FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE: IMPROVING AMERICA'S SCHOOLS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE: IMPROVING AMERICA'S SCHOOLS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Tuesday, July 17, 2001

House of Representatives,

Subcommittee on Education Reform,

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Washington, D.C.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2 p.m., in Room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Mike Castle presiding.

Present: Representatives Castle, Roukema, Hilleary, Ehlers, DeMint, Keller, Kildee, Scott, Woolsey, Hinojosa, McCarthy, Sanchez, Ford, Davis, Kind and Kucinich.

Staff Present: Patrick Lyden, Professional Staff Member; Doug Mesecar, Professional Staff Member; Michael Reynard, Deputy Press Secretary; Whitney Rhoades, Legislative Assistant; Deborah L. Samantar, Committee Clerk/Intern Coordinator; Jo-Marie St. Martin, General Counsel; Bob Sweet, Professional Staff Member; Denise Forte, Minority Legislative Associate/Labor; Ruth Friedman, Minority Fellow; Maggie McDow, Minority Legislative Associate/Education; Alex Nock, Minority Legislative Associate/Education; Joe Novotny, Minority Staff Assistant/Education; and Brendan O'Neil, Minority Legislative Associate/Education.

Chairman Castle. Good afternoon. A quorum being present, the Subcommittee on Education Reform will come to order. We are meeting today to hear testimony on improving America's schools through educational research.

Under Committee rule 12(b), opening statements are limited to the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of the Subcommittee. Therefore, if other Members have statements, they may be included in the hearing record. With that, I ask unanimous consent for the hearing record to remain open 14 days to allow Members' statements and other extraneous material referenced during the hearing to be submitted in the official hearing record.

Without objection, so ordered.

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

Chairman Castle. I will now proceed with my opening statement. I am pleased to welcome everybody in the room to the first, at least in this term of Congress, the first in a series of hearings on how best to strengthen and reform the Federal role on education, research, evaluation and dissemination, and, as the title in today's hearing suggests, successfully translate education research into practice in our Nation's schools.

With the House and Senate ready to convene the conference on H.R. 1, the No Child Left Behind Act, school administrators, educators and parents are already examining various strategies and methods to help their students meet and exceed the new and more challenging standards of accountability. Yet, with few notable exceptions, precious little attention has been paid to education research as part of the whole debate on education reform.

Some say that 30 years of federally funded research, assistance and evaluation has had little or no significant impact on educational policies and practices. To the extent that this is true, I believe this is due to the fact that there has not been enough value placed on the need for scientifically based education research as a means to drive good policy, effective instruction and, most important, student achievement.

For example, from 1967 to 1976, the Federal Government conducted the largest education experiment ever conducted in the United States, comparing more than 20 different teaching approaches on more than 70,000 students in 180 schools. Yet at the end of the study, all of the programs, those that were successful and those that failed, were recommended for distribution to our school districts, with some that were considered a failure in the study marked as exemplary and effective.

In part, this problem is due to the fact that education research activities are scattered throughout the Department of Education, even throughout the Federal Government. As we learned from hearings last year, the history of education research at the Federal level lacks a specific vision and mission, and it never really found its place in

the Department. Perhaps this is best highlighted by the fact that while OERI is the Department of Education's main singularly focused research and dissemination program, these activities are not the major focus of the office.

I think that all of us here would agree that some reform and restructuring are needed, and most have agreed that improving student achievement, not protecting the current research structure, should be our main objective.

For these reasons, last year I introduced legislation, H.R. 4875, the Scientifically Based Research, Evaluation, Dissemination and Information Act, to reform OERI and institutionalize new high standards of quality to ensure that our Federal investments produce results. Then and now, among other things, I will seek to insulate our Federal research, evaluation statistics activities from partisan or undue political influences, put the needs of our teachers and students first, insist on the use of rigorous scientific standards to identify and disseminate effective strategies and methods, and ensure the program evaluations are impartial.

Without a doubt my bill will be a departure from the status quo, yet I believe if we are to fundamentally reform education and make a difference in the lives of children, we must expect better from OERI, and there is no question in my mind that this can be accomplished.

I have already discussed the need to reform OERI with President Bush, who named it as a top priority in making sure that the Federal education programs produce results. Secretary Paige, other Bush administration officials, and experts in the field and others have also expressed their strong personal interest in moving legislation forward. In each case, including this panel, there seems to be general agreement that education research is critical to improving the academic success of our students.

I wish to thank each of our witnesses for taking time to be with us today, and I look forward to learning more about the changes that we need to make to move research out of the ivory towers and into our classrooms. Among the topics I hope to hear the witnesses discuss are knowledge of how the structure of OERI can be improved, how education research efforts help in classroom practices and how Federal education programs can be independently and effectively evaluated.

In just a few moments I will proceed with introductions. At this time I want to thank Ranking Member Kildee for working with me to develop and report OERI reform legislation in the 106th Congress, and I hope we can continue to work together on this important issue. To that end, I yield to him for any statement that he may wish to make.

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

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER DALE KILDEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATON AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Kildee. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to be here with Governor Castle as we begin our efforts this Congress at reauthorizing the Office of Educational Research and Improvement and other related programs in the Department of Education. I know that both of us look forward to gaining the perspective of today's witnesses on this very important topic. The research, technical assistance, dissemination and evaluation activities of the Department are critical if we are to improve the educational achievement of our Nation's students.

With the final passage of H.R. 1 later this session, schools and school districts will have increasing need to access research, improving practices in a format that is able to be replicated and easily understood.

As this Subcommittee picks up where we left last year, I hope we will be able to reach a bipartisan consensus on reauthorization of OERI. Last year the Subcommittee approved a bill that resolved a major difference between Governor Castle and myself over where OERI should be placed. An important focus in our deliberation should be the strengthening of dissemination of research-based best practices in a fashion that can be understood by teachers and parents at the local level. Too often the findings of research cannot be applied in our classrooms because they are too complex or simply not applicable.

Lastly, it is critical to invest additional resources if we are to ensure that we produce quality research that can reach and inform the local level. We should not go on research on the cheap. It is important that we invest in research. For too long the appropriations of OERI have been pitifully small when compared with other Federal research efforts.

In closing, Governor, I want to thank you for holding this hearing, and I look forward to our work on this issue. Mr. Kind and I will have to be leaving soon. We all serve on various subcommittees. We have a very important markup on a resources subcommittee. So I and Mr. Kind will have to be leaving very, very soon for that, because there will be a motion very, very early, but I certainly will be reading your testimony, and Alex here will be helping me digest it. Thank you very much.

Chairman Castle. We all have our interpreters up here. Thank you very much, Dale. We appreciate that, and if Mr. Kind has to leave as well, what I am going to do now is

introduce all the witnesses, but I think I will skip to Ms. Schmitt, because Mr. Kind is going to introduce her, and then I can go back and do the others.

Mr. Kind. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, let me, first of all, commend you for holding this hearing and for your interest in the reauthorization of OERI. As you know, I have had a particular interest in this. We have worked well together in the past, and I look forward to working with you as we move forward on a good piece of legislation that I think is going to be a bipartisan outcome, given the importance of the dissemination of information for the type of innovation and reforms that we want to see in our public school system, and this hearing is going to be very interesting.

Unfortunately Mr. Kildee is right. We have a markup that we are going to have to run off to, so we will be reviewing everyone's testimony here today. I want to thank all the witnesses, but I want to especially take this opportunity to welcome my good friend, Ms. Mary Ann Schmitt, who will be testifying today. She and I, Mr. Chairman, go back to our young rebellious days in the mid-1980s at the London School of Economics together, and now since this time, whether she was at the Department of Education, Director of Goals 2000 Community Project, or now as president of the New American Schools, she is one of the foremost experts on comprehensive school reform, and a lot of the reforms and the consultations that she and New American Schools have been holding across the country have proved of great value to many, many schools, even schools in Wisconsin and my congressional district. So I want to welcome Ms. Schmitt here. It is good to always see her testifying before our Committee, and thank you all to the witnesses for your interest in this subject as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Mr. Kind.

Mrs. Biggert. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Mrs. Biggert.

Mrs. Biggert. I do have an opening statement, but in the interest of time, if I could have unanimous consent to submit it for the record.

Chairman Castle. We have already consented to that for everybody, so we would be happy to have it submitted. Thank you very much. We appreciate that.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JUDY BIGGERT (R-IL), SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C. – SEE APPENDIX B

Chairman Castle. I am going to run through the rest of the introductions, and then we will call you for your testimony.

And we will start with Dr. Frank Newman, who is the visiting professor of public policy and sociology at Brown University. He is also a visiting professor at Teachers' College at Columbia University. In July of 1999, Dr. Newman stepped down after serving 14 years as president of the Education Commission of the States. ECS is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, whose purpose is to help Governors, legislators and other State education leaders develop and implement policies and improve education.

The second witness will be Dr. Susan Fuhrman. Dr. Fuhrman is the dean and a George and Diane Weiss Professor of Education at the Penn Graduate School of Education. She also chairs the management committee of the Consortium for Policy Research and Education, known as CPRE. CPRE, in its 16th year of funding from OERI, conducts research on State and local education policies and finance, subjects that Dr. Fuhrman has written widely on.

Of course, Ms. Schmitt has already been introduced.

Dr. Forgione is the superintendent of the schools of the Austin Independent School District in Austin, Texas. He has served as the chief educational officer at the local, State and national levels over the course of a 30-year career in public education. He is currently chair of the Texas Council for Urban Schools and is also vice president of the Texas School Alliance, and previously Dr. Forgione served as the U.S. Commissioner of Education Statistics in the Department of Education. And he was the superintendent of public instruction in the State of Delaware, which is the most important job he has ever held.

Dr. Albert L. Bennett is the Harold Washington Professor of Education at Roosevelt University. He is currently the director of the Consortium on Chicago School Research. Before coming to Roosevelt, Professor Bennett was the senior staff associate at the Chicago Community Trust, with responsibility for administration of the trust and education grant-making program.

And finally, Dr. Dawn Goldstine for over 10 years has served as the division superintendent of North Hampton County Public Schools in Machipongo, Virginia. Previously Dr. Goldstine was the assistant superintendent for instruction at Wantaugh Public Schools in Wantaugh, New York. She is a member of the American Association of School Administrators and formerly chair of the Region 2 study group of Tidewater superintendents.

That is the introduction. The basic ground rules are relatively simple. We operate under a 5-minute rule. You will have 4 minutes, and those little machines there in front of you of green, one of yellow, and then it turns red, and there is a little bit of latitude in the red, but we don't want to go too crazy with that, and we will go through all of you,

and then we will take questions rotating back and forth in 5-minute segments as well. And depending on votes and time or whatever may be, we may have an additional round of questions. We may not. We just don't know the answer to that.

So that, Dr. Newman, we are back to you, sir.

STATEMENT OF FRANK NEWMAN, PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIOLOGY, BROWN UNIVERSITY, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Mr. Newman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and this has already been helpful. I had never known that Mary Ann Schmitt had a rebellious youth, and I can use that information.

Mr. Chairman, on the spectrum of activities that are involved in your description, I would like to concentrate on how we get to first-class research. Not only does that strike me as perhaps the single biggest problem, but also it is the place where the Federal Government has the biggest and clearest role in the education system, and it seems to me the goal ought to be very clear. We not only need first-class research that drives reform, but we need that research widely understood. Our experience at ECS was that you could not create effective reform unless the public understood what was going on.

The problem with research, at least public scholarship, is not a deficiency of quantity, but of quality. The problem is that the research in this country is grossly inadequate to the task. In terms of quantity, there are 980 recognized journals in the field of education that are in the ERIC clearinghouse, and there are more than that in newsletters and a variety of other things. There is a ton of material out there.

The problem is not whether there is anything to read, but whether there is anything worth reading. And for the last 30 years or so, I have been involved in this task of trying to worry about reform as president of a university, as chair of two Federal task forces, and as president of the Education Commission of the States. What I learned from all this was that too much of the research is basically opinion buttressed by anecdotes. We have not insisted on a careful structure to research, to careful focus, to focusing on the most important problems, and, in fact, at the Education Commission of the States, which is arguably the biggest single consumer of research, putting it together for policymakers, most of our staff did not read these journals on a regular basis at all.

There is indeed some helpful research, and I must say that CPRE that Dr. Fuhrman runs was always one of our favorite sources of good research. So there is good certainly out there, but it is very slender compared to the problems. It doesn't have to be this way.

What I would like to argue is that what we need to do is think in fundamentally different terms about the structure of research. I would argue that what we need is a

research institute in education; modeled on the great success we have had in the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.

Some years ago I was writing a book and did a study of research in this country and its role vis-à-vis the world and all fields. It is absolutely stunning how successful American research is, and it is basically university research. And essentially every field, when you examine where the leadership is, it resides in American research and particularly in university research. But it is done on a different basis. It is done in an institute that is politically shielded. You were talking about protecting it earlier; politically shielded, carefully peer-reviewed research, long-term viewpoint, clear willingness to stay with research problems over a long period of time, and a tradition in infrastructure that favors first-class research designs.

Here are some things that would matter: One, creation of good databases. We have had one fascinating example recently. The Mellon Foundation, of all people, put together a first-class research base, tackled two subjects so far out of it, affirmative action and sports; in both cases demonstrated that many of the myths on which some of our policy is based simply are inaccurate, but it took a first-class, deep research base, 45,000 students.

Second, focus on issues of importance. We have been much too scattered, I think was the term you used, Mr. Chairman, and I would agree with that, much too scattered, and we have often focused on things that are of interest to someone, but they are small. They are not the central issues on which reform is based. There are plenty of big central issues to worry about, and instead, what we have often on the big central offices, such as is smaller class size helpful, are smaller schools helpful, is confusing and limited information.

We need longitudinal studies. We need to follow the research over a long period of time. If you look at the most helpful research, I would say the most helpful research we dealt with the entire time I was at the Education Commission of the States was the research on the new scanning of the brain and how this has helped, and that research followed infants over a decade.

Then finally, I would argue for replicating successful results. We, in the field of education, if we get a good study, we say that takes care of that. In the field of medicine, you get a good study, and immediately NIH sets the stage for other universities to begin to try and replicate it. We urgently need that.

My argument is that we are in a cycle. Education is not well respected as a field of study and an academic field. It is poorly funded. As a consequence, it is not as well done, so it becomes less well respected. We need to reverse that cycle, and I would argue a first-class research institute is what we need.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF FRANK NEWMAN, PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIOLOGY, BROWN UNIVERSITY, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND – SEE APPENDIX C

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much, Dr. Newman. Dr. Fuhrman.

STATEMENT OF SUSAN FUHRMAN, DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Ms. Fuhrman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee. I have been asked to talk about two topics. The first is the role of research in influencing policy. We all know that many other things influence policy besides research, but I believe there are things the research community can do to promote its influence.

I certainly share with Dr. Newman a belief in longitudinal research and in replication of research.

Chairman Castle. Could you move the microphone a little bit closer to you so the whole room can hear? Thanks.

Ms. Fuhrman. I hope I get an extra minute.

So, confirm findings. Research needs to be rigorous and large-scale. It needs to be designed in a way that is appropriate to answer the question. If the question is, does it work, then an experimental or quasi-experimental design with controls would be appropriate; but if the question is, how does this policy translate into practice in the field, then qualitative research in schools and classrooms is called for.

In addition to these characteristics, we need research syntheses. We need to place single studies in a larger context so policymakers know what the weight of the evidence is. There are some encouraging signs in the universities. At Penn we have just inaugurated the Campbell Collaboration, a multinational effort to produce up-to-the-minute Web-accessible syntheses in education and social policy, so recent syntheses on what works. And I take this as a very encouraging sign.

My second topic is the role of R&D centers in building cumulative knowledge and in disseminating it. I think centers that are long-term are important in asking successful questions. Research generates findings that then lead to further questions. Over time we build a knowledge base that way. I would like to give an example from the Consortium for Policy Research and Education, or CPRE. In the mid-1980s, we

examined how States were implementing increased high school graduation requirements. We found a number of courses like informal geometry, which suggested that the more challenging content envisioned by policymakers when they required more math and science units wasn't necessarily happening in the classrooms. That finding was particularly salient in States that had low-level competency exams to graduate from high school. The examinations were stressing arithmetic. The policymakers wanted algebra and geometry.

We began to write about a more coherent approach to policy where these conflicts did not appear and began to talk about the ideas of standards and other policies like student assessment and professional development aligned to them.

We also began to ask ourselves further questions: What lay behind course titles such as informal geometry? We undertook two successive studies in which we pioneered in the development of measures of instructions so we could actually measure course content on a large scale, and, in the process of that, confirmed some of the proponents of standards-based reform. For example, when teachers receive professional development in the content of the curriculum students were taking, student achievement was higher.

We are now engaged in yet another large-scale study that has arisen out of these earlier studies. Moving from the high school to elementary schools, we are engaged in the study on 120 schools that is enabling us to explore what kinds of professional development influence instruction and learning, among other important questions, and to further develop those measures of instruction that we see as key to determine content and pedagogy that is actually taking place in the classroom.

We don't wait for our findings to be conclusive to begin to disseminate them. So on this most recent study, we are already using some of those measures in conjunction with the evaluators of the California Professional Development Summer Institutes and content. They are using the measures to pre- and post-test teachers in professional development, and we are getting several thousand additional teachers to use in piloting and refining our measures.

To me, that is one key to dissemination, constant contact with the field, close links with clients, which I believe that centers are uniquely positioned to build up. We use these links to learn from policymakers what their research needs are and to help develop our agenda, and we also reach policymakers through established channels that serve them; for example, the Education Commission of the States, which Dr. Newman headed until recently. We also use multiple formats for disseminating our work. So I think there are a variety of ways that we can work to improve the quality of research and to improve its dissemination and outreach to constituents. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SUSAN FUHRMAN, DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA – SEE APPENDIX D

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Dr. Fuhrman. Ms. Schmitt?

STATEMENT OF MARY ANN SCHMITT, PRESIDENT, NEW AMERICAN SCHOOLS, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

Ms. Schmitt. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. The question that I have, Frank, is how an elitesy radical and more recently a Wharton MBA has ended up in this room with all of these Ph.D. researchers, but I hope that I do have something to offer to the discussion today.

And I think what I have been asked to speak to is how do you build the bridge between academic research and the professional development strategies that allow teachers to improve classroom practice, and then how do you make this happen at scale, and that has been the work of New American Schools. This is an incredibly important subject, given the dramatic impact the new education reform legislation moving through Congress will have on schools.

The only way we can know what works to improve student performance is to more effectively link academic research to applied research and the development of educational products and hands-on services to improve schools. This has been the mission of New American Schools since 1991. In partnership with the Rand Corporation and others, we have done extensive research and development in thousands of schools across the country and learned a great deal about how to redesign schools, how to improve teacher professional development, and ultimately how to raise student academic achievement. Yet we have remained frustrated about the state of education research, because its weaknesses handicap us and other educators from obtaining a clear and a complete picture of how school reform approaches actually impact student improvement over time.

As you know, the demands placed on education research have changed. Educators are under enormous pressure to make substantial improvements yesterday and to get those improvements to every child who needs them today. This means we must be able to take reform approaches proven to work in a handful of schools and see if they work in hundreds of schools. To scale up quality work rapidly calls for new research approaches, and requires education researchers to think differently about what they do and why, and to integrate experience and expertise from other fields, particularly modern business, where new technologies are developed and broadly disseminated, often within 18 months.

In short, researchers must get closer to the developers and disseminators of quality education products and services and help improve them while they are in the development stage rather than telling them what went wrong after the fact. Most importantly, they must develop cost-effective means of measuring widespread implementation school by school, rather than selective sampling. This is the only way we can build a system focused on continuous improvement and to stop the common and costly practice of making decisions about the best way to educate children based on too little data and poor research methods.

New American Schools is absolutely committed to improving the field of education research. We have spent over $150 million in R&D during the past 10 years to create a more systematic process to identify what works and then implement those programs and practices at scale. And based on this work and experience, and with full acknowledgment that we have made many mistakes along the way, I would like to offer four observations to improve education research.

The first, quality research is the underpinning of successful reforms. Comprehensive school-based reform is based upon multiple components, ranging from classroom management to teaching mathematics. Each one of these components is developed based upon a wide variety of research, including, but certainly not limited to, randomized experiments, core-relational studies and descriptive research.

Ultimately each comprehensive reform model as a package needs to be evaluated in well-controlled studies in order to determine its ultimate impact. As such, comprehensive school reform models are only as good as the research they are based upon, which is why regardless of the type of research being supported, it must conform to high standards of quality, including, first and foremost, the use of value added rather than absolute test scores. The measure of a reform should be its ability to increase performance, not simply echo the performance expected based on the socioeconomic status of a school's students.

Second, the research should be timely. Too often reports are released long after the analysis is completed, and OERI needs to look to streamline its review and release process.

Even in those instances where an evidence base is being built, efforts to identify effective programs are also hampered by counterproductive disputes among researchers. This problem is only exacerbated by the lack of consensus on standards and protocols in the field of education research. Meanwhile on the frontlines of school reform in the real world, this constant infighting within the educational research community has the effect of encouraging many schools simply to reject research as a guide to practice.

I don't purport to have all the answers on how to address this issue, but at a minimum, I would urge that as you move forward with the reauthorization, you continue your efforts to focus on increasing the standards of research and demanding more in return for the dollars invested.

To achieve this goal I would highlight the need for adequate funding and the development of an infrastructure, either within OERI or, I think I agree with Dr. Newman's recommendation, through an external partner organization. To build the capacity to oversee and manage this system, the fact is you simply can't do good research on the cheap. It is truly a case of you will get what you pay for.

My second observation, quality research must be relevant and translated into effective applications. We have to stop funding research that never gets translated into effective classroom practice. The profession tends to value critique over action, and it lacks adequate understanding. The traditional dissemination methods alone, and by that I mean print reports, presentations at conferences or clearinghouses will not succeed in getting best practice implemented in our classrooms. Unfortunately, government policy plays into this culture and reinforces it.

There are several areas we believe should be adopted or strengthened within OERI to address this issue. First, incentive research that leads to the development of high-quality education products and services. In particular, factor into the grant review process an applicant's capacity to apply research to product development and their track record in doing so.

Second, fund intermediaries that can identify promising approaches to education reform, and help these developers take them to scale.

Third, promote initiatives stimulating demand for those research-based offerings, such as the Comprehensive School Reform Program.

And fourth, fund studies of these programs where researchers stand along providers with an eye towards continuous improvement.

Fifth, research-based practices must be understood and accepted by schools. Earlier I alluded to the credibility of education research.

Chairman Castle. Ms. Schmitt, can I ask you to go into a conclusion? We will come back with questions.

Ms. Schmitt. Absolutely.

The problem with credibility of education research, it is critically important that we develop educated consumers in the field of research. Right now there is a great deal of skepticism, and we should see this as a positive, not a negative, and we need to focus on building the skill level, the knowledge base and the capacity to understand effective high-quality evidence and research from that which is not. Until recently, there has been no attempt to build that kind of information base or capacity in the field, and I urge you to look at the work of a new organization called the Education Quality Institute.

In the coming months, Congress will likely pass a major education reform initiative which will hold States and schools to a new level of accountability for making sure that all students are actually learning. This is a very positive step and should have a profound impact on creating an even larger demand for education solutions that work. Indeed, faced with some of the sanctions that are likely to be imposed upon schools for failure, many will be scrambling to implement reforms, which have evidence to suggest that they will be successful and implemented.

What I urge today is that the Committee look at developing a more systematic process, invest in the development of a much more systematic process to identify what works, to then invest in building the capacity of those research organizations to take those programs and practices to scale, and then to make them sustainable in the long term. The work of New American Schools and the Education Quality Institute lead to an information base and expertise over the past decade that speaks to the ability to do this if we make the right sorts of investment, and I hope this Committee will consider that.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARY ANN SCHMITT, PRESIDENT, NEW AMERICAN SCHOOLS, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA – SEE APPENDIX E

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Schmitt. Dr. Forgione.

STATEMENT OF PASCAL FORGIONE, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, AUSTIN, TEXAS

Mr. Forgione. Good afternoon. I am Dr. Pat Forgione, currently the superintendent of schools in the Austin Independent School District in Austin, Texas, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to offer testimony on the topic of research into practice, and I have prepared testimony that I have submitted. Given the breadth of the voices here on the panel, I will concentrate my comments on issues related to creating a structure and operation that will ensure the integrity and quality of the Nation's research and statistics function to support quality education across the Nation.

There is so much I would want to say to you on behalf of students, teachers and citizens who value and believe in quality public schools in America, but most importantly, I implore Congress to please continue to invest. Please continue to invest in our children and our teachers. At the heart of our enterprise of public education, we are and must be about achieving equitable academic success for all children. Ultimately, to be an effective public school system, we must know and use best practices and current research to inform and guide our daily teaching and learning.

And the second section of my paper, I provided a personal prospective on an urban school reform. I think my life is like that of a number of peers around the country, and as you read those pages, you will get a sense of the issues that concern and affect us

daily that I hope a research agenda would address.

In the third section, I speak to the role of statistics in educational improvement. Let me clearly state that I support a major Federal role and investment in education statistics and research. These functions, in my opinion, are well within the appropriate Federal role in education, and critical to the Nation's educational health. Certainly the Federal Government is the junior government partner in education, with only spending 6 percent of that investment, but statistics and research are areas that are considered central to the Federal role.

With regard to H.R. 4875, there is a glaring need for Congress to reinvent the educational research, evaluation and dissemination functions. I applaud the new vision of these functions that is set out in H.R. 4875, the scientifically based educational research proposal. Also, the institutional safeguards related to integrity and independence that are outlined are absolutely needed.

However, the proposed National Academy presents to me an ideal or very mature vision of how the education research, evaluation and information function might be organized. It is, in my opinion, an unrealistic leap of faith that is too adventurous and hopeful at this time.

Let us take stock. By unanimous accounting, the National Center for Education Statistics is recognized as the successful Federal agency that has shown both its capacity and its track record in well-done studies and valuable data sets. Everything that Dr. Newman said, NCES has all of these data sets and has been doing that for decades. So, please, don't throw NCES into a new sea of uncertainty that offers little prospects for enhancing reform; in my opinion, significant risks to continued success and viability.

Again, I reinforce that explicit institutional safeguards need to be built into the NCES and the National Academy of legislative authority in three areas: personnel, budget formulation and reporting. And on pages 10 to 12, I outline each of those in detail. Therefore, I respectfully ask that we preserve NCES as an independent statistical agency, in the tradition of the Census Bureau within the Commerce Department or the Bureau of Labor Statistics within the Labor Department, and enhance the explicit statutory safeguards related to the Commissioner's ability and budget formulation, personnel and reporting.

With respect to the NAEP and NAGB relationship to NCES, I believe the current agreement of sharing responsibilities for NAEP between the Commissioner of NCES and NAGB has worked and is in the Nation's best interest. I believe everyone in this room would have a strong consensus that NAEP is flourishing and has distinguished itself as a national benchmark. So why propose to separate NAEP from NCES? You should not underestimate the technical demands that this premier assessment program requires, and having the strength and experience in the NCES behind it now for over three decades must not be lost. There has been a healthy and productive tension in this relationship, but

it has been good for the Nation, good for NAEP, and I believe it should remain.

Moreover, in this time when accountability in education is resonating across the landscapes, and I am from Texas, and you know what that is like in accountability testing and assessments is going to come under more scrutiny. Why would we want to intentionally remove the premier statistical agency not only in the United States, but also in the world, from having a major role? Isolating the capacity and credibility of NCES from the needed technical work required to design and develop quality testing and accountability system simply does not make sense to me.

With respect to OERI's reauthorization, I am sorry to say that the Federal functions in the area of research, evaluation and dissemination are fundamentally broke, and I applaud the Committee in its desire to start over and build anew and to give the Director total authority to do that. I would ask that you consider not including NCES within that new academy, and on page 15 lay out five reasons. Certainly a most provocative reason is the current experiment with the consolidated operation, called OERI, has been a dismal failure. So I would recommend that while you want to proceed in integration, I would advise at this moment to go on a parallel track, develop NCES as an independent office with statutory guidelines, and create a new National Academy with similar safeguards.

In the final section, I give you some examples of issues that a superintendent is facing every day, and that I would hope would be part of a serious and mature research and development agenda.

In conclusion, I welcome a more active Federal role, especially in funding, and a more focused Federal role in educational research and statistics. I do believe that the structural changes proposed in H.R. 4875 are necessary and appropriate with two key modifications: Maintain NCES as an independent statistical agency, and maintain NCES's role in the area of assessment through NAEP and NAGB. Thank you very much.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PASCAL FORGIONE, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, AUSTIN, TEXAS – SEE APPENDIX F

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Dr. Forgione. We appreciate that. And Dr. Bennett is next.

STATEMENT OF ALBERT L. BENNETT, DIRECTOR, CONSORTIUM ON CHICAGO SCHOOL RESEARCH, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Mr. Bennett. Thank you, Chairman Castle and members of the Committee. I am delighted to have this opportunity to talk about ways to strengthen the relationship between research and practice. For the last 10 years I have been the director of the Consortium on Chicago School Research. The consortium is an independent federation of Chicago-area organizations that conducts research on ways to improve Chicago Public Schools and assess the progress of school improvement and reform. Formed in 1990, it is a multi-partisan organization that includes faculty from area universities, leadership from the Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago teachers' union, education advocacy groups, the Illinois State Board of Education, the North Central Regional Laboratory and other key civic and professional leaders.

The consortium does not argue a particular policy position. Rather, it believes a good policy is most likely to result from a genuine competition of ideas informed by the best evidence that can be obtained.

Besides the makeup of its membership, the most important difference between the consortium and many other research groups is a commitment to public informing. From its beginning, the consortium believed that to produce high-quality, technically sound research is necessary, but not sufficient. We believe that in order to be truly successful at what we do, our research and/or findings must be disseminated to teachers, principals and parents. We also believe that this broad educative function plays an important role in introducing and sustaining local school reform efforts.

Ten years ago we began our public informing work by dividing the various constituencies into discrete groups. We began working with relatively small groups of individuals who read research like ours, not the typical members of the local policy and research community. Over time, as the capacity of the consortium grew, we have attempted to get our reports and research findings into the hands of nontraditional groups, teachers, parents and members of the broader community.

We have come to realize that when we began our public informing activities, we started with a school group and worked toward a large group. We now know that working with large groups is both difficult and complex.

While we have been very successful in reaching members of the research community and members of the policy community and members of the Chicago Public Schools, we have not been very successful in reaching parents, teachers, and principals. And I think we understand why this is difficult. In a city like Chicago, you have 26,000 teachers, you have 570 principals, and you have hundreds and hundreds of thousands of parents. However, the lack of access and success with this group is still unacceptable. We have concluded that a research organization like the consortium can never accomplish such a labor-intensive goal, unless we establish partnerships with our organizations that understand research and, equally important, have the ability to connect practitioners, parents and other members of the community to our research.

Through various meetings and conversations, the consortium directors agreed that the North Central Regional Lab is one of the agencies appropriate for us to partner with to fulfill our community education function. Because NCREL has worked closely with teachers, it has developed an understanding of how to frame complex research findings so they are useful to classroom teachers. Over the last year or so as the director of the consortium, I have been working with NCREL staff developing ways to get the consortium's work into the hands of this nontraditional group of people, principals, teachers and especially parents.

Much of this work will be supported by NCREL's innovative use of technology. However, in the process of working together, we have found that some of the consortium's reports, although written to be successful to a wide range of stakeholders, need to be rewritten and reorganized to make them user-friendlier for principals, parents and teachers.

Over this last year I have been pleased with NCREL's ability to think about complex research findings from the perspective of classroom teachers. But more importantly, although our research is conducted in Chicago, we do believe it has implications for school systems in the region, and we look to that regional expertise to help assist us.

The connection of research to practices has been personally and professionally important to me for the last 10 years. Each year I attend professional conferences for very impressive research that is presented by very impressive research scholars. The only problem is that the people on whom the research is done and for whom the research is intended to help are, for the most part, not there. Generally speaking, they do not go to these annual meetings. They are in their schools doing their work.

I would hope that we are seeing the end to the days when researchers conducted research that were read by few and rarely widely disseminated. My work with NCREL and other agencies is an attempt by the consortium to ensure that our research findings are connected to practice, widely disseminated and used by practitioners.

Thank you for allowing me to share this most important topic with you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ALBERT L. BENNETT, DIRECTOR, CONSORTIUM ON CHICAGO SCHOOL RESEARCH, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS – SEE APPENDIX G

Chairman Castle. Thank you very much, Dr. Bennett. We appreciate that. And, Dr. Goldstine, you are next.

STATEMENT OF DAWN GOLDSTINE, SUPERINTENDENT, NORTH HAMPTON COUNTY SCHOOLS, MACHIPONGO, VIRGINIA

Ms. Goldstine. Mr. Castle and members of the Subcommittee, welcome from the trenches. I hope our story will be useful to you. North Hampton County is located on Virginia's beautiful Eastern Shore, between the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay. According to the last census figures, 27 percent of our 13,000 residents live below the poverty level; 12 percent of all housing units lack indoor plumbing; and 8 percent complete kitchen facilities. About 74 percent of our school population qualified for a free or reduced lunch; 63 percent are African American, 36 percent white and 1 percent Hispanic.

Twelve years ago, children attended five elementary schools nearly 100 years old, woefully inadequate in equipment, space and resources. The dropout rate was almost 10 percent. We had just been served with our third court order for desegregation. An ability grouping process drove elementary classroom assignments. Textbooks dated back to the 1970s. A few Radio Shack and Commodore computers were the extent of technology. Salaries were abysmal, and staff development was virtually nonexistent. Standardized test scores were also among the lowest in Virginia, and not surprisingly, only 60 percent of our graduates furthered their education beyond high school.

The task before us was daunting. In 1990, we used effective schools research to reorganize under a school-based plan; we redesigned our instructional program and tackled the issue of ability grouping. In 1993, through consolidation, we closed all five elementary schools, replaced them with two modern ones, doubled the size of the middle school, and refurbished the high school with no additional cost or tax increase to the community. Now about 80 percent of our students further their education, and in 1995, a Federal judge returned Northampton to unitary status.

Since 1996, all four schools have been honored as Virginia Schools of Excellence, and three are U.S. Blue Ribbon Schools. All four schools are fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. No Northampton school has a warned accreditation status in the Virginia reform program, and State test scores are increasing at a consistent and rapid rate.

None of this progress was happenstance. Rather, it was the result of data-driven planning and a continual cycle of goal setting, implementation, analysis and decision-making. We have been blessed with the help of many knowledgeable advisers, but none more influential than our most recent partners at AEL, Incorporated, formerly known as the Appalachian Educational Laboratory, and the Virginia Department of Education's Regional Best Practice Center. An external facilitator works directly with administrators and teachers to design relevant staff, curriculum and program development. The facilitator provides practical, down-to-earth problem solving that employs data and

research to answer day-to-day questions on student achievement, teaching strategies, standards and assessment.

Positive results are already evident. Reform has moved ahead faster and in a more focused manner. Greater collaboration and sharing has occurred between the neighboring school districts, also served by that regional that external facilitator. Greater focus is placed on student achievement, with more time spent on teaching and learning. Greater achievement has occurred on standardized tests, especially among at-risk students. Teachers are more knowledgeable as staff development focuses on what teachers and students need to know.

Make no mistake, while the new programs and requirements are costly and the task is formidable, it is doable, but not necessarily by everyone everywhere and at the same time, without carefully placed funding implemented with a carefully planned focus.

Federal funds have made a difference. The 21st Century grant has provided after-school academics and enrichment for children who need more time than the regular school day. The preschool program for at-risk youngsters helps to bridge the experience and language gap. The in-school dental program ensures that poor and migrant children whose teeth may be sadly neglected can concentrate on learning rather than their pain. These and other programs provide funding for opportunities that are beyond the reach of small, economically deprived communities. Your funding allocations translate into opportunities for staff and students in school systems across America. We in Northampton, and I am sure those other communities, thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DAWN GOLDSTINE, SUPERINTENDENT, NORTH HAMPTON COUNTY SCHOOLS, MACHIPONGO, VIRGINIA – SEE APPENDIX H

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Dr. Goldstine. Thank you to all the witnesses. We will now go to that period of time during which the Members may ask questions, and you can answer. We each have 5 minutes, and there are 6 of you. So you can do the division yourself in terms of trying to go through this pretty rapidly, and I would yield to myself for 5 minutes to begin.

First of all, I am a little bit overwhelmed by all this. You are a wonderful panel. Each of you had very pertinent comments concerning the whole area of research. I don't mean to speak for anyone, but I think there is a common thread, if you will, that we need to do better with education research in the country, and that doesn't mean there aren't pockets of excellence, but we need to do better than we are doing now.

Some of you made specific recommendations. Others made general observations. Just so you understand where we are going, I introduced legislation last term on this, and we actually had to go through a subcommittee, and we had a few hearings on it, and we are preparing to do more again this year.

As you also know, the appointment process is dreadfully slow. Talk about something that needs reform over in the Senate. And they are still waiting for confirmation, and they are just getting their people in place. So it is very hard to move forwards.

This Subcommittee, I think we may have some differences in terms of exactly how we are going to move forward, but I think we all feel, as you do and so many educators do who approach us, that we need to make changes. So we are vitally interested in what you stated, and we hope in the next few months, and I can't give you an exact timetable, but during the course of the rest of this year, to be able to take up this legislation and make changes, and I can speaking for myself, and I think it is true of others I have spoken to I know it is true of Mr. Kildee. I don't know if any of us are really set in terms of what we want to do. We just all realized that we need to do better than we are doing today, and how can we do it.

So we are reaching for answers. We are on a quest. This is not a political mission to sell something. We are trying to find whatever is the best research we can possibly determine in this country. So I say that to you because not only in answering questions here today, or other written questions may be submitted to you, but as you go back home and you have ideas, we would like to hear from you with respect to those thoughts.

Let me try to ask a question or two. I think it was Dr. Newman who mentioned NIH, which I have often compared this to. NIH does do a very good job with respect to research. We actually in our bill separated OERI out of the Department of Education altogether. That is a little bit controversial. We may have to rethink that. I don't know. But we felt that was important, and I think to some degree NIH does well because it is actually under the Department of Health and Human Services, as I understand it, but nobody realizes that because they have this sort of sense of independence about them, and we don't have that with OERI, as I view it. A lot of people view it sort of politically held on to the Department of Education. What are your thoughts about that? I mean, it is nice to say it should be like NIH, but how do we get there? The practicality of how we get there comes to mind.

Mr. Newman. NIH is in the Department, and NSF is separate, and if you look at those two, they both work, and they both work, in my opinion, for exactly the reason you are talking about. They are seen as independent agencies. They also have a structure that works, and I think it is absolutely essential to have the right structure. And that structure, first of all, I have room for a talented staff. You can't do this without a talented staff.

Pat mentioned NCES. I happen to be the chair of the task force that proposed NCES and wrote the report on it. One of the things we argued had to be built in was the room for a very talented staff the way NSF, NIH or, for that matter, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says. Not there.

Secondly, you need a tradition and infrastructure, and that infrastructure, to do competitive, peer-reviewed grants effectively, you have to have well-established structure, so you have peer reviewers that are talented, trained and so on. You have to

have a long time frame, and you have to have principally a tradition that says the research is going to have a very solid structure to the research, and it is going to be replicated over and over again, and the agency is not going to be afraid of the results.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Dr. Newman.

Let me ask Dr. Goldstine a question and maybe Dr. Bennett. Do you look to the Office of Education Research for anything, or to you is it just some sort of amorphous organization out there that means nothing to you in terms of what you are doing, for instance, in Virginia or Chicago or whatever it may be? I mean, do you get meaningful research that is disseminated to you that you can implement, or do you just glean various things?

For instance, there has been approval, you know, tens of thousands of reading studies, and it seems to me we teach reading the way we always did, and I just wonder if you really get anything productive out of it on a local level? Dr. Bennett, do you look to the Office of Education Research for anything, or is it just some sort of amorphous organization out there that means nothing to you in terms of what you are doing?

For instance, Virginia or Chicago, whatever it may be, do you get meaningful research that is disseminated to you that you can implement, or do you just glean various things? For instance, there has been approval, tens of thousands of reading studies; and it seems to me we teach reading the way we always did.

I just wonder if you really get anything productive out of it on a local level.

Ms. Goldstine. I can't tell you that unless I see OERI on something that I know exactly where the source is. I know that when we are looking to solve a problem or to deal with it, we are looking for research-based information. And we go through our Department of Education and through the U.S. Department of Education to get that kind of information in the normal sense, or through grantors.

And we survive to a great degree on the amount of money we get from grants. In our small school system we write about $3 million worth of grants a year. Were it not for that, we would be back where we were 12 years ago.

Chairman Castle. Okay.

Dr. Bennett, did you want to add anything to that? Then we'll go on to the next question.

Mr. Bennett. At the Consortium, our research is kind of particularized to Chicago. As a research unit, though, we are clearly aware of those kinds of things because we have to be informed about research. So while we try to kind of bridge the gap between research and practice by using other agencies, our research is on Chicago and really focusing on the increasing number of policy initiatives that have taken place over the last 5 or 6 years and

we hope to get those into the eyes of the people who make policy in other places.

Chairman Castle. So research is localized, regionalized?

Mr. Bennett. It is localized simply on Chicago. We look just at Chicago for the last 10 years.

Chairman Castle. Dr. Forgione, if you want to say something, or we will go on to Ms. Woolsey.

Mr. Forgione. As an urban school superintendent, I think what we need to focus on is finding the best minds who really understand it, but then for those people to truly treat us as colleagues.

On page 6 and 7 of my paper I talk about our partnership with the Institute for Learning in Pittsburgh, the best cognitive science, with Lauren Resnick, but she is coming. Today in Austin we have six colleagues from L.A. meeting with our colleagues working with all of our principals.

You have got to build learning communities to understand this. It isn't sending an e-mail that is going to do it. It is practicing. It is reflecting on it, understanding it. And often the best researchers can't talk to practitioners, so you have got to find these translation mechanisms; but they have got to be active, they have got to be connected. And therefore I tried to describe that.

This idea of writing research papers is necessary, but making that connection, and unfortunately, I have not seen in the laboratory structure or the centers that these connections are happening. Lauren Resnick was at the center at one point, but now she is doing this on her own. And 12 districts in America are partnered.

So I think we need to think about a different model of how we translate that research and engage practitioners.

Chairman Castle. I think that is a good point. I happen to agree with that. I think we all agree with it.

Ms. Woolsey.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a wonderful panel. Thank you, panel.

I just want to add to what our chairman was saying about not knowing for sure what we want from you today or what we want out of the program. But I know one thing we want. We want the biggest bang for our buck. So you are helping us look at what we are doing and making it better, I hope.

Dr. Bennett, my question to you would be, how does research center or site-based help us and help a school use any of the test data that is currently in President Bush's ESEA reauthorization proposal?

Or does it apply?

Mr. Bennett. If I understand your question and let me assume for the moment that I do, and you can correct me if I don't. Over the last several years a number of school districts have focused on test scores as a single accountability measure; and we have done that in Chicago as well. The value of focusing on the one test score as an accountability measure in Chicago has helped us as a community to acknowledge and recognize the importance of student achievement.

We have worked with schools, meaning the Consortium and our research partners have worked with schools to provide individual analysis of where schools are in terms of where their test scores are and how they might go about helping children with the knowledge and with decisions that they may make with that data.

And so I think you have to couple the whole notion of the accountability measures with the support for schools to interpret the analysis and make decisions about how schools can help their children based on this data. And we have been doing that for the last 5 years or so.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you.

Dr. Goldstine, about research centers or site-based, how does this help any of us assure that our children are tested fairly?

Ms. Goldstine. That is a good question, and that is going to be a pervasive question as long as short-answer paper-and-pencil tests are the only game in town.

I am frankly very interested in our students' test scores, but more interested in the process of thinking. I know that business is more interested in problem solvers as graduates than those that can simply take a paper and pencil test well.

Somewhere along the line, I think we have got to look at how we can produce a better learner, not just a better test-taker; and research, I think, is one of the ways that that can happen.

The process of learning is the critical issue, not just how well we do on the test. That issue has not been addressed, at least in the public's eye, yet because we are still looking at the media's interpretation of what achievement is. That is not necessarily the educator's notion of what learning is.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you. I would like to comment that you finished your presentation to us exactly when the light turned red. It was very clear to me why you were so

successful in your achievements.

Ms. Goldstine. I think it was just lucky.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you. I don't think so.

Now, I would like to ask Dr. Fuhrman. How do you suggest that we get classroom teachers involved so that we know of their concerns and so that we can incorporate the teacher in the research?

Ms. Fuhrman. I think both the agency and the grantees have a responsibility to consult with teachers about their research needs, to work with them to understand the challenges that they face, and the ways in which research can best help those challenges, how it can be presented and translated for their needs.

So it would be incumbent on the agency to take that on in terms of agenda-setting consultation with the field, and incumbent upon grantees to have a client consultation part of their mission.

Ms. Woolsey. Dr. Newman, do you think we are doing that well?

Mr. Newman. No, I don't really. I think well, I shouldn't say yeah, I will say it.

No, I don't think we are doing that well, and I think we can do a lot better.

But I think, in answer to a question that you just asked, I would like to add a point. If we have first-rate research, there is a distinct problem of dissemination. But there is another factor. If we really have first-rate research, we replicate it, we buttress it and we are sure of it, that information seeps throughout the country.

Of course, we need better dissemination methods. But if you take a field like medicine or the economy or some other fields where we have really good data, pretty soon the practitioners know about it, and the practitioners know about it because they want to know about it.

You raised the question; do the tests really show what we want? That is an issue that is roiling this country from one end to the other. We have very limited data on what kind of testing really produces the results we want.

If we had first-class data that would seep around the country and people would find it, even if we had poor dissemination. That is not an argument for poor dissemination, but that is a fact.

Ms. Woolsey. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey. Ms. Biggert.

Mrs. Biggert. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to pursue the question of the teachers. I guess my question of the witnesses would be, should the consumers of education research and not only the teachers, but the school board members and the parents have a role to play in setting the priorities for the Federal research agenda?

Is this and if so, in what ways can they participate, and how do you ensure that the teachers and parents have a seat at the table when education research and development priorities are being set?

Ms. Schmitt. I will take a first cut at that.

On a very practical level, if they are not at the table and you don't have a level of understanding and buy-in, you tend not to get acceptance in the field. And we have seen very good work be undermined by a lack of active engagement of school boards in the broad-based stakeholder group. So it is absolutely essential.

It is very challenging in the absence of an adequate infrastructure to engage all of the stakeholder groups in meaningful discourse and dialogue around research-based practices and what it takes to build the skill and capacity level of teachers to really change classroom practice for the better. So there is a great deal of work that needs to be done.

So I just separate it. First of all, engagement in the development of the research agenda, there is a great deal of work that needs to be done there. Part of it is just an iterative process, but I think it will take a lot more than that to create the kind of dialogue that leads to better research.

And then the other piece is the work that needs to be done in order to get people actively engaged in the implementation of research-based practices. We have learned a great deal around how to do that. And it would take more time than I have here today to talk that through.

Mrs. Biggert. Dr. Newman.

Mr. Newman. Could I add a point to that? I think it is essential to get this kind of input. I think there are structures that we have used to get teacher and school leader input. It is not easy, but it is as Ms. Schmitt says, it is perfectly doable.

I think you also have to have a true, first-class leadership of the academy, or whatever you call it. And I happen to think that the academy design is, in general, a very good approach.

The reason I say that you have to have that in education, we are subject to waves of fads. Most of the crucial issues like what kind of tests work well, how do students actually learn to read, what techniques does a teacher need to master to be able to be effective with the students that don't speak the language, these things have been with us for a very long time. And, as far as I can see, they are going to be with us for a long time to come.

So you need leadership that not only is listening and has a structure, but has the courage to say, we still need to know more about what kind of testing we need in order to get the kinds of skills and knowledge that are essential.

Mrs. Biggert. Where do you think that leadership would come from?

Mr. Newman. Well, an enormous amount depends on when you create an agency of the kind the chairman was describing, and an enormous amount depends on whether you can attract, and do attract, to it first-class leaders out of the field who have the stature, the courage and the backing to stay with the game plan.

And there is always, of course, a time when the political process intervenes, understandably.

For example, in the field of medicine, the war on cancer was really a push from the political world. But we have stayed with that, and the fallouts of basic science that have come from that are absolutely crucial to all sorts of fields.

So I think you have to have the courage and the political backing to pick really a talented team.

Mrs. Biggert. Thank you.

Ms. Fuhrman. Might I add to that that the agency needs to have flexible staffing so it can bring in people from the field, practitioners and researchers on term appointments? It needs to have sufficient funding for professional development and the expectation that it will engage in professional development with its staff.

It can't have a travel budget that constrains them from going out into the field, finding out from practitioners that their research needs are and finding out from researchers what are some promising opportunities to meet those needs.

Mrs. Biggert. Thank you.

Ms. Schmitt. I want to add one point. I think there is a lack of acknowledgment in this room that right now one of the biggest challenges that we have is actually building demand for research-based educational practices.

We are in over 3,000 schools. We are in about 25 districts, a number of States across the country. And the challenge is that we have to get people to sit around a table

and even ask some of the simple questions around what works, how do we know it works, how do we primarily implement it in this context. We spend a lot of time just trying to build that basic understanding and demand.

So I think that leadership, while I agree with what has been said, it really has to be built at the local level as well.

Mr. Newman. If I could just add something. That is part of the vicious circle I was talking about.

If, in fact, the research doesn't seem to the practitioners to be effective, then it makes it harder to get them to sit around. Then it is harder to get them to sit around, the research isn't as effective, and it just keeps spiraling.

So it all goes together as a package.

Mrs. Biggert. Dr. Goldstine, you had something.

Ms. Goldstine. Perhaps one of the problems in recognizing the importance of research is that people, the public, and parents; even educators understand what science means when you are talking about science or math. But when you are talking about teaching and learning that is not necessarily what is uppermost in people's minds.

They want to know, what is it going to mean to my child? What is it going to mean to the children in these classrooms? How am I going to use this so that it is useful to me in my practical, everyday life?

I think that the concept of educational research is more esoteric and more difficult for people to appreciate. It makes your tasks harder, certainly, in selling the notion that money is necessary to be able to fund that important function.

Mrs. Biggert. Thank you. Chairman Castle. Dr. Goldstine.

Mr. Forgione. I think Dr. Newman put his finger on an important point, representative leadership.

You know, NCS is well respected, but during my tenure, as I tried to point out in the paper, the core values were not to be timely, not to be predictable. You have got to set up mechanisms of advisory. By putting this national academy, you could distance it, in fact, not to be responsive.

So you need to put in place an advisory mechanism that gives it the sense that you are going to hold it accountable to translate that into product.

For example, the TIMS Tool Kit. TIMS has become a byproduct around America, the Third Internal Math and Science Study. It was only when we turned it, with OERI, into a tool kit that people could take to analyze their curriculum, to benchmark

their testing, that TIMS became a household word.

That wasn't in the culture of NCS to want to do that. That is why the leadership and in your advisory function you have got to keep that pressure on, to have a national data agenda to say, when are the data going to be ready. These statisticians often would take years in getting it out. You need it out when you need that question answered. You have got to turn that around.

So these are the kind of mechanisms that you are dealing with in the bill, and I think that you have got some good thinking here, if you could continue to make sure that you keep vectoring with the clients.

Chairman Castle. I think Dr. Bennett had a comment; then we will go to Ms. Davis.

Mr. Bennett. Very quickly, I think there are three big barriers that we always have to be conscious of when we think about parents and teachers and how they relate to researchers. One is history, two is culture, and three is language. Unless we address those, those barriers and we can talk more about those later it is never going to happen.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Davis.

Ms. Davis. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you all for being here.

I think that Dr. Newman mentioned the long time frame. And part of the difficulty that we all have with educational research is that things change. And by the time you have got a research plan in place, you have a new program; and so it is difficult to focus.

And I am wondering if you could speak to what research structures then best support that. Should we have incentives, so if you are given money, if you have grants, no matter where it is from, you can't change midstream? Or you have to do something different, I am trying to get at that. How do we do that?

And then I think the other issue always is, when you are doing research over a period of time, you also have new factors that come into play. Perhaps you drop class size; perhaps you have a peer support program, whatever it may be. Is there a research structure that supports that more, one over another?

Ms. Fuhrman. Well, grantees already are consulting with the agency. If their plans change, you don't just independently change the terms of a grant or cooperative agreement.

But I think the idea of infrastructure implies having advisors or staff at the agency who are expert in the field, who can help researchers think through those decisions about changes in course during the design of research and in terms of a long time to change.

There is much that we can do very quickly. We can set up standing study panels, much like NIH has in various fields, to begin to synthesize the research, to begin to identify quickly where the next important research opportunities are; that would not await a structural change, it could be done immediately.

Mr. Newman. Congressman Davis, there is, I think even a more fundamental thing that has to happen. I think the agency has to accept that valid answers only come from a fairly lengthy research design, and the necessity that, that research design then has to be checked by maybe other approaches to try and validate that.

We are far, far too prone when we are dealing with an absolutely fundamental issue to say, why don't we take a look at 13 kids and see how they do over the next 6 months, and we have pretty much got the answers. And we don't.

In all of the other fields of research, whether you are talking about science or social science, economics, whatever it is, how many times have we thought that we were on the track of having the answer, and we get into it 4 or 5 years before it begins to become apparent that we have got a partial answer?

Another thing that has to be done is, we have to accept the fact that research builds on itself it is a pyramid; a research project puts some understandings in place, the next project builds on that, and the next on that and that pretty soon we really know and understand things.

And in what we have now are a lot of fragmented pieces of research rather than that building process. So I think it is much more fundamental. It has to be built into the structure of something like a national academy.

Ms. Fuhrman. The point about replication, we have a premium in newness in education and, in education research, on fads, which are certainly closely related to one another.

Part of that has to do with the incentive structure within the universities because tenure, promotion decisions and even dissertations are all prized for their unique contribution to the field, not for replicating existing studies.

That is a culture change that we are certainly trying to work on at Penn, but it requires the field to understand the importance of confirming findings in varied contexts before we assume that they are true.

Mr. Newman. I should give you one example.

One of the most important pieces of research that came along the entire time that I was at the Education Commission of States was some work by a fellow named Bill Sanders down at the University of Tennessee. He studied all of the children in Tennessee over a long period of time on how important was the individual teacher, the skill of that individual teacher in affecting the child's learning.

And what he developed was a statistical profile. It is kind of complicated, but he worked this out. And the answer turned out to be that the teacher's quality was, by far, the most important factor. The next thing that happened was the University of Texas team took all of the students in the Dallas school district and tried to replicate it with a slightly different methodology. And they found basically confirming information.

That is fundamental. We now know a lot about how important the teacher is. We can say with some confidence, a bad teacher will kill your kid, particularly if you have two bad teachers. And if you have three, throw the kid away and get another one.

And these are very important findings. But it takes that dedication.

Ms. Schmitt. I would just like to add that it is incredibly important to keep pushing the envelope in the field of research and looking for new answers. But there is also incredible consensus if you read all of the research reports in the last 10 years; there is incredible consensus around what needs to take place within school buildings to improve student achievement. And the biggest barrier is taking that consensus and actually getting it implemented in classrooms.

I think that we have to debunk some of the ideas about what it takes to get to a high-performance learning environment. It is actually building teams of teachers, it is continually investing in human capital, and it is focusing on data-driven decision-making and moving beyond the rhetoric, actually building skills within classrooms. And there are a number of other things.

But we really need to look at what is that translation mechanism that takes this incredible consensus within the research community and actually builds the capacity to help teachers and principals by rolling up your sleeves, getting in there, doing high-quality training, coaching, reflecting, refinement and really building a culture of continuous improvement.

So sometimes I think when we stay up in the more ethereal research realms, we sort of miss the obvious needs that need to take place.

Chairman Castle. Thank you.

Mr. Forgione. Can I just make one comment?

Chairman Castle. If you can do it briefly.

Mr. Forgione. Regarding the time frame, we need to realize that we have an immature field. That is a reality.

You know, the gross national product and the unemployment rate took decades to build. We need to make that same investment.

The good news is in the field of reading, we have a technology now. We are training teachers in how to read. The difficulty was when I was at the Texas legislature this year, they want to fund mathematics. There is no agreement on how to teach math. We all thought math was math. But how to get agreement on how to teach it, like we have in reading, this is the disability of our field.

But it is a young field. Please invest in it, and in 30 years we will have the complement. It takes that much time.

Chairman Castle. Thank you, Ms. Davis.

Here is the schedule. We are trying to go to Mr. Hinojosa and Mr. Ford in the next 10 minutes, or perhaps a little bit less; and then we have a vote.

I will have to make a decision about whether we are going to come back or not. I have a hunch we may have more than the one vote, so we may be gone long enough that we will have to submit some questions.

Mr. Hinojosa. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was very pleased to hear Dr. Bennett from Chicago say that in doing research you need to really focus on including history, culture and language. And because of that, I want to maybe focus on special populations. I am talking about the bilingual and dual-language programs, migrant education, the challenged and disabled children and their programs, and the gifted and talented.

And I wanted to say, Dr. Goldstine, that I was very impressed with your presentation, and I would like to go visit your county school district sometime soon, because in your opening statement, you said that no other regions of the country have been as challenged as yours.

Well, I want to go see yours, because I would question that, and invite you to come visit mine where the makeup is quite different. The number of migrant students that I have is over 100,000. The Hispanic population, Latino population, does not have a 10 percent dropout rate like when you felt you were challenged; it is three times that. And the challenges just continue to be huge, like a real mountain.

So all I can say is, I was very impressed with your presentation. And I look forward to going to visit your school.

But I think that I am going to start with my first question to our good friend from Texas, Dr. Forgione.

Having been in State and Federal positions, where you could really make a difference, I appreciate your experience with education research statistics, evaluation, information dissemination, all of that. What have you learned about dealing with the Latino community? You said in your presentation that you had reduced the dropout rate from 1,200 students to 800 in 1 year.

And can you tell me what you learned with that? How we can utilize research to take that 30 percent dropout rate and bring it down to less than 10?

Mr. Forgione. In every year, you start over. So even though we did it 1 year, the next year we could be back to 1,200. It is a real challenge. I remember I was at this Committee, and you raised questions a couple of years ago about the dropout as being an impediment. The whole issue of English language learners, I think, is one that needs an increasing investment in research.

We in Austin are a community, one-third of our households are English language learners. Half of our students are Hispanic American. This is a challenge. The good news is, the cognitive research applies in both cases. We are dealing with clear expectations, rigorous, challenging content, accountable talk.

The difficulty is to build the rubric in Spanish so that the teachers can take the children in their own language, build that strong foundation, and then move them into English quickly. That is what we are trying to do. That is why, in fact, Dr. Resnick is working with us, because she wants to work in a community that is committed to true bilingual education with every student being dual-language competent.

That has got to be the goal of Austin even though this superintendent is deficient in that.

So we welcome it, but we need the best people in the country helping us, whether it is Albert Ortiz at the University of Texas or other people, Henji Hakuta at Stanford. And this is where you, creating a national vehicle that we can work with, will leave us an opportunity to grow together.

But we are trying to move in all dual language. Everything I put out is in two languages. I have got to communicate and build respect for public education across my community.

And obviously the challenge of Texas in the future is our demographics. It is a wonderful opportunity, but it also a real constraint when you are Chapter 41, which you know what that means, less resources.

Mr. Hinojosa. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time. I wish we had more time to ask questions.

Chairman Castle. We can come back if you wish to, sir.

Mr. Hinojosa. It depends on the number of votes.

Chairman Castle. There are two votes, so we would be gone a while. The first is 15 and the second one is five, unless there is a motion to recommit, in which case there

would be three votes. Mr. Ford.

Mr. Ford. Real quick. I appreciate, Mr. Chairman that there are a lot of good people on the panel.

Dean Fuhrman from the University of Pennsylvania, I thank you for being here.

And Ms. Schmitt, for whom I worked for a period of time in one of her earlier lives, and she is also a graduate of the great University of Pennsylvania, having recently graduated from Wharton.

Congratulations to you.

Dr. Forgione, it is good to see you again. We had a little, kind of cantankerous exchange last time you were before the Committee.

Delighted to see you back, Dr. Bennett, and all of the other panelists.

I have two quick questions. I would like to get some of it in writing since we are running out of time.

With regard to the ESEA reauthorization bill that this Committee passed, I would like to get, maybe briefly, 30 to 45 seconds of thought, if indeed you can reduce it without doing injustice to your argument or your feelings or perspective on the issue.

I know, Ms. Schmitt, being from Memphis we have had some experiences really or some decisions made by some of our local education policymakers about some of the strategies provided by your company. I am not interested in the blame game, but I would love to hear what the company might have learned from that experience and how we might be able to apply some of that nationally and even learn at a local level how to do things better.

That being said let me be quiet. You all came to talk to us, so let me listen for a second. And I apologize for missing most of the hearing. Dean Fuhrman, I particularly apologize to you. I hope you don't tell President Rodin on me.

Dr. Fuhrman. I won't do that.

On ESAE, 30 seconds. States are going to need sufficient resources and assistance in undertaking worthwhile annual testing and building measures of annual yearly progress.

One point I want to make is that consistently, since the 1980s, as responsibilities at the State level have increased, so has funding decreased for State agencies.

I was fortunate enough to chair Dr. Forgione's advisory board when he was chief State school officer in Delaware, and back then we struggled with the problem of

sufficient State resources to help schools.

Dr. Goldstine told us earlier about how helpful the States have been. It is shortsighted when State legislators are not sufficiently funding their agencies, which are critical in assistance and will be even more so under the new ESEA.

Dr. Newman. Let me do what I think could be a problem worth thinking about in the ESEA, and particularly the testing part that has been referred to.

There is across the country at the moment a growing apprehension about testing at the very time I think that assessment and standards and assessment have really produced results. I think you couldn't have as much progress and reform if it hadn't been for the whole standards and assessment movement.

But there is a concern that the nature of the testing we are getting isn't really up to the task of measuring what we really want it to measure. It is too simplistic. There is a lot of backlash around parents; and Massachusetts, for example, has had a real backlash on this, as well as several other States.

Secondly, we have been attempting to rush it into high-stakes efforts. I think that as the Federal Government pushes for more testing, we need to be careful that we push for high-quality testing and that we move on a continuous but not over-rapid basis, if you follow me.

Unless the parents and the schools and the teachers believe what is happening is really relevant, there will be a big backlash.

Ms. Schmitt. I will focus specifically on the question about Memphis. In Memphis, Tennessee, New American Schools, which is a nonprofit organization, has been working in partnership with that district for over 5 years and had a charismatic leader in the form of the superintendent, Dr. Gerry House, who was there for 8 years, and really brought to the district a focus on utilizing research-based strategies.

What happened most recently is a new superintendent, new team, came in and a decision was made to wipe out everything that had happened in the prior administration, literally in every school, 167 schools in the district, and it was based on a research report.

Chairman Castle. Ms. Schmitt, I am going to have to ask you to be very brief, because we are down to less than 3 minutes on this vote. We have got to get over to the vote.

Ms. Schmitt. It was very poor research. So everything that we have been talking about today and the need to dramatically enhance the quality of research that is used to make decisions is absolutely critical.

Number one lesson learned, it is not a good idea in any school district in America to mandate a particular approach. There was a 100 percent mandate, all schools, and we

should not do that.

We need buy-in, commitment and thoughtful implementation.

Mr. Ford. I appreciate that. I want to follow up with you on that as well, because I agree with you.

And whatever the Chairman wants to do, if we can come back.

Chairman Castle. We have agreed not to come back, but submit questions in writing; I have some questions that I wish to submit in writing. We could do that. Some of the others do also.

But rather than delay you all, we aren't sure how long it is going to be. So we are going to stand adjourned. You may receive a letter with questions in writing. But, again, we thank you very much for being here. We appreciate it. It is good to see all of you.

We have got to go out that door real fast. So we stand adjourned.

Whereupon, at 3:40 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.

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

The Honorable Michael N. Castle
Education Reform Subcommittee Hearing
"From Research to Practice:
Improving America's Schools in the 21st Century"
July 17, 2001

Good Afternoon. I am pleased to welcome you to the first in a series of hearings on how best to strengthen and reform the federal role in education research, evaluation, and dissemination, and, as the title of today's hearing suggests, successfully translate education research into practice in our Nation's schools.

With the House and Senate ready to convene the conference on H.R. 1, the No Child Left Behind Act, school administrators, educators and parents are already examining various strategies and methods to help their students meet and exceed the new and more challenging standards of accountability. Yet, with few notable exceptions, precious little attention has been paid to education research as part of the whole debate on education reform.

Some say that 30 years of federally funded research, assistance and evaluation has had little or no significant impact on educational policies and practices. To the extent that this is true, I believe this is due to the fact that there has not been enough value placed on the need for scientifically-based education research as a means to drive good policy, effective instruction and, most important, student achievement.

For example, from 1967 to 1976, the federal government conducted the largest education experiment ever conducted in the United States, comparing more than 20 different teaching approaches on more than 70,000 students in 180 schools. Yet, at the end of the study, all of the programs – those that were successful and those that failed – were recommended for distribution to our school districts with some that were considered a failure in the study marked as "exemplary and effective."

In part, this problem is due to the fact that education research activities are scattered throughout the Department of Education and even throughout the federal government. As we learned from hearings last year, the history of educational research at the federal level lacks a specific vision and mission, and it never really found its place in the Department. Perhaps this is best highlighted by the fact that, while OERI is the Department of Education's main, singularly focused research and dissemination program, these activities are not the major focus of the office.

I think that all of us here would agree that some reform and restructuring are needed, and most would agree that improving student achievement – not protecting the current research structure – should be our main objective.

For these reasons, last year, I introduced legislation, H.R. 4875, the Scientifically-Based Research, Evaluation, Dissemination and Information Act to reform OERI and institutionalize new high standards of quality to ensure that our federal investments produce results.

Then, and now, among other things, I will seek to insulate our federal research, evaluation and statistics activities from partisan or undue political influences, put the needs of our teachers and students first, insist on the use of rigorous scientific standards to identify and disseminate effective strategies and methods, and ensure that program evaluations are impartial.

Without a doubt, my bill will be a departure from the status quo. Yet, I believe that if we are to fundamentally reform education and make a difference in the lives of our children, we must expect better from OERI. And there is no question in my mind that this can be accomplished.

I have already discussed the need to reform OERI with President Bush, who named it as a top priority in making sure that federal education programs produce results. Secretary Paige, other Bush Administration officials, and experts in the field and others have also expressed their strong personal interest in moving legislation forward. In each case – including this panel – there seems to be general agreement that education research is critical to improving the academic success of our students.

I wish to thank each of our witnesses for taking time to be with us today, and I look forward to learning more about the changes that we need to make to move research out of the ivory towers and into our classrooms. Among the topics I hope to hear the witnesses discuss include know the structure of OERI can be improved, how education research affects classroom practices, and how federal education programs can be independently and effectively evaluated.

In just a few moments, I will proceed with introductions. At this time, I want to thank Ranking Member Kildee for working with me to develop and report OERI reform legislation in the 106th Congress. I hope we can continue to work together on this important issue. To that end, I yield for any statement he may wish to make.

APPENDIX B -- WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JUDY BIGGERT (R-IL), SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Opening Statement of Representative Judy Biggert (R-IL)
House Committee on Education and the Workforce
Hearing on Education Research
July 17, 2001

Mr. Chairman, good afternoon. Thank you for calling this timely hearing on education research and how it can help improve America's schools in the 21st Century.

I think it is safe to say education research is one of the most overlooked areas of education. When we talk about reforming our nation's public schools, rarely do we mention the importance of education research and development.

Frankly, there probably aren't many Americans who are even aware that there is a federal office whose mission is to conduct and support education-related activities such as planning, assessments, coordination and research information dissemination. Well, as we will hear from out witnesses today, there is an office dedicated to such purposes, and it's called the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, also known as OERI.

N CREL

I know first hand the good and valuable worked supported by the OERI because I am fortune to have a regional education laboratory located within the congressional district I represent. Since 1984, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL), which is located in Naperville, Illinois, has provided information to and worked with schools, teachers, community members, parents and administrators throughout Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.

I applaud the work undertaken over the years by those working at NCREL. Their efforts have helped promote good education practices and achieve quality education reform in schools throughout the Midwest during a time when schools located in many other places were falling a step behind.

I've often compared the work of NCREL to those who evaluate the financial industry. Surely, none of us would be stock without doing extensive research on the past performance of the stock, the strength of the company we were investing in, or the long-term prospects for the success of such company or stock. It is the same with NCREL.

NCREL performs the R & D research educators and public policy makers need to make quality investments in education – whether it be teaching methods or curriculum materials. And, I would say to those calling for revising or even eliminating the role of OERI in our nation's education system, that quality information is the key to success. Efforts to reform our education system will fail without the knowledge gained through research done and disseminated by institutions such as NCREL.

But, this is not to say that the OERI, and the research is supports, aren't due for a little reevaluation and mission update. Clearly, this Office, like many others, is ready for a little makeover.

I am troubled by some of the operational problems that have dogged the OERI and am hopeful that your proposed legislation, Mr. Chairman, will take care of any troublesome issues. I also am hopeful that today's hearing will help us better understand what this Committee should to improve the Office and therefore ensure that its core programs remain operational, sound and beneficial.

Again, Mr. Chairman, I thank you for calling this important hearing. I look forward to working with you, the individuals testifying today and the Department of Education to both strengthen the mission and performance of the OERI, as well as to ensure its relevance in the 21st Century.

Thank you.

APPENDIX C -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF FRANK NEWMAN, PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIOLOGY, BROWN UNIVERSITY, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Testimony to the Committee on Education and the Workforce
Dr. Frank Newman
July 16, 2001

From Research to Practice: Improving America's Schools in the 21st Century

A major problem in the spectrum of activities represented by the title, "From Research to Practice: Improving America's Schools in the 21st Century," is that the research in education is inadequate—grossly inadequate. There are problems, as well, in the way research is used and in the way even valid reforms are implemented, but the focus of these comments is on research. Not only is the need for research to guide reform great, but it is in research that the federal government plays the leading role and thus this committee can have the greatest impact.

The problem of research, or at least of published scholarship, is not deficiency of volume, but of quality. There are 980 major scholarship journals in education listed in the ERIC clearing house. (There are others less well known as well as a growing number of electronic journals and newsletters.) The problem isn't whether there is anything to read but rather is all this outpouring worth reading.

For over thirty years, I have been involved in the difficult task of implementing change in American education, as the chair of two federal task forces, as a University president, and perhaps most relevant, for over fourteen years as the president of the Education Commission of the States. These experiences, coupled with participation in an endless number of seminars and discussions on the subject of research in education, has

reinforced my sense that too much of what is published represents opinion buttressed by anecdotes. In education research, we have not insisted on the careful formulation of research designs built on a carefully constructed hypothesis. Rather, we have often accepted a more biased agenda. Many, if not most, studies have focused on narrow subjects that are easier to address but of less use in advancing the reform agenda. Despite the fact that the Education Commission of the States is the largest consumer of education research—assembling, synthesizing and translating it for policy makers—our staff seldom read any of the 980 journals.

It does not have to be this way. Some years ago I studied the overall effectiveness of American research. In essentially every other field—social sciences, physical sciences, medicine, economics, environmental sciences, whatever—American researchers were at the forefront of their field. The prime reason was the American system of organizing research—university researchers as the responsible parties; peer-reviewed competitive grants; multiple federal agencies as the grant makers. This is a system fundamentally different from the one used in education, which depends more on block grants. Block grants, even to universities, are much less effective.

A long involvement with this issue leads to the conclusion that we need a fundamentally different approach to education research, one that builds on our experiences in other fields of research. We need a federally sponsored research institute modeled on the success of the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation—an institute shielded from political pressure, adequately funded, primarily

utilizing peer-reviewed competitive grants, and capable of a long term perspective. To help those making policy and those involved in the profession of education, research needs to be concentrated in two broad areas—how learning takes place and the effectiveness of various policies, practices and programs. To create a first class research program that serves as the support for effective policy and practice, several elements are essential:

- Creation of large databases constructed with care. An example illustrates the value of a serious database. The Mellon Foundation established such a database encompassing the experience of more than 45,000 students who attended twenty-eight elite colleges and universities. In two books and a number of articles, research from the data has so far illuminated two areas of deep current concern—the effects of affirmative action in helping create a black middle class and the spread of ever more intense competition in intercollegiate athletics throughout not just Division I but Divisions II and III as well. In each case, the reports effectively shattered a number of myths on which policy and practice had been based.

- Focus on issues of importance. Too many research projects, and the resulting publications, address peripheral issues, while at the same time there are a number of critical questions for which we have limited or conflicting evidence, questions such as:
  - How do infants acquire language skills?
  - How do children acquire the ability to read?

- Under what conditions does digital technology make learning more effective and exciting?
- What and how much are college students learning?
- Do smaller classes improve learning?
- Do smaller schools improve learning?

The list of critical questions is large, but it is not endless.

- Follow the research over a long enough period to provide meaningful data. The effectiveness of a reading program or the outcomes of preschool education require a longitudinal research effort. Some of the research we found most useful to our efforts at the Education Commission of the States came not from education researchers but from neurological scientists and cognitive psychologists funded by National Institutes of Health. These careful studies exploring such issues as the impact of early childhood experience on the later ability to learn or the causes and potential corrections for difficulty in learning to read have tracked students over many years, often as long as a decade or more.

- Replicate encouraging results. One of the most valuable studies of recent years is a large, longitudinal study of Tennessee school children by William Sanders of the University of Tennessee that demonstrated the powerful influence of the skill of the individual teacher on student learning. The results were then confirmed by a University of Texas longitudinal study, using somewhat different methodology, of Dallas school children. This concept of demanding the replication of even the most

promising results has been the backbone of this country's success in medical research.

- Learn from what has worked, or failed to work, elsewhere around the world. The United States is so large and diverse that we too often fall into the easy habit of assuming whatever is to be learned can be learned right here. France has much to teach us about the effects of early childhood programs. New Zealand has experimented with policies based on the use of market forces in both elementary and secondary education and in higher education.

Surely one of the problems is that this country is not spending enough on research in education, especially considering the importance we place on improving the learning outcomes for American students. In part, this is a result of a cycle that needs to be broken. Education as a discipline within the university is not well respected. Education research among policy makers is not seen as the cornerstone of policy as it is in, for example, medicine or economics. As a result, education schools and education research are poorly funded. As a result, they are less effective and less respected. And so the cycle continues. We need to break this cycle.

SUMMARY OF SUBCOMMITTEE-REPORTED BILL

H.R. 4875

SCIENTIFICALLY-BASED EDUCATION RESEARCH, STATISTICS, EVALUATION, AND INFORMATION ACT OF 2000

National Academy for Education Research, Statistics, Evaluation and Information

- The Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the Department of Education would be eliminated and replaced with a new National Academy providing the infrastructure for the undertaking of coordinated and high quality education research, statistics gathering, program evaluation, and information dissemination.
- The Academy would be located within the Department of Education but would function as an autonomous entity. Autonomy will help ensure the Academy's activities are carried out with the greatest level of independence and integrity.
- A Director, appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, would replace the assistant secretary and serve a six-year term.
- The Director would be responsible for overseeing and ensuring the integrity of the activities carried out under the Academy.
- Under the Director, a national board comprised of each of the Commissioners appointed under the Academy, appropriate federal agency directors, and individuals, (including teachers, parents and researchers), nominated by the president and Congress would help the Director oversee the functions of the Academy.
- The Academy would consist of three main Centers, including: the National Center for Education Research; the National Center for Program Evaluation; and the National Center for Education Statistics.

1. National Center for Education Research

- The National Center for Education Research would replace the five existing education institutes and be headed by a Commissioner.
- The Commissioner of Education Research would oversee all research activities, guided by a seven member committee with extensive technical expertise. This committee would replace the current 15-member National Educational Research Policy and Priorities Board and play a greater role in policy decisions.
- All research funded by the Center would be required to meet the requirements of 'scientifically valid research' as defined in the legislation.
- The Commissioner would be responsible for developing and carrying out a research agenda based upon a limited number of priorities identified through local, state, and regional surveys and 'evaluative summaries' designed to provide insight into the gaps in research covering a broad array of major issues in education.
- These summaries would also provide classification of all major educational research, providing insight to parents, teachers and others on the type, reliability and utility of such research. These evaluative summaries are based upon the work of the National Reading

Panel that found that just a fraction of the research studies in reading actually met rigorous standards of research.

- Grants for the current National Research Centers would be extended for two years to carry out these evaluative summaries.
- After two years, individual grants for National Research Centers would be extended only if their work fits into the research plan developed by the Commissioner and if the quality of work conducted by the Center can be determined will meet the high standards of research as defined in the legislation.
- The legislation also expands competition to allow other research entities -- such as higher education institutions, and public or private, profit or non-profit, research organizations – to carry out research with funds from this Act.
- Ensures that one half of funds from the Center go toward long-term research.
- Information on research grants, including the amount of funds, the use of funds and the findings would be made widely available to the public through such means as the internet as part of an annual report prepared by the Commissioner.

2. National Center for Program Evaluation

- The Department of Education is currently charged by Congress to evaluate its own programs. However, under the current structure, there are insufficient boundaries and quality standards to ensure that the Department produces high quality evaluations that are able to demonstrate whether programs are actually working.
- This Act makes education program evaluation more independent, and sets quality standards to ensure that the studies are rigorous and able to provide Congress and educators with useful information about the effectiveness of federal education programs.
- The Commissioner of the National Center for Program Evaluation would oversee all program evaluations, including the Title I program evaluation, to determine the impact of such programs.
- The Commissioner would be authorized to establish independent review panels for evaluations conducted by the Center to ensure that evaluations are meaningful, rigorous in methodology, are timely and reflective of national priorities.

3. National Center for Education Statistics

- The legislation basically maintains the existing structure under the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).
- The legislation also maintains the current 18 member advisory council to review and advise the Commissioner on a broad spectrum of general policies for the activities and operations of the Center.

Other Functions Under the National Academy:

National Education Library and Clearinghouse Office

- The National Education Library and Clearinghouse Office would also be located under the Academy and would be responsible for streamlining the existing maze of federal education clearinghouses and maintaining a national education library.

- The structure would be built around the existing Educational Resources and Information Center (ERIC) system. This would be comprised of other federal education clearinghouses, including the Eisenhower Math and Science Clearinghouse, and would provide high quality, user-friendly internet-based information for schools, teachers, educators, researchers and policy makers.
- Such activities would include the collection, archiving and disseminating, of all research, statistics and evaluations undertaken within the agency as well as other relevant education-related materials from other federal agencies and research institutions.

Regional Research and Technical Assistance

- The Director of the Academy would oversee a regionally-based grant program combining funds currently directed to Regional Educational Laboratories, Comprehensive Centers, Regional Technology Centers, and a portion of the funds under the Eisenhower Math and Science Consortia currently used for technical assistance.

  - ✓ Each of ten regions of the country would convene a governing board to determine its unique priorities and to develop a plan for disseminating educational research, providing technical assistance, and for carrying out applied research projects.

  - ✓ Each region, at a minimum, would have to address issues surrounding reading, math, science, technology, and federal education program support. These regional boards would have the authority to enter into grants and contracts to carry out such activities which may include the continuation of funds to existing labs and Centers to the extent they are meeting the needs of the region.

- The Academy would also oversee a state-based competitive grant program providing funds for high-need schools seeking the opportunity to select their own providers of high quality technical assistance.

Other Provisions:

National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB): Would be given full authority to develop policy and carry out the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Prohibition on National Tests: The Act also includes a prohibition of federally sponsored national individualized tests including the development of such tests.

Committee on Education and the Workforce

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

Your Name: Frank Newman		
1. Will you be representing a federal, State, or local government entity? (If the answer is yes please contact the Committee).	Yes	No X
2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1998:		
3. Will you be representing an entity other than a government entity?	Yes	No
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you will be representing:		
5. Please list any offices or elected positions held and/or briefly describe your representational capacity with each of the entities you listed in response to question 4:		
6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1998, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:		
7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing? If so, please list:	Yes	No

Signature: Frank Newman Date: 7/16/01

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

APPENDIX D -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SUSAN FUHRMAN, DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Testimony to

The U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce

The Policy Influence of Education Research and R&D Centers

Submitted by Susan H. Fuhrman
Dean, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania
and
Chair, Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE)
July 17, 2001

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to testify this morning. I have been asked to focus on two issues: the role of research and education policy as viewed from the university level and the role of R & D research centers in building a cumulative base of knowledge and disseminating it to the field.

The Role of Research and Education Policy

Research and experience have shown that the direct application of research to policy is rare. In the heat of political decision-making, many other factors come into play. The authoritative allocation of values has more to do with aggregating interests around particular positions than with making decisions based on evidence. Research is often used to justify political positions already taken, rather than to set a direction for policy. Decision-making happens in a haphazard fashion and research can become a key ingredient or not depending on very particular circumstances. (Kingdon, 1984). Whether research is shaken or stirred into the mix has little to do with its nature and much more to do with what else is going on in the stew. Furthermore, researchers and policymakers are said to speak different languages, operate on different time frames and care about different things. Researchers are always qualifying their findings and disagreeing with one another; policymakers are always pressing for more definitiveness and consensus. (Kaestle, 1993; Lagemann, 1997).

Abandoning the notion that research is likely to have an instrumental influence on policy, many scholars have come to the conclusion that research has a more indirect, conceptual influence. Weiss and others believe that social science research has its greatest effect on the discourse of policymaking rather than on specific policies. Research

filters into the discussion through a gradual process of "enlightenment." (Weiss, 1980; Weiss and Buculavas, 1980). It frames debates by introducing new ideas or problem definitions, helps to question or support existing assumptions and creates frameworks for thinking about policy issues. Its influence is so gradual and unpredictable that the original source may be long forgotten. The very fact that an idea emanated from research as opposed to experience or interest group argument may be entirely lost. While this suggests that the influence of research is probably seriously underestimated – as many ideas from research are not correctly attributed to research – there's no question that even if we appreciate the enlightening value of research, evidence appears relatively low on the list of factors that influence policy.

However, there are ways to promote the use of research by policymakers. Examining studies that have garnered significant policymaker interest, like the Perry Preschools study and the Tennessee STAR class size experiment along with associated studies, I've come to the conclusion that several aspects of such studies facilitate their influence. In my opinion, four aspects of policy studies promote their use.

First, studies that are influential incorporate a research design well suited to the question they are intended to answer. Some questions concern the effectiveness of a particular policy approach. If the question is "does this option work," then either an experimental or quasi-experimental design with very careful controls would be appropriate. Other types of designs might show relationships between treatments and achievement but cannot answer definitively the causal question. But "does it work" is not the only question policymakers ask about policy options. They also want to know the manner in which policies exert an influence – not just whether they do – and how various

design options play out in practice. To study how policies play out in practice – how they are implemented – research must include significant qualitative components. Only by visiting classrooms and schools where policies are being translated into practice can researchers understand the many issues that shape the translation. Policymakers also want to know more about the dimensions of problems, such as whether different population groups or types of schools experience issues differently. In other words, there are many things they want to know that don't require an experimental design. The important point is that research suited to the question is more likely to be considered rigorous than research that is stretched to answer questions it can't. Another aspect of design is scale. Studies with very small sample sizes cannot support more generalized statements. They can raise issues for further investigation and suggest possible relationships, but larger scale studies will be necessary to confirm their findings.

A second characteristic of influential research is that it is longitudinal in nature. In my opinion, policymakers want to know how results hold up over time and whether effects are sustained. Short-term studies don't provide such answers; they may be a first step, but once a finding of interest emerges, it should be followed over time to determine its staying power.

Third, research that is useful is accompanied by successive studies that confirm and lend weight to its findings. In many fields, replication is accepted practice. Studies are undertaken specifically to repeat previous studies and to confirm or deny their findings. In education, however, perhaps because research has been significantly under-funded, we have put a premium on new, unique studies. Little credit is given to researchers who replicate previous work although such replication is essential – not just

to confirm and lend credence to the original work, but also to see how the policy under investigation works in various contexts. Policymakers particularly want to understand this last point – will it work in my state – and value studies that are replicated in varied settings.

Fourth, policymakers value synthesis, efforts to connect the most recent study with past work and to clarify the aggregate weight of the findings. Single studies very often contradict one another. The contradictions may be artifacts of design or setting; they may or may not shed light on the underlying research question. Only through systematic summaries that sort through the contradictions and determine where the weight of the evidence lies can we provide policymakers with definitive statements that can guide their decisions.

In my opinion, influential research is rigorous, large-scale, longitudinal, validated through replication and packaged in a way that puts findings in the larger context of related research. Substantial funding is necessary to sponsor such research. The President's Commission of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) recommends that funding for education research, development and dissemination be increased over five years to $1.5 billion – a multi-fold increase over current funding.

At the university level, we are attempting to promote the type of research I have just described. For example, at the University of Pennsylvania, we have founded the Campbell Collaboration (http://campbell.gse.upenn.edu/), a multi-national association named after statistician Donald Campbell and modeled on the Cochrane Collaboration, one of the foremost promoters of evidence-based practice in medicine. The Campbell Collaboration produces systematic reviews of "what works" in education and social

policy. Policymakers will have electronic access to up-to-date syntheses of relevant research. Significantly, by employing rigorous standards for including studies in such syntheses, the Collaboration will encourage and promote research quality.

The Role of R&D Centers in Building Cumulative Knowledge

As founder and director of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), an R&D center supported by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) since 1985, I have had the opportunity to participate in a number of large-scale studies that have enhanced the knowledge base over time. Centers are essential for building programmatic research efforts – studies that build on one another over time to accumulate knowledge progressively. Successful centers build knowledge that is cumulative, provide a sort of institutional memory about that knowledge, and make it available to other researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

One example of successive studies that build upon each other to provide cumulative knowledge concerns standards-based reform and the development of measures intended to determine what content is actually being offered in classrooms. In the 1980s, during our first grant period, we were charged with determining the effects of state policies to raise high school graduation requirements. States were mandating additional units of key subjects, and policymakers were curious about whether students were actually taking the added units. We examined transcripts in four states and found that students were indeed taking more units of math, science, English and history, but that it wasn't obvious from the course titles what content they were actually receiving. For example, we came across a course called "Informal Geometry," or geometry without

proofs, leading us to wonder whether the content was significantly watered down. It turned out that courses such as this were more prevalent in states with high school graduation tests that focused on low-level competencies. In such states, many additional mathematics units focused on arithmetic, as did the tests. This finding led us to examine how the two policies – requirements for graduation units (which envisioned students taking algebra and geometry as their additional units of math) and competency examinations (which led to the additional units being focused on the same low-level skills as the tests) – were in conflict with one another. Understanding and documenting such instances of policy conflict, we began to write about a more coherent approach to state instructional guidance: the idea of standards that would set expectations for student learning and aligning other policy levers – student assessment, teacher education and professional development – to such standards. The early work on standards-based reform was enormously influential, leading directly to NSF's Systemic Initiatives and to policy reforms in a number of states (Smith and O'Day, 1991; CPRE, 1991).

We continued to wonder about what actual content was behind course titles, and in the early 1990's we undertook the Reform Up Close study, a six-state, 72 classroom examination of enacted curriculum content. We studied the courses that expanded the most as a result of new high school graduation requirements and used questionnaires, daily instructional logs, and observation to determine what was actually being taught. We found, reassuringly, that "algebra" being offered to students taking it largely as a result of the new requirements, students who previously would have been in lower-track math, was similar to algebra offered to students with better previous preparation. This

study showed that it was possible to monitor instructional content on a large scale to determine if policymaker expectations were really being met. (Porter et. al., 1994)

If algebra is algebra, pretty much the same from place to place, can students with poor preparation take it and then move on into other college preparatory classes? Growing out of the Reform Up Close study was a set of questions about whether moving students into gateway courses such as algebra could have long-term benefits. We then undertook a study involving 4800 students in New York and California who were engaged in transition math classes designed to move them from general mathematics into higher levels of the subject. The Upgrading High School Mathematics Study (Gamoran, et. al., 1997) showed that students in the transition classes did in fact move into college preparatory math sequences at higher levels than comparison groups and their achievement was higher as well. This study confirmed important components of the theory underlying standards reforms: students can learn to higher expectations and, since the students who learned the most had teachers who had extensive professional development in the math curriculum they were teaching, aligned professional development pays off. The study enabled us to further develop the measures of classroom content that we had been working on and to relate the content of instruction directly to student learning.

We are now working on a very large-scale, longitudinal study of elementary school instruction, the Study of Instructional Improvement, that asks the next set of logical questions: what is the actual content of elementary instruction and how is it aligned to standards, how much and what kinds of professional development are most effective in changing instruction and influencing student learning, and what components

of instruction are most related to student learning? The study focuses on the design, enactment, and effects of four comprehensive reform interventions and is aimed at building a theory of instructional intervention. Using a sample of 120 schools over six years, the study entails and depends on the development of suitable measures of intervention design, the processes of enactment and of instruction. For this study, we have made significant advances in the development of daily instructional logs and developed new, unprecedented measures of teachers' knowledge of content for teaching, or pedagogical content knowledge.

Disseminating Research to the Field

We are not waiting for the results of the Study of Instructional Improvement to begin disseminating the work. We are piloting our pedagogical content knowledge questions in California with teachers taking summer professional development institutes. The evaluator of the institutes will benefit from new measures to use in pre- and post-testing, and we will benefit from having several thousand additional teachers involved in measurement refinement.

Disseminating work in progress is one way to maintain close contact with the field. To us continuing, close contact with the audience is the key to successful dissemination. CPRE has accomplished this by making interaction with clients a central element of our mission. In our view, our constituents – policymakers and practitioners who are engaged in reform – want research that responds to their concerns, that reaches them conveniently, and that is timely. We try to consult a variety of stakeholders to develop research projects that will meet the needs of constituents, seeking advice about

important questions from our Executive Board, Affiliated Organizations (20 national policymaker and practitioner organizations), and in the course of research and dissemination.

We use multiple channels for publishing and conveying our findings, including meetings and newsletters of Affiliated Organizations. Our work is produced in a variety of formats: Policy Briefs (circulation 11,500); Policy Bulletins (short summaries sent to approximately 600 people including members of the state associations of school administrators, state school board associations, and media representatives); Research Reports (sent to Affiliates and advisors; advertised widely); Journal Articles; Books (sent to key advisors and advertised in CPRE briefs and by publishers); Occasional Papers (allied work not directly supported by CPRE and distributed like Research Reports); and papers presented at conferences.

Face-to-face dissemination includes our own sponsored meetings such as policy forums and Congressional briefings; special strands and regular presentations at Affiliated Organizations meetings, such as meetings sponsored by the Education Commission of the States, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the American Association of School Administrators; presentations at policymaker, researcher and practitioner meetings throughout the country and abroad; work with the press; and technical assistance to states and localities. Electronic dissemination features our website (http://www.gse.upenn.edu/cpre/) which is linked to a special CPRE website on Teacher Compensation, School Finance, and Program Adequacy (http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/cpre/) as well as to OERI and to our affiliates; 16,470 copies of reports were downloaded from the CPRE site between Dec 2000 and May 2001.

Conclusions

Quality research and dissemination are closely linked. Links to constituencies are strengthened when researchers disseminate findings that derive from high quality studies, and developing such links can in turn enhance the quality of the research. Research quality is furthered when the questions are closely tied to the needs and concerns of clients; those needs are frequently uncovered in the course of dissemination.

I hope the thoughts I have presented on high-quality research that influences policy, on building cumulative knowledge, and on disseminating research are helpful. I will be glad to answer additional questions. Thank you.

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Committee on Education and the Workforce

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

Your Name: **Dr. Susan H. Fuhrman**		
1. Will you be representing a federal, State, or local government entity? (If the answer is yes please contact the Committee).	Yes	No **X**
2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1998: - **None**		
3. Will you be representing an entity other than a government entity?	Yes **X**	No
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you will be representing: - **The Consortium for Policy Research in Education** - **The Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania**		
5. Please list any offices or elected positions held and/or briefly describe your representational capacity with each of the entities you listed in response to question 4: - **None**		
6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1998, including the source and amount of each grant or contract: - $9,064,006 from the U.S. Department of Education (Office of Educational Research and Improvement) for the "Consortium for Policy Research in Education" (cumulative amount awarded from 10/98 through 7/01 – Susan H. Fuhrman, Principal Investigator) - $74,402 U.S. Department of Education subcontract (from SRI) for "Evaluation of Title I Accountability Systems" (Margaret Goertz, PI) - $100,000 U.S. Department of Education subcontract (from the National Center on Education and the Economy) for "NCEE Capacity-Building" (Thomas Corcoran, PI) - $1,183,289 U.S. Department of Education subcontract (from the National Center on Education and the Economy) for "Learning to Think, Thinking to Learn" (Thomas Corcoran, PI) - $305,082 U.S. Department of Education subcontract (from the University of Washington) for "Center for Teacher Policy" (Thomas Corcoran, PI) - $185,694 from the U.S. Department of Education for "Augmentation, Analysis and Dissemination of TIMSS" (Thomas Corcoran, PI) - $154,445 U.S. Department of Education subcontract (from the National Conference of State Legislatures) for "Legislative Leadership and State Education Reform" (Thomas Corcoran, PI) - Approximately $14 Million in other federal grants and subcontracts to the Graduate School of Education.		

7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing? If so, please list:	Yes	No X

Signature: Susan Fahrman Date: July 16, 2001

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

APPENDIX E -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARY ANN SCHMITT, PRESIDENT, NEW AMERICAN SCHOOLS, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

Statement of Mary Anne Schmitt, President
New American Schools
Arlington, VA

July 17, 2001

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee. I am Mary Anne Schmitt, President of New American Schools. I am pleased to have the opportunity to be here today to discuss the topic of education research.

This is an important subject given the dramatic impact the new education reform legislation moving through Congress will have on schools. The only way we can know what works to improve student performance is to more effectively link academic research to applied research and the development of educational products and services to improve schools. This has been the mission of New American Schools since 1991. In partnership with the RAND Corporation and others, we have done extensive research and development in thousands of schools across the country and learned a great deal about how to raise student achievement.

Yet, we remain frustrated about the state of education research because its weaknesses handicap us and other educators from obtaining a clear and complete picture of how a school reform approach is actually impacting student improvement over time.

As you know, the demands placed on education research have changed. Educators are under enormous pressure to make substantial improvements yesterday and to get the improvements to every child who

needs them today. This means we must be able to take reform approaches proven to work in a handful of schools and see if they work in hundreds of schools. To 'scale up' quality work rapidly calls for entirely new research approaches and requires education researchers to think differently about what they do and why and to integrate experience and expertise from other fields, particularly modern business where new technologies are developed and broadly disseminated, often in less than 18 months.

In short, researchers must get closer to the developers and disseminators of quality education products and services and help them improve while they are in development, rather than telling them what went wrong, after the fact. Most importantly, they must develop cost-effective means of measuring widespread implementation school-by-school, rather than through selective sampling. In the absence of this, educators will continue to make costly decisions about the best way to educate children based on too little data and poor research methods.

New American Schools is committed to improving the field of education research. We have spent over $150 million in R&D during the past 10 years to create a more systematic process to identify what works and then implement it at scale. Based on this work and experience, and with full acknowledgement that we've made many mistakes along the way, I would like to offer four observations to improve education research.

#1. Quality Research is the Underpinning of Successful Reform

Comprehensive, school-based reform is based upon multiple components – ranging from classroom management to teaching mathematics. Each one of these components is developed based upon a wide variety of research, including, but certainly not limited to, randomized experiments, correlational studies, and descriptive research.

Ultimately, each comprehensive reform model as a 'package' needs to be evaluated in well-controlled studies in order to determine its ultimate impact. As such, comprehensive school reform models are only as good as the research they're based upon – which is why, regardless of the 'type' of research being supported – it must conform to high standards of quality, including, first and foremost, the use of 'value-added' rather than absolute test scores. The measure of a reform should be its ability to increase performance, not simply echo the performance expected based on the SES of a school's students. Second, the research should be timely. Too often reports are released long after the analysis is complete. OERI should look to streamline its review and release process.

Even in those instances where an evidence base is being built, efforts to identify effective programs also are hampered by counterproductive disputes among researchers. This problem is only exacerbated by the lack of consensus on the standards and protocols in the field of education research. Meanwhile, on the front lines of school reform in the 'real world' this constant 'infighting' within the educational research community has the effect of encouraging many schools simply to reject research as a guide to practice.

I don't purport to have all the answers on how to address this issue, but at a minimum, I would urge that as you move forward with the reauthorization of OERI, you continue your efforts to focus on increasing the standards of research and demanding more in return for the dollars that are invested. This should include consideration of clear definitions of what Congress expects of education research, as well as assurances of a strong process by which this research is peer reviewed.

To achieve this goal, I also would highlight the need for adequate funding of education research and the development of an infrastructure within OERI, or through an external partner organization, to oversee and manage this system. The fact is, you simply can't do good research on the cheap – it is truly a case of "you get what you pay for."

#2. Quality Research Must be Relevant and Translated into Effective Applications

Funding research that is either not relevant to the needs of today's classrooms or that never gets translated into effective classroom applications is a poor investment.

There must be a better process for getting input from the classroom level on the types of research most in demand. I would suggest this input come from more than simply having classroom representation on a national board. What's needed is a more formal process through which to convey these needs to those funding research projects.

Additionally, we have to stop funding research that never gets translated into effective classroom practices. The profession tends to value critique over action. And, it lacks adequate understanding that traditional dissemination methods alone (e.g., written reports, conference presentations) will not succeed in getting best practice implemented in our classrooms. Unfortunately, government policy plays into this culture and reinforces it.

There are several areas we believe should be adopted or strengthened within OERI to address this issue:

- First, **incentivize research** that leads to the development of high quality education products and services. In particular, factor into the grant review process, an applicant's capacity to apply research to product development and their track record in doing so.
- Second, **fund intermediaries** that can identify promising approaches to education reform and help their developers take them to scale.
- Third, **promote initiatives stimulating demand** for these research-based offerings – such as the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program; and
- Fourth, **fund studies of these programs where researchers stand alongside providers**, with an eye toward continuous improvement.

#3. Research-Based Practices Must be Understood and Accepted by Schools

Earlier, I alluded to the 'credibility' of education research. We find that many school administrators have grown cynical about research. In my opinion, this skepticism is not necessarily bad. In fact, it is healthy that educators begin taking a more critical view of research. That's not to say I believe they should disregard it – instead, they should be better-educated 'consumers,' with the ability and training to ask the tough questions when presented with reforms – such as the base of evidence supporting such reform.

We believe that OERI should help promote this concept of providing potential consumers of these new services with useable information explaining the best research and what it means for their school, as well as the quality of the providers' service and their capacity to serve.

Until recently, little has been done to assist in creating this awareness and capacity. However, New American Schools and the Council for Basic Education, along with a bipartisan blue ribbon panel, have worked to develop an initiative focusing on this issue. The recently launched Education Quality Institute (EQI) is an independent, nonprofit organization that will help educators, parents, policymakers, and the public to understand education research and to judge and successfully implement research-based programs. EQI will disseminate widely an education consumer report with independently validated, descriptive information on programs, as well as reviewed research findings and decision-making tools leading to the selection and implementation of more effective school improvement strategies.

Only with these types of concerted and on-going efforts can we expect schools to understand and therefore accept research-based reforms.

#4. Schools Need On-going Technical Assistance to Sustain and Continuously Improve Research-Based Reform

Schools and districts need more resources and technical assistance to collect data properly, maintain it, and then develop meaningful comparisons and ratings for their internal decision-making, as well as for the entire school community to review. Research serves two purposes – externally, it serves as a check on a public investment; internally, it can and should serve as a helpful diagnostic, a means for schools to reflect and improve. OERI should sponsor research with an eye toward supporting both of these goals.

Today, we are damning promising work with shoddy evaluations conducted without appropriate controls. Not only are we damning good work but we are also hurting the students who read about their 'low-performing' schools in the newspaper or hear about it on the nightly news. They don't understand that their improvement would be considered significant, if measured properly.

Also, we have observed that implementing research, such as through comprehensive school reform approaches, at times will produce positive results in one school yet in the school next door, it'll fail. Although some of this can be explained as the result of variables such as student population, teacher 'buy in' and local-level politics, it is clear that we still have a great deal to learn.

OERI has become more involved in this area recently by promoting opportunities within the comprehensive school reform community to expand collaborative research efforts; discuss common challenges and methodological issues; and work together to inform others of their findings. I believe these types of efforts are an important and worthwhile strategy towards building on and expanding the success of research-based reforms.

Conclusion:

In the coming months, Congress will likely pass a major education reform initiative which will hold States and schools to a new level of accountability for making sure that all students are actually learning. This is a very positive step and should have a profound impact on creating an even larger demand for education solutions that work. Indeed, faced with some of the sanctions that are likely to be imposed upon schools for failure – many will be scrambling to implement reforms which have evidence to suggest they will be successful when implemented.

The combination of these standards and the market they are creating, along with the numerous amounts of potential solutions available to schools, is all good news for those who support the expansion of research-based reforms. However, the fact is, we still lack good measurement, an objective way of knowing what works, of discarding what doesn't, and investing more in what does. The current education research structure does not do this. Until it does, it's failed.

I believe that OERI can and must be a critical force in addressing these issues. New American Schools and the Education Quality Institute are

poised to assist in this effort and we look forward to having the opportunity to continue to share our experiences in an effort to better inform the debate around this issue of vital importance.

Again, thank you for having me here this afternoon.

Committee on Education and the Workforce

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

Your Name: Mary Anne Schmitt

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

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

U.S. Department of Education
Award #R215U980001-00
02/02/99 - 02/01/01
$2,000,000.00

U.S. Department of Education
Award #R215U990017
10/01/99 - 09/30/01
$2,563,654.00

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

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

N/A

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

Member of the Board of Directors of The Education Quality Institute.

6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1998, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:

N/A

	Yes	No
7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing? If so, please list:		X

Signature: Mary Anne Schmitt Date: 7/17/01

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

APPENDIX F -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PASCAL FORGIONE, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, AUSTIN, TEXAS

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

Hearing
on
"From Research to Practice:
Improving America's Schools in the 21st Century

Testimony
of

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July 17, 2001

The comments presented here are those of the author and should not be attributed to the Austin Independent School District.

Good afternoon. I am Dr. Pat Forgione. I am currently superintendent of schools in the Austin Independent School District in Austin, Texas, and previously I served as the U.S. Commissioner of Education Statistics in the Department of Education (1996 – 1999) and as the Delaware State Superintendent of Public Education (1991 – 1996).

I am pleased to have this opportunity to offer testimony on the topic of "research into practice." I have structured my written comments in eight parts.

I. Introduction
II. A Personal Perspective on Urban School Reform
III. Role of Statistics in Educational Improvement
IV. Reauthorizing NCES
V. NCES – NAGB Relationship
VI. Reauthorizing OERI
VII. Research into Practice: Key Issues
VIII. Conclusion

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(To Be Added)

I. Introduction

There is so much I would want to say to you today on behalf of our students, teachers, and citizens who value and believe in a quality public school education. But most importantly, I implore Congress to please continue to invest in our children and our teachers.

We must remind ourselves that the educational sector of the United States is second in size only to the health care sector in terms of its drain on national resources (Levin, 2001). When one includes formal education and the various forms of training, it is estimated that 10% of the gross domestic product---about ¾ of $1 trillion in 1998---is allocated to education (Merrill-Lynch, 1999). Moreover, the educational sector in the United States is spending at least $2 billion per day and billions of dollars in student time (Levin, 2001).

Of all the federal hearings and discussions underway, your deliberations on the future of federal research and development---statistics, evaluation, research, etc.---could offer the greatest long-term benefits, if we have---what we in Texas call---the "ganas," or the will, to make a level of investment that is needed and to do so in ways that ensure quality, timely, and useful information for educational policy makers and practitioners at the school, district, state, and federal levels.

At the heart of our enterprise of public education, we are and must be about achieving equitable academic success for all children. We need examples of entire schools districts in which all schools, not just isolated campuses, are places in which children of poverty and color experience the same kind of quality school success that most middle and upper class students have experienced. Unfortunately, few examples of more broadly based school success for children of color and/or low socioeconomic status (SES) students exist (Skira, 2000).

Today I bring you a voice from the trenches---a perspective that is not intended to be reflective of mighty ideas, great thoughts or theoretical understandings, but of an educator whose ideals demand that public school leadership be dedicated to and accountable for achieving equity of results for all of America's children, and whose day-to-day life is consumed in an effort to keep teaching and learning front and center and not be overwhelmed by other interesting and demanding but not essential realities. Ultimately, to be an effective public school system we must know and use best practices and current research to inform and guide our daily teaching and learning. So I am a believer, but my recent experience---I am just completing my second year as an urban superintendent---have not been positive in terms of the benefits of the federal investments in educational research and statistics.

While today's discussion is really "a million miles away" from the realities of my life in a complex urban public school system, I keep reminding myself that your deliberations, if done well and thoughtfully, can have a significant impact over time on the operation and productivity of public school districts across this nation. But first, let me paint the personal context of an urban school leader on the issues and realities of school reform.

II. A Personal Perspective on Urban School Reform

Austin Context. In case you are not knowledgeable about the Austin Independent School District (AISD), we are proud to be sharing one of our own who has taken up residency at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. Of course, I am referring to President George W. Bush, whose children I am proud to note, are graduates of public schools in Austin, Texas.

AISD is an urban school district with about 78,000 students and 103 schools. We are the third largest school district in Texas and we employ over 5000 teachers among our 10,000 employees. Like other urban school districts, we essentially operate our own city, complete with our own telephone and fiber optic cable systems, police department, transportation system, facility management and food services. We have two cable channels. We have our own taxing authority, set our own tax rate within state limits and are governed by an elected nine-member Board of Trustees. Like other urban systems, we serve many minority students---about 44% of our students are Hispanic and 17% African-American. About 42% of our students are considered at-risk. One in three students comes from homes of English language learners. About one in eight of our students has a disability or special education need. While AISD is located in the center of a booming economy, more than half of our students come from low income homes. It is this compounded concentration of need that presents a unique set of challenges to our mission, "to educate every child every day." Like other urban districts, we struggle with budget shortages, aging facilities, and political issues, as we seek to keep our focus on teaching and learning.

Urban Schooling Context. While one might believe my prior training and experience (i.e., Stanford University Ph.D., a dozen years as director of testing and research with the Connecticut State Department of Education, and tenure as U.S. Commissioner of Education Statistics) would make me the obvious exemplar of data-driven decision making and research into practice, I readily confess my shortcomings and checkered success over my first two years as superintendent in fulfilling this image (Forgione, 2001c). In fact, as I recently chronicled in a short article on my first year as an urban superintendent, the complexities and brutal pace of demands placed on urban school leaders and administrators is overwhelming (Forgione, 2000a).

When I first arrived in Austin, Texas on a sweltering day in August 1999, I thought I was fully prepared to become superintendent of the local school district with its 78,000 students.

I already knew about the demands placed on students, teachers, and administrators by the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills tests, and I was well aware of the Austin School District's less-than-stellar performance the previous year on these tests. I also was ready to address the criminal indictment that the county attorney had brought against the school district for its inappropriate manipulation of student information related to TAAS.

But what my previous assignments as state superintendent in Delaware and commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics hadn't prepared me for was all the other large-scale assessments I would be required to make in the months ahead overseeing a local school system.

More concretely and, probably very representative of my urban peers, my inauguration to Austin in August 1999 didn't start off too well. When I stepped off the plane, I was greeted with the news that we had an "unacceptable" rating for data quality from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). AISD also had indictments hanging over our heads; we were about to be audited by the State Comptroller, and the specter of Chapter 41 (the state's "share the wealth" funding system) was right in front of us. We couldn't get transcripts or report cards out on time, and some of our schools were in very bad shape academically.

Good News. With the help of a great community in Austin, we rolled up our sleeves and got to work. We addressed the immediate problems, such as mold, asbestos, and financial management. While we were in the process of addressing immediate problems---and there will always be immediate problems in a school district our size---we also began the process of foundation building for the long-term. We put teaching and learning front and center for everything we do.

We are now nearing the end of our process of rebuilding our information and data systems so they are invisible and allow all our teachers and administrators to focus on teaching and learning. TEA has removed that "U" for unacceptable data quality and has given us an "A" for acceptable.

We went through a difficult budget period---trying to adjust to the new realities of being designated a property wealthy school district, called Chapter 41. The Board and I have come out of that united. We are determined to preserve and enhance the key components of our educational system. In FY01 (and proposed for FY02), we did not raise the tax rate. We kept our commitment made the year before. We have allocated $34 million in FY01 and some $94 million in FY02 as payments to the state under Chapter 41. Moreover, our fiscal management efforts have also borne fruit. Last winter, AISD

received a AA bond rating (the highest for school districts) and was taken off the negative watch by Standards and Poor and Moody.

And we have not lost the community's support. Through a partnership with the University of Texas, we were able to learn from a totally independent and scientific survey what the parents of our students think about our performance. If we'd run this survey ourselves and come up with these results, nobody would have believed us. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very unsatisfied and 10 being very satisfied, 57.5% of all AISD parent registered their satisfaction at the high end of the scale, from 8 to 10. Twenty-six percent gave this district a 10 out of 10. Only 3% were very dissatisfied, and only 10% gave the district less than a 4. Those are incredible numbers. Parents across this district rated AISD with an average of 7.3 on a 10-point satisfaction scale (University of Texas, 2000).

More good news is that our TAAS scores are up (Forgione, 2001d). When TEA released the scores this spring, we could see that we are moving in the right direction. We have nearly doubled the Exemplary and Recognized schools from what we had last year and nearly cut in half our number of Low Performing schools. Our scores have gone up in every category, and our scores for Hispanic, African American, and Economically Disadvantaged students have gone up dramatically. We are closing the gap between our high-performing Anglo students and our other students. Three of our newly Recognized campuses---Dawson, Maplewood, and Ridgetop---have student populations that are more than 75% minority and low-income. At the same time, we're far from satisfied.

We cut our dropout losses by a third from over 1200 students the previous year to less than 800 last year. We have reduced our number of high schools rated as low performing for dropouts from seven in 1999 to two this year.

Renewed Focus on Teaching and Learning. We are now concentrating all our time and energy as a district on teaching and learning (Forgione, 2001b). This year we are focusing on every classroom through two major initiatives. With a grant from the RGK Foundation, we are working with the University of Pittsburg/Institute for Learning (UP/IFL) to train all our teachers, principals, curriculum specialists, and area superintendents in how to evaluate and improve teaching and learning in every classroom in this district. It teaches teachers and principals how to structure their teaching around key principles of learning and how to evaluate themselves and each other against those principles on an ongoing basis. I've taken part in the training and it's powerful.

AISD is guided by and grounded in a shared vision of high expectations for all students. We can't control what each child's life or learning has been like before he or she enters our classrooms. But that shouldn't determine that child's future success in school or in life. It shouldn't determine that child's fate. There are no acceptable excuses. Instead, learning based on sound principles and high standards should help each child achieve success.

We are combining our Principles of Learning training with training for all teachers and principals on the state's TEKS---Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills. These are the standards every teacher and every parent will know and use. They are high standards, and they will drive this district. We are working closely with the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas, which is providing our principals with the structured training they are taking back to their teachers and parents. Throughout this year, we will have teachers at each grade level present district-wide discussions about the TEKS on our Cable Channel 22, so we can grow a community-wide understanding of these standards. We're calling it "TEKS for Austin." We also have printed Family Learning Guides that contain the grade-level standards and helpful tips and resources for parents to support their children's learning (AISD, 2001). Every parent and citizen must know what the academic expectations are for their children at each grade level.

These initiatives are designed to build a strong foundation to prepare the students of Austin for the new millennium. They will take several years to penetrate and become ingrained in our school cultures. Teachers will need several years to integrate a thorough understanding of all the TEKS standards into their classroom work. The Board of Trustees and I firmly believe that AISD can meet these challenges. We believe we are on our way to making AISD the premier urban district in the country. To do that, we must keep the faith. We must stay the course. We must have the courage to stay with the educational foundation we are laying for the long term.

Moving From Research into Practice. The Board and Superintendent have committed AISD to an emphasis on professional development as the primary strategy in moving AISD forward to become a high performance educational organization. The AISD-Institute for Learning Partnership provides an ongoing, comprehensive professional development process for all AISD teachers and administrators. It reaches into every classroom and provides an infrastructure for teaching and ongoing assessment that enables teachers and students to continually progress along a continuum toward deeper and more rigorous learning. By raising and reinforcing the levels of understanding among teachers and principals of nine Principles of Learning in all, the partnership provides scaffolding for both new and experienced teachers to continually advance their skills and their students' levels of understanding and performance. Beginning this year we are focusing intensively on three principles---Clear Expectations, Academic Rigor in a Thinking Curriculum, and Accountable Talk (Forgione, 2001a). All AISD principals, teachers and instructional specialists will take part in workshops, seminars and study groups to deepen their understanding of these principles, how they can be embedded in the teaching of the curriculum, and their relationship to the state standards as defined in the TEKS. AISD area superintendents are leading this process through district-wide seminars, through their vertical team meetings and in individual schools. The area superintendents, principals, instructional specialists and teachers take part in continuous assessment of the application of Principles of Learning in each classroom through Learning Walks, which focus on discussions with students about their learning.

Thus, AISD has progressed over the past two years toward implementation of a quality educational system of teaching and learning for all students every day. We are working with an exceptionally talented group of educational researchers, including Professor Lauren Resnick, who have spent the past decade building a proven track record of high-quality scholarship and successful working relationships with high-performing urban school districts. AISD administrators are participating in a national network of reform-oriented urban schools and proven educational leaders which provides positive mentoring and immediate access to best educational practices. This partnership supports our district's shared vision of quality teaching and learning for all students and creates a special and focused relationship between AISD and UP/IFL that will provide customized professional development services to AISD.

III. Role of Statistics in Educational Improvement

Let me clearly state that I strongly support a major federal role and investment in educational statistics, research, evaluation, and information dissemination. These functions, in my opinion, are well within the appropriate federal role in education and critical to the nation's educational health. My 30 year career in education---holding CEO positions with prominent education agencies at the local, state, federal, and national levels---clearly has shown me the absolute need for a significant federal investment in these critical functions.

NCES' Mission. NCES is unique among the 13 federal statistical agencies because it is very public in nature and is the only one focused on children (Forgione, 1999b). Though the federal government remains the junior government partner in education, statistics is one area that has always been considered central to the federal role. NCES has been at this business of collecting and reporting statistics since 1867, though under other names. The current charge from Congress is to report "statistics and information showing the condition and progress of education in the United States and other nations in order to promote and accelerate the improvement of American education." Its charter is to provide information that will help education our children---it is that simple and complex.

The Center's current mission, as mandated by Congress, is to do the following:

- Collect, collate, analyze, and report full and complete statistics on the condition of education in the United States and other Nations;
- Conduct and publish reports and specialized analyses of the meaning of such statistics; and
- Assist state and local education agencies in improving their statistical systems.

NCES has acquired a reputation for trustworthy data and long-range planning that has enabled it to meet its mandate. Its activities are driven by the responsibility to meet the needs of various audiences, among whom are teachers, policymakers, researchers, the media, the general public, and most certainly legislators. As such, one of its primary

goals is to ensure that the data produced can reliably answer important questions relevant to major decisions of education policy, programs, and practice.

Commissioner's Core Values. I established four core values to guide NCES' national data agenda during my tenure: quality, usefulness, predictability, and timeliness (Forgione, 1999b). The first two represent current assets, while the latter two have presented challenges. Of course, quality is of utmost concern, and NCES has a strong foundation in place for quality data collection and analysis. The agency continues to provide quality data by using the highest statistical standards and latest advances in survey design and statistical methods.

To be useful, data must be presented in a variety of formats. NCES' publications and products include reports, books, newsletters, and issue briefs that range in level of detail and scope. Data sets can be used to generate additional analyses on a wide range of relevant educational issues at the national, state and local levels. They are a unique resource for researchers and policy analysts. The development of the Internet has allowed NCES to expand the options for presenting data, while simultaneously improving the customer's ability to access it.

In addition to quality and usefulness, another value I had set for myself and for NCES is the provision of data on a predictable basis. This not only increases the usefulness of the data, but also allows people to develop a greater understanding of their meaning and relevance by permitting regular discussion. Key indicators should not come "out of the blue;" rather, the public should be waiting expectantly for them. Finally, NCES strives for timeliness by undertaking its activities and reports its data with an eye toward addressing key questions of current interest. We know that data are of greatest interest when they reflect the current state of things.

A Competing Vision for NCES. From the perspective of a local school district policy maker and constituent, I would offer the following portrait as an appropriate vision of NCES as a national resource for school improvement (Forgione, 1996).

Our vision for statistics for this nation should be comprehensive and address a core set of educational issues. For example, local school boards and central district offices should know about demographic trends that will affect them far in advance and should get that information on a regular basis. Districts should have national and state dropout data every fall for comparison. And they should have annual data on nationally benchmarked student achievement in core academic areas. The schedule for release of that data should be created several years in advance. School boards should be able to use NCES data to learn about the best use of professional development investments or what works in bilingual education or what the elements of good child development programs are. When a district is working on improving standards, it will find data on what students in other countries are exposed to at what grades and will even learn instructional strategies from video presentation in the NCES data bank. School officials will find national data on the postsecondary experiences of students and make comparisons with their own data gathering efforts.

Our nation must continue to have rich, consistent, and continuing sources of reliable and trustworthy information that will be useful and timely to help our children have good futures.

IV. Reauthorizing NCES

Premature Proposal Regarding Statistical Function. The proposed National Academy for Education Research, Statistics, Evaluation and Information which is framed in HR4875 possibly represents an ideal, or a very mature vision, of how the educational research, statistics, evaluation, and information functions might be organized. It is, in my opinion an unrealistic leap of faith that is too adventurous and hopeful. I would sincerely ask that the House take a phased-in approach (perhaps two five-year reauthorization cycles) regarding the restructuring of NCES that builds on the strengths presently in place, preserves the outstanding features of the current operation, and set out a roadmap to achieve such an integrated and ambitious proposal over the next decade, if such proves to be desirable.

Let's take stock of where we are. By near unanimous accounting---including periodic customer survey study results of clients and constituencies---NCES is recognized as a successful federal education agency that has shown both its capacity and track record of well-done studies and valued data sets. NCES' performance in designing, developing, implementing, analyzing, and reporting key statistical information and findings is well respected. Certainly, as I earlier noted, there are important areas in which NCES needs to show improvement, especially the predictability and timeliness of its data.

So I ask the Committee to be careful and consistent in your planning. If there is a general agreement on the merits of NCES, I ask that your proposals reinforce the agency's current strengths, especially through much needed statutory authority and provisions that I will outline later in my testimony. Please don't throw NCES into a new sea of uncertainty that offers little prospect for enhancing its performance, and, in my opinion, significant risk to its continued success and vitality.

Instituting Needed Safeguards for NCES. Rather than moving NCES into a larger organization, "the Academy," where the new Academy Director will be consumed with major challenges to set up and retool poorly performing and ill-defined functions of research, evaluation, and information management, I would respectfully propose that NCES be maintained as a separate statistical agency in the excellent traditions of the Bureau of the Census (within the Commerce Department) and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (within the Labor Department). NCES' operations can continue to cooperate and partner with this new National Academy, as well as NAGB, NSF, BLS, SLS, IEA, OECD, and other units within the Department of Education, as it has done successfully in recent years. NCES and the Commissioner should report directly to the Secretary of Education, or Deputy Secretary of Education.

As I stated in my May 27, 1999 testimony (Forgione, 1999d), I wish to clearly emphasize that over my three-year tenure as U.S. Commissioner of Education Statistics (1996-1999), the integrity of NCES' statistical processes had not been violated with respect to:

- the identification of studies to be conducted,
- the design and implementation of our studies, and
- the analysis and content of our statistical reports.

However, I did identify one area that I believed needed attention: the release of the agency's statistical findings. Over my tenure as Commissioner, I became sensitized to, and more acutely aware of, the issue of safeguarding the independence of a federal statistical agency. My primary goal had been to protect the integrity of our Nation's education data. Critical to this is the release of results that are, and are perceived to be, objective and non-partisan. The heart of the matter was and will continue to be the integrity and independence of the statistical function in education.

The landmark report, Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency, which was produced by the National Research Council/Committee on National Statistics, identified two essential prerequisites for the effective operation of a federal statistical agency: first, a clearly defined and well-accepted mission and; second, a strong measure of independence. The report states "to be credible, a statistical agency must clearly be impartial. It must avoid even the appearance that its collection and reporting of data might be manipulated for political purposes." It is everyone's interest to have clear boundaries. The situation of ambiguity in releasing reports invariably leads to awkward situations that do not serve the Nation well. With the appetite for sound and unassailable education data at an all-time high, I believe it is all the more vital at this moment to give the National Center for Education Statistics the institutional protection it needs to fulfill its statutory mission.

Beyond strengthening the reporting authority of the Commissioner, explicit institutional safeguards also need to be built into the NCES legislative authority on two other critical areas, namely: the allocation of personnel---especially Senior Executive Status appointments and excepted appointments---and budget formulation. These three areas of budget formulation, personnel, and reporting are essential to the ability of the Commissioner to perform with integrity and to successfully fulfill the Agency's important national statistical mission.

(1) Budget Formulation. The heart of any federal agency is the funding invested in their data collection and production work. The Commissioner should have full authority to prepare and submit an agency budget to the Secretary for consideration each year. A National Data Plan should also be prepared each March to set out the priorities for NCES data collections, analyses, and reports, as well as the procedures being used to assure scientific rigor, predictability, timeliness, and customer usefulness.

Advisory Council on Education Statistics (ACES) should then be required to review and provide feedback to the Commissioner on his plan and budget priorities by May of each year. This analysis should also be incorporated into ACES' annual report (described below).

A major impediment to the Commissioner's ability to manage the NCES budget has been the absence of regular information from the Assistant Secretary's Office.

(2) Personnel. NCES has six senior officers under the Commissioner. These are: (a) the Deputy Commissioner who oversees the statistical standards and technology operations, and who supervises the Chief Statistician; (b) the Chief Statistician who oversees the statistical integrity processes, including study designs/reviews and adjudications; and (c) four Associate Commissioners who supervise the four branches of education statistics, namely: assessment, elementary/secondary, post-secondary, and international/early childhood/condition of education.

These programs must be led by national experts and senior, experienced program managers. Each of these six positions should be designated as Senior Executive Status (SES) to ensure that the highest quality staff are recruited and retained at NCES. During my tenure, NCES had only 3 SES positions, and the Department had little incentive to support NCES' needs despite the overwhelming positive response our reports were receiving. Practically, NCES competed with the Administration's emerging priorities. Thus, while the NCES program budget grew by 150% during my tenure, the agency's position count remained stable and no additional SES positions were allocated. The NCES statute should explicitly define six SES positions as the minimum complement, and provide the Commissioner with excepted hiring authority. This will ensure that quality staff can be recruited to produce the valued national statistics

The Commissioner should have full authority to make all appointments in NCES following Department personnel policies and procedures, and no transfer of personnel should occur without his approval.

(3) Reporting. To ensure the continued independence and reliability of NCES reports and findings, statutory language needs to be strengthened and made explicit that the Commissioner of NCES has final authority over the methodology for data collection and the review and release of statistical reports. And while NCES already uses rigorous statistical procedures and standards, the agency should also be required to meet the highest standards for quality, timeliness, and customer service.

ACES should provide stronger public oversight of NCES (as NAGB does for assessment) in the form of an annual report each Fall to the President, Secretary, and Congress on how well NCES is doing in carrying out its statistical plan and

serving the Nation's data needs. This report should also identify new and emerging data priorities so that the President, Secretary, and Congress can be informed and take appropriate action. Both the CCD and IPEDS constituent forums that NCES coordinates should be asked to provide their input to ACES on the operations of NCES' institutional surveys. This will ensure that state and local feedback is received on the quality, predictability, timeliness, and usefulness of the data being produced.

Recommendation. Preserve NCES as an independent statistical agency, in the tradition of BLS and the Census Bureau and enhance the explicit statutory safeguards related to the Commissioner's budget formulation, personnel, and reporting authority. The Commissioner of NCES should report directly to the Secretary of Education.

IV. NCES – NAGB Relationship

Educational reform has entered a new era; the question asked by the American public is: How good is student achievement when measured against a standard of what we believe all students should know and be able to do?

Created by congressional mandate in 1969, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has been a source of information about what American students in grades 4, 8, and 12 know and are able to do in key academic subjects. Since 1990 NAEP has also provided state-level information of student achievement for states that wished to participate. By showing what students do in fact know and are able to do in more sophisticated ways, NAEP has made evident that U.S. student performance is not where most Americans expect or want our students to be (Forgione, 1999a).

NCES' Role. Currently, it is the responsibility of the National Center for Educations Statistics to conduct the National Assessment. According to the latest NAEP authorization (the National Education Statistics Act of 1994), "The Commissioner shall, with the advice of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB)...and the technical assistance of the Advisory Council (on Education Statistics), carry out through grants, contracts or cooperative agreements with one or more qualified organizations, or consortia thereof, a National Assessment of Educational Progress" (Forgione, 1997).

NAEP has survived and prospered for 27 years because of its willingness to adapt to its times without abandoning its most basic mission to provide sound reliable, and meaningful information about student achievement in American. While the demands on NAEP have never been greater, so to is the accumulated wisdom about how it can be improved, wisdom honed in some cases from nearly three decades of experience.

I believe the current agreement of sharing responsibility for NAEP between the Commissioner of NCES and the NAGB has worked and is in the Nation's best interest. I also do not feel that it is helpful or effective to ask ACES to continue its NAEP technical advisement role. This provision, in my opinion, has confused the assignment of

authority, and ACES in reality has neither the time nor resources to fulfill this role. It is best for NCES and NAGB to deal directly with such technical matters, and for the Commissioner to use NCES' resources and his authority to conduct needed technical work on NAEP-related issues.

By working closely with states and local policy makers and by exploiting the guidance provided by leading experts in the field, I am convinced that NCES and NAGB together can continue NAEP as an increasingly rich tool for fostering educational improvement in American well into the 21st century.

Unprecedented Opportunities and Challenges Ahead. The history of the NCES – NAGB relationship has been unique for NCES. Having a strong, independent, and standing policy advisory board to guide the conduct and reporting of the Nation's Report Card has been an overall positive for both NAEP and the assessment agenda at NCES. Certainly, this relationship requires much communication and good will, but its successes are notable and many.

Again, if we were to take stock, I believe the strong consensus would be that NAEP is flourishing and has distinguished itself as a national benchmark. So, why propose to separate NAEP from NCES? We must not underestimate the technical demands that this premier assessment program requires, and having the strength and experience of NCES behind it---now for over three decades---must not be lost. There has been a healthy and productive tension in the relationship. But, in every case, the Commissioner and the NAGB Chair have constructively resolved the issues (Forgione, 1997; 1999c).

It would be very short sighted, in my opinion, to remove NAEP from NCES' purview since NAGB should want to have a distance from the program's operation so that it truly can be independent in exercising its reporting responsibilities. Bringing the program's administration and technical work under NAGB would remove what has served as an effective and productive "check and balance" relationship. The policy perspectives of NAGB members have been critical to enhancing the usefulness and value of NAEP to constituents, and the statistical and scientific depth and technical culture of NCES has been central to ensuring the integrity of NAEP as our national assessment "gold standard."

Moreover, in this time when accountability in education is resonating across the educational landscape at all levels, and testing and assessment are so critical to the future of educational reform, why would we intentionally remove the premier statistical agency in education, not only in the U. S. but worldwide, from having a major role. Isolating the capacity and credibility of NCES from the needed technical work required to design and develop quality testing and accountability systems simply does not make sense to me.

Thus, I respectfully request that the Committee revisit the proposal to take NAEP out of NCES and to abandon this uniquely successful partnership.

Recommendation. The shared responsibility for administering NAEP should be preserved, with the Commissioner of NCES being responsible for the conduct and technical qualities, and the NAGB being responsible for the policy and reporting of the Nation's Report Card.

VI. Reauthorizing OERI

The New National Academy Proposal. There is a glaring need for Congress to reinvent the educated research, evaluation and information dissemination functions. I applaud the new vision for these functions that is set out in HR 4875, the Scientifically-Based Educational Research proposal. The institutional safeguards related to integrity and independence that are outlined are absolutely needed. The creation of a National Academy with a strong director who can create a compelling vision for this nation and who will put in place a coordinated and high quality plan for educational research, program evaluation and information dissemination will be a national resource. If successfully launched, this proposal offers much potential for enhancing the education productivity and performance of America's public schools.

The conduct and operation of a national research agenda must be seen as objective and meaningful to the nation's 14,000 school districts and 50 states. Now is the time to start putting put in place a foundation for a national leadership role that draws together the best minds, listens to the education clients to determine the priority needs for quality R & D and then is able to produce "value-added" knowledge and tools for practitioners and policymakers on what works to aid our ongoing educational improvement reforms. The federal role should be one of leadership in consensus building on a priority agenda, investment and useful products.

Currently, I am sorry to say, the federal functions in the areas of education research, program evaluation and information dissemination are fundamentally broke. In contract to the earlier portrait that I painted of a mature and successful statistical operation, in my opinion, the federal units in research, evaluation and information dissemination have neither the capacity nor the track record in fulfilling their critical mission. I applaud the Committee's apparent desire to start over and build anew these functions. It will be especially important that all positions be reposted so that the new Academy Director can build a first-class team of scientific experts and leaders in these fields. Thus, I would strongly recommend a phase-in strategy that allows current federal units for a two-year period to complete the work underway, while new designs and development programs are incubated and launched under the new Academy. A coordinated transition period is essential so that the new Academy Director is not overwhelmed with the enormous ongoing work that must be done, at the expense of needed planning and capacity building.

Why Incorporate NCES? I would ask that the Committee reconsider the inclusion of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within this new Academy. I strongly recommend, as I outlined earlier in my testimony, that NCES be separated from OERI and elevated within the Department of Education so that the Commissioner of NCES would report directly to the Secretary of Education for the following reasons. First, so much must be done to create and put in place a compelling program in the three areas of research, evaluation and information dissemination. The Director will need to devote full-time attention over a 3-5 year period to create the structures and capacity to meet our nation's research and development needs. Second, building the quality systems and developing a culture of integrity in the new National Academy (including standards for judging the adequacy of work products, monitoring program developments and ensuring adequate reviews, such as NCES' adjudication process under the Chief Statistician) took nearly a decade to institutionalize at NCES. Establishing parallel processes in the new Academy will be demanding and essential to a successful research and development enterprise. It is my experienced opinion that the Academy Director should not need to worry about the statistical operations, which are very demanding, and also operating well.

Third, the current experiment with a consolidated operation (namely, OERI) has been a dismal failure. In contract, there is much evidence from the experiences of other Departments – the two prominent being Commerce and Labor --- that a mature and well-performing independent statistical operation is a successful model, and an asset to the nation's data needs as currently demonstrated by the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Education's own NCES. Fourth, the new Academy and its Director needs to have an opportunity to aggressively advocate for and hopefully be successful in securing the personnel and resources needed to achieve the stated purposes of the new National Academy outlined in HR 4875. Having NCES within the Academy will place unnecessary pressures and competing demands on the Director to support ongoing and mature education statistics programs and plans at the expense of, or in competition with, the less-mature and visible R & D programs. I believe the new Academy would be best served by not having this internal competition, but rather have such deliberations play out in the broader Department budgeting processes.

And fifth, we need to recognize that the development of a national research and evaluation agenda will be difficult, both substantively and politically. The divisions over values and approaches are deep in the education arena. Much care and deliberation needs to be exercised in proceeding to build the needed research and development enterprise. While conceptually one might argue for greater integration of the research and statistic functions and operations so as to benefit the whole, I would ask that we be appropriately cautious. Merging a well-accepted and credible national statistical agenda into the very uncertain political waters of a new Academy may constrain an otherwise successful statistical operation. Certainly, the institutional safeguards that are being proposed are welcomed, but in themselves they will not guarantee continued success.

Thus, while I understand the proposal's interest in supporting greater integration, I advise that you proceed in parallel tracks: (a) make NCES an independent office, with statutory safeguards; and (b) create a new, separate National Academy, with similar statutory safeguards.

Recommendation. Create a new and independent National Academy of Education Research, Evaluation and Information (without Statistics).

VII. Research into Practice: Key Issues

The invitation to testify requested that the presenters comment on how a more robust R & D investment can be used by local school districts to improve education practices and academic outcomes.

First, let me restate my belief that the federal government alone has the capacity and staying power to conduct the quality research and statistical studies to generate the knowledge base that will guide and stimulate America's educational enterprise.

Second, given that the federal investment in education spending represents less than 6% nationally, federal funding must be strategically invested to have the greatest impact, that is, needy school district, schools and children should be targeted as a top priority.

I have purposefully focused the bulk of my testimony on the organizational and statutory considerations of the HR 4875 proposal given my recent tenure as U. S. Commissioner of Education Statistics (1996-1999). I offer the following brief thoughts and a local perspective of priorities issues.

(1) There is a need for greater attention on school district improvement as the primary agent in instituting educational reforms, notably high standards and quality student learning. If we are to achieve our shared goal of replicating academic success for all children, then we need to understand how and what systemic and coherent reforms work across school districts (and not just at the school level). How does one implement successfully districtwide high academic standards?

(2) The nation has accepted the reading knowledge base and is translating these best practices into curricular and professional development initiative (e.g. Texas Statewide Reading Initiative to train over four summers all K-3 grade teachers). Now, we need to reach consensus on best practices in teaching mathematics, especially to middle school students (grades 5-9).

(3) There is too little understanding of how to implement schoolwide academic improvement in secondary schools. All the major reform models (e.g. Success for All, Accelerated Learning, etc.) continue to focus on elementary school successes. Secondary schools are difficult to change and very large and demanding communities. More emphasis has to be placed on successful and best practices in secondary education, especially as related to literacy and mathematics standards.

(4) Research on best practices for achieving reading/literacy proficiency with English language learners is a glaring need.

(5) The field of special education, including identification criteria, service options and program effects, is so primitive and unrelated to student outcomes rather than process certification.

(6) Research on the cost of education and financial factors affecting equity and fairness on public school financing continues to challenge us. What constitutes an adequate education? In this same vein, we need to better understand the current models of public school governance and what structures are effective, especially in a complex urban setting.

In summary, it is difficult to change large educational systems, but continuous improvement is essential in achieving the mission of AISD, to educate every child every day. We have created unique connections through special relationships with partner higher education institutions (namely, the University of Texas and the University of Pittsburgh/Institute for Learning) to bring best practices and new knowledge to our daily education practices. Our goal is to create a community of learning across AISD and within each of our 103 campuses so that we can be good consumers of educational research and better practitioners of quality teaching and learning for all children.

VIII. Conclusion

I welcome a more active (especially in funding) and more focused federal role in educational research, statistics, evaluation and information/dissemination. I do believe that the structural changes proposed on HR 4875 are necessary and appropriate, with two key modifications (i.e., maintain NCES as an independent statistical agency and maintain NCES' role in the area of assessment through NAEP and NAGB).

Earlier I describe my vision for a visible and active national presence in supporting school improvement efforts.

Our vision for statistics for this nation should be comprehensive and address a core set of educational issues. For example, local school boards and central district offices should know about demographic trends that will affect them far in advance and should get that information on a regular basis. Districts should have national and state dropout data every fall for comparison. And they should have annual data on nationally benchmarked

student achievement in core academic areas. The schedule for release of that data should be created several years in advance. School boards should be able to use NCES data to learn about the best use of professional development investments or what works in bilingual education or what the elements of good child development programs are. When a district is working on improving standards, it will find data on what students in other countries are exposed to at what grades and will even learn instructional strategies from video presentation in the NCES data bank. School officials will find national data on the postsecondary experiences of students and made comparisons with their own data gathering efforts.

I thank you for this opportunity to share my thoughts on this important topic with the Committee.

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APPENDIX G -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ALBERT L. BENNETT, DIRECTOR, CONSORTIUM ON CHICAGO SCHOOL RESEARCH, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Dr. Albert L. Bennett
Director, Consortium on Chicago School Research

Testimony before the
Subcommittee on Education Reform
"From Research to Practice: Improving America's Schools in the 21st Century"

July 17, 2001

Good afternoon, thank you Chairman Castle, Ranking Member Kildee and members of the committee. I am delighted to have this opportunity to talk about ways to strengthen the relationship between research and practice. For the last ten years, I have been a director of the Consortium on Chicago School Research (the Consortium). The Consortium, founded by Anthony Bryk, a professor at the University of Chicago, is an independent federation of Chicago area organizations that conducts research on ways to improve Chicago's public schools and assess the progress of school improvement and reform. Formed in 1990, it is a multi-partisan organization that includes faculty from area universities, leadership from the Chicago Public schools, the Chicago Teachers Union, education advocacy groups, the Illinois State Board of Education, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, and other key civic and professional leaders. The Consortium does not argue a particular policy position. Rather it believes that good policy is most likely to result from a genuine competition of ideas informed by the best evidence that can obtained.

Besides the makeup of its membership, the most important difference between the Consortium and many other research groups is a commitment to public informing. From its beginning, the Consortium believed that to produce high-quality, technically sound research is necessary but not sufficient. We believe that in order to be truly successful at what we do, our research and findings must be disseminated to teachers, principals and parents. We also believe that this broad educative function plays an important role in introducing and sustaining local school reform efforts.

Ten years ago, we began our public informing work by dividing the various constituencies or stakeholders into discrete groups. We began with the relatively small group of individuals who read research like ours -- members of the local and national research community. Over time, as the capacity of the Consortium grew, we have attempted to get our reports and research findings into the hands of non-traditional groups – teachers, parents, and members of the broader community. We realized when we began our public informing activities that as we moved from the smallest group to the largest group the range of our public informing activities would become more varied and more complex. We simply did not realize just how varied and how complex this task would be.

We have been very successful in reaching members of the research community, members of the policy community, members of the Chicago Board of Education, and members of the Chicago Public Schools' central administration. We have been much less successful in reaching principals, teachers and parents. While we understand why this task has been so difficult (i.e., over 26,000 teachers, 570 principals and hundreds of thousands of parents) the lack of success is still unacceptable. We have concluded that a research organization like the Consortium can never accomplish such a labor-intensive goal unless we establish partnerships with organizations that understand research and, equally important, have the ability to connect practitioners, parents and other members of the community to research.

Through various meetings and conversations, the Consortium directors agreed that the North Central Regional Education Laboratory (NCREL) is one of the agencies appropriate for us to partner with to fulfill our community education function. Because NCREL has worked closely with teachers, it has developed an understanding of how to frame complex research findings so that they are useful to classroom teachers.

Over the last year or so, I have been working with NCREL staff developing ways to get the Consortium's work into the hands of principals, teachers, and parents. Much of this work will be supported by NCREL's innovative use of technology, however, in the process of our work together, we have found that some of the Consortium's reports, although written to be accessible to a wide range of stakeholders, need to be re-written and reorganized to make them more user-friendly for principals, parents and teachers. I have been pleased with NCREL's ability to think about complex research findings from the perspective of classroom teachers.

The connection of research to practice has been personally and professionally important to me for the last 10 years. Each year I attend professional conferences where very impressive research is presented by very impressive research scholars. The only problem is that the people on whom the research is done and for whom the research is intended to help are, for the most part, not there. Generally speaking, they do not go to these annual meetings, they are in their schools doing the work.

I would hope that we are seeing the end to the days when researchers conducted research that was read by a few and rarely widely disseminated . My work with NCREL and other agencies is an attempt by the Consortium to insure that our research findings are connected to practice, widely disseminated, and used by practitioners. Thank-you for allowing me to present my views on this most important topic.

Committee on Education and the Workforce

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

Your Name:		
1. Will you be representing a federal, State, or local government entity? (If the answer is yes please contact the Committee).	Yes	No ✓
2. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) which you have received since October 1, 1998:		
3. Will you be representing an entity other than a government entity?	Yes	No
4. Other than yourself, please list what entity or entities you will be representing: CONSORTIUM ON CHICAGO SCHOOL RESEARCH		
5. Please list any offices or elected positions held and/or briefly describe your representational capacity with each of the entities you listed in response to question 4: I AM A director of the Consortium on Chicago School Research.		
6. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received by the entities you listed in response to question 4 since October 1, 1998, including the source and amount of each grant or contract:		
7. Are there parent organizations, subsidiaries, or partnerships to the entities you disclosed in response to question number 4 that you will not be representing? If so, please list:	Yes	No

Signature: Robert F. Kennedy Date: _____

Please attach this sheet to your written testimony.

APPENDIX H -- WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DAWN GOLDSTINE, SUPERINTENDENT, NORTH HAMPTON COUNTY SCHOOLS, MACHIPONGO, VIRGINIA

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION REFORM

Written Testimony: Dr. S. Dawn Goldstine, Superintendent of Schools, Northampton County, Virginia

July 17, 2001

Northampton County is located on Virginia's Eastern Shore between the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay. It is connected to the mainland of Virginia by a 17 mile bridge/tunnel/causeway. Northampton's 13,000 residents in its 200 square miles are comprised of newcomers who enjoy the natural beauty of unspoiled creeks and bay and long time residents, some of whom trace their ancestry back as much as 300 years. Our isolation and lack of services and popular entertainment are agreeable to some but difficult for others.

Despite our natural gifts, we have severe problems. According to the last census figures 27% of our 13,000 residents live below the poverty level. Twelve percent of the housing units lack indoor plumbing, and 8% complete kitchen facilities. Twenty percent of the population over the age of 25 have less than a ninth-grade education. About 74% of our school population qualify for free or reduced lunch, 63% are African American, 36% white and 1% Hispanic. We have a 23% student mobility rate and a 20% teacher mobility rate.

In no school system in the country has more systemic change occurred. We have found out the hard way the answers to many of the questions puzzling America today. Our school reform story began twelve years ago when as Virginia's representative as one of the 50 cutting edge superintendents in the nation I was awarded a scholarship to attend the Effective Schools Institute. With the help of a $50,000 project grant and an Effective Schools Institute consultant, we designed a school-based and data-driven process for reform. Existing and developing

research provided initial information, but our own surveys, test analysis, and training in organizational change formed the basis for planning and decision making.

Twelve years ago children were learning in five elementary buildings nearly 100 years old which were woefully inadequate in equipment, space and resources. The drop-out rate was almost 10%, we had just been served with our third court order for desegregation over 25 years, an ability grouping process drove classroom assignments at all levels, textbooks dated back to the 1970's, a few Radio Shack and Commodore Pet computers were the extent of technology, salaries were abysmal, and staff development was virtually non-existent. Standardized test scores were among the lowest in Virginia and a general attitude prevailed that because the Eastern Shore was unique and money was tight, the children would probably never be able to compete with those in other places. Not surprisingly, only 60% of our graduates furthered their education beyond high school. The task before us was daunting.

Well, money is still tight, but thanks to state and federal grant funding and our participation in state, regional and national reform initiatives, we have been able to accomplish what many thought was impossible. Our hard working staff, supported by volunteers, parents, and most of all the students, have proven the nay-sayers wrong,

In 1990 we used research to reorganize under a school-based plan, redesigned our instructional program and tackled the issue of ability grouping. In 1993, with state consultation and through consolidation, we closed all five elementary schools, replaced them with two modern ones, doubled the size of the middle school, and refurbished the high school with no additional cost or tax increase to the community

State, federal, and grant funds provided computers, network wiring, and administrative software. We made a commitment to the belief that our children can and will be able to compete for the best jobs, the best colleges and the best scholarships. Now, about 80% of our students further their education at fine colleges, universities and technical schools throughout the country, Four years ago only 56% of kindergarten children entered first grade reading on grade level, now 100% do. In 1995, at the recommendation of the U. S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, a federal judge returned Northampton to unitary status.

Since 1996 all four schools have been honored as Virginia Schools of Excellence and three are U. S. Blue Ribbon Schools. All four schools are fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and Northampton is one of 58 out of 135 school systems to be fully accredited as well. No Northampton schools have a warned accreditation status in the Virginia accreditation program and state test scores are increasing at a consistent and rapid rate. None of this progress was happenstance. Rather, it was the result of data driven analysis and a continual cycle of goal setting, implementation, analysis, and decision-making.

Even though we began the process for organizational change and formed the foundation for progress that was not the whole challenge. We knew what we had to do to raise test scores but did not have the funds to accomplish it. Like so many school systems with severe financial problems located in communities that cannot fund the schools at the level necessary for students who are greatly in need, we had never had a local curriculum and certainly not one aligned with the state standards and assessment program. Like similar school systems we had used the scope and sequence of skills presented in the textbook whether or not it reflected the content or time frame required by the standards. Local assessment confirmed that teachers were teaching and

the students were learning but success in the Virginia Standards of Learning and Assessment program required a different approach.

Four years ago, with state funds, teachers began writing our own curriculum in the four core subjects and support courses as well. Summer after summer teachers PK-12 worked together in subject area groups to write Northampton's first curriculum and laboriously linked it with state standards, assessment, and nationally normed tests. Now, in accordance with Effective Schools Research, we teach what we test and we test what we teach.

We have been blessed with the help of many knowledgeable advisors but none more influential than our most recent partnership with AEL, Inc. formerly known as Appalachian Education Laboratory and the Virginia Department of Education's Regional Best Practice Center. An external facilitator, paid by AEL and working in sync with the Tidewater Best Practice Center was located on the Eastern Shore to serve its two Virginia counties. This individual, who knows the Eastern Shore and its people, works directly with administrators and teachers to tailor make a program of staff, curriculum, and program development.

Each of the two Eastern Shore school systems addressed the reform process in their own way and with a focus on the new state standards program. Most importantly the approach is not one size fits all, which tends to discourage educators.

The facilitator, who is a practitioner and a partner, has access to data and research as well as assistance in identifying financial resources. Most of all, the facilitator provides practical down to earth problem solving which employs data to answer typical questions like these: A. How are

my students achieving? B. What teaching strategies should I use that will ensure greater learning? C. What must my students know to be successful in the state standards and assessment program? D. What expectations must I have in order to assure that my students will progress?

The result, as we begin the third year with an external facilitator, is:

1. Reform based on student centered decision making has moved ahead faster and in a more focused manner.
2. Greater collaboration has occurred between teachers. They are encouraged to learn from one another.
3. Greater sharing has occurred between the neighboring school districts.
4. Teachers are encouraged and supported in continuing to make a personal commitment.
5. Greater focus is placed on student achievement resulting in more time spent on teaching and learning.
6. Greater achievement has occurred on standardized tests especially among at-risk students.
7. Teachers are more knowledgeable with staff development focused not only on their needs but those of their students.

Make no mistake, while the new programs and requirements are costly and the task is formidable it is doable….. but not necessarily by everyone, everywhere, and at the same time, without carefully placed funding implemented with a carefully planned focus.

Federal funds have made a difference. The 21st Century grant has provided after school academics and enrichment for children who need more time than the school day. The preschool program for at-risk youngsters bridges the experience gap. The in-school dental program ensures that poor children whose teeth may be sadly neglected, can concentrate on learning rather than their pain. These and other programs provide funding for opportunities that are beyond the reach of small localities that have few options for their resources.

Best wishes in your deliberations. Your funding allocations translate into opportunities for staff and students in school systems like ours.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today and your support for the future of the children we share.

Dr. S. Dawn Goldstine

Northampton County Public Schools

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