I am glad to hear those comments. I had one other concern. When you were talking earlier, you mentioned that math and science teachers should be paid more. I think we have a critical shortage of math and science teachers in our schools and in our country, and I think that is an area that we, as a Nation, have got to be focused on. The ability of our teachers to teach and our students to learn science, math, engineering, and technology for all of the green energy jobs that are going to be available. Could you elaborate on that statement?

Secretary DUNCAN. Yes. I think, again, this is where I think we have lacked, and this is a broad statement. There are pockets of innovation, but as a country, we have lacked creativity here. Whether it is math or science, whether it is special education stu-

dents, whether it is foreign language teachers, where we have areas of shortage, we need to do some things differently.

It's how we reward and compensate folks, how we recruit them. I will tell you, in math and science, one of the only benefits of a tough economy is there are folks coming out of industry who have great math and science content knowledge, who actually know physics and know biology. We should be much more creative in how, through alternative certification tasks, how we bring in this great talent.

Whether it is compensation, whether it is teacher pipelines, we haven't done enough here, and there are great people out there who want to make a difference. I will never forget, I spoke with a gentleman—I won't use his name—an extraordinarily well-respected national figure who wanted to come teach science in an inner-city high school, and because of the licensure requirements, he was prohibited from doing it.

So guess where he ended up—Princeton University. He was good enough for Princeton, but he wasn't good enough to go where he wanted to go. Something is wrong with that picture. He said, "Arne, I was dying to go there. They would not let me."

That is not just an isolated case. That happens time "and time again". Where we have talent that wants to make a difference, we need to be much more thoughtful, much more creative in how we get that talent in. Again, unfortunately, given a tough economy, there is a lot of talent out there that we could be benefiting from today.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Senator Roberts.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR ROBERTS

Senator ROBERTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I am interested in this business of a district and State definition of effective and highly effective teacher, and I am trying to find desperately here. "State-wide definition"—this is page 14 of your very excellent summary here. It says, "State-wide definitions of effective teacher, effective principal, highly effective teacher, highly effective principal developed in collaboration with teachers, principals, other stakeholders based on significant part, on student growth, also other measures as classroom observations."

I am thinking then that, basically, somebody can come in and take a look at you when you are teaching and make some judgments. And then, second, what happens to your students? In other words, if you have student growth, if you have student performance, why then are you a highly effective teacher.

The thought occurs to me that if you are a teacher, say, that you are a journalism teacher and say that you have the yearbook and say that you have the student newspaper. Say that you even have the debate team. You have great kids. They will wear you out. It is a 24-7 job, and anybody that comes into the classroom would probably be impressed, more especially if you were trying to put together the paper at the last minute or work on any particular job.

I am just wondering what about the rest? Other teachers will not have that kind of category of student. How do we give them a shot to become a highly effective teacher?

Secretary DUNCAN. It is a great question, and there is actually some—not enough, but there is some very interesting work that a set of districts are doing around that. Whether it is goals that teachers set out at the start of the year and they are working toward that, whether it is principal observation—and to your point, if you come in for 15 minutes once, that doesn't work. If you continue to work, I am a big believer in peer review and having teachers look at how other teachers are doing, and no teacher wants to be working next door to a teacher that is not pulling their weight.

There are multiple ways to get at it through goals, through leadership. Again, if a teacher is volunteering on the yearbook team or the debate team or the academic decathlon, and there are a series of districts who have put in place very robust, comprehensive evaluation systems that look at many, many things beyond just a student's test score, and that is the way it should be. No one should be evaluated by one test. It doesn't make sense.

Senator ROBERTS. The other thing that I would bring up from the rural standpoint, you are getting a lot of questions from the standpoint of rural and small town America, a lot of representation here in that regard. And you say that, basically, both States and districts must publish report cards every 2 years that provide information on key indicators such as teacher qualifications, teacher and principal designations of effectiveness, teachers, principals hired from high-performing pathways—I am not sure what that is—teacher survey data on levels of support, working conditions in schools, the novice status of teachers and principals, teacher and principal attendance, retention rates of teachers by performance level.

States will also be required to report on the performing of teacher and principal preparation and program by their graduates. Obviously, the record of the football team. I tossed that last one in.

[Laughter.]

Secretary DUNCAN. I was hoping that wasn't in there.

Senator ROBERTS. I just put "wow" after all this in terms of a small school district trying to figure out—I don't know if you have this computerized or if it is on a floppy disk or whatever. Or if floppy disks even exist anymore.

[Laughter.]

That is going to be quite a burden, it seems. Well, not a burden, but at least a challenge in that regard. And that is just an aside.

What I really want to get at is on page 17, on teacher and leader pathways, and you say priority may be given to programs that work to recruit and prepare high-performing college graduates or nontraditional candidates, such as military veterans or mid-career professionals, i.e., somebody who said, you know, in college or pre-college I didn't want to become a teacher. That never entered my head, but I have always had this idea that I would like to be a teacher.

The back door is shut because in terms of the certification, you have to have X, Y, Z in regards to a lot of college courses. The two favorites are standard—well, one is test and measurement and

standard deviation, where you spend 2 weeks trying to study math enough to do the standard deviation, which you never use in the classroom because you don't have time. The other one is the famous B.F. Skinner, who fed pigeons and rats occasionally and then a lot and then maybe not at all and then tried to figure how that transferred into the classroom.

Bottom line, if you give pop quizzes, you get better results because the kids don't know when they are coming and they study all the time, as opposed to having a test every Friday, where they study every Thursday night. I am not too sure that we need to read volumes about B.F. Skinner, with all due regard to the great man.

How are you going to do that? To eliminate incentives for teachers to obtain credentials that have been shown not to be linked with student performance. I have been fighting that for years. Say something.

[Laughter.]

Secretary DUNCAN. I was trying to take it all in and process. I was still in processing mode there. I will try and switch to speaking mode.

Senator ROBERTS. Well, No. 1, do you agree with my back door assessment that there are a lot of good teachers out there that certainly could teach and should teach, but they have a lot of hurdles out there that—

Secretary DUNCAN. That was our earlier conversation on alternative certification. So, yes, I am less interested in where teachers are coming from, and I am more interested in how well their students are learning. There are many different paths to be a great educator. There are great schools of education, and there are poor schools of education.

I think there are great pools of talent, Troops to Teachers being one of them, that have been significantly underutilized. I think there are physicists and mathematicians and chemists and biology professors who would love the chance to teach in a public school, but we have made it far too hard.

So, again, I keep coming back to it. We want to put significant resources behind those districts and States that are much more focused on getting great talent in and supporting that talent than in that candidate's paperwork.

Senator ROBERTS. I appreciate it. I have some other questions I may submit for the record, and I am already 2 minutes over time, which the chairman will tell you is a usual practice, and I apologize to my colleagues.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Roberts.

Senator Franken.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR FRANKEN

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Mr. Secretary.

If Senator Roberts wants to make a mid-career change to comedy, I know some people.

[Laughter.]

Secretary DUNCAN. I need him teaching.

Senator FRANKEN. Bernie Sanders talked about Mr. Schleicher coming with the OECD results, and they were disheartening in

terms of where we have been going in recent years compared to the rest of the OECD countries. One thing I noticed that even in countries that are more diverse than we are, the achievement gaps are lower.

Secretary DUNCAN. Smaller, yes.

Senator FRANKEN. What it seems to suggest in the report was that these OECD countries put more effort into high-need schools. I was very, very happy to see the emphasis that you are putting on principals and putting principals in the high-need schools, recruiting them and training them.

Senator Hatch and I have introduced a bill that is similar to your transformational leaders proposal, and because principals create the ethos in the school, teachers obviously are the key ingredient in the classroom. In recruiting teachers, in keeping teachers, and leading teachers, that is what a principal does.

It is so important that principals become more than like an administrator of a building and be a school leader. Can you just provide some further details on the type of training aspiring principals would get under transforming leaders?

Secretary DUNCAN. Absolutely. Let me say that we are challenging everybody to behave in different ways and move outside their comfort zones. I just want to let this committee know that every day we are trying to look in the mirror and be very self-critical. I think, frankly, in many ways, we have been part of the problem as well, and so we are trying to change our behavior very significantly.

One of the areas where I think we have been part of the problem is, we have dramatically underinvested in principals. As I said before, there are no good schools without good principals. I think it was on a visit with Senator Enzi in Wyoming, talked to a teacher who drove an hour out of his way past a bunch of schools not for any money, but because he loved that principal and wanted to stay at that school.

You see that time and again where you could pay a teacher $50,000 more, but if they are going to a bad school where there is no leadership, they won't take it. Or you put a good principal in there, you have a chance to do it. We need to think about how we train the next generation of principals, how we train them to take on those toughest assignments. This is an area where Senator Bennet has huge interests, how they become those turnaround principals.

Principals today are CEOs, and we need to train them as such and reward them as such. They have to be instructional leaders. They have to be able to attract and retain talent, probably the most important thing they do. They have to be able to often manage multimillion dollar budgets. They have to work with the community. They have to work with the media.

If we had a great principal in every one of our 95,000 schools, we could all retire. We would be done. Our job would be finished. The schools would heal themselves. We can't put enough emphasis on training and preparing the next generation of great principals, but to your point specifically, to going to those historically underserved communities.

Senator FRANKEN. Is mentoring, like putting a principal with another principal who has been successful in turning around a high-need school is, I think, a great way to create and recruit and train principals.

Secretary DUNCAN. Ninety percent of this education is not going to be in some textbook. This is going to be hands-on, in the community, working with an established leader. Those kind of residency models, whether they are for principals or for teachers, sort of base them on the medical model, I am a big fan of.

Senator FRANKEN. Every one of us has gone over a little bit. I still have some time left, but I know that each of us would probably like to have an hour with you on this at least. And we are going to continue. This is an ongoing discussion.

I really love that you are focusing on progress and growth and not hitting an arbitrary score. When I introduced this principals bill and talked about it in Minnesota, I had principals talking about the current way of testing, and they called the test results "autopsies". That you would give it in April and you would get it June, and kids were going out the door. And it was too late.

In Minnesota, teachers and school superintendents have talked about a test that they have, the NWEA test, are you familiar? The Northwest Evaluation Association exam.

Secretary DUNCAN. Very familiar with it.

Senator FRANKEN. I am sure there are many like them around the country. It is a computer test. As you answer questions correctly, they get harder, and if you do them wrong, they get easier. You get the results right away, immediately.

In Minnesota, they give them three times a year. You can measure—this is what I think parents thought we were going to get when we heard about No Child Left Behind. "Oh, great. My kid will be tested. The teacher will be able to look at it and diagnose what my child needs." We had none of that.

We are going to be able to do this kind of testing, right? Where you can test several times during the year, measure the kids' growth, but the teacher can look at the kids diagnostically, right?

Secretary DUNCAN. I don't even call it testing. I call it evaluation, ongoing evaluation. What we are seeing around the country is a breakthrough in this.

I have talked to hundreds and hundreds of great teachers who, as good as they were, they are saying this is taking their teaching to an entirely different level. They are not having to guess anymore. They know whether what they taught students picked up, and things that students didn't pick up, they would have to reteach and they have to group students differently and do differential instruction.

That is the tools that teachers desperately need that for far too long they have been denied. There are some great programs out there. I think this is going to continue to evolve and get better and better.

That real-time data that tells teachers, that tells the children themselves, and tells parents these are my strengths and these are my weaknesses. And let me be very clear, If we get real college- and career-ready standards in 12th grade, we should know in 9th grade and in 6th grade and in 3d grade, am I on track to hit those?

There should be no guessing. There should be no surprises when you get to that junior, senior year.

We need to back map this all the way down and give everybody that real-time data. As I look around the country and see schools where we are seeing this remarkable increase in growth and gain, almost every single one, they are using these forms of assessments. It has been an absolutely powerful tool.

One final thing I would say, one of the biggest critiques I am hearing from teachers is this is very rarely being taught in schools of education. This is new technology, new ideas, and we have too many professors of education who have been out of the classroom for too long who don't know anything about this.

All these great young teachers are saying this is wonderful. It is changing my practice. Why did I have to learn it on the job? Why didn't I learn it before I got to the job?

Senator FRANKEN. Another area I would love to ask you about is schools that teach teaching and how we teach teachers. I have gone way over my time, but most of it was you, frankly.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

I think it is fitting that we end this round—with two experts on our committee. We have a former Secretary of Education in Senator Alexander and Senator Bennet, former superintendent of a large school system in Denver, CO, both of whom have a lot of knowledge in this area. It is wonderful having them on this committee.

Senator Alexander.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR ALEXANDER

Senator ALEXANDER. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, I congratulate you on your first year. I think you have approached it with passion and honesty and skill, and I appreciate the way you have worked with Republicans as well as Democrats. We don't agree on everything. I greatly disagree on what you are doing on student loans, but I greatly agree on a number of other things. I would like to focus on those.

One thing I congratulate you on is I counted, this is only 41 pages, and we don't do comprehensive very well around here. This is a helpful blueprint. We asked you for it. We worked with you in the development of it, and we will now take it from here.

It is a good beginning for a complex area, and my recommendation is instead of getting bogged down in a comprehensive reauthorization of a 1,000-page bill, No Child Left Behind, that what we really ought to do is focus on a handful of agreed problems and fix what is wrong with No Child Left Behind. I think your blueprint is an excellent beginning for that.

If I were going to list some of those problems—and I think there is general agreement—I would say, first, we need to start out by thinking of a different way to talk about the schools. We need to catch schools doing things right instead of catching them doing things wrong. I know you agree with that. It makes it look like we are just running around labeling schools as failing.

No. 2, we need to figure out what to do about the 100 percent proficiency requirement in 2014.

No. 3, Senator Coburn and others have mentioned, the highly qualified teacher definition needs some work.

No. 4, what do we do about State standards? A lot is going on. You are working with the Governors on that. I, for one, am watching that with a lot of interest.

Greater flexibility in meeting those standards, you have talked about that. I think we can get some consensus on that in this next 5 or 6 years. Maybe Washington can learn more from the States than try to teach the States how to reach their goals.

Using charter schools and parent options, you have been courageous on that. In terms of dealing with failing schools, evaluation and testing of teachers, and rewarding outstanding teaching, you have taken a lead on that.

I would like to see us—the late Senator Kennedy and Senator Byrd and I all worked to consolidate the existing U.S. history programs—in one way or another, make them part of this.

I wonder what your reaction is to the thought of taking a set of agreed problems and fixing what is wrong as a good way to work, and then leave me at least 30 seconds because I have one more question.

Secretary DUNCAN. I think it is a great, great thought. I just want to say, personally, how appreciative I am of your leadership and wisdom, and I have learned so much from you over this past year and have so much respect for your knowledge and your commitment on these issues. You and your staff have been phenomenal to work with, and I want you to know how much I appreciate that personally.

A second quick thing I would say is that our staff has worked unbelievably hard on the blueprint, and we had staff staying up literally all night, night after night, hundreds and hundreds of community meetings. The ideas didn't come from us. The ideas came from the community. My team has done an extraordinary job, and I just want to let you know it has been their hard work that got it to you. I am glad it was only 41 pages.

Senator ALEXANDER. Mr. Secretary, last night, I was at a reception for a college president here, and a woman came up to me and thanked me. She said, "I am still a beneficiary of Tennessee's Career Ladder program." What she was talking about was in 1984, Tennessee became the first State to pay teachers more for teaching well.

I was a naive Governor at the time, and I got into a 2-year brawl with the National Education Association over it. Eventually, the American Federation for Teachers actually supported it pretty well.

It was the beginning of an effort to try to reward outstanding teaching, going back to something another Senator said—Senator Sanders—he pointed out that when 70 percent of women went to work outside of the home, it created many more opportunities for women. We couldn't capture them in the classroom, and so we had to compete for excellent teaching.

I agree with most people who say that parents are first, principals and teachers are next. After that, not much else makes much difference.

How do we move ahead in rewarding outstanding teaching? We found, in developing our master teacher program in Tennessee,

that 10,000 teachers voluntarily went up, but it was sort of the Model T of all this. A week doesn't go by that one doesn't come by and say, "I wish we still had it." After I left, they knocked it out. The forces of opposition are always saying, "Well, you can't identify one teacher as better than another and relate pay to that."

Of course, that is just patently absurd because we all recognize better teachers. It is difficult, we have found—and everyone has found—to find fair ways to reward outstanding teaching and then to connect that to student performance. But it can be done. If our goal is to help the students, it needs to be the holy grail of what we are about. Senator Bennet has done a lot of work on that. Senator Corker did as the Mayor of Chattanooga.

My question is you were doing a pretty good job, I thought, with the Teacher Incentive Fund because instead of telling school districts what to do, we said we will give you some money if you can figure out how to do it, and they are all doing it in different ways, rewarding outstanding school leadership, rewarding outstanding school teaching. I noticed in the blueprint that the Teacher Incentive Fund seems to be assimilated into a lot of other programs.

Isn't there a risk that you will lose the Federal Government's best effort to help encourage rewarding outstanding teaching and tying it to student achievement whenever that is appropriate and done in fair ways?

Secretary DUNCAN. Great question. I will tell you the best thing that the previous Administration did for me—when I was running Chicago Public Schools—was we got the largest Teacher Incentive Fund grant in the country. Our program was designed by 25 of the best teachers in the city. They did a far better job than I could have done, and we rewarded excellence.

We had money for about 20 schools. We only went to schools where 75 percent or more of the faculty wanted it, and we had 120 schools who showed interest. There is a huge unmet demand, huge unmet need with teachers out there.

What we are doing, Senator, to show you we are not going to lose that focus, we have actually tried to increase that pot of money dramatically—$950 million for competitive and innovative teacher and leader reforms, including performance pay and tenure reform. Let us keep working it through together, and you keep an eye on it.

Not only are we trying not to lose it, we are trying to take it to an entirely different level. We think there are many, many innovative school districts in partnership, management and teachers working together who want to do this, and we want to put far more money than the previous Administration had behind these efforts.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Alexander.

Now Senator Bennet.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BENNET

Senator BENNET. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for holding this hearing.

Mr. Secretary, it is great to see you here. I am on the Banking Committee also, and we are going through this discussion now

about the re-regulation of Wall Street, which is very important for us to do. I have been struck sitting here today, that those committee hearings are full of photographers, there are journalists throughout the room, covering what is going on. This room is not being covered in the same way.

In my judgment, that is a shame because nothing is more important than the work that you are doing and the work that our teachers are doing, our principals, our kids every day. People sometimes say to me, "Michael, you know, not everybody is going to go to college. Don't you know that not everybody is going to go." This is what I want to ask you about.

I say that is true, but I am not going to be satisfied until it is their choice whether they are going to college or not. The reason for that is that when you look at the jobs being created in this country, from 1992 to 2002, we created 6 million jobs for people with a 4-year college degree. We created another 6 million jobs for people with some sort of advanced degree. We created no jobs for high school degrees, and we lost jobs for people that had dropped out of high school.

I don't see any way of dealing with our economic issues unless we confront our education issues. We are not doing that as a country. The statistics sometimes are mind-numbing. Consider the fact that, today, a child in poverty in this country stands a roughly 1 in 10 chance of graduating from college.

I counted them up. There are 20 rows here. If this room were filled with children in poverty in the United States of America, you would have one row at this end with children that were going to go to college. You would have one row in the other end of this hearing room with children going to college, and everybody else in between would not go to college.

Fifty percent of them would be high-school dropouts. Eighty-two percent of the people in our prisons, you alluded to this earlier, are high school dropouts. Over half the people that have not graduated from high school are not even in the labor force anymore.

So, I don't know. Mr. Secretary, what do you say when people say not everybody needs to go to college?

Secretary DUNCAN. First of all, I just want to thank you for your leadership and passion. I learned so much from you during your superintendency in Denver and continue to learn from you now, and we are thrilled to have you on this committee. It is going to be a great, great partnership.

There are no good jobs in the legal economy for high school dropouts, none. There are almost no good jobs if you just have a high school diploma. Some form of higher education—4-year universities, 2-year community colleges, trade, technical, vocational training—K to 12 has to be a starting point on the education journey, and all of our students have to have some form of education beyond that.

I actually think it is a false choice between college and careers. Many young people, as you know, go to college and work part-time, or vice versa. Actually, skills needed to be successful in both are actually very much aligned today, more so than ever before.

To your point, our challenge as a country is not that we are forcing students to go to college. Our challenge is that far too many

of our students are prepared for neither, neither the world of work or the world of higher education, and that is what is fundamentally happening.

Senator BENNET. I think that is such an important point because when I was superintendent, if you blindfolded me, I didn't know whether I was talking to a university president or somebody that was running the apprentice shop for the trades, I would hear the same thing, which is we need to do too much remediation for your kids in math.

This shows 11 great American cities—Chicago being one, but you could put Denver in the list. It is not in the list—where 85 percent of our kids are not proficient mathematicians. Fifteen out of one hundred kids in these cities at most are proficient mathematicians.

I just want to say that, as you know, I have an abiding interest in working on the question of how we are going to do a better job of attracting and retaining teachers in this country. Notwithstanding all of this evidence, notwithstanding the chronic shortages that we have all over the country, notwithstanding the fact that we are losing half the people from the profession roughly in the first 5 years, we have done essentially nothing to change the way we think about the profession. We haven't changed our thinking about paying people or training people or recruiting people or retaining people or inspiring people to be teachers since we had a labor market that discriminated against women and said you have got two professional choices; one is being a teacher and one is being a nurse.

We subsidized our system of public education through that system of discrimination. Thank goodness, that hasn't been true for 30 years. In my judgment, and I appreciate your leadership here very much, this is a time for very bold thinking in this country for our school districts, our States, and this country to re-imagine the teaching profession as a 21st century profession because, otherwise, I think all this other stuff is just talk.

I don't know if you have a response to that?

Secretary DUNCAN. No, I couldn't agree more, and talent matters tremendously. In politics, in business, in nonprofit work, in sports teams, in orchestras, and yes, in education, talent matters tremendously. We have to convince the country that poverty is not destiny, that we have poor children around this country routinely now beating the odds because they had great adults in their lives.

At any time, talent matters tremendously. As you know, we have a baby boomer generation that is moving toward retirement. Over the next 5, 6, 8 years, we could have as many as 1 million teachers retire. Our ability to attract and retain great talent over the next few years is going to shape public education for the next 30 years in this country. It is a generational shift.

If we don't take full advantage of this opportunity, if we don't think creatively and boldly, as you said, we will condemn not just our current students, but a generation of students to a lack of opportunity. If we do this well, we transform things for decades.

Senator BENNET. I would just say, Mr. Chairman, finally, thank you again to you for holding the hearing. I think, you know, and Secretary Duncan knows this as well, there is not a harder job in the country than being a teacher in an urban or rural school dis-

trict with children that are living in poverty. There is not a harder job.

It would be difficult for me to imagine that we could do a more horrible job supporting their work than we are doing right now. I think part of this is going to be solved by all of us kind of getting out of our own way here and creating politics that will allow us to make revolutionary change, not just evolutionary change.

Because the kids that are in the fourth grade today aren't going to get the chance to go through the fourth grade again. This is it for them. I look forward to working with you on these issues and deeply appreciate your letting me be on the committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Bennet.

It is a privilege to have you on this committee, believe me. We will be working together on this reauthorization.

Well, Mr. Secretary, one of the benefits of sitting here listening to all this is I have pages of questions and follow-ups, but we don't have enough time for all that. Let me just delve into a couple of things.

I thought it was interesting when Andreas Schleicher was here, and we talked about the OECD countries. A question was asked of him, how much does it cost to go to college in some of these countries? And he said, "Oh, nothing." As a matter of fact, in some of the countries, they pay kids to go to college. Boy, that is kind of mind-numbing.

The second thing he said is they have active recruiting policies in these countries of recruiting the top 10 percent of students to become teachers. They obviously do that through pay, but also through career development, professional development, stature, sabbaticals for teachers so they can take time off to advance their career, do other things, and then come back into teaching.

Teaching has a much different level of public support and stature in those countries than what we have had in ours. That is one thing that we have to be thinking about.

Senator Bennet is right. I just wrote "bold moves." It is time to make some bold moves. There is a story that I heard one time that I think illustrates some of our problems. There is a story about a small community that was on the shores of a lake, and they noticed that the beaches, that this community relied upon people coming in for vacations. They noticed that the shoreline was getting plugged up with refuse and all kinds of plastic bottles and junk like that.

The community got together, the town council, and they wanted to clean it up. They levied a bond issue to raise some money to hire a company to come clean up all their water and their beaches. And the community did that. They cleaned it all up, and for a couple years, it was fine. People came back to the beaches. People spent money, and then all of a sudden, they noticed after a few years, there was refuse along the beach again. They went out and floated another bond issue and got a company in, cleaned it all up.

Well, this went on for several cycles until finally someone at one of these city council meetings got up and said, "Where is this all coming from?" No one had asked that question before. They found out the lake was fed by a major stream, and they went upstream and found out where all the stuff was coming from.

They passed a bond issue to go upstream and stop it all. It cost a little bit more, but they did it and they never had any problems after that.

Now I think that story illustrates a lot of the problems that we have in elementary and secondary education because these kids are coming to school in kindergarten, and they are already way behind.

They are behind in terms of their health because they come from poverty, low-income families, as Senator Sanders talked about. Their health is bad. They have had no intellectual stimulation from the time they were born until the time they walked into that school at kindergarten.

Maybe they have tough home lives. Maybe there are single parents who are working one or two jobs just to keep things together in our low-wage society. Now we are trying to patch and fix it. We are trying to patch it up, and we are always kind of playing catch-up.

Now that is not to say you can't, of course. And you have illustrated it. You have said that when a lot of these poor kids come in, they are low achieving. With great teachers and good schools and good motivation, you can move them on. It seems to me that we have got to start focusing upstream on where this is coming from.

You know, here we are talking about elementary and secondary education. Why do I have to accept that all we can talk about is the time they enter kindergarten until the time they graduate from high school? Why am I constrained by that if, in fact, we know what is happening on the front end?

As you have heard me say before, I think it is time to rethink elementary education. I am not just saying this to you. I know there are a lot of educators in this room. I know there are a lot of people who work for education publications and things. Maybe I am talking to them, and I am talking to the general public out there.

Maybe we ought to rethink elementary education, as beginning at birth. It doesn't begin when that kid walks into kindergarten. It begins at birth. If elementary education really begins then, then we start to think about how we can approach early learning programs. Should it be segmented and differentiated out from all the rest of elementary education, sort of set aside? Or should it be integrated into it?

You have heard me say this before, and I think we need to keep looking at it. This is not really a question, but just an observation. The first question I might have is in regard to your blueprint, which calls for "encouraging increased resource equity at every level of the system."

I have always had a problem with the way we fund education. I have always said that in the United States we have a wonderful system of education, which is not top-down, not so structured that you can't have diversity and innovation and creativity. Local control, the way we have done education, I think, is one of the geniuses of our system.

The failure of our system is how we pay for it. I have said for years, where does it say in the Constitution of the United States that education has to be paid for by property taxes? That is how

we have done it even since before we were a country. We paid for it with property taxes.

If you live in an area where there are high-valued housing and businesses and good property taxes, you have great schools. If you live in a poor area with low property taxes, you have bad schools.

We always say, that we have got to attract teachers to those schools and that kind of thing, but now you are also saying, we must encourage increased resource equity at every level of the system. I don't know that I have ever heard this before in all my years on this committee, with all the Secretaries of Education, the Presidents, and all the different administrations.

Again, what are your thoughts on what States and districts would be required to do to achieve that equity? Not only in comparability of resources between high- and low-poverty schools, but also in creating a more equitable education system overall, where students have access to the same opportunities and educational quality regardless of the zip code in which they live.

Could I just ask you to expound on that a little bit? Because I have not seen this before. This is good. This is good stuff.

Secretary DUNCAN. Senator, when I ran the Chicago Public Schools, 90 percent of my children came from the minority community, and 85 percent lived below the poverty line, 85 percent. Six miles north of me, in a much wealthier community, those children there received twice as much money, more than twice as much money per year on their education. Compound that every single year over 12 or 13 years, and is that fair? Is that equitable?

I keep saying if we want to close the achievement gap, we have to close the opportunity gap. How is it fair that some children have access to 60 different types of AP classes, and some children have no AP classes, zero? How is it fair that some children have state-of-the-art computer labs and science labs, and other students are still working with Bunsen burners?

We have to give every child a chance to fulfill their great potential. How do we get great teachers into underserved communities? We keep coming back to that. We have created almost no incentives and many, many disincentives. I have also been fortunate enough throughout my life to see poor children from very tough backgrounds and tough communities and sometimes dysfunctional families do extraordinarily well because they had opportunity.

So, if we are serious about doing something better, if we are serious about just stopping and talking about all the statistics and the studies, but actually doing something about it, we have to give every child a chance to be successful. That is what we are aiming at.

The CHAIRMAN. With both of my hats—on this committee, and as chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee, I am anxious to work with you to find a solution. Even if we don't have the wherewithal to do it overall, right away, I am looking for places where we can target it and show examples and innovate things on an experimental type basis.

Secretary DUNCAN. And Senator Alexander's point, we need to catch more people doing things right.

The CHAIRMAN. That is right.

Secretary DUNCAN. There are folks who are doing things right often in very, very tough circumstances, and we need to highlight that.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, some States have passed equalization formulas to try to equalize this out. Quite frankly, some States have done a pretty good job of equalizing the property tax. Then they use it from their general fund.

With the States being under the problems now with their economies, it is very tough to do that, and some States, quite frankly, don't have that kind of revenue. Some States don't have income taxes. They don't have very good equalization formulas. We still exist with this kind of a problem.

I am anxious to, as you say, encourage increased resource equity at every level of the system. How do we encourage that? How do we do that? I look forward to working with you on that.

The second thing—getting back to early learning. Quite frankly, you are the Secretary of Education. You have everything, including higher education. We are interested here in elementary and secondary education. If we are going to solve the problems of higher education, we have got to make sure our kids are better educated in elementary and secondary education.

Regarding early learning and how we focus more on early childhood education, is that a proper thing for us to be thinking about?

Secretary DUNCAN. We have to think about it. I don't see how we get where we need to go if we don't think about it. Again, if we want students to be college- and career-ready as seniors, they need to be kindergarten ready when they are five. So, we can't not think about it.

The President has put out a bold blueprint, a bold plan, a vision. Again, almost a $10 billion increase in investment to increase access and quality for early childhood education around the country, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

You have worked extraordinarily hard, and I want to thank you, to work on this higher education bill to dramatically increase access at the higher education side. I hope early childhood can be a part of that. If it can't, we need to find another way to do that.

If we want to get out of the catch-up business, if we want to stop playing catch-up, we need to do a much better job of making sure every child enters kindergarten ready to learn and ready to read. Again, that is not just 3- and 4-year-olds. That is starting at birth, to your point.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Mr. Secretary, we are still trying to get money in there for early learning. It is being worked on now, as a matter of fact. I don't need to delve into what happened, because of the CBO scoring and all that. It is a shame that we lost that $10 billion, which was sorely needed.

We are still working to try to save some of it anyway.

Secretary DUNCAN. Phenomenal, the work that you are doing.

The CHAIRMAN. And I know you are, too, and the Administration also.

I want to ask you about ongoing assessments. There have been a lot of questions about using a snapshot from a test to evaluate student learning. What can they do with that information?

There are good programs out there that help teachers constantly assess their students. We have one in Iowa that has been ongoing for some time. I think it is in two or three States, and I have looked at it. I am not an expert in this area at all. I have looked at it, and I have talked to teachers, and it has been well accepted by teachers. They love it, and we don't have it in all our school districts in Iowa because of money issues.

It does give the teachers—it is a software program—a constant evaluation of each student, plus the resource materials that they need for whatever that student is lacking in. Even a simple thing like in math, one teacher told me there was a student who was doing fairly well in geometry. But they, for some reason, had a problem with angles. They couldn't figure out what angles were all about.

Well, that is an important subset of math. So, they were able to get the resource materials to that student and they caught up in just that one area where the student couldn't excel.

There are programs like that. There are probably others around the country. Are we going to focus on trying to find the ones that are really working and try to fund those and get those out to schools and out to teachers?

Secretary DUNCAN. Absolutely. Again, this is an area that 8, 10 years ago just didn't exist. There has been this flourishing, a breakthrough. There are some phenomenal programs out there. I think none of them are perfect. I think this next generation is going to be even better.

As you know, as part of the Race to the Top, we have carved out—which we didn't talk about today—$350 million to invest in the next-generation assessments. This has to be a huge piece of that. There are wonderful things out there. I think, honestly, we are scratching the surface, and I think 5, 10 years from now, we should be at an entirely different level as a country. To your point, we can just take those examples of success and take them to scale.

The CHAIRMAN. Last, you know how I feel about a well-rounded education. I know we are focusing on science, technology, math, and engineering, all of which are extremely important. I don't denigrate that whatsoever. As you heard from that young man in Iowa this weekend, he was concerned about music and the arts. Where does that fit into this picture?

Again, I know how you feel about that. We just want to make sure that kids get that exposure. It just pains me to see because of the downturn in the economy, and in some cases because of No Child Left Behind, that the first people let go are art and music teachers.

Not every kid's brain is wired for math, science and engineering. Some of them are more artistic, more creative, in music and the arts. I hope you feel that is also something we just can't throw overboard.

Secretary DUNCAN. Hugely important. Again, $265 million for history, the arts, financial literacy we talked about, languages, a 17 percent increase. Let me say, Senator, it is so important. We are trying to put our money where our mouth is, a major, major investment.

We can't do this alone, and I do worry. As you know, times have never been tougher at the district and the State level. Everyone is cutting back. I worry that the wrong things are getting cut. These are very, very tough decisions. When you start eliminating band and orchestra and the extracurriculars, if we are serious about reducing the dropout rate, those are often things that keep students motivated in going to school every day.

I would argue that there is huge data, huge research around the correlation between music and math, and students who have exposure to music do much better in math. It doesn't take away from their math performance. It actually enhances it.

We are going to invest, but we need districts and States, despite horrendously tough times—I know how tough. I have heard it everywhere. I heard it with you on Sunday. Despite those tough times, we have to put scarce resources where we need it most, in those art, music, drama, PE—physical education—those things that keep students engaged, keep them motivated. If we walk away from those things, we do a grave disservice to our children.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Secretary. The last thing I would say—and I don't need a response from you—is the point that Senator Hagan brought up on financial literacy. You just mentioned it. Also in the area of leaving no child behind in terms of their health and their well-being.

We need to have this in our schools, physical exercise, and measure that. We know that it can be done. I look forward to working with you on making sure that is a part of our reauthorization.

Last, Mr. Secretary, thank you. I think it was Senator Bennet who said we have to have some bold changes here and some bold innovations. Quite frankly, you are doing that. I appreciate that you have this kind of a vision for the future. We look forward to working with you on implementing it in the reauthorization. More importantly, working with you in this Administration to make sure we have the resources to implement this bold vision for the future.

Thank you for your great leadership, Mr. Secretary. We really look forward to working with you on getting a great bill through this year.

Secretary DUNCAN. Thanks for your leadership and partnership, we have an opportunity of a lifetime here. If we can do the right thing here, we are going to change education in this country for decades to come. It is an extraordinary opportunity.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, you are the right person in the right place at the right time.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

The committee will stand adjourned, but we will keep the record open for 10 days for closing comments and other questions.

[Additional material follows.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi, and members of the committee thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for the hearing "ESEA Reauthorization: The Obama Administration's ESEA Reauthorization Priorities."

The American Association of University Women is a membership organization founded in 1881 with approximately 100,000 members and 1,000 branches nationwide. AAUW has a proud 128-year history of breaking through barriers for women and girls and has always been a strong supporter of public education. Today, AAUW continues its mission through education, research, and advocacy.

AAUW believes that quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society. In 2002, AAUW joined in the bipartisan enthusiasm when the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law—which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965—was first passed, hoping the law would provide a remedy for ailing schools and low student performance. There are some good ideas in NCLB, such as increased teacher and school accountability, higher standards of achievement for student progress, supplemental service funds for low-income students, and public school choice for students who attend underperforming schools. In addition, AAUW worked hard for the inclusion of programs to serve girls' special needs and was successful in ensuring that NCLB included provisions to reauthorize the Women's Educational Equity Act; strengthen dropout prevention measures; protect girls from sexual harassment in schools; and increase girls' access to and interest in technology.

It has become clear, however, that there is a large difference between the ideals espoused in the law and the implementation and realization of program goals. While NCLB set lofty aspirations for public education, its poorly targeted punitive measures and the law's unfunded mandates have left many States and school districts in dire straits; in fact, NCLB has been underfunded to the tune of over $85 billion since its inception—a figure local school boards cannot possibly supplant.[1] AAUW believes it is possible—and necessary—to maintain a commitment to high standards and greater accountability in our Nation's public schools, but the Federal Government must develop measures that do not impose sanctions in a way that undermines success. As Congress and the Administration begin to contemplate ESEA reauthorization, AAUW offers the following recommendations for strengthening the law's goals, improving its implementation, and making clear progress in closing the achievement gap:

• **Strengthening STEM Education:** AAUW supports promoting and strengthening science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, especially for girls and other underrepresented populations in the fields. In order to close the gender gap in the STEM fields, AAUW supports efforts that train teachers to encourage girls and other underrepresented groups to pursue STEM careers, and recommends a grant program from which schools can cover a number of expenses including mentoring, after-school programs, summer programs and internships, field trips, etc. Moreover, ESEA should include science as a required area of assessment used to calculate Adequate Yearly Progress goals.

By measuring student performance and disaggregating data by gender, race, and socioeconomic status, we can obtain valuable information about student aptitude in science and better identify opportunities to improve girls' exposure to and achievement in science.

• **Requiring High Schools Sports Data Collection:** AAUW believes that high schools should be required to report basic data on the number of female and male students in their athletic programs and the expenditures made for their sports teams. Access to such data will enhance compliance with title IX and aid in the continued expansion of athletic opportunities for girls at the high school level. This is important because while girls comprise 49 percent of the high school population,[2] they receive only 41 percent of all athletic participation opportunities, amounting to 1.3 million fewer participation opportunities than male high school athletes.[3] Sta-

[1] National Education Association. (February 4, 2008). *Funding Gap: No Child Left Behind.* Retrieved April 27, 2009, from *http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/fundinggap.pdf.*

[2] U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey. (2005). School Enrollment, Table 1. Retrieved April 7, 2009, from *http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/school/cps2005/tab01-01.xls.*

[3] National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). (September 18, 2006). *Participation in High School Sports Increases Again; Confirms NFHS Commitment to Stronger*

Continued

tistics have shown that girls thrive when they participate in sports and are less likely to get pregnant, drop out of school, do drugs, smoke, or develop mental illness.[4]

• **Supporting Reauthorization and Implementation of the Women's Educational Equity Act:** This law was first enacted in 1974 to promote educational equity for women and girls, through the provision of funds to help education agencies and institutions meet the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. AAUW strongly supports the principles of WEEA and full funding of this act, as well as the appropriate application of these funds to meet the goals of the program. Title IX remains a vital tool in providing equal educational opportunities and WEEA, when used properly, can provide critical technical assistance to schools as they work to comply with title IX not just in athletics but in all educational programs that receive Federal funds.

• **Creating Environments Free of Bullying and Harassment:** The implementation of stronger policies to deter bullying and harassment will help to ensure a safe learning environment for all students. Almost a decade ago, AAUW's own research revealed that 83 percent of girls and 79 percent of boys reported having experienced sexual harassment, and over one in four students stated that harassment happens "often."[5] More recent research shows that bullying affects nearly one in three American school children in grades 6 through 10.[6] AAUW advocates passing legislation to better address bullying and harassment; these measures should include the Department of Education Office for Civil Rights' definition of harassment and identify the classes that are protected (including actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religion).

• **Decreasing the Use of High-stakes Testing and Using Multiple Measures:** AAUW believes in holding schools accountable for demonstrating that they are meeting educational goals. However, it is both problematic and discriminatory to rely on tests as the sole indicator of student progress. AAUW is supportive of provisions encouraging the use of multiple measures of student achievement—including flexible and innovative growth models and tracking the same group of students over time to determine whether schools meet annual benchmarks and allowing schools to use a number of factors for determining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AAUW joined more than 120 national education, civil rights and religious organizations in signing a statement stating that other key measures that demonstrate student achievement and progress should be explored and utilized.[7] While these measures will provide more flexibility, accountability must not be lost in the process.

• **Closing the Achievement Gap Once and for All:** The past 50 years have seen continued improvements in proficiency levels among both girls and boys across a wide range of subjects. However, the existence of an achievement gap continues to stand in the way of true educational progress for all. While AAUW's 2008 report, *Where the Girls Are*, showed girls' educational gains have not come at the expense of boys, the report also further illuminated large gaps in test scores among children of different races and ethnicities and among children from different family income levels. For instance, a majority of African-American and Hispanic 12th graders score below a basic level of proficiency in math, while a 23- and 24-point gap exists between students of lower-income and higher-income families in reading and math, respectively, at grades 4, 8, and 12.[8] AAUW believes that a quality education is a civil right, and strongly supports efforts to close this persistent and detrimental achievement gap.

Leadership. Retrieved April 7, 2009, from *http://www.nfhs.org/web/2006/09/participation_in_high_school_sports_increases_again_again_confirms_nf.aspx.*

[4] Women's Sports Foundation. (December 12, 2007). *Women's Sports & Physical Activity Facts & Statistics.* Retrieved January 16, 2008, from *http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/binary-data/WSF_ARTICLE/pdf_file/191.pdf.*

[5] AAUW Educational Foundation. *Hostile Hallways: Bullying, Teasing, and Sexual Harassment in School,* p. 4 2001.

[6] Members of the National Safe Schools Partnership (June 2007). *Bridging the Gap in Federal Law: Promoting Safe School and Improved Student Achievement by Preventing Bullying and Harassment in our Schools.* Retrieved on April 7, 2009, from *http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/000/912-1.pdf.*

[7] National Education Association. (April 2008). *Joint Organizational Statement on "No Child Left Behind" Act.* Retrieved March 3, 2009, from *http://www.nea.org/home/1400.htm.*

[8] AAUW Educational Foundation. (May 2008). *Where the Girls Are: The Facts About Gender Equity in Education, 18–19.*

• **Making NCLB Funding Mandatory at the Authorized Levels:** Research by the Center on Education Policy found that approximately 80 percent of school districts said they have costs associated with the law not covered by Federal funding.[9]

Ensuring Adequate Physical Education Classes, and Ensuring Equity in Facilities and Equipment Access and Usage: Over the past 25 years, the percentage of overweight girls has more than doubled; currently, 16 percent of girls ages 6 to 19 are overweight, up from 6 percent in 1974.[10] Further, minority and low-income girls have the highest rates of childhood obesity.[11]

• **Continuing to Offer Public School Choice and Flexibility:** AAUW believes it is in students' best interests to be offered public school choice and flexibility, and schools should continue to encourage innovative programs and classroom techniques. Such flexibility and innovation, however, must be consistent with civil rights law, including title IX, and public funds should only be used for public education, not private school vouchers.

• **Improving Teacher Training and Retention:** AAUW believes there should be a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. NLCB reauthorization should include an expansion of programs that improve teacher training and retention.

• **Holding Schools Accountable:** Schools should be held accountable for demonstrating that they are meeting educational goals, but only in such a way that it doesn't create a bigger problem than it seeks to solve. NCLB designates schools that fail to meet AYP as "low-performing" and provides sanctions against such schools. AAUW believes the Federal Government should offer incentives and assistance to struggling schools, rather than punishment, which only serves to further harm students.

• **Cross-Tabulating Data:** AAUW recommends that data be cross-tabulated for State assessment systems, State reporting requirements, AYP goals, and graduation rate requirements. Having the most accessible, accurate and detailed information will encourage action specifically tailored to improve outcomes for those falling behind. School districts, educators, and policymakers cannot create the right solutions if they do not have the right data to truly know what segments of the population need help.

• **Expanding Afterschool Programs through 21st Century Learning Centers:** After-school programs should be expanded to enrich the school experience and improve educational outcomes. One program vehicle might be the 21st Century Community Learning Centers; this could also be used to expand STEM programs—currently allowed as an option but given no real incentive.

• **Increasing Access to and Funding for Early Childhood Education:** Providing a foundation of strong early childhood education will help improve and sustain achievement in later years. AAUW supports funding increases for Head Start and Early Head Start to ensure all children are prepared for school, as well as access to high-quality and affordable child care to ease the burden on working families and expand educational opportunities.[12]

For more than 125 years, AAUW has fought for educational equity and achievement in our Nation's public schools. Reauthorization of ESEA represents a tremendous opportunity to make significant strides in this direction, and we are committed to putting our full resources behind this effort. AAUW looks forward to working with you on this significant legislation in the year ahead.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

[Whereupon, at 12:41 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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[9] Center on Education Policy. (2006). *From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 4 of the No Child Left Behind Act,* 4. Retrieved December 30, 2008, from *http://www.cep-dc.org/__data/global/nidocs/CEP-NCLB-Report-4.pdf.*

[10] Girl Scouts of the USA. *Girls & Overweight: Key Facts.* Retrieved December 30, 2008, from *http://www.girlscouts.org/research/publications/original/gs__key__facts__p1c.pdf.*

[11] Ibid.

[12] The Office of the President-Elect (2008). *Education: The Obama-Biden Plan.* Retrieved December 23, 2008, from *http://change.gov/agenda/education__agenda/.*