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Details: Informational Hearing (September 13, 2007)

(FORM UPDATED: 07/12/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2007-08

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Education (SC-Ed)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
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- Record of Comm. Proceedings ... **RCP**

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- Appointments ... **Appt**
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- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions

(ab = Assembly Bill)	(ar = Assembly Resolution)	(ajr = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(sb = Senate Bill)	(sr = Senate Resolution)	(sjr = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

MB

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 13, 2007
~~THE~~ INFORMATIONAL HEARING - NCLB



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Attachment A

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testimony before the house education and labor committee on nclb

Testimony before the House Education and Labor Committee on
the Re-Authorization of No Child Left Behind

Linda Darling-Hammond
September 10, 2007

(For the complete report, go to the [U.S. House Education and Labor Committee site.](#))

Congressman Miller, Congressman McKeon and members of the Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on the draft bill to re-authorize No Child Left Behind. I am Linda Darling-Hammond, Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University and co-director of the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute and the School Redesign Network. I was also the founding Executive Director of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, and have spent many years studying policies and practices in the U.S. and around the world that support stronger curriculum, assessment, teaching and learning.

I want also to thank the Committee for its openness and commitment to the democratic process in having shared a public draft of the re-authorization bill prior to finalizing the bill. This move shows a respect and consideration for the public that is appreciated by those who care deeply about our nation's education system.

While the very complex NCLB legislation has many elements that deserve attention and ongoing revision, I am sure you will hear about those from many others. I want to focus my testimony this morning on three key elements of the law:

1. The provisions to encourage multiple measures of assessment and multiple indicators of school progress, which I believe are essential to raise standards and strengthen educational quality in ways that are internationally competitive;

2. The provisions to improve the quality and distribution of the teaching force, which are also essential to our ability to reach the high goals this Congress would like to establish for our nation's schools, and

3. The means for measuring school progress from year to year, which I believe need to become more publicly comprehensible and more closely focused on evaluating continuing progress for students and schools.

My comments are based on studies of U.S. education and of the education systems of other countries that are outperforming the U.S. by larger and larger margins every year. For example, in the most recent PISA assessments, the U.S. ranked 19th out of 40 countries in reading, 20th in science, and 28th in math (on a par with Latvia), outscored by nations like Finland, Sweden, Canada, Hong Kong, South Korea,

the Netherlands, Japan, and Singapore (which did not participate in PISA but scored at the top of the TIMSS rankings) that are investing intensively in the kinds of curriculum and assessments and the kinds of teaching force improvements that we desperately need and that this re-authorization bill is seeking to introduce.

2003 PISA RESULTS

Reading

Finland

South Korea

Canada

Australia

Liechtenstein

New Zealand

Ireland

Sweden

Netherlands

U.S. ranks # 19 / 40

Scientific Literacy

Finland

Japan

Hong Kong

South Korea

Liechtenstein

Australia

Macao

Netherlands

Czech Republic

U.S. ranks #20 / 40

Math

Hong Kong

Finland

South Korea

Netherlands

Liechtenstein

Japan

Canada

Belgium

Macao (China)

U.S. ranks #28 / 40 It is worth noting that PISA assessments focus explicitly on 21st century skills, going beyond the question posed by most U.S. standardized tests, "Did students learn what we taught them?" to ask, "What can students do with what they have learned?" PISA defines literacy in mathematics, science, and reading as students' abilities to *apply* what they know to new problems and situations. This is the kind of higher-order learning that is increasingly emphasized in other nations' assessment systems, but often discouraged by the multiple-choice tests most states have adopted under the first authorization of No Child Left Behind. Underneath the United States' poor standing is an outcome of both enormous inequality in school inputs and outcomes and a lack of sufficient focus for all students on higher-order thinking and problem-solving, the areas where all groups in the U.S. do least well on international tests.

In addition to declines in performance on international assessments, the U.S. has slipped in relation to other countries in terms of graduation rates and college-going. Most European and Asian countries that once educated fewer of their citizens now routinely graduate virtually all of their students. Meanwhile, the U.S. has not improved graduation rates for a quarter century, and graduation rates are now going *down* as requirements for an educated workforce are going steeply up. According to an ETS study, only about 69% of high school students graduated with a standard diploma in 2000, down from 77% in 1969. Of the 60% of graduates who go onto college, only about half graduate from college with a degree. In the end, less than 30% of an age cohort in the U.S. gains a college degree. For students of color, the pipeline leaks more profusely at every juncture. Only about 17% of African American young people between the ages of 25 and 29 – and only 11% of Hispanic youth – had earned a college degree in 2005, as compared to 34 % of white youth in the same age bracket.

And whereas the U.S. was an unchallenged 1st in the world in higher education participation for

many decades, it has slipped to 13th and college participation for our young people is declining. Just over one-third of U.S. young adults are participating in higher education, most in community colleges. Meanwhile, the countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which are mostly European, now average nearly 50% participation in higher education, and most of these students are in programs leading to a bachelors degree. Similarly in Southeast Asia, enormous investments in both K-12 and higher education have steeply raised graduation rates from high school as well as college-going rates.

The implications of these trends are important for national economies. A recent OECD report found that for every year that the average schooling level of the population is raised, there is a corresponding increase of 3.7% in long-term economic growth, a statistic worth particular note while the U.S. is going backwards in educating its citizens, and most of the rest of the world is moving forward.

What are High-Achieving Nations Doing?

Funding. Most high-achieving countries not only provide high-quality universal preschool and health care for children, they also fund their schools centrally and equally, with additional funds to the neediest schools. By contrast, in the U.S., the wealthiest school districts spend nearly ten times more than the poorest, and spending ratios of 3 to 1 are common within states. These disparities reinforce the wide inequalities in income among families, with the most resources being spent on children from the wealthiest communities and the fewest on the children of the poor, especially in high-minority communities.

Teaching. Furthermore, high-achieving nations intensively support a better-prepared teaching force – funding competitive salaries and high-quality teacher education, mentoring, and ongoing professional development for all teachers, at government expense. Countries which rarely experience teacher shortages (such as Finland, Sweden, Norway, Netherlands, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore) have made substantial investments in teacher training and equitable teacher distribution in the last two decades. These include:

- <!--[if !supportLists]-->1 <!--[endif]-->High-quality pre-service teacher education, completely free of charge to all candidates, including a year of practice teaching in a clinical school connected to the university,
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->2 <!--[endif]-->Mentoring for all beginners in their first year of teaching from expert teachers, coupled with other supports like a reduced teaching load and shared planning,
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->3 <!--[endif]-->Salaries which are competitive with other professions, such as engineering and are equitable across schools (often with additional stipends for hard-to-staff locations),
- <!--[if !supportLists]-->4 <!--[endif]-->Ongoing professional learning embedded in 10 or more hours a week of planning and professional development time.

Leaders in Finland attribute the country's dramatic climb from the bottom of the international rankings to the very top to intensive investments in teacher education. Over ten years the country overhauled preparation to focus more on teaching for higher-order skills and teaching diverse learners – including a strong emphasis on those with special needs – and created a funding stream to provide a 3-year graduate level preparation program to all teacher candidates free of charge and with a living stipend, a full year of training in a professional development school site – rather like the residency promoted in this draft bill, intensive mentoring once in the classroom, and more than ten hours a week of professional learning time in

school, where teachers collaborate on lesson planning and on the development and scoring of local performance assessments that are the backbone of the country's assessment system.

In high-achieving Singapore, which I recently visited as part of a review team for the Institute of Education, students from the top 1/3 of the high school class are recruited into a 4-year teacher education program (or, if they enter later, a one-year graduate program) and immediately put on the Ministry's payroll as employees. They are paid a stipend while they are in training (which is free for them) and are paid at a rate that is higher than beginning doctors when they enter the profession. There they receive systematic mentoring from expert teachers once they begin teaching. Like all other teachers in Singapore, the government pays for 100 hours of professional development annually in addition to the 20 hours a week they have to work with other teachers and visit each others' classrooms to study teaching. As they progress through the career, there are 3 separate career ladders they can pursue, with support from the government for further training: developing the skills and taking on the responsibilities of curriculum specialists, teaching / mentoring specialists, or prospective principals.

Curriculum and Assessment. Finally, these high-achieving nations focus their curriculum on critical thinking and problem solving, using examinations that require students to conduct research and scientific investigations, solve complex real-world problems in mathematics, and defend their ideas orally and in writing. In most cases, their assessment systems combine centralized (state or national) assessments that use mostly open-ended and essay questions and local assessments given by teachers, which are factored into the final examination scores. These local assessments – which include research papers, applied science experiments, presentations of various kinds, and projects and products that students construct – are mapped to the syllabus and the standards for the subject and are selected because they represent critical skills, topics, and concepts. They are often suggested and outlined in the curriculum, but they are generally designed, administered, and scored locally.

An example of such assessments can be found in Appendix A, which shows science assessments from high-achieving Victoria, Australia and Hong Kong – which use very similar assessment systems – in comparison to traditional multiple choice or short answer items from the United States. Whereas students in most parts of the U.S. are typically asked simply to memorize facts which they need to recognize in a list answers, or give short answers which are also just one-sentence accounts of memorized facts, students in Australia and Hong Kong (as well as other high-achieving nations) are asked to apply their knowledge in the ways that scientists do.

The item from the Victoria, Australia biology test, for example, describes a particular virus to students, asks them to design a drug to kill the virus and explain how the drug operates (complete with diagrams), and then to design an experiment to test the drug. This state test in Victoria comprises no more than 50% of the total examination score. The remaining components of the examination score come from required assignments and assessments students undertake throughout the year – lab experiments and investigations as well as research papers and presentations – which are designed in response to the syllabus. These ensure that they are getting the kind of learning opportunities which prepare them for the assessments they will later take, that they are getting feedback they need to improve, and that they will be prepared to succeed not only on these very challenging tests but in college and in life, where they will have to apply knowledge in these ways.

Locally managed performance assessments that get students to apply their knowledge to real-world problems are critically important to the teaching and learning process. They allow the testing of more complex skills that cannot be measured in a two-hour test on a single day. They shape the curriculum in ways that ensure stronger learning opportunities. They give teachers timely, formative information they need

to help students improve – something that standardized examinations with long lapses between administration and results cannot do. And they help teachers become more knowledgeable about the standards and how to teach to them, as well as about their own students and how they learn. The process of using these assessments improves their teaching and their students' learning. The processes of collective scoring and moderation that many nations or states use to ensure reliability in scoring also prove educative for teachers, who learn to calibrate their sense of the standards to common benchmarks.

The power of such assessments for teaching and learning is suggested by the fact that ambitious nations are consciously increasing the use of school-based performance assessments in their systems. Hong Kong, Singapore, and several Australian states have intensive efforts underway to expand these assessments. England, Canada, Sweden, and the Netherlands have already done so. Locally managed performance assessments comprise the entire assessment system in top-ranked Finland and in Queensland and ACT, Australia – the highest-achieving states in that high-achieving nation.

These assessments are not used to rank or punish schools, or to deny promotion or diplomas to students. (In fact, several countries have explicit proscriptions against such practices). They are used to evaluate curriculum and guide investments in professional learning – in short, to help schools improve. By asking students to show what they know through real-world applications of knowledge, these other nations' assessment systems encourage serious intellectual activities that are currently being discouraged in U.S. schools by the tests many states have adopted under NCLB.

How NCLB can Help the United States Become Educationally Competitive

Multiple Measures and Performance Assessments. The proposals in the re-authorization draft to permit states to use a broader set of assessments and to encourage the development and use of performance assessments are critical to creating a globally competitive curriculum in U.S. schools. We need to encourage our states to evaluate the higher-order thinking and performance skills that leading nations emphasize in their systems, and we need to create incentives that value keeping students in school through graduation as much as producing apparently high average scores at the school level.

Many states developed systems that include state and locally-administered performance assessments as part of their efforts to develop standards under Goals 2000 in the 1990s. (These states included Connecticut, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Vermont, Rhode Island, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, among others.) Not coincidentally, these include most of the highest-achieving states in the U.S. on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Indeed, the National Science Foundation provided millions of dollars for states to develop such hands-on science and math assessments as part of its Systemic Science Initiative in the 1990s, and prototypes exist all over the country. One such measure – a science investigation requiring students to design, conduct, analyze, and write up results for an experiment – currently used as a state science assessment in Connecticut (a top-ranked state in both science and writing) is included with the assessment examples in Appendix A.

Researchers learned that such assessments can be managed productively and reliably scored with appropriate training and professional development for teachers, along with moderation and auditing systems, and that teaching and student achievement improve when such assessments are used.

However, the initial years of NCLB have discouraged the use and further development of these assessments, and have narrowed the curriculum both in terms of the subjects and kinds of skills taught. NCLB's rapidly implemented requirement for every-child every-year testing created large costs and

administrative challenges that have caused some states to abandon their performance assessments for machine-scored, multiple choice tests that are less expensive to score and more easily satisfy the law. In addition, the Department of Education has discouraged states from using such assessments. When Connecticut sued the federal government for the funds needed to maintain its sophisticated performance assessments on an every-child every-year basis, the Department suggested the state drop these tasks -- which resemble those used in high-scoring nations around the world -- for multiple choice tests. Thus the administration of the law is driving the U.S. curriculum in the opposite direction from what a 21st century economy requires.

For the complete report, go to the [U.S. House Education and Labor Committee site](#).

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WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



Statement of Becky Pringle

Chair, National Education Association ESEA Advisory Committee

On Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Before the Wisconsin Senate Committee on Education

September 13, 2007

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today on the very important issues surrounding reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. I am pleased to be able to represent the views of the 3.2 million members of the National Education Association (NEA), including the more than 98,000 members of the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC), at this hearing.

I come before you today as an eighth grade science teacher with more than 30 years of classroom experience. My testimony is informed not only by my personal teaching experience, but also by the work I have done in numerous professional capacities for the National Education Association, as well as the opportunities I have had to meet with and learn from NEA members across the country. I serve on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and I chair the NEA Elementary and Secondary Education Act Advisory Committee. I have recently completed my service on the NEA Executive Committee, having had the privilege of representing NEA members in this capacity for two terms.

NEA and WEAC members have approached the ESEA reauthorization with a fervent hope that it would offer an opportunity for a renewed, broad, and bold national discussion about how to improve and support public education. We want all students to succeed. We show up at schools every day to nurture children, to bring out their full potential, to be anchors in their lives, and to help prepare them for the 21st century world that awaits them.

I have been honored to serve for these past two years as Chair of a thoughtful and diverse committee of our members, charged by the NEA president to help outline what, in our view, would be a positive reauthorization of ESEA. Our committee worked for more than two years — hearing from experts, digesting volumes of research, and listening to practitioners across the country — to come up with not just recommendations about how to change Adequate Yearly Progress, or AYP, but substantive, thoughtful recommendations about how to define and create a great public school for every child.¹

Simply put, this reauthorization is and should be about more than tweaking the No Child Left Behind portions of ESEA. It should be a comprehensive examination of whether federal policies follow what the research says about how children learn and what makes a successful school. And, this reauthorization should not continue to ignore the unacceptable opportunity and achievement gaps that plague so many of our communities and students.

Lack of access to after-school programs and extended learning time programs and curriculum gaps continue to prevent students from accessing a rich and broad curriculum. This is exacerbated by No Child Left Behind's over-emphasis and over-reliance on standardized testing in three subject areas: math, reading, and now science. Many poor and minority communities as well as many rural and urban schools do not have access to arts, advanced placement, or physical education courses, nor do they have access to innovative curricula such as

¹ *ESEA: It's Time for a Change! NEA's Positive Agenda for ESEA Reauthorization*, <http://www.nea.org/lac/esea/images/posagenda.pdf>.

information literacy, environmental education, and financial literacy. Too many of our neediest students are taught by uncertified and under-prepared teachers. There are significant infrastructure and school environment gaps that hamper learning. Students clearly cannot learn in buildings with leaky roofs or in classrooms in which one cannot turn on a computer and the lights at the same time without blowing a fuse.

These gaps are attributable not only to inequitable distribution of resources, but also insufficient resources altogether, particularly from the federal government. Each year under No Child Left Behind, the gap between federal funding promised in the law and what has been delivered has grown ever wider. To date, the federal government has shortchanged states and school districts by \$56 billion.

If one of our goals is to remedy achievement and skills gaps that exist among different groups of students in this country, we cannot do so without addressing these opportunity gaps. This is about more than disparities in per pupil spending across states, within states, and within districts; it's about disparities in the basics of a student's life — disparities in the learning environments to which students are subject, disparities in the age of their textbooks and materials, disparities in course offerings, disparities in access to after-school help and enrichment, and yes, disparities in access to qualified, caring educators.

I would like to commend Wisconsin for having a more progressive philosophy about the distribution of resources and attempting to address the notion of equity. More needs to be done all across the country, however.

Our members have no doubt that No Child Left Behind, as it has played out in schools and classrooms across the country, is not fair, not flexible, and not funded. So, we have called on the United States Congress to take this opportunity for a major course-correction.

Here in Wisconsin, you have first-hand experience with the failings of No Child Left Behind. A survey conducted last year by the Wisconsin Education Association Council and the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators found that a full 83 percent of Wisconsin superintendents believe No Child Left Behind is not helping to improve educational quality for poor and minority students in their districts even though that is the stated purpose of the law. In addition:

- 73 percent of respondents believe that No Child Left Behind has not improved the overall quality of education in their districts.
- 69 percent believe students are spending too much time preparing for and taking standardized exams.
- 60 percent say the law is narrowing the curriculum in their districts.

Perhaps most troubling, 80 percent of Wisconsin superintendents do not believe their districts will meet the AYP goal of all students scoring proficient or advanced by 2013.

In June of this year, the list of schools that did not meet No Child Left Behind's unrealistic standards included 95 Wisconsin schools and two school districts - Kenosha and Milwaukee - that failed to make AYP. It also included 45 schools and one district - Milwaukee - that have been identified as "in need of improvement" for missing the same AYP objective for two or more consecutive years. These schools don't need new mandates or punishments from the federal government; they need resources and support, and they need a common-sense accountability system that presents a complete, accurate picture of their achievements.

The federal government has failed to provide Wisconsin school districts with \$593 million promised under ESEA Title I, Part A, to assist schools in helping the students with the greatest needs. Of this cumulative shortfall, \$191 million is for the current 2007-08 school year. While Kenosha failed to make AYP, the federal government failed to provide the school district with \$16 million in Title I funds promised under No Child Left Behind since its enactment. While Milwaukee failed to make AYP, the federal government failed to provide the school district with \$252 million in Title I funds promised under No Child Left Behind since its enactment.

NEA members in Wisconsin care deeply about the reauthorization process and its outcome because they have lived for more than five years under a system that was crafted without enough of their input, that has proven to be unworkable, and in too many cases has had negative, unintended consequences. They, like NEA members across the country, are counting on a thoughtful process this time and a bill that recognizes more than just the technical flaws with the statute, but the conceptual and philosophical flaws of the current test-label-punish theory of education reform.

Let me share some real-life perspective on the law from WEAC members.

Melissa Barkley, an elementary school teacher in Weston, writes,

Since the adoption of NCLB, art, music, drama, and physical education classes have been reduced or eliminated to make room for the tested subjects of math, reading, and writing. Because I am a great teacher, I know that students perform better when they are motivated. With the exclusion of these programs, students lack motivation to come to school and participate in activities. If it continues, students will have nothing to read or write about.

Kraig Brownell, a high school science teacher in La Crosse, tells us,

President Bush came to my high school (Logan High School in La Crosse) in May of 2002 as part of his trip to launch ESEA/NCLB. His reason for coming to our school was because we had achieved excellent test scores with a large population of economically disadvantaged students....Since [that time], class size has increased to the point that I cannot safely monitor and individually help in the lab area. In addition, the main focus of district-sponsored training has shifted away from methodology and toward focusing teaching to the ESEA test. What a waste of money and professional time it is to instruct teachers on how to teach students to take tests in place of teaching ways to educate students for lifelong learning and critical thinking!

Jack Clement, a social studies teacher in East Troy, says,

Because of NCLB's emphasis on high-stakes testing, teachers must take valuable time away from teaching the curriculum to prepare for, and take the state test (WKCE). The high school test must be taken in October of the 10th grade but does not correspond to most school district curriculum, so students are often tested on subject topics that they will not be taught until later in 10th, 11th, or 12th grade. This test also does not promote higher-level critical thinking skills and is therefore detrimental to student learning.

Wendy Haag, a middle school teacher in Janesville, tells us,

I teach a self-contained math class in a middle school. This is a multi-grade level (6th, 7th, and 8th) class in which students with special educational needs from all areas are enrolled. I have two weeks in both the fall and spring in which about one-third of my class is missing due to mandated testing. Instruction is severely disrupted for students who are more in need of instruction and remediation, yet the district requires that each grade be tested twice each year so that we can show adequate gains. The current law requires my special needs students to take the same assessments without regard to their current level of skills or ability to understand the concepts. These interruptions in classroom instruction definitely interfere with both curriculum presentation and the mastery levels my students attain. Help!

And finally, Rozalia Harris, an elementary school teacher in Milwaukee, writes,

The focus on ESEA and testing has taken the heart of teaching out of the classroom. Students' spirit for learning and sharing has been reduced to rote memorization. Creativity is a skill students need to compete in

today's society. Don't reduce the power of the teacher and students by having them spend 75 percent of their time and energy on a one-shot testing experience.

This week in the United States Congress, the House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing on a "discussion draft" for reauthorization of Title I of ESEA. At that hearing, NEA President Reg Weaver told the committee that we do not believe the committee's first discussion draft of Title I adequately remedies most of the problematic provisions of the current law.

While the draft bill currently under discussion in the House includes the concepts of growth models and multiple measures in an attempt to get a more accurate picture of student learning and school quality, so far these provisions are inadequate, as the accountability system envisioned still relies overwhelmingly on two statewide standardized assessments. This does not give real meaning to the growth model and multiple measure concepts and defies the advice of assessment experts across the country.

We believe there must be a richer accountability system with shared responsibility by stakeholders at all levels for appropriate school accountability. Such an accountability system must marry not only accountability for achievement and learning by students, but also shared accountability to remedy other gaps in our education system and flaws in the current accountability model.

This reauthorization for us is about more than fixing AYP and other provisions that have been problematic; it's about recognizing that providing a quality education to every student takes more than a measurement system. It's about sending a message to students that they are more than just test scores. We should care as much OR MORE about whether a child graduates after receiving a comprehensive, high-quality education as we do about how he or she performs on a standardized test. We should be sending a message to educators that the art and practice of teaching is and must be about more than test preparation. If the only measures we really value are test scores, rather than some of the other indicators of a rich and challenging educational experience and set of supports provided to students, then we will have missed the mark again when it comes to adequately serving and educating all children. We will have avoided yet again the more difficult discussion of what services AND outcomes are important for all stakeholders to be held accountable.

At this week's congressional hearing, Reg Weaver reminded the committee about the essential elements included in our *Positive Agenda* that would truly make a difference in student learning and success. These include early childhood education, class size reduction, safe and modern facilities, and a real attempt to infuse 21st century skills and innovation into our schools to ensure that public education in this country is relevant and engaging to students in our changing, inter-dependent world. He urged the committee to remember that teaching and learning conditions are one of the two main factors (low salaries being the other) that continue to create the teacher recruitment and retention problem, particularly in the hardest to staff schools, and to take this opportunity to address these critical issues.

Today, I urge you to help send a strong message to the United States Congress that No Child Left Behind is not working in Wisconsin. I encourage you to go on record, calling for Congress to focus on what you know works – in Wisconsin and across the country – great teachers and staff, small class sizes, one-on-one attention, ongoing teacher training and mentoring, up-to-date books and learning materials, parental involvement, and community support, instead of mandates and punishments handed down from Washington, D.C.

We are pleased that, on the Senate side in Congress, Wisconsin's Senator Russ Feingold is planning to introduce legislation that would address some of the major issues I have raised here today. His bill would grant states more control over their testing schedules and accountability systems. States would be allowed to go back to testing once in elementary school, once in middle school, and once in high school if they so choose. States could also continue to test annually as they do now under No Child Left Behind. The point is that states would have the flexibility.

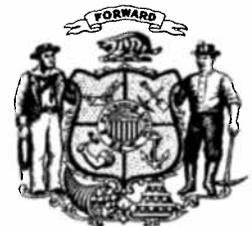
Senator Feingold's legislation emphasizes high quality assessments, not high volume. And his legislation would move us in the right direction toward assessing student learning and school quality through the use of multiple measures and growth models. He has been a leader in the Senate in making his colleagues aware of the negative affects of No Child Left Behind in terms of narrowed curriculum, incompatibility with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and focus on punishment rather than help and support. He has listened to educators and his constituents all across the state, and we thank him for that.

Representative Petri has also been listening and shares many of these concerns. I was pleased to testify at a listening session he held in April of this year.

In conclusion, it is clear that the current NCLB law is not working for Wisconsin educators, students, or schools. Major changes are needed to ensure every child in Wisconsin and in every state has the opportunity to excel. I thank you for inviting me to share the views of NEA and WEAC with you today. We look forward to future opportunities to work together to ensure great public schools for every child.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



WHY NCLB IS BAD FOR WISCONSIN'S CHILDREN

*Invited Testimony before the Senate Education Committee
September 13, 2007*

*Dr. Miles Turner, Executive Director
Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators*

Let me begin by thanking the committee for its commitment to openness and the democratic process by holding this important hearing on No Child Left Behind. By way of introduction, my name is Miles Turner and I am the Executive Director for the Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators. WASDA represents the public school superintendents of Wisconsin. Our mission is to serve public school superintendents so they can better meet the educational needs of the students of Wisconsin. I have been the Executive Director for WASDA for 19 years. Prior to that I was a superintendent, principal and a classroom teacher. In my nearly 40 years of public education, I have not seen a more ominous or more intrusive, counterproductive federal policy regarding public education.

Clearly, I am not alone in this assessment as every organization in the educational community, civil rights groups, higher education institutions, parent organizations and many state legislators oppose this poorly constructed and highly prescriptive unfunded (at the local level) federal mandate. Currently hearings are being held in Washington, D.C. on the reauthorization of ESEA that focus on the needed changes in this law. The hearings in Washington and here in Wisconsin will reveal the multiple problems with this law and recommend specific solutions in greater detail than I can provide in my brief testimony today.

My goal in this hearing is simply to point out four major flaws that Wisconsin superintendents see in NCLB. This list of flaws is not all inclusive but is intended to highlight some of the most serious shortcomings of this federal mandate.

They are:

- Wisconsin students are not failing the tests, the tests are failing Wisconsin students.
- Under NCLB, Wisconsin students are learning less.
- NCLB does not address a significant root cause of low achievement.
- NCLB's ways are mean.

1. *WISCONSIN STUDENTS ARE NOT FAILING THE TESTS, THE TESTS ARE FAILING WISCONSIN STUDENTS.*

Under No Child Left Behind, schools are required to test their students in reading and math in grades three through eight and once in high school. Schools are now required to test science once in elementary, middle and high school. These tests are frequently machine scored multiple-choice bubble tests whose results are not returned until the end of the school year. Because of the high risk nature of these exams, teachers are forced to increase time on test content and use instructional methodologies that are monotonous, repetitious drills to achieve rote memorization of unrelated facts. The tests do not require critical thinking skills, problem solving or relevant application to real life. The test scores are not used to improve instruction because they do not reflect the needs of individual students. Test scores are used to feed the federal system of punishment and sanctions. The federal government is forcing Wisconsin down the wrong path of testing and instruction. For further proof of this, I have submitted testimony submitted this week in Washington by a Stanford Professor. Please read Attachment A.

2. ***UNDER NCLB WISCONSIN STUDENTS ARE LEARNING LESS.***

Research has shown that the implementation of single source high stakes testing leads to a narrowing of the curriculum. In other words, when schools are threatened with loss of funds and the threat of firing employees and closing, they are obviously going to narrow their instruction to those items in the federally mandated test. As pointed out in the WASDA/WEAC survey, 60 percent of superintendents in Wisconsin responding indicated NCLB has forced them to narrow their curriculum. Courses that are threatened and have been reduced in many schools include art, music, vocational, business skills, personal finance, etc. Many subject areas facing reduction teach the very skills demanded by the business community to keep Wisconsin economically viable. This narrowing of curriculum in Wisconsin schools is predicted to significantly increase when local superintendents face increased demands on the core subjects of math and reading and financial strains under revenue caps. The rich breadth of academic offerings needed to educate the whole child is threatened in Wisconsin. Large scale assessments have very limited use in improving instruction. At best they should be administered in a limited number of grades over a greater span of years. The requirement under No Child Left Behind to test every student every year in every grade is excessive. This robs instructional time from the classroom teacher for tests that have virtually no use in improving individual instruction. Teachers are forced to use their own tests to measure their students' needs and modify their instruction further eroding instructional time. For this and many other reasons, the superintendents of Wisconsin believe that No Child Left Behind will lead to less, not more, education for our students.

3. ***NCLB DOES NOT ADDRESS A SIGNIFICANT ROOT CAUSE OF LOW ACHIEVEMENT.***

It is a well established and indisputable fact that there is an absolute correlation between poverty and educational achievement. The achievement gap is real and the responsibility to close it lies mainly with our public schools. Educators cannot be allowed to use the excuse that the test scores are low because we have so many poor kids in our school. On the other hand, society cannot be permitted to ignore the increased financial and educational needs required to serve children of poverty. NCLB does absolutely nothing to address this major issue. The schools must do everything in their power to close the achievement gap but cannot operate in a vacuum. There must be programs for improved health care for children, jobs for their parents, and equal access to technology for all children if we are going to truly leave no child left behind.

4. ***NCLB'S WAYS ARE MEAN.***

Every educator knows you cannot improve a student's performance by humiliating, embarrassing, intimidating and punishing them into performing better. Students perform best when challenged, rewarded and given the help and support they need. Why would our federal government believe that the way to improve public education is to humiliate, embarrass and take away money from the schools who need the most help? I recently had the opportunity to visit the schools, teacher training institutions and the Department of Education in Ireland. During a meeting with the Minister of Education, I asked her what Ireland did with its test scores. Her response was immediate and emphatic. She said, "We have no appetite for publishing test scores. You cannot improve schools by embarrassing them. We use tests to improve instruction not to sanction schools." To the best of my knowledge, the United States is the only industrialized nation that uses this test and punish approach to improve their educational system. In fact, many countries who have better test scores than the United States, go so far as to explicitly prohibit this practice. A discouraging trend was recently revealed that the students who leave schools identified as in need of improvement; i.e., failing schools; are the better students leaving those schools with fewer resources and more challenging student populations. Is this really the model we want to improve our nation's schools and close the achievement gap?

Finally, I ask you to join other state legislators in their effort to regain their state's rights on the issue of public education. The federal government has usurped your authority over public education and we should work together to reject No Child Left Behind because it is bad for Wisconsin's children. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.



To: Senator John Lehmann and members of the Wisconsin State Senate Education Committee
From: Kathryn Champeau, representing the Wisconsin State Reading Association
Re: Hearing on NCLB
Date: September 13, 2007

The Wisconsin State Reading Association and I want to both thank and commend you for your leadership in convening this hearing around the critical issue of the No Child Left Behind Act and its impact on Wisconsin schools.

I am here as a representative of the Wisconsin State Reading Association and am co-chair, along with Susan Schumann, of our NCLB Task Force. In addition, I serve on both Wisconsin's ESEA Testing Advisory Committee and the Reading First Leadership Team, and am an adjunct instructor for the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for the last eighteen years teaching courses on the instruction of the struggling reader and assessment. I am a Reading Specialist for the Muskego-Norway School District where I have worked for over thirty years. I am also in the process of conducting a national study with the help of a national researcher from the State University of New York at Albany on the effects of high stakes testing on our children.

There is no question that we all support the concept that we must ensure that every child in our public schools succeeds. We also support the belief that every child needs to receive the kind of robust education that will ensure attainment of that goal. But the law as it is currently written is seriously flawed and is leading us down a perilous path that will not help us achieve the very goal for which it was written. It is critical that we understand that this law is not based on proven methods for increased achievement but rather on a theory that annual high stakes testing with group-administered standardized tests that carry punishments for not improving test scores will produce the kind of robust education and achievement we want for our own children and those of others. The foundation of this law is seriously flawed and is, in essence, a national experiment.

The evidence currently being gathered by numerous professional organizations and research groups is shedding a bright light on the effects of NCLB and some of the fallout from this law. These effects that we see nationally are also in play in Wisconsin schools. Here are some of the effects, and we ask, is this the best use of our tax dollar?

1. National studies are showing that there is a significant change in the type of education students are receiving in public schools across the country. The findings tell us that schools are spending far less time on the subjects that are not being tested. In some cases subjects like the arts are eliminated. There is more emphasis on lower level thinking and fragmented learning that can easily be measured on these tests rather than on more difficult to assess critical and creative thinking and problem solving. What is being eliminated is exactly what our students need to achieve and compete in our global economy.

The stories and information I am acquiring in my survey corroborate these findings. So what does this mean for Wisconsin?

In a recent Milwaukee Journal Sentinel article, Bob Kern, founder of Generac Power Systems, says "If you are interested in engineering design... you can see a lot of creativity... that kind of technological creativity is becoming all too uncommon in the United States.

If we begin to narrow the type of curriculum and education that Wisconsin students experience, what does happen to business and the economy in our state? In an era when we need to be globally competitive, we cannot afford to diminish the nature of the education our children receive.

2. Narrowing the curriculum also happens when there is an overemphasis on test preparation which takes away from valuable teaching and learning time. A significant number of teachers report spending 5-10 hours a week on test preparation resulting in less time spent on other subjects and on needless drill and lower level thinking.
3. A current phenomenon is the practice of test preparation being pushed down into kindergarten, first and second grade classrooms, a developmentally inappropriate practice that does not lead to improved literacy skills but a practice employed out of desperation.
4. High stakes testing has resulted in less time teaching students who need the extra support. Special education teachers, reading specialists, and other support staff who work with struggling students are spending less time teaching these students and more time on helping with testing, proctoring tests, providing makeup tests for students, creating test schedules and data collection. Many report that teaching during the month of November is nonexistent due to testing.

In Wisconsin a reading specialist reports "a lot of my time is now devoted to preparing test schedules, accommodations, proctoring, data collection, and data interpretation. A lot of time is taken away from the role of the position. Other support staff as well has been taken away from student learning to help with testing."

Another teacher writes, "The morale at school for both students and staff are at such tense levels. Kids do not want to come to school and frustration of make up testing time frustrates teachers even more. We lose far too much during testing time."

A special education teacher reports "IEP's are not implemented when I am testing kids."

happened in Wisconsin. Higher quality performance assessments were being developed prior to NCLB and now sit on shelves at the Department of Public Instruction. The Third Grade Reading Test, long heralded for the kind of information it gave teachers about students, was abandoned because it was too costly to replicate when annual testing was mandated. Because of NCLB, we gave up the very assessments that could give critical information about students, the kind that teachers use to inform their instruction.

6. It is a fact that the results of high stakes tests should not be used to make important decisions about individual students. To do so invalidates them. The results are too unreliable to be used for this purpose. But this practice is rampant in many schools in the hopes that it will motivate students to learn, another unfounded practice.
7. In Wisconsin, the tests are administered in the fall and the results are received in the spring, far too late to glean important information about the current student population.
8. One of the most disconcerting and questionable phenomena of high stakes tests is the damage to students of all ages in terms of tremendous fear, undue stress, and loss of interest and motivation in school. Reports of attempted suicide, vomiting, temper tantrums, young children wetting their pants, crying, and the refusal to go to school during testing times are among the many stories reported by parents, classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and school nurses. Some students believe that they do not have the ability to learn after looking at the daunting task of tackling the lengthy tests.
9. NCLB assumes that threat of punishment will produce consistently better learning, an unfounded theory. Fifty years of scientific research has demonstrated that threat of punishment is ineffective. Research overwhelmingly proves that high quality teachers make the difference and professional development is the tool that helps teachers and schools learn to do a better job.

A single test score of an extremely limited measure has been given the power not only to determine how well school districts and schools are measuring up, but how it uses its resources. This single test score controls the curriculum and determines the fate of many students, while placing many of them in emotional jeopardy. And worse yet, not only is it based on an unproven theory, it contradicts what is proven to increase both teacher quality and student learning. And so as we scrutinize this law, we need to ask ourselves, are we getting the return we are looking for? Is it serving us well? Is the price paid worth the investment? WSRA believes we should be looking toward more well-founded assessment systems to guarantee that Wisconsin's schools will help all children attain the rich education they all deserve.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





To: Senator John Lehmann and members of the Wisconsin State Senate Education Committee
From: Susan Schumann, representing the Wisconsin State Reading Association
Re: Hearing on NCLB
Date: September 13, 2007

The over-2,000 members of Wisconsin State Reading Association join me in thanking the Senate Education Committee for holding this public hearing on NCLB and inviting our testimony. Our organization's goal is excellence in reading for Wisconsin. We are teachers, administrators, university professors and students along with parents working toward this goal.

WSRA believes that every child is more than a test score – a fact often lost in the debates about this bill. We have carefully studied and watched the implementation of the No Child Left Behind bill since its inception and shared information with our members. Over the years, we have discussed the provisions of NCLB with quite a few educational researchers, many state organizations representing professional educators and school board members, as well as speaking personally with our representatives in the United States Congress. During this time we have continued to support the philosophy behind NCLB which seeks a full and complete education for every child in this nation while eliminating achievement gaps between various groups of students.

In researching the effects of NCLB on schools and students in our state and nation we have found the following to be problematic to schools in Wisconsin:

- The results of the tests and the consequences of failing to make adequate yearly progress in any one of the 85 different areas/subgroups measured by NCLB cause negative publicity that is unearned. A school failing to meet objectives for AYP in only one area/subgroup is labeled as a school in need of improvement or as the press often says, "failing." The true fact is that the school as a whole is NOT failing; the failure to meet AYP expectations was in only one subgroup/area out of the 85 different measures that can be applied.
- There continues to be a belief, not only by the general public, but also by many people in education that the standardized tests we give each year for NCLB give information that educators can use to improve instruction. The general belief is that these tests give educators information on which to base instruction both at the classroom level and at the individual student level. This is, in fact, not the case. The reports that can be made about student results are not precise enough to be used to guide curriculum improvement or to intervene when a student is struggling. It's like saying, "He can't see," but not knowing WHY that might be the case.
- The achievement of adequate yearly progress by school districts in the state which have a highly diversified population are subject to comparison to other school districts which are smaller and have less diversity and/or poverty. It has been shown by researchers that schools and districts with greater diversity will be identified as having failed to attain adequate yearly progress at a faster rate than schools/districts with homogeneous populations. This is due to the fact that larger/poorer districts have increased "opportunities to fail."
- Schools in Wisconsin, especially those having larger, more diverse populations also experience the problem of having different cohorts of children compared from year to year. Research has found these year to year comparisons to experience an error rate of 70%. Year to year comparisons are a basic part of the AYP formula and may unfairly rank many schools in the state.
- Schools in Wisconsin and other states may be labeled a school in need of improvement, even though they were also recognized as a "Blue Ribbon School" by the U.S. Department of Education. This award acknowledges the school for their quality curriculum and growth in achievement. Being designated as a "school in need of improvement" is due to the fact that AYP does not consider growth of individual students or groups of students. One school may have made great gains during a year and still be considered failing while another school has made only modest gains, but is still considered making adequate progress. This may also be due to the fact that progress in reading and math have been the only areas that are measured (science is added this year), but schools may have demonstrated great advancement in other areas of learning such as social studies, writing, fine arts and music.

- In complying with the rules of NCLB, we subject all of our students in grades 3-8 and grade 10 to high-stakes testing even though this kind of testing has not been shown to increase student achievement by any scientific evaluation. In the process, we often use valuable instructional time to help our students understand how to take this kind of test, reassuring them that the writers of the test do not expect them to be able to answer every question correctly. This reassurance is necessary, especially in the early grades since working under pressure (time and expectations) is something to which we do not overtly subject our students.
- The failure to make AYP in any area/subgroup also causes a mandatory shifting of Title I funds away from the classrooms and students of that school and toward (1) busing these students to other schools at their parents' request and/or (2) paying for supplementary educational services provided by private companies. Those providing these services are not required, as are schools, to employ "highly qualified teachers" nor are they held accountable for the results that are achieved by students receiving their services.
- There are numerous hidden costs not apparent to individuals who are not intimately involved with the testing operation. These hidden costs escalate the costs per district in significant ways. In complying with the rules of NCLB, school districts have needed to either add personnel or divert the responsibilities of existing personnel toward the information technology now demanded, the increased clerical needs involved in multi-grade testing, and, in some cases, additional personnel to help manage the details of delivering, securing, collecting, packaging and shipping tests back to the testing company to be scored. Interestingly, as the assessment coordinator for my district, my office has also noticed an increase in the amount of paper needed as well as the number of printing cartridges needed to print the reports of results which now only arrive via a secure internet website.
- The budget for assessment in my school district has increased over the years since NCLB became the law. One significant expense my budget now diverts funds for is the hiring of substitute teachers to fill in for special education and ELL teachers while they administer these high-stakes tests to children in their programs. Without the additional teaching assistance, some special education students and ELL students in the grades not tested would either miss completely or receive much less time for the specialized instruction that their needs require. Not all districts choose to use budgeted funds in this way. In districts which don't hire substitute teachers, struggling students are left unserved because of the time needed by reading teachers/specialists and others to perform test related duties.

In order for the No Child Left Behind law to achieve its "mission" in Wisconsin, we believe the following changes/modifications must be made during reauthorization:

- Eliminate the testing of every student in every grade every year. Psychometricians know that there is no test that is sensitive enough to measure the gains made in only one year. Since the same information about growth can be obtained with alternate year testing OR by testing samples of students across the district/state, in each grade, continuing to test every child every year is a waste of resources in terms of time, tax dollars, and the loss of instructional opportunities for all students.
- The over-identification of "failure" must be reduced and the AYP model must be much less rigid. The focus needs to be placed on support of schools and students instead of punishment for not attaining an arbitrary goal.
- Multiple measures of achievement other than standardized, high-stakes tests must be allowed as part of the measurement of proficiency for NCLB. This will provide a more valid assessment of growth and achievement and would be more likely to inform instruction for a child or group of children. Among other options for assessment, Nebraska's state-developed performance assessment presents an alternative model of assessment. Local assessments must also be considered when making judgments about progress.
- Educationally sound assessment should be explored and implemented for ELL students. Students whose first language is not English and who have been in our schools for only one year should not be required to take these high stakes tests in English, as is the case at the present time and will continue to be this coming year.

- Educationally sound assessment and reasonable expectations should be put in place for students with disabilities. Districts should not have to count as “not tested” the student who is so disabled that there is no possibility of taking even an alternate test. It would be more educationally sound to assess the student’s growth and be allowed to count it toward the “proficient” or “advanced” categories if proficient or advanced growth in IEP goals has been demonstrated. In light of this, we believe that IDEA should have primacy over NCLB in many cases of individual students with disabilities.
- States should be recognized as being in the best position to identify and problem solve special circumstances in testing when they arise. The right to decide about how to handle unique conditions in different communities and set the requisites of “highly qualified” teachers should be returned to the state.
- The goal of “reaching 100% proficiency by 2014” should be revised so that the goal itself is in line with statistical possibilities. At the present time, it is estimated that the expectation of 100% proficiency for every subgroup (including students with disabilities and ELL students) in every school is not statistically possible while retaining a high expectation for what “proficiency” represents.
- Our present state assessments are the best that we can afford. However, they are predominantly multiple choice tests with a few short answer questions inserted. Adding more short answer questions to the test would increase the likelihood that the assessment is valid and reliable, but it is cost-prohibitive due to the expense of scoring this type of answer. Therefore, additional funding from NCLB will be necessary to create high quality assessment tools that can better capture more complex learning.
- Finally, federal funding for the ESEA/ NCLB act must increase. There has not been a time in the history of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA-NCLB) when it has been fully funded. The fiscal impact of NCLB results in states having two separate costs: “compliance” costs (cost of administering the law) and “proficiency” costs (the costs of bringing every child to academic proficiency. Compliance costs are most likely **additional** costs to the state. If all children are to achieve proficiency in reading, math, and science by 2014, then the costs of proficiency achievement must certainly increase.

Since the federal constitution places the responsibility with the state, not the federal government, for educating its citizens, we believe that it is appropriate that all groups concerned with education in Wisconsin consider the advantages, disadvantages and the costs of this law and exert their influence in the reauthorization process for NCLB so that Wisconsin schools and students are supported by this law. By removing the barriers that this law inadvertently places on students and schools, we can truly make it possible that no child is left behind.

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**Stromme, Denise**

From: Bougie, Debra A - DPI
Sent: Thursday, October 11, 2007 10:48 AM
To: Timothy Gavigan, CESA 1; Carol C. Gerhardt, CESA 7; Donald Stevens, CESA 5; Gary Albrecht, CESA 2; Guy Leavitt, CESA 4; Jerome Fiene, CESA 9; Jesse Harness, CESA 11; Wade, Joan; Kenneth Kasinski, CESA 12; Larry Annett, CESA 10; Nancy Hendrickson, CESA 3; Robert Kellogg, CESA 8
Subject: Guest Editorial on NCLB Reauthorization
Attachments: dpi2007_109 nclb op ed c.pdf

State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster issued an editorial on important considerations for reauthorization of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

The editorial is available on the Department of Public Instruction's news release website at <http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/prmenu.html>. A copy in pdf is attached.

Please direct comments or questions about this news item to Patrick Gasper, (608) 266-3559, or patrick.gasper@dpi.state.wi.us.

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State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*** GUEST EDITORIAL ***

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI 2007-109 C

Thursday, October 11, 2007

CONTACT: Patrick Gasper, Communications Officer, (608) 266-3559

Reauthorization of NCLB: Accountability That Makes Sense

By State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster

Raising achievement for all students and closing achievement gaps between economically disadvantaged students, students of color, and their peers must be our No. 1 priority in Wisconsin. We must ensure that every child, no matter the economic or educational level of their parents, race, ethnicity, what language they speak at home, or where they live in our state, is prepared with the knowledge and skills to succeed in the 21st century interconnected world.

This is more than an education issue. It is a moral and social justice issue. It is an economic imperative for our state and nation as well. This is the intent of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, commonly known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), which must continue to guide reauthorization of the law.

A federal education law is only as effective as its credibility at the local level. Parents, educators, and the public are committed to the intent of NCLB, but are distracted by its complexity and burdensome requirements. One of the 10 sections of the law has more than 600 requirements. The greatest problem for most people with NCLB is that they feel it is a punitive law more concerned with sanctions and labels for schools than on helping all children learn.

NCLB mandates how states and local school districts are held accountable for student achievement in reading and mathematics on statewide, standardized tests. But, Wisconsin citizens expect more than just good test-takers. A child is more than a test score. A quality education is one that addresses the social, cognitive, emotional, and physical needs of diverse learners. To truly "leave no child behind," parents, educators, and communities must be supported through the law as they come together around the responsibility to ensure a quality education for every child.

(more)

While state standardized tests have a role in accountability, they are not adequate in providing parents a clear picture of how well schools are doing, and the current law does not recognize student growth in achievement from year to year. In the reauthorization of NCLB, multiple measures of student achievement, which are determined to be valid and reliable, should be allowed to enhance accountability and give an accurate and fair account of school progress. The reauthorized NCLB must encourage innovation without reducing accountability for results. The reauthorized NCLB must not only collect data, but also empower states and local communities to use research-based and data-informed best teaching practices to support low-performing schools and struggling students. The federal government has the responsibility to fully fund a reauthorized NCLB to truly impact improvement for students no matter where their schools are located.

Our American democracy will be defined in the 21st century by how successful we are in providing a quality education for every child. NCLB must set a high standard by allowing states and local school districts to move beyond “no child left behind” to every child a graduate prepared to apply knowledge and 21st century skills. Congress has the opportunity through reauthorization of NCLB to strengthen public education in our country by moving from overly prescriptive compliance to community-based innovation and accountability that makes sense in transforming America’s PK-12 educational system.

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Elizabeth Burmaster is the elected state superintendent of public instruction and president of the national Council of Chief State School Officers. Burmaster has conducted input sessions throughout Wisconsin on needed changes to NCLB and has testified before Congress and the Wisconsin Legislature on this issue.

NOTE: A high-resolution photo of the state superintendent is available on the Department of Public Instruction “Media Contacts and Resources” webpage at <http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/vm-media.html>. This editorial is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2007_109.pdf.



Stromme, Denise**From:** Renee Rybak [rrybak@educationsector.org]**Sent:** Tuesday, November 13, 2007 9:40 AM**To:** Renee Rybak**Subject:** Education Sector Release: Report finds Wisconsin among states that game NCLB**EDUCATIONSECTOR**

SARA
Education
N.C.L.B

For Immediate Release: November 13, 2007

Contact, Renee Rybak, 202.552.2853, rrybak@educationsector.org

The Pangloss Index: How States Game the No Child Left Behind Act
Education Sector report finds Wisconsin among states that undermine the law.

Washington, D.C.—When policymakers in the White House and Congress wrote the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, their goal was to steadily *raise* the bar for academic achievement. But many states, such as Alabama, Iowa, Tennessee, and Wisconsin, have undermined the spirit of the law by *lowering* achievement goals every year. A new report from Education Sector explains how these states are gaming NCLB's accountability system and doing so with the full approval of the U.S. Department of Education.

The Pangloss Index: How States Game the No Child Left Behind Act, features a composite index of state rankings based on annual reports that states submit to the federal government detailing their progress under NCLB. Ideally, the index should show which states are doing the best job of educating their students. Instead, the index is more indicative of which states have simply chosen to *define* themselves as doing well. Education Sector first unveiled the Pangloss Index in a 2006 report *Hot Air: How States Inflate Their Progress Under NCLB*.

In this new report, Research and Policy Manager Kevin Carey updates the index for 2007 and reveals that in some states, not much has changed: Wisconsin and Iowa still fill the top two slots, defining themselves as educational utopias, while Massachusetts, which is one of the highest-performing states nationally, is ranked near the bottom, holding itself to tougher standards.

But some states changed their rank substantially. And none increased its position more than Alabama, which jumped from 22nd to 5th. Carey chronicles Alabama's progress under NCLB and demonstrates that this didn't happen because students in Alabama and in similar states learned much more than they did the year prior. It happened because state departments of education manipulated NCLB in such a way that no other result was possible.

The Pangloss Index: How States Game the No Child Left Behind Act provides specific recommendations for Congress as it prepares to reauthorize NCLB, including ways to close the loopholes that states have routinely used to undermine the nation's most important education law.

Read "The Pangloss Index" at: http://www.educationsector.org/analysis/analysis_show.htm?doc_id=582446.
Detailed information about the measures used to determine Wisconsin's ranking on the 2007 "Pangloss Index" is available upon request.

This publication was made possible by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Education Sector is an independent education policy think tank devoted to developing innovative solutions to the nation's most pressing educational problems. We are nonprofit and nonpartisan, both a dependable source of sound thinking on policy and an honest broker of evidence in key education debates throughout the United States. Visit www.educationsector.org to read more about Education Sector and our work.

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Renée Rybak
 Marketing & Events

11/13/2007

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