

**NCLB REAUTHORIZATION: STRATEGIES THAT  
PROMOTE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

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**HEARING**  
OF THE  
**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS**  
**UNITED STATES SENATE**  
**ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS**  
FIRST SESSION

ON

EXAMINING THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT REAUTHORIZATION,  
FOCUSING ON STRATEGIES THAT PROMOTE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

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FEBRUARY 8, 2007  
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## **NCLB REAUTHORIZATION: STRATEGIES THAT PROMOTE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2007**

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m. in Room SH-216, Hart Senate Office Building, Hon. Edward M. Kennedy, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Kennedy, Reed, Obama, Brown, Enzi, Alexander, Burr, Murkowski, Roberts, and Allard.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR KENNEDY**

The CHAIRMAN. We'll come to order. I trust this microphone is on. Is it on? There we go. We'll come to order. I want to welcome all of our witnesses here this morning and at the outset, we've adopted Senator Enzi's roundtable concept about how to better inform the members of our committee on some of these important public policy issues and it's, I find, a very effective way to highlight the information that we're seeking. We also rely on good written testimony for more details on some of these ideas that are talked about during the course of our hearing which gives our staffs opportunities to develop these concepts in greater detail as we are legislating. We have a very impressive panel this morning and we are very grateful to all of them and I welcome all of our participants in the first of several roundtable discussions on the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act. I'm especially grateful to Senator Enzi for his help and the help of his staff as well as Senator Dodd and Senator Alexander's staff in putting together this roundtable. We look forward to continuing the bipartisan partnership on these issues.

Our public schools today are more indispensable than ever in giving all students the opportunity they need and deserve in life. We all agree upon the importance of the Nation's future, strengthening and supporting our schools. Reauthorizing the No Child Left Behind Act this year is a high priority for Congress and the American people. The law enacted 5 years ago was a defining moment for Federal support of public education and was intended to respond to the many challenges facing our schools in today's rapidly changing world. We know that schools have faced many difficulties in implementing the act, the most serious of which has been the lack of adequate funding. But we've also learned a great deal over the past

5 years about what's working well in the law and what needs to be changed.

Our goal this year will be to work across party lines to enact a strong reauthorization that builds on the positive aspects of the law and answers the widespread concerns about implementation.

Today our focus is on ideas and strategies needed to turn around struggling schools identified by the law's accountability provisions. The act appropriately ensures that accountability is guided by realistic data on every child in every State. No Child means no child. The act is a promise to students and parents alike that regardless of their background and language and income or disability, every student counts in school reform.

The initial results of the act's accountability provision show that States have focused primarily on standards, assessments and measurements in building their framework for accountability but much more remains to be done after that essential first step, especially in schools that haven't met the challenge and are wrestling with improvement. The Federal role in assisting these schools may be our greatest challenge and is top priority for this reauthorization.

Over 9,000 low-income schools have been identified by the act for improvement, corrective action or restructuring. Some of these schools are in the early stage of changing their curriculums or beginning tutoring. Others are in later stages of replacing staff or reforming their overall approach to teaching and learning. Thousands of schools are waiting for technical assistance and support to develop and implement their improvement plans as required by law in order to avoid the later stages required in restructuring. In fact, only 34 percent of the schools needing improvement—one in three—have received outside help or support. Developing the ability to do so is a major challenge at all levels. Obviously, we must do better. Fortunately, we know we can.

Today, we'll hear about some of the successful solutions that States, school districts and individual schools have adopted to make their improvement efforts successful. We'll hear how teachers and principals have concentrated on data on each child to produce results. We'll hear how outside experts and coaches have made a substantial difference in improving the quality of teaching and we'll hear how schools have partnered to learn from each other to achieve improvement.

We know it can be done and today is our opportunity to consider how best to shape policies and allocate Federal resources to achieve the greatest impact in these high-priority schools. We look forward to your insights. We're grateful to you for your being part of this immensely important task. We've chosen, as I mentioned, a roundtable format for today's hearing so we can hear from more people and to facilitate an interactive discussion among the panelists on this important issue.

I'll first turn to my friend, Senator Enzi, for opening remarks and then we'll open up the discussion by asking each of our witnesses to describe two or three of their most important interventions or strategies they used to turn around school performance and achieve results and also the greatest obstacles or challenges they encountered in the process.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ENZI

Senator ENZI. Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for getting us busy on this most important issue that we're going to be covering, getting it started right away and allowing our staffs to work together to put together such a great panel of experts that can give us ideas and help us gain real knowledge before we write the bill. Getting started on this review is extremely critical and this is an outstanding panel to do that. I look forward to the several other panels that we'll have before we actually do No Child Left Behind as well as opportunities to get into our districts and see what the people there are thinking.

There are many good things happening in our schools today but that's not what we focus on when we talk about schools. Just as our schools vary in size and student population, effective approaches to school improvement vary widely.

What we have not done effectively is getting the word out, getting the word out about what we know are the most effective improvement interventions—in other words, what works and that is what this roundtable is about. School districts in Wyoming are using a variety of strategies for schools designated as in need of improvement under the adequate yearly progress structure. In Cheyenne, our largest school district in Wyoming, Superintendent Dan Stephan has put in place professional learning communities that focus on three goals. First, increased achievement on math and problem solving skills. Second, the utilization of writing skills across the curriculum. And third, increasing the graduation rate. Superintendent Stephan is changing the culture of the school district from one of a teaching district to a learning district and firmly believes that failure is not an option.

Superintendent Kevin Mitchell, of Big Horn County School District Number 1, believes that an increased focus on reading instruction and effective leadership are two key indicators of increasing student academic achievement as part of school improvement. His experiences show that an effective leader who can not only pinpoint the problem but also execute a strategy to fix the problem, is the key to school success.

Both of these district leaders also said that they need help. They need to know what strategies other districts, with similar characteristics, are using to improve student achievement outcomes. They need technical assistance to implement school improvement plans and to analyze data to determine where interventions are most needed. Finally, they need assistance to provide training to staff on interventions that have been successfully improving student achievement levels.

Now, each of you have coped with similar needs. I'm very pleased that we are able to hold this roundtable to learn from each of you the strategies that have been effective and the obstacles you've faced in implementing these strategies. No Child Left Behind has given us a strong framework and good data to learn where schools are faltering. The next step is to learn how we can help schools that are faltering improve and increase student academic achievement.

The topic of school improvement isn't a new one. In 1979, Ron Edmonds, an expert on high-performing, high-poverty schools, identified what he called the most tangible and indispensable characteristics of effective schools. He found six key characteristics: strong administrative leadership, high expectations for all students, an orderly and quiet atmosphere, clear focus on academics, readiness to divert energy and resources to academics, and the frequent monitoring of student progress. A similar study was published in 2000, which found very similar traits. The only big addition was the use of master teachers.

We know what makes a good school. What we don't know is how to make a low-performing school into a high-performing school. Many of you here today have done just exactly that. The key is how do we duplicate the successes you've had in other schools across the country?

The Federal Government, through No Child Left Behind, can assist with a number of the issues and problems each of you have encountered. First, we need to learn more about what's working. Schools are working very hard to increase the academic achievement levels of their students and that effort needs to be recognized and successes need to be disseminated.

I believe it is important that everyone—school leaders, teachers and especially parents, have access to school improvement activities and interventions that have been proven to be successful in both schools and school districts. Superintendents, principals and teachers should be able to adapt these interventions to their school environment so that they work for their students.

Second, I believe that Congress should support school improvement activities as they are authorized under No Child Left Behind. Schools and districts now have the data and information they need to determine where they need help but often don't have the resources needed to implement strategies to achieve improved student performance.

Finally, I believe we can work within the current No Child Left Behind structure to improve teacher training and professional development and focus on strategies that increase student academic achievement. Teachers are a necessary and vital factor in the school improvement process.

That said, there is no silver bullet when it comes to school improvement. Every school and school district in this country is unique and has different areas in need of improvement. We have to focus on strategies that couple effective interventions, such as aligning curriculum and professional development, with State standards.

I look forward to working with all of you as work progresses on the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Senator Enzi. I'll introduce our panelists and then we'll move ahead and hear from each of them.

Dr. Martha Barber, of the Alabama Reading Initiative. We're delighted to have you here. Martha is a Reading Initiative Regional Principal Coach in Birmingham, Alabama and has led the effort to pair 36 low-performing elementary schools with higher performers. Dr. Barber will focus on the importance of strong leadership and



strategies to teach principals and staff how to work as a team to develop solutions and improve data driven instruction. As a principal, Dr. Barber found that many students were coming to elementary school without any prior school experience. She worked with the community to create their own early education program in order for systemic school reform to work. We welcome you.

Dr. Yvonne Brandon is Associate Superintendent, Richmond Public Schools, and has led district-wide improvement efforts to use data to improve instruction and support research-based reading interventions. Dr. Brandon will focus on the challenges her district faced in developing a curriculum and standards for all their schools to follow and the importance of constant monitoring and intervention to support schools before they begin to fail. Last year, 88 percent of the district schools met AYP and met the Virginia State standards. They've used assessment data to improve instruction, not just to label schools as failing. We're delighted to have you.

Richard Coleman is the director of the Achievable Dream Academy, in Newport News, Virginia. He is a principal at a predominately poor minority school that is extended day and year. Here, a focus on data-driven instruction turned around a chronically failing public school. Dr. Coleman has received financial support from local businesses and higher education communities. Strong community and parental involvement has been critical in the success of the school and the school provides health and other comprehensive services to students to improve their social development and academic achievement.

Alana Dale Turner is a teacher at Easton High School in Easton, Maryland. Nominated by the NEA to participate, she will focus on the importance of high quality, professional development using data to improve instruction, tutoring and extra help for students and the need for more funding. We'll look forward to hearing the role of the teachers in this whole process.

Michael Flanagan, we welcome you. Your colleagues from all of our States have extended a word of welcome to all of you. I wanted to give a special welcome as well from Debbie Stabenow. Michael Flanagan, Michigan State Superintendent of Instruction, led state-wide efforts to intervene in struggling schools. The State developed new rigorous high school course requirements, rigorous elementary and middle school standards, and research-based school improvements. The State has supported high need schools for the establishment of principal academies, follow-up coaching and support, school monitoring teams, targeting funds to schools in subgroups that need it the most.

Kimberly Johnson, good morning. She is the principal of Briggs Chaney Middle School in Silver Spring, Maryland, who led successful school improvement efforts at a high-poverty middle school, particularly successful with disabled students. Ninety-two percent of the classes in the schools are taught by highly qualified teachers and strong professional development has helped staff improve instruction for every student.

Hosanna Mahaley-Johnson, good morning. She is Executive Officer, Office of the New Schools, Chicago Public Schools. She has implemented successful programs to close low-performing schools and reopen as a school providing intensive clinical experience for new

teachers entering the field. Teachers participate in a year-long residency program where they learn skills to be strong classroom teachers. The program supports them for the first 3 months with mentoring. These teachers go on to provide a highly qualified, stable source of teachers for schools. Very interesting.

Paul Reville is President of the Rennie Center for Education Research. Paul, good morning.

Mr. REVILLE. Good morning, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. My constituent here has had a long history in education. It's good to see you. He is President of the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, author of the new blueprint for the State role in improving low-performing schools. Paul Reville will focus on the importance of building State's capacity to provide needed support to schools and districts in need of improvement. States also face challenges in developing standards and assessments that are competitive in line with the demands for the 21st century and he's done a good deal of work with that.

So we have a very interesting and broad group of presenters this morning from very much different backgrounds and experience but with a common theme and that is that you've been creative, innovative and successful and that's what we're interested in as we draft this legislation and as we set out different kinds of criteria, we want to understand underneath, how we can set the standard to have the kind of successes that I think all of you had coming at this from your own particular life's experience but with important lessons for us to hear about.

So, I'm going to ask each of you, if you'll take the two or three most important interventions or strategies and we'll go through the whole line and then we'll open this up to conversations and get some interaction between the particular witnesses.

Dr. Barber, we'll start with you, if we could.

**STATEMENT OF MARTHA BARBER, ALABAMA READING INITIATIVE REGIONAL PRINCIPAL COACH, BIRMINGHAM, AL**

Ms. BARBER. Thank you. First of all, thanks for this opportunity to share strategies that have proven to be successful in schools that have been struggling. I've been a principal, I've been an assistant principal and I've supervised schools and now I work with the Alabama Reading Initiative for the State Department of Education and I work with principals, trying to replicate those practices that have proven to be successful in schools that are beating the odds. And as I think back over those practices that have been successful in most schools, I began work in effective leadership. Leadership is the key. If you have an effective leader, that leadership would have a vision for success. That leader serves as a point guard to make sure all the other stakeholders are in place and that they have the appropriate resources and the appropriate support that is needed to ensure that success is accomplished.

Too often, we have leaders in place who don't have that support. We give them mandates, we give them directives and a lot of times, our principals come to school when they're selected; they have no preparation. Our higher education programs are sometimes limited in providing them with the training and some principals come straight from the classroom but it is different being a principal

than being a classroom teacher. The principal is going to guide the success, is going to determine the direction of that school.

In my capacity with 36 schools, I make the comment that if I have a failing school, I have a principal who is in need of some support. The principal sets the tone, the principal determines the climate. The principal determines the culture of their school and the culture is what is in the school. A true leader can make almost anything happen in a school. A true leader can guide the people in that school to believe that they can do all—do anything that they set their heart to. Our students come to us with needs and with issues sometimes and are struggling with situations but the parent has sent to us the best that she or he can.

If public education is to do its job, then we have to ensure that those students are going to obtain a quality education and the principal will be the key to making that happen, to setting beliefs in place, asking—getting teachers to challenge their own belief system, to challenge our value system and the principal has to set the tone so that the teachers can believe that they can teach those students. Our beliefs become our actions. If that belief is not in place then our actions are going to be in such a way that the kids are not going to be successful.

The culture of that school is important. You have to set a culture that embraces learning for all students. It doesn't matter whether the student is special ed or a minority or any of those factors but that student is a child and we have the responsibility for taking that child from where he is to where he needs to be, making that part of the culture. That belief system is part of the culture.

And professional development—I started at a school with marginal teachers, low-achievement schools. Within 3 years, I only changed two staff members but the data in that school almost doubled in that time because of the professional development that we put in place for those teachers and it was a high-poverty, inner-city school. But nothing changed. The teachers were the same, the students were the same. What changed was the culture. What changed was the belief system and what changed was the professional development that took those teachers who were not—who were failing. That's what changed and when that changed, then everything else changed. The students started learning. The school became a place of safe haven for all students. The teachers were comfortable. Their reward was in the fact that they started believing in themselves and once they believed in themselves, they started believing in the students and that has trickled down and once that occurred, then the students started learning because they felt comfortable in that situation.

The CHAIRMAN. Just quickly, you had this tie-in between low-performing schools and higher performing schools. Could you just comment quickly on that, if you would? It's rather interesting how you tied the high-performing with the low-performing out of that work.

Ms. BARBER. I think all schools can be high-performing schools. As a principle, I went to high-performing schools. I went to schools that did not look like my school. I went to schools that were a different race, different socio-economic standard. I wanted to see what the utopia could be because I felt that my students deserved that. I took those things that I saw that were working. I wanted to build

a culture in that school of high expectations. My students came to me from homes that were not always what it should have been. So when they crossed the threshold—when they walked in, they should have felt the warmth, before anybody spoke. They should have felt that they were loved, that they were cared for. They should have walked into a building that was student-centered where they were the center of everything, where everything was print rich. Books everywhere, those things that we value and we made that our standard, even before No Child Left Behind, before Federal accountability. We made that our standard and we made it happen according to what we could do as a faculty and as a staff because all schools can be there and I wanted my staff to know that if one school was doing it, regardless of the factors that were in place, then we could do it. So I use them as—I use those type of schools as our standard and we partner with those schools and we reach for that goal.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Barber follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARTHA S. BARBER

I would like to express gratitude and thanks to Senator Kennedy, Senator Enzi, and the members of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee for allowing me to share and discuss my school improvement efforts and experiences. As each of you know, sessions of this type can help in identifying practices that are successful in schools that are improving the academic achievement of poor, minority, and disenfranchised students.

It has always been my philosophy that public schools serve as a haven for all students. Furthermore, it is my strong belief that we can impact student learning regardless of what they bring or don't bring to the table. Having been a child of poverty has also influenced my school improvement efforts.

The seminal work done at Tuggle Elementary School in the Birmingham City School System actually preceded the inception of NCLB by just a few years. However, the underlying premise in NCLB is the same fundamental premise of the school improvement efforts implemented at Tuggle Elementary School: that is all children can learn, and it's our responsibility as educational caregivers to make learning happen. In order for school improvement efforts to be successful, the leader must have a vision. My vision was to build a culture that embraced student learning and teacher learning as the primary outcomes for the school. Engaging all stakeholders in this vision became my task. Additionally, I wanted to implement a schoolwide program that would allow all stakeholders to reach such levels of success that learning and student achievement would occur at unprecedented levels.

Several strategies and behaviors served as the catalyst for our school improvement efforts. We had a clear sense of purpose. Our only purpose for being at Tuggle was to be successful with all of our students. We focused strictly on student learning. Moreover, we focused on learning at high levels for all students. The goal of student learning became the parameter under which we operated.

We focused on developing a positive and collaborative culture at Tuggle. Culture in itself is defined as "what is in the school." We worked toward developing a culture that was warm, inviting, and student centered. All students were embraced and made to feel special. In developing a collaborative culture, teachers and other staff members were given quality time for meetings. These meetings were designed to focus on teacher effectiveness as well as student achievement. During the meetings, data was analyzed, students were discussed, and intervention plans were developed for students not making appropriate and adequate growth.

The staff at Tuggle became highly effective. We finally realized that if our students were going to learn at high levels, we, too, had to learn at high levels. We had to increase our content knowledge. Research is very clear, "good teachers make good schools." We began to seek means of learning for ourselves. Participating in job-embedded professional development became the norm. Staff development was based on student needs and teacher needs. We no longer attended workshops that were not related to our needs. Initially, we held our workshops at our school using in-house staff. To enhance our professional growth, the staff decided to become a part of the Alabama Reading Initiative (ART). This research-based project is a process that uses the scientific research on reading to guide the teaching of reading.

We focused on results as part of our efforts. The staff used data to determine the effectiveness of all of our efforts. We looked at quantitative as well as qualitative data. This analysis showed us whether students were learning as well as whether our classroom instruction needed adjustments.

Having a strong principal was also instrumental to the success of our school improvement efforts. Principals are key to successful schools. Effective principals empower teachers to excel.

Tuggle developed a school-wide theme: "Don't be caught dead without a book." As a result of ARI, reading became our theme. Our efforts were designed to increase volume of reading by our students. To this end, we organized around the concept of using every available minute for reading.

In my current position as ARI Regional Principal Coach, I coach 36 principals in the State of Alabama. The school improvement strategies that have proven to be successful are the ones discussed above. As a principal coach, it is my goal to coach principals and central office staff on connecting leadership to instruction. As part of this process, we have identified practices and behaviors that will maximize our school efforts. Some of these were mentioned in the earlier part of this response. Successful schools have leadership teams led by the principal who learn these strategies and behaviors and then replicate them in the building. Thus, successful schools go from structures to processes. These processes become a natural part of the school culture.

As a result of the school improvement efforts at Tuggle, the staff transformed. Teachers changed their instructional behaviors and developed a sense of efficacy. They adopted a "can do" attitude and started to believe that their students could learn. The teachers also began to believe that it was their responsibility to teach their students. Students also developed that "can do" attitude. The students' confidence increased. Behavior problems decreased. Test scores increased in all three tested grades. The school also received the following awards and recognitions: National Distinguished Title One School, ARI School (member of the sweet 16), International Reading Association Exemplary Reading Program Award, and Blue Ribbon School for Alabama.

Several issues emerged that had to be addressed during our school improvement efforts. Some teachers resisted the change. If success is to occur, you have to stay focused and committed to your goals. We kept the goals front and center in every conversation. We reminded everyone of our purpose and tried not to lose focus.

Our students were not participating in pre-school programs. As a result, students entered our school with limited or little prior knowledge. We had to invite the community into our doors. We had to work with area daycares. Using Title One funds, we operated summer programs for incoming kindergarten students and reading academies for all other students during the summer.

Parent involvement was initially an issue. We needed parents on the team if growth was to be sustained. A Title One Parent Involvement Aide provided workshops and other trainings. Additionally, parents were encouraged to participate in the daily operations of the school. They were also trained on providing academic support to their children. We included parents on our school leadership team.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks.  
Dr. Brandon.

**STATEMENT OF YVONNE BRANDON, ASSOCIATE SUPER-  
INTENDENT FOR INSTRUCTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY,  
RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS, RICHMOND, VA**

Ms. BRANDON. Good morning. I would like to thank Chairman Kennedy, Senator Enzi and the members of this committee, the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you about school improvement with respect to No Child Left Behind. I am very honored and grateful for this opportunity.

For us in Richmond City Public Schools, right down the road in Richmond, Virginia, it was more of a district focus. We had schools that were excelling but they were pockets of excellence. We wanted a district of excellence. So therefore, it required having not only district support but State support as well. Our Governor, Mark Warner, had the PASS Initiative, which is Partnerships for Achiev-

ing Successful Schools, which had a similar pairing of high-performing schools with low-performing schools. Those schools invested time and effort in visiting our schools and giving tips about how we could involve and incorporate their strategies into our schools.

Additionally, we had to look at ourselves with a critical view. We had to accept the brutal facts that our district was extremely low performing. It was the second lowest performing district in the Commonwealth of Virginia. That was not a good place to be and none of us wanted to accept that. It was neither acceptable nor were we willing to allow it to continue. So we had to make a concerted effort between our governance arm, that is our school board, our administration, our teachers, our principals, and our central administration. We were going to do better than that.

We had the Council of Chief State School Officers come in and do a strategic study of our district—I'm sorry but I'm kind of nervous—strategic study of our district and they gave us a lot of important topics to look at. It was not comfortable but we had to engage ourselves and make sure that we got over that uncomfortable feeling and started to make strategies to do what was right.

We also invested in curriculum revision, curriculum alignment, professional development, not only professional development from the principal standpoint but we also invested a lot of time and effort into our classroom teachers because we knew that that was the most important investment that we could make. Our teachers learn how to use data, how to collect the data first and how to analyze it and apply those data points to improve instruction.

We also decided that we could select all kinds of reading programs, all kinds of math programs but when the door closed on that classroom, we needed to know if there was fidelity to implementation. So our central office developed a strategy of internal monitoring called, Charting the Course and we go out each October and visit each school. Everybody except our superintendent, who is with me today, goes out to those schools. We sit with the principals. We talk about their trend data. We set targets and we monitor. We also have teacher leaders around the table to talk to us about what happened the year before and what their strategies are. And we use that information to develop their school improvement plans.

We then go back each month, sometimes twice a month, depending on the status of those schools. And it is a means of providing resources, both human as well as fiscal resources to those schools to help.

We also have engaged tutors and coaches. As we visit, we find out where the areas of need are and we send tutors and coaches to those schools. Our central office instructional staff go to those schools. So we have a lot of resources directed toward the areas of need.

This is a year-to-year process for us, which is a challenge because as soon as that last State assessment is collected, we have to start all over again with a new group of students, a new group of teachers. We lose some of our teachers to our surrounding area because they become attracted to less strenuous circumstances than the urban district that they are currently working. So professional de-

velopment is an ongoing process and we have to make sure that we are dealing with it on a year-to-year basis with the same intensity. We cannot let up.

We also recognize the value of early childhood education in scaffolding the learning. So we focus a lot on pre-k through 2nd grade and making sure that those skills are developed in those children who come to us with different levels of need. We have kids who come in who are reading in pre-kindergarten or at least they can recognize sounds. Then we have kids who come in who don't have a clue. So we have to make sure that we are providing them with the same resources.

The data is what we use to identify those skill deficits in the students and we employ a variety of instructional strategies to support it. We look for textbooks, resource materials—everything we do is based on the data that we receive so we don't haphazardly teach. We teach by blending the art of teaching and the science of teaching together. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Brandon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF YVONNE W. BRANDON, ED.D.

Good morning. I would like to thank Chairman Kennedy, Senator Enzi and members of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee for the opportunity to testify on No Child Left Behind Reauthorization: Strategies that Promote School Improvement. I am Yvonne Wallace Brandon. I am the Associate Superintendent for Instruction and Accountability of Richmond City Public Schools in Richmond, Virginia and I am accompanied by Superintendent Dr. Deborah Jewell-Sherman.

The goal of Richmond City Public Schools is to provide students with a world-class education. The vision is for Richmond Public Schools to be the premier learning community that is the first choice for ALL in Richmond and is recognized nationally for student excellence. For that reason, student achievement is the focus for every initiative, program and partnership undertaken by the Richmond City School Board and the district community.

Approximately 25,000 students attend public schools in Richmond. Of that number, 89.19 percent are African-American. We also provide a variety of educational services for the 19 percent of our student population who have disabilities. In the past few years, we have seen a steady increase in our ESL student population, with Hispanic students representing the fastest growing segment of that population. Additionally, nearly 70 percent of our students qualify for free and/or reduced lunch. And, a significant number of our students come from single-parent homes and reside in low-income housing. In other words, Richmond Public Schools includes all of the characteristics of urban school districts across this Nation.

What is not so typical is that the Commonwealth of Virginia implemented its Standards of Learning (SOL) initiative in 1999, a high-stakes testing program that required every local school district to meet achievement benchmarks in all four core academic subject areas. To become fully accredited, 70 percent of a school's student population must pass the tests. In year one, only two of Richmond's schools earned full accreditation. In 2002, that number reached 10. The progress was neither expedient nor acceptable.

A change in culture of the entire district was necessary. Under the leadership of our new superintendent, Dr. Deborah Jewell-Sherman, we started charting our course to excellence. We had to create a culture of continuous commitment to student success. The vision provided the foundation for excuse-free education and high expectations for all. We committed being on board, on purpose, and on message. We also vowed to show that our students would excel not in spite of who they were or where they lived but because of who we are.

Our journey was multifaceted expanding from Governor Mark Warner's PASS (Partnership for Achieving Successful Schools) Initiative to the local governance arm down to each classroom. We took a critical view of ourselves and in the words of Jim Collins; we faced our "brutal facts." Our district was suffering from low student self-confidence, sinking staff morale, school board frustration and parent and community dissatisfaction. We were reverberating from site-based management—multiple reading programs, textbooks, supplemental materials and other resources with-

in the district. This alone proved to be disastrous for students in a district that experienced an estimated 40 percent mobility.

We embraced Jim Collins' work from *Good To Great*, applying business principles to our work. Realizing that our profitability was measured by student achievement, we embraced a managed instruction theory of action. We developed a district-wide curriculum that was aligned to State standards and assessments and a district-wide instructional model. We created instructional tools for the classroom teachers called the RPS Treasure Chest. This resource included a pacing guide, lesson plans for each standard, sample activities, technology integration, essential knowledge, vocabulary, and sample assessments.

Another facet of our work was to blend the art of teaching with the science of teaching. We developed benchmark and other formative measures to collect data, analyze it and utilize the information to drive all of our decisions. The application of the data was used to deploy central office assistance to schools and classrooms, to develop remediation and intervention plans, for professional development, to select textbooks and supplemental materials, to develop school improvement plans and finally to allocate fiscal and human resources.

The belief that consistent and thorough monitoring is necessary to assure fidelity to implementation was the guiding principle behind the development of our internal accountability system called "Charting the Course." This process requires that central office administrators and instructional staff make monthly visits to schools. The initial visits are conducted to review trend data, set yearly targets, observe teachers and provide immediate feedback and recommendations to principals. The frequency of subsequent visits was determined by the schools ability to reach AYP and accreditation for multiple years.

Last, we infused another business model, "The Balanced Scorecard," into our work to provide transparent accountability and to guide us. The BSC provides feedback on internal instructional and business processes and external outcomes (i.e., student achievement and customer satisfaction) in order to continuously improve results.

Our progress has been noted in local, State and national publications. Richmond Public Schools is no longer the second lowest performing school district in Virginia. In 2003, we more than doubled our number of fully accredited schools, moving from 10 to 23 or 44 percent; in 2004, 39 or 76 percent schools; in 2005, 45 or 90 percent schools; and in 2006, 44 or 88 percent. In meeting the Federal benchmark, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), our students have shown a similar pattern of progress. In 2003, 12 or 23 percent of our schools made AYP; in 2004, 27 or 53 percent schools; 2005 41 or 82 percent and in 2006, 40 or 88 percent of our schools. In fall 2006, one of our schools was named a Blue Ribbon School, our first.

While the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act provided a springboard for our school district to take a bold look at our instructional program, it must also be noted that Richmond Public Schools did not shy away from the challenges that accompanied the implementation of the NCLB Act. We know that our greatest asset is our teachers. They make the difference between a successful and memorable educational experience and one that is forgettable. The concentration of efforts at the classroom level is an investment in the future of every child who walks into our doors. The commitment to fidelity of implementation is critical to the success of any program or strategy and requires the allocation of time, effort and support at the classroom level.

Are we there, yet? No. We face many challenges as we progress. The investment in professional development is an on going process. We sometimes lose our investment as surrounding school districts, without urban challenges, become more attractive. When teachers leave us, they leave with experience and a tool box of strategies and resources. Our quest to change the culture is not complete. As we progress, we have the challenge of balancing flexibility and accountability. In the past we have focused on the upper elementary grades in our assessment and accountability system. By analyzing data, we know that pre-school-second grade education is extremely important to the success of students as well as necessary to close achievement gaps. The balance of developmental instructional strategies with academic strategies is also a challenge. These aforementioned challenges may impact our ability to build and maintain the capacity for excellence in each school, but they do not impact our resolve. For us, failure was not, is not and never shall be an option for Richmond Public Schools.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.  
Mr. Coleman.



**STATEMENT OF RICHARD COLEMAN, DIRECTOR,  
AN ACHIEVABLE DREAM ACADEMY, NEWPORT NEWS, VA**

Mr. COLEMAN. Senator Enzi and other Senators here, thank you, first of all, for inviting me to represent An Achievable Dream, which is in Newport News, Virginia. I, like my colleagues, I think we focus on many of the same things and I'm proud to subscribe certainly to many of the principles that they subscribe to as well.

An Achievable Dream Academy and I'm going to give you a perspective from a building level. I'm the Director of An Achievable Dream, which is a K-12 program. I happen to have been the principal of the school for 5 years and the assistant principal for 3 years and over the years, we've subscribed to three strategies that have been effective with us.

First and foremost, we have high expectations and I know that in schools that have high-minority, low-income clientele, high expectations are one of those elements that have to be implemented if we're going to have our children succeed.

At An Achievable Dream Academy, we have a selection process. We're not a magnet school nor are we a charter school. We're a unique partnership with the School Board, the Newport News School Division and the city of Newport News and in that partnership, every year we select children that come into our school. There are three factors that we use to select the children. We use a point system.

First, those children that are on free or reduced lunch—you have to be eligible for free or reduced lunch to be eligible to come to our school. So consequently, 96 percent of the kids that are at our school are on free or reduced lunch. You get additional points if you live in public housing versus private housing. You get additional points if you live with surrogate parents or grandparents as opposed to living in a two-parent family.

So basically, we look for those kids that are socially and economically deprived and those are the students that are at An Achievable Dream Academy from grades kindergarten through grades 12.

We focus, as I mentioned, on high expectations but we also have to focus on the data that has been mentioned and data is so critical; it becomes such a common phrase and terminology that it is critical, as has been mentioned already, that we teach our teachers how to take a look at data and then feedback the data to our teachers and to our children so that they have it in digestible sound bites. What I mean by that is the strands of information that our children do not do well in, we have our teachers focus on those areas. So we are working on the interventions on the areas that they've not mastered as opposed to trying to review everything that we've taught already. We do that in a number of ways, but the data—and looking at the data is the critical piece that our teachers have learned to use to be able to accommodate our children.

In addition to that, we believe in a framework that we call social, academic and moral. In academic, we all understand academic is for children that come to school every day expecting to get an education. But we also feel that socially, we have to prepare our children to be prepared for life and to be lifelong learners but also to be prominent citizens and productive citizens when they get out of school. So every child that comes to our school every morning re-

ceives a firm handshake and a good morning by the principal and other members of the school community as they come into the building.

That's important because the first part of their day sometimes makes a difference in how the rest of their day will be. As they go into their classrooms, as well, they are given a firm handshake by their teacher, a good morning but also eye contact. Typically, low-income minority children will look down instead of looking up so we teach our children to have eye contact with those they are confronted with.

So the strategies that are most important are looking at data, making sure that our instructional program is solid, making sure that our children have the social skills that they need. Every morning, we have children that go through a social program. It's called the Morning Program but also we have kids that go through what we call our Morning Rotations. We have a conflict resolution class. We have something called Speaking Green and that's where our children are taught to border cross—they're taught that it's okay to speak slang from the neighborhood but when you come to school, when you go to a public environment, when you're applying for a job, you have to speak proper business English. So we have signs around our school that say, Only Proper Business English is Spoken Here.

Understanding the backgrounds of our children; sometimes that can be an insult culturally but we teach our children that it's okay to—the defense mechanism and the language that they use in their community is okay but again, if we want them to be productive citizens, they have to speak business English and they have to speak it properly.

We have an etiquette class where we teach our children also how to conduct themselves when they go to a restaurant, how to conduct themselves when they are in the public, when they are talking to people. These factors become very important, not only for their academic education but for their social education.

Morally, we focus on the belief system. How do we believe? We believe all children really can learn. Sometimes your body language will indicate whether or not you really care about children and we also want our children to believe that they are capable of learning. We want them to believe that they are someone special and in the morning program, we enforce those kinds of guidelines and rules every day by them saying what we call the banners every morning.

Another strategy that we think is critical to the success of our children is we are a year-round school. I also represent the National Association of Year-Round Education and we believe that our children must have a balanced calendar. Eight weeks of summer vacation is just a bit much for our children in our community because we recognize that that muscle called the brain, if it's not used for 10 weeks, sometimes it makes it very difficult when they get back to school in September. So our kids have a 5-week summer break. Our teachers have a 4-week summer break and we go through 9 weeks of instruction and then we have 2 weeks of what we call an intersession. During that intersession, we look at the data. We determine where our kids are deficit and then we focus

on those strands, as I mentioned earlier, that our kids need—I mean, where we need to improve on.

So teachers are taught how to look at data and take that data and use it to re-teach not the entire 9-week curriculum but just those areas where our kids have been deficit. It's been proven for us to be successful.

We also have a longer day. We have an extended day. Our children arrive at school at 8:15 every day and they go home at 4:30. Not only do we provide time for additional character development, because we think that's important but we want to provide additional instructional time as well.

See, we recognize that all children don't process at the same speeds. So those kids that need more time, we provide them additional time and that's why we have the longer day and that's why we have that balanced year-round calendar with the mandatory intersession. So consequently, our kids are in school for 205 days a year as opposed to 180 days a year and it makes a difference. The longer children are with us, the better they have a tendency to do.

Our middle school kids; their test scores in the Virginia Standards of Learning are sometimes—very often in the last 3 years, far exceed those of any school in our district. We usually have the strongest writers and readers and for those of you that know the background of minority children and their writing skills, typically we don't do very well. But we have the strongest writers in our school district just based on the Virginia Standards of Learning and we're very proud of that because we teach our children that writing is critical and when we teach them to speak correctly; when they hear it correctly, very often they'll write it correctly. So we look at that as a very important strategy. Reading is the key to the success in their life and we know how important that is.

So those are three strategies, the focus on instruction, the focus on their framework, providing more time for our children to learn with the longer day and providing additional time on a year-round basis. We also have 26 weeks of Saturday School. So those children that need additional time, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturdays, we provide Saturday School and typically, we have, out of 1,200 kids in our population, we have about 250 kids that are in Saturday School because they need the additional time. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Coleman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD COLEMAN

AN ACHIEVABLE DREAM—“BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY THROUGH SOCIAL, ACADEMIC AND MORAL EDUCATION”

*An Achievable Dream (AAD) is a collaboration of public and private organizations that runs a comprehensive K-12 public school program.* Newport News Public Schools provides the instructional and support elements common to all schools in the city, including curriculum, student services, basic staffing, transportation, food service, and maintenance. The private arm, through the mechanism of the nonprofit An Achievable Dream, Inc., raises funds for and operates all the additional components that contribute significantly to the program's effectiveness: the extended school day, longer school year, uniforms, tennis equipment and instruction, curriculum enrichments, technology, parent involvement activities, and program evaluation. At present, AAD operates a K-8 Academy with students in grades 9-12 continuing in the program while attending a comprehensive high school in the district. Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, AAD will operate its own Middle and

High School Academy so that students have full access to the array of AAD services through their primary and secondary school years.

#### AN ACHIEVABLE DREAM SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

An Achievable Dream's selection and integration of specific design elements is based on available evidence of strategies that are effective at promoting the educational success of minority and low-income students. (Note: Among 1,000+ An Achievable Dream students, 100 percent qualify for free or reduced lunch and 98 percent are African-American.) Among those that have the most influence on program design are:

- Evidence that in urban schools, minority and low-income students are more likely to achieve at lower levels, need remedial services, be retained, and drop out and less likely to take advanced courses or apply to college. They are less likely to receive health care and more likely to become involved in the justice system, bear children during adolescence, and, as adults, be unemployed or underemployed and depend on public assistance. Equally compelling is evidence that with appropriate supports and high expectations, they can achieve and succeed at levels consistent with those of white and affluent students. At An Achievable Dream, expectations are uniformly high, clearly articulated, and consistently reinforced by teachers, staff and volunteers.
- Evidence that students lose academic ground in the summer. An Achievable Dream is a year-round school, with its extra 30 days organized into three mandatory intercessions between regular quarters.
- Evidence that extended instructional time can yield results in student achievement. An Achievable Dream's day is 2¼ hours longer than the city norm and the year 30 days longer. This schedule makes time available for more intensive instruction in basics, as well as for curriculum enrichments (foreign language, technology education, the arts) and special offerings like the positive conflict resolution program, etiquette and Speaking Green (proper business English).

#### PROGRAM EVALUATION

An Achievable Dream believes that evaluation is essential both to identify areas in which modifications are needed to strengthen the program and to demonstrate its effectiveness to other communities seeking evidence-based strategies for serving inner-city youth.

Outcome evaluation focuses on two areas: educational achievement, as measured largely by standardized testing and college acceptance, and behavioral performance, as measured by the incidence of infractions of school policies (ranging from cheating, lying, and insubordination to those involving weapons, alcohol, and drugs).

The program has contracted with the School of Education at the College of William and Mary for continuing, objective, and systematic evaluation. In assessing outcomes, Achievable Dream students are compared to a control group of students matched by age, gender, socioeconomic level, and academic status. William and Mary also assesses parent satisfaction through focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys.

The key findings from a 2-year study by William and Mary, issued July 2006:

- Compared with the match group, An Achievable Dream students in grades 3 and 5 scored higher on every portion of the Standards of Learning academic tests and on a standardized reading test.
- The number of disciplinary referrals for Achievable Dream students was less than half that for the match group. Dreamers miss less school.
- Parents involved in the program are extremely satisfied with their children's learning, the performance of teachers, communication and relations with the school, and the school environment.
- The most significant finding is that *An Achievable Dream is effective at closing the gap between white and black students*. On statewide tests, Dreamers—98 percent of whom are African-American and all of whom are eligible for free or reduced price lunches—outperform other minority students in the city. They pass the Virginia tests at rates approaching or identical to the rates for white students. On some tests and grades, they closed the racial gap typical in most schools and on other tests narrowed it to only a few percentage points, compared to the 15–30 percentage point gap between black and white students in the city, the State and the Nation as a whole.

*Advancing the principles of positive youth development*

An Achievable Dream does this through:

- Surrounding children with high, clearly articulated, and consistently reinforced expectations. It is blatantly clear: these children are preparing for college, for careers, and to become contributing members of their families and communities. These expectations are reinforced in daily morning character development exercises, classroom discussions and proclaimed from banners in the hallways.
- A strong and pervasive character education program that helps children develop critical values—honesty, respect, responsibility, loyalty, courage, self-discipline, integrity, and patriotism.
- Equipping children for the world of success through programs like etiquette classes and the “Speaking Green” program, which fosters poise, public speaking skills, and fluency in standard English. The “Peaceful Conflict Resolution” program teaches nonviolent ways to resolve disputes.
- Fostering a sense of identity with a positive group that is an antidote to the lure of street gangs. From the earliest years, students identify themselves as Dreamers, an identity that is bolstered by uniforms, and the distinction of attending a school that has a high profile in the community.
- Requiring and supporting the involvement of parents, one of the strongest weapons in the quest to develop strong children. All parents must sign a pledge to volunteer in the school and make education a priority at home. They review children’s binders daily and can take a variety of classes in the parents’ night school.
- The program incorporates services to prevent and treat health needs and promote students’ well-being. An on-site health clinic serves students and their families, and the “Healthy Living” curriculum emphasizes healthy habits and living, including nutrition, exercise, hygiene, and healthy daily schedules.

#### DISTRICT STRATEGIES

Newport News Public Schools, like many urban districts, is working to assist a number of schools that have been identified for improvement under the No Child Left Behind Act, specifically schools that did not meet Annual Yearly Progress Determinations (AYP) for two or more consecutive years. One school improvement strategy the district has pursued is the closure of Briarfield Elementary School, whereby Briarfield’s students (with similar demographics to AAD students) were absorbed into AAD’s elementary and middle school programs, while Briarfield’s campus is to be converted to the new An Achievable Dream Middle and High School.

While no district likes to think about closing schools, this public/private partnership has demonstrated how a bad situation can be turned into a win-win for the district, students, parents and the community.

#### CHALLENGE #1

With Newport News Public Schools, An Achievable Dream operates a K–8 Academy. Historically, when they graduate from the 8th grade, AAD students attend a comprehensive public high school (Heritage High School), a school in year 2 of improvement, where the current high school “culture” does not share the academic expectations and the disciplined structure to which AAD students have grown accustomed. The social pressure at this 1,800+ student high school to not achieve is a grave concern, and has had a negative impact on AAD students in terms of academic achievement.

Research shows that in the mid-1990s, high schools began receiving better-prepared students, after numerous reform efforts focused on elementary and middle schools, but achievement remained flat at the high school level. One of the problems is size: Many of today’s high schools have enrollments of 2,000, 3,000, even 4,000 students which make it difficult, if not impossible to govern and emphasize the academic part of the curriculum. Further research shows that students drop out of school because they are bored or do not think material learned in high school applied to real life. Specific research on An Achievable Dream high school students supports the findings that achieving academic success in a large high school is a challenge.

#### SOLUTION

This year, alongside Heritage High School, An Achievable Dream is building its own dedicated 500-student middle and high school. Where it has closed the achievement gap, An Achievable Dream will now be able to close the ambition gap by giving students future goals to work toward. An Achievable Dream, working as a laboratory school, is developing and will test new ways to excite students to keep them in school, and to motivate them to graduate and pursue college, further career training, or the military. The campus is an innovative partnership of An Achievable

Dream, Newport News Public Schools, the city of Newport News, regional corporations and regional universities.

The enriched academic program will prepare students for successful careers by allowing them to explore and plan for intended vocations. Students will be exposed to 12 primary career paths, including: college, the military, police and fire, medical technology and nursing, shipbuilding, computer technology and other 21st century careers. Enrichment classes in math, science and technology will be offered in partnership with Virginia Modeling Analysis Simulation Center and Northrop Grumman Newport News. Medical careers will be directed by Riverside Health System, homeland security (police and fire) through the city of Newport News, and entrepreneurship through Ferguson Enterprises.

#### CHALLENGE #2

One of the national education community's and An Achievable Dream's greatest challenges is teacher recruitment and retention, specifically in urban schools. The national average tenure of urban teachers is 2–3 years. While An Achievable Dream has been fortunate to find and hire many committed, long-term teachers, it is increasingly more difficult to fill teaching positions when they do come open.

#### SOLUTION

Old Dominion University (ODU), in nearby Norfolk, Virginia, will establish the Center for Urban Teacher Training, Education and Research (CUTTER) on An Achievable Dream's new middle and high school campus. The Center will initially focus on preparing AAD teachers to staff the new 6–12 campus. Later, the Center will open its doors to teachers from districts within the region and beyond. The Center will become a national model for urban teacher professional development, education and research.

The Center will invite K–12 teachers and administrators and higher education faculty from communities across the globe to join ODU in improving teaching and learning. In order to improve teaching and learning at scale, universities and schools must join forces with the community to strengthen its instructional core by increasing teachers' skills and knowledge in combining instruction and assessment; enable students to be active agents for their own learning; enable teachers and higher education faculty to serve as "coresearchers;" and ensure that the curriculum challenges the students academically.

Getting assessment "right" is more important than ever for African-American children as we near 2014 when all children must meet NCLB requirements. With a growing knowledge of how people learn, it is critical to develop assessments that help teachers diagnose students' comprehension more precisely and accurately.

In essence, the Center moves school improvement to the university and teacher development to the urban classroom.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Flanagan, we're grateful to you for being here. We had our colleagues from Michigan that wanted to make sure we extend a warm welcome to you. Nice to have you. Thank you.

#### **STATEMENT OF MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN, STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF INSTRUCTION, STATE OF MICHIGAN**

Mr. FLANAGAN. Thank you very much, Chairman Kennedy and Senator Enzi and the rest of the Senators for taking time to listen to this panel. I've learned a few things already myself so we've got a good start.

I've been a lifelong educator but have only been the State Superintendent of Schools for about a year and a half in Michigan and I need to tell you just straight out that No Child Left Behind is really the spirit behind what drove our change in Michigan. I think there was reluctance to accept some of the No Child Left Behind specifics in the beginning but here's what No Child Left Behind did for us.

It finally focused us in Michigan on all children. In the system, we've been kind of well-intentioned hypocrites up until No Child

Left Behind. We've said things like all kids can learn. We've said it for decades but we have numbers that don't demonstrate that. So one of the things, when I was able to come to this position and Governor Granholm and a bipartisan State board worked extremely well together, as we said we've got to change the cultural learning in our State.

We had a perfect storm. We still have a perfect storm in Michigan. We've got an auto industry that's kind of a little shaky if you haven't heard, although they're coming back. And I think my job is more to take kind of a Model T system that we have in place and modernize it the way our car industry is doing.

But we have this perfect storm of the auto industry which is shaky and the cultural learning that you could actually be a high school dropout in Michigan and earn a great living. I grew up in New York. When I first came to Michigan, my wife's cousin—who is smarter than me, who clearly was intelligent—was driving a Lincoln and I was driving a Pinto. He had a place up north, a cottage. I didn't know what up north meant at the time but it's where people in Michigan go. And he was a high school dropout. And I couldn't figure out what's going on. I had worked through the system and had a couple of degrees and it's because we rewarded, in Michigan, high paying auto industry jobs without an education and we're still dealing with this. It's in the water.

So we finally decided last year, with the Governor's support, bipartisan State board, we're going to put in the highest rigor in high school graduation requirements, learning from what other States have done and we've done that. That's the first step because it will get us to the spirit of all means all. You know, once and for all, all means all.

The beauty of No Child Left Behind is that it has helped us—it's helped us see our faults. If you look—when you have to look at subgroups, you have to look in the mirror and say, this isn't all hunky dory.

I was a local superintendent in the late eighties and early nineties outside of Detroit and we had three very poor schools bordering Detroit. But in general, our aggregate scores were all great so we all kind of felt everything was great, when in fact, our poor schools, which isn't a race issue, by the way. In Michigan, this sometimes is mistaken for race when really, it's a poverty issue and kids with high, free and reduced lunch. Now we have to measure under No Child Left Behind and I'm glad about it. I think it has made all the difference.

So we're finally getting to a point where we're going to try imagine our State with 2 million kids in our State, all achieving at high levels, something we've never accomplished before, getting off this auto industry mindset that you can make a good living without an education. When I first came into this position, we surveyed districts and only a third of them required Algebra I. I mean, how do you do well at all if you kind of wink and believe that some kids don't need to learn Algebra? So we've actually got requirements that now have all kids exposed to Algebra II.

And some of that, for example, may be a career tech sequence, where you're learning the pathagorium theorem in a building trades course. You don't need to learn it in an algebra course. And

we've changed our mindset from courses to credits. As long as you can demonstrate mastery, we don't really care about the seat time. And this has all been driven by the spirit of No Child Left Behind, which I thank you for and we have been a supporter from the beginning of this.

You mentioned, Senator, our principle academies and some of those specific strategies we've used that is in detail in our testimony so I won't belabor that. What I would say if I had to mention a few, just a few things that might strengthen No Child—one, my colleagues in the Council of Chief State School Officials. They are called commissioners in some States. I'm called a superintendent and one of the highlights, I think, that Senator Kennedy has dreamed about from the beginning of this legislation was that we would have proper resources and I think there is a place to strengthen some of the resources there, although frankly, we're going to do it with or without it.

But I think there are some places—for instance, you really can't do the tutoring part of this if you're not financing the tutoring part. But putting that aside, the only other thing I would kind of highlight would be the fact that there seems to be some inconsistencies with what is approved between States. You know, Arizona has been approved for some things when it comes to ELL students that we weren't able to get approval on and these are hardworking people in the Department, by the way. This isn't a criticism of the Department. I find them to be very helpful. I think it has more to do with some of the ways that we could improve on No Child Left Behind law.

It's an honor to be here today.

The CHAIRMAN. Just before you leave, you had 163 schools that moved off of State warning lists. Just talk about that quickly and then we'll move on.

Mr. FLANAGAN. Senator, what this comes down to—I'm glad you have such a diverse panel because one thing you'll find is, it's not about people like me. We have something to do with the system. It's ultimately about teachers in the classroom. How do you support the teachers in the classroom? We have trained turn-around specialists. So we have people that we use in what we call our intermediate school districts. These are county systems with consultants and teams that go in and turn around a school in terms of academic achievement and we only focus on what we call our high-priority schools. Frankly, we're not going to spend any time in Grosse Point. They're doing fine. But we're going to spend time in the schools that need the most help and those are the schools that got turned around and it had to do with coaches academies, it had to do with principals academies because of the leadership comment that the good doctor mentioned earlier but most importantly, it was to give strategies to teachers on how you deal in the classroom on a day-to-day basis and care about all kids and work toward their academic achievement.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Flanagan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN

Chairman Kennedy, Senator Enzi, and distinguished members of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, I am extremely honored and pleased to participate in your kick-off round table discussion on the reauthorization



of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and specifically the amendments that were made to it in 2001 with the passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

On behalf of Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and Michigan's State Board of Education, I thank you for providing the Michigan Department of Education this special opportunity to testify here today on the successes the State of Michigan has experienced with the implementation of NCLB as well as sharing the challenges we have encountered that make it difficult to provide a fair and reasonable accounting of all schools and almost 2 million students in Michigan.

I applaud the committee's interest in hearing from those of us who have worked diligently throughout the country to implement this groundbreaking legislation. As the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan for just the last 18 months, although always an NCLB advocate, I have had literally a crash course in understanding that the critical role of States is in providing the direction and leadership necessary to assist schools and districts in meeting the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Michigan chose to immediately embrace the new law—viewing it as an opportunity to create a statewide focus on school improvement and student achievement for every child. Michigan was one of only a dozen or so States that already had begun to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), as prescribed in the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994. As a result, many of our highest-need schools began the NCLB era further down the Federal "sanctions" path than similar schools in other States. As such, Michigan has helped blaze a trail for NCLB and stands as an innovator and model for other States to follow.

Michigan has embraced the moral imperative of NCLB that schools must provide the highest quality education for every child, regardless of race, culture, background, or learning ability. And I mean every child—ALL means ALL. Clearly, NCLB has served as a catalyst for reform focusing on the importance of instructional excellence and student achievement, and brought attention to every child in the classroom.

Initially, I want to embrace the recommendations developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) that include positions and strategies leading us as a Nation from "No Child Left Behind to 'Every Child a Graduate'."

Michigan has made tremendous strides in increasing student achievement and re-tooling its K–12 education system over the past 3 years.

Michigan has implemented among the most rigorous high school graduation requirements in the Nation; developed grade-level standards in math and reading that have resulted in statewide increases on our State assessment scores in grades 3–8; instituted a strong support system for our High Priority Schools that has resulted in 163 schools coming off the Federal sanctions list last year; and will administer a new high school test this spring that will help drive more students into postsecondary education.

Michigan also has begun to intensely focus on improving teacher preparation programs in Michigan to ensure that we have educators who will deliver instruction to our students in innovative and relevant measure for our 21st Century learners.

Michigan's formula for building success in our schools has been steady and growing. In 2002, we were one of the first States to adopt the Reading First program. Today, Reading First is in 168 schools in high need geographic areas; encompasses 2,000 teachers and 40,000 students; and has resulted in significant increase in the percentage of students reading at grade level each year.

We have developed a School Improvement Framework—A research-based model of the proven components of school improvement that now serves as the blueprint to be used to develop improvement plans in our High Priority Schools (those schools not making AYP).

The Michigan Department of Education also has provided direct intervention and support strategies for our High Priority Schools, including: Principals' Academies; Coaches' Institutes; and School Support Teams assigned to the most critical schools.

These School Support Teams represent a collaboration with the Michigan Department of Education, the State's Intermediate School Districts, and the school accrediting organization North Central Association. The teams conduct Comprehensive School Audits to investigate why a specific school is not making AYP, and assist the schools with developing an improvement plan based on audit findings.

Michigan's NCLB system of AYP sanctions has been established as "Phases," where after 2 consecutive years of not making AYP, a school goes into Phase 1 (school choice and transportation); after 3 consecutive years, Phase 2 (Supplemental Educational Services, plus school choice and transportation); and so on, through the Federal requirements for sanctions.

Michigan's Phase 1 and 2 schools are provided with training and their own nationally-recognized MI-MAP Kit. Developed by educators for educators, MI-MAP provides over 300 practical strategies and activities to shape, support, and sustain systemic reform and academic achievement.

For schools in Phases 3-5, in collaboration with the College of Education at Michigan State University, we developed a Coaches' Institute and trained 93 turn-around specialists to work with principals and school improvement teams as an alternative governance option.

Michigan has schools in NCLB Phases 6 and 7 that are placed on a "critical list." For these schools, we administer a comprehensive school audit, and turn-around specialists are assigned. This year, we're collaborating with the North Central Association to identify audit teams from their cadre of ambassadors.

Creating this kind of statewide capacity requires solid partnerships with our intermediate school districts (education service agencies), the professional education organizations, and universities.

As Michigan has led the way in meeting the requirements of NCLB, we have recognized and understood that it is a complex and comprehensive law that has been a true work-in-progress. Through the first few years of setting rules, regulations, and guidance, adjustments and amendments have had to be made at the Federal, State, and local levels.

NCLB was fostered with the intent of transparency and accountability on the Nation's public schools. Yet as my colleagues at CCSSO have agreed, each State is allowed different standards by which to determine AYP and each State has had different experiences in having their State plans for accountability approved.

By and large, the USED has been helpful to us as we have tried and tested; discovered what works and what doesn't work; what is fair and what is not fair for all schools; and continued to improve our State plan of implementation. However, like all things, there is room for improvement.

Michigan has urged the U.S. Department of Education to allow English Language Learners to be proficient in English before being tested, only to be denied. Our efforts to allow students to take 5 years to complete high school in some cases, in order to reflect the realities of today's evolving high school models, also have been rebuffed.

Michigan needs to be able to assess less severely cognitively impaired students with "in between" assessments that are rigorous but not necessarily tied to our grade level standards. These less severely impaired students should not be measured by regular State assessments and are not likely to achieve regular grade level standards. Yet they are not so severely impaired as to be eligible for the lower-level alternate assessments currently in place for "severely cognitively impaired."

Supplemental Education Services (SES), or tutoring, should be the first provision required on the Federal sanctions list, rather than the second phase; and States should be provided adequate resources to administer and monitor these services. SES providers also should meet the same highly-qualified standard in their subjects as classroom teachers.

SES is an expensive, time consuming, and administrative-heavy option. In Michigan's successful experience, clear learning expectations, improved classroom instruction and effective school leadership has had a much greater impact in turning around achievement than SES or choice and/or transportation. We would like to see the Regional Assistance Centers playing a more significant and increasing role in helping States with monitoring and evaluating SES providers.

Again, I would like to echo my colleagues in a call to strengthen resources to fully recognize the increased roles and responsibilities of States and the ever-increasing challenges for districts to meet the NCLB requirements.

Every reform initiative has its challenges. NCLB is no exception. However, in Michigan we are encouraged by our results and believe that this endeavor will have a positive impact on our State for generations to come. Thank you for affording us this opportunity to share our experiences.

The CHAIRMAN. Hosanna Johnson. Again, comes to us from the Chicago Public Schools. We thank you.

**STATEMENT OF HOSANNA MAHALEY-JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, OFFICE OF NEW SCHOOLS, CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS, CHICAGO, IL**

Ms. MAHALEY-JOHNSON. Good morning, Senator Kennedy, Senator Enzi and the other Senators who have taken time out of your

busy schedules to be here today. As an educator, it means a lot for me to be here and to see you here as well.

By way of introduction, I am a graduate of public schools and when we talk about under performing schools, I know them well because I attended them. So when I talk about what we're doing, I know it firsthand because I lived it as a student.

In Chicago, we are employing a Fresh Start strategy. We're doing a number of other things that my colleagues have discussed but I want to focus on our Fresh Start strategy and that is where we have made the decision to close some of our chronically under-performing schools and re-open them. It's a very drastic measure and one may ask, why would we do that?

We did it because in 2002, we looked at our student data across the city and in Chicago. We have 50 communities and we found that half of them—in 25 of them, over 75 percent of the children there were attending chronically under-performing schools. Over 200,000 children were attending chronically under-performing schools. When we looked at the data, we knew that our investments in additional staff and smaller class size and curriculum—we knew that those things were making a difference but it was gradual and for those children, we felt that gradualism wasn't enough. These are children who couldn't afford to wait 5 to 10 years for the reform efforts to take hold so we decided to do something to accelerate progress.

In 2002, we closed three schools. Two of them are widely known in Chicago. One is Dodge and one is William. They are widely known because we reopened them. When we made those decisions, it was a wake-up call for us, the parents and all of the adults. Public outcry was significant. We spent time having community meetings and talking to others and one of the questions we would always ask the adults, is that 20 years from now, would you be able to look these children in the eye and tell them that you did the best that you could? And if not, then we need to take a new approach.

So results. When we decided to close Dodge—I'll use Williams. When we decided to close Williams Elementary School in 2002, 15 percent of the students were meeting State standards. It was closed for 1 year. Last year, in 2006, 64 percent of the students are achieving—are meeting State standards, a 50-point increase.

Dodge is another example. A different part of town. When we closed, 24 percent were meeting State standards in reading. Last year, 57 percent, almost a 35-point increase in 3 years.

So is this a strategy for all situations? No. But for children who can't afford to wait, we do think it's appropriate. In 2004, we took the strategy to scale and set a public commitment to open 100 new schools over the next 5 to 6 years and today, we've opened almost 50. They are fairly new so some performance data is not available but there are some signs that show that the strategy is taking effect.

When we look at the mobility rate of the schools, it is half of the mobility rate for the district. We look at the graduation rate of the high schools that have been open longer. It's 15 percentage points higher than the district. When we look at attendance, it's 5 percent higher than the district average. We conducted teacher surveys in all of our schools. The teachers in the new schools felt more collec-

tive responsibility, innovation and program coherence. I could go on and on but there's lots of evidence that says that this is working for those communities.

You asked about challenges. One of the challenges we faced was public perception. Some felt that closing a school was a draconian measure and when we closed them, there was some student mobility and we recognized that the student mobility was not positive and that many parents preferred to keep their children in schools in the neighborhood because it was more convenient for them.

Last year, we launched a new strategy called a Turnaround School and I think I've heard some of my colleagues refer to that. The Turnaround School that we had, all of the children stayed but a new team of adults came in. It was not just a new team of adults but 25 percent of them are nationally board certified. Twenty-five percent of them have a record of effective teaching. And how did we incite them to come into the school? We did offer a bonus to them. So those 25 percent of teachers are receiving an additional \$10,000 every year and we expect them to teach. We expect them to share best practices and mentor the younger teachers. Also in that model, we partner with an organization called the Academy of Urban School Leadership. It's an organization that trains mid-career professionals to come into struggling, under-performing schools.

So just in summary, in Chicago, one of the strategies we're using is a Fresh Start. We've gotten great results and our challenges are public perception and also the charter cap. We have one charter left in the city of Chicago.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Mahaley-Johnson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HOSANNA MAHALEY-JOHNSON

STRATEGY

*Question 1.* What specific strategies, programs or polices have been effective in addressing your process of school improvement?

Answer 1. The Chicago Public Schools have employed a variety of school improvement strategies over the past 10 years. Efforts have ranged from curricular reform and increased professional development to full scale turnarounds. The Illinois General Assembly 60 charter schools for the State. Thirty were given to Chicago, twenty-nine have been used, and there is only one left.

The student achievement, increased demand, and strong parent satisfaction in charter schools set the stage for the Renaissance 2010 initiative, announced in June 2004. Renaissance 2010 calls for 100 new schools by 2010. This bold plan closes chronically under-performing schools and sets up a competitive, community-based selection process to determine the best school operator for each site. These schools are held accountable for performance through 5-year contracts while being given autonomy to create innovative learning environments using one of the following governance structures: charter, contract, or performance. The vision of Renaissance 2010 is to:

- Provide diverse education options for parents and students,
- Serve chronically underserved communities throughout Chicago, and
- Act as a catalyst for new education strategies in the district.

OUTCOMES & PERFORMANCE

*Question 2.* What outcomes or progress have been made as a result of these strategies?

Answer 2. Starting fresh has been a way for CPS to successfully turnaround schools. We are fortunate in Chicago to have Office of New Schools that has nurtured and partnered with a number of local education management organizations with proven ability to run schools. Such partner organizations have the ability to

leverage outside resources and foster innovations that as a large district, it is hard for us to do.

#### Case Study

In 2002, the Chicago Public Schools took the unfathomable step of actually closing chronically failing schools. That year three schools were closed and a year later, two new schools opened under brand new management with renovated faculties. The two schools, Dodge and Williams, are models of what our system has done right.

	Reading 2002	Reading 2006	Math 2002	Math 2006
Dodge .....	23.6	57	28.3	67.2
Williams .....	14.6	53.8	15.9	69.5

\*Although the 2002 and 2006 tests were different, the scores have been equated.

#### Indicators

There are indicators that new and charter schools are accelerating academic achievement. The Office of New Schools currently manages 83 new schools which include 24 pre-Renaissance 2010 charter schools, 54 Renaissance 2010 schools, and 5 professional development schools (professional development portion only). Below are a few highlights of new schools:

- Over 1,700 Renaissance 2010 students are new to CPS (kindergarteners were not included).
- 19 school leaders are alumni of New Leaders for New Schools.
- Nearly 300 community members have served on Transition Advisory Councils (TACs).
- Over 800 individuals subscribe to the Renaissance 2010 Report.
- 89 percent of Renaissance 2010 students reside in primary or surrounding community of the school they attend.
- Students are transferring out of Renaissance 2010 schools at nearly half the rate of the district (7.7 percent vs. 14.1 percent).
- New schools have a higher graduation rate than the district (89.9 percent vs. 73.4 percent).
- Charter school students have a higher attendance rate (Elementary schools: 94.6 percent vs. 94.4 percent and High school: 93.1 percent vs. 86.0 percent).
- Charter schools are making upward progress in ISAT composite scores and closing the achievement gap across students that meet State standards.
- Teachers in new schools feel like they have more collective responsibility, innovation, and program coherence in their schools.
- High school students tend to feel more supported, safer, and have higher expectations in new schools.
- Over 4 years, high schools' students experienced an 8 percentage point gain in PSAT scores compared to 4 points made by the district.
- New schools rank top 5 in all but one category for the CPS High School Score Card.

#### PUBLIC PERCEPTION

*Question 3.* What challenges did you encounter in your improvement efforts and how did you address those challenges?

*Answer 3.* School closings and investment in new schools creates push back from the community. There is a history of distrust that creates a barrier with the community and many feel new school development is part of a larger plan of gentrification. There is also a belief that the students being served are not from the community and the schools are handpicking the best students. However, we have found that 89 percent of Renaissance 2010 students in formerly closed schools reside in the primary or surrounding community.

Transition Advisory Councils (TACs) were created to serve as liaisons between Chicago Public Schools and communities. Representing the voice of the community, a TAC works to ensure that new schools offer high quality educational options that reflect the community's needs and interests. Through TACs, some of our most vocal opponents have become our most vocal supporters. TACs collaborate with CPS in the following ways:

- Meet regularly to discuss and determine the community needs in the new school;

- Conduct community outreach activities and collect citizen input;
- Network and host public forums with community leaders, groups and organizations; and
- Make recommendations to CPS about the new school proposals.

#### CHARTER CAP

CPS welcomes opportunities to provide students and parents with educational choices, including charter schools. CPS has had significant success with charter schools and generally supports efforts to expand the number of charters available to the district. We believe that Illinois should ideally raise the charter cap on its own. In the meantime, however, no one's child should be "trapped" in a failing school. If the State will not raise the cap, we welcome the Federal Government's willingness to "step up" on behalf of the children and support parental choice. We support charters for chronically under-performing schools and legislation that gives the district the broadest range of options to meet our restructuring needs. We also note and support this provision of the reauthorization of the NCLB Act.

#### STUDENT DISPLACEMENT

The drawback to closing and re-opening schools is the displacement of students. Acknowledging that student mobility can disrupt academic performance in some situations, we found a way around it by closing Sherman Elementary School in June 2006 and re-opening it the following fall. We call it our NCLB Turnaround School because it had not made AYP in 5 years. The school is a collaboration of the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL), the Joyce Foundation, and the Chicago Public Education Fund. The students stayed and a new team of adults came in to lead the school. CPS asked that AUSL to recruit one quarter National Board Certified or Golden Apple-award winning teachers. In this way, CPS has delivered the most effective teachers to the students who need them the most. Students were not displaced and the parents are pleased with the new education program and improved school environment. Enrollment has increased from 425 to over 600.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. Senator Brown has to go preside in just a few minutes for an hour or so and will miss the time so he wanted to make—he had a couple questions.

Senator BROWN. Thank you, Senator Kennedy, Mr. Chairman. Just one question.

Dr. Flanagan—and I appreciate all of you. This has been very enlightening and I hope to take some of these ideas back to Ohio. I very much appreciate that.

The problem that I hear so often and generally, I think it's more a function of income than race, whether it's White Appalachia, Ohio or inner-city East Cleveland—is the movement of students in and out of school during the same school year and I know, Dr. Coleman, your comments may have addressed some of that but I guess, Dr. Flanagan, if you would—what did you do to address the issue of parents who were more mobile, that have to move, that they may lose their apartment, they may find a job somewhere else. The student is in one school in the Detroit schools and then maybe in Hamtramck and then back in another school in Detroit. How do you address the continuity of learning in that way?

Mr. FLANAGAN. That's a great question. We accepted the reality of that and didn't use it as an excuse anymore. We've kind of used it as an excuse. They're mobile, we can't move those kids. So what we did was have what are called Grade Level Content Expectations for K-8. They're exactly the same through the State so whether you're in Marquette in the Upper Peninsula or in Detroit, you will, at the same time and even allow the art and craft of teaching to be unique in a 2nd grade classroom but the grade level content expectations are the same. If they move from Marquette in 2nd grade to go to Detroit for 3rd grade, it's the same. After this year, we've

finally gotten course content expectations for high school to be exactly the same, tied in with our new high school requirements. So it doesn't matter where you live. You still have the uniqueness of developing your own materials and your own approaches in an individual district but we needed to have a standard for exactly the reason you're bringing up.

Senator BROWN. Dr. Brandon.

Ms. BRANDON. I'd like to just add from a district perspective, we have about 40 percent mobility in Richmond City Public Schools.

Senator BROWN. In the course of 1 year?

Ms. BRANDON. In the course of 1 year and they're moving across town, from one place to the other or from one community right next to each other but still going to different schools. So our approach was to have a district-wide curriculum, district-wide teacher resources, district-wide textbooks, district-wide resources, so that if a child moves from one school to the other, he or she will not have to overcome the gap in the learning curve for those items.

We also developed pacing guides. We developed assessments, sample assessments so if he moves in October from one school, he should be in the same place in his instruction when he goes to the next school.

Senator BROWN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Kimberly Johnson.

**STATEMENT OF KIMBERLY JOHNSON, PRINCIPAL, BRIGGS  
CHANNEY MIDDLE SCHOOL, SILVER SPRING, MD**

Ms. JOHNSON. Hi, good morning.

The CHAIRMAN. The principal of the Briggs Chaney Middle School in Silver Spring.

Ms. JOHNSON. Yes and good morning, Senator Kennedy and Senator Enzi and other Senators that are here as well. I would also—I know Senator Brown had to leave but I also wanted to reference the mobility piece as I begin to speak.

We have adopted the VSC as our primary curriculum, which is the Voluntary State Curriculum, which is created by Maryland. Montgomery County, for a long time, did not want to adopt State standards but they understood under No Child Left Behind that is how we would be scored. So a student may move from area to area but not often out of the State and that is something that the State has provided to us as measured indicators and our curriculums are based on those. So that's how we address mobility.

I would like to focus my presentation on what it means for students and I've heard a lot from my colleagues as to what it means from the leadership standpoint and how students should feel in a school that is high achieving. But I consider myself not only a principal but a principal teacher of all of my children. The vision of my school is One Vision, One Voice, Everyone Achieves and that is the bottom line for me. Failure is no longer an option and that is what No Child Left Behind has done.

Three pieces that you wanted us to mention. One will be my speaking on full inclusion and the access of special education students to the general rigorous curriculum. Two, what it truly means for a student to fall in more than one subgroup because they don't

just hit the African-American subgroup. You can be African-American, poor, and special education all at the same time and all three of those have a different, profound effect on your education. And third, with the staff development, which I've also heard much about as to how do you move a school and how do you lead a school so that they understand data analysis and they understand the importance of using it in order to move students ahead.

Over the last 3 years, with full inclusion, we have transcended or had a paradigm shift in terms of how we treat students with disabilities. We have, at this point, unlocked their IEPs or Individual Education Plans, unlocked that to find out exactly what they need to be served. Often times, we see or hear disabled and we think, they can't do. That is absolutely untrue. We need to provide these students the opportunity to see whether or not they can be successful with the rigorous curriculum and measure their results as well.

I think we said that there was a hypocrisy whereas the special education students weren't measured before. They were included in a larger picture and forgotten. So now, we have to measure their success as well and that is why they need the access to the general curriculum and they need to be in the classrooms with other students, depending upon disability.

So it's gotten teachers to understand more fully what it means to be disabled. When we think about adults, we probably can look around the room or even reflect personally and know that we may have had a reading disability or a math disability or a speech deficit or any of those types of things but it did not dictate where you learned or it should not have.

So that is what No Child Left Behind has done for special education students in my school. They are fully immersed in the program and accepted—and they accept now their special education status, their accommodations. They advocate for themselves. The teachers understand that these students deserve to learn, that they must master as well. So that would be my first point.

The second point, as to what it truly means to fall in one or more subgroups. We go back and forth as educators to whether or not it is race or whether or not it's poverty. Well, often times, it's both and that, as I shared earlier, has a significant impact on a child's education, meaning if we tell a child to go home and study for that evening, they may not be able to or they may have to watch two and three children at home while their parents are away working. So they don't have the quiet space and they are also on free and reduced meals, so they may not have much in their cupboards to eat. So there are a lot of different areas that focusing in on all eight subgroups that you really understand the full child and the impact of all of the social aspects of being a child in America today.

The third point would be the staff development and this is where teachers need to constantly refine their pedagogy in terms of—I have only been out of college, I would say, about 11 years but with that said, 11 years ago, we weren't learning about No Child Left Behind. We weren't learning about data analysis. We weren't learning about disaggregating data to understand and pull and push each individual child. It was okay if 95 percent of the students overall did well because that 5 percent could represent 100 kids and that was okay. They just didn't perform but 95 did. So the



paradigm shift in education, I think, within the building, within the teaching profession and also, hopefully, at the university level so that teachers come out better prepared to understand what they are dealing with.

The other piece and I've heard a lot today about the data analysis. That is what drives every decision in a school because of No Child Left Behind. You look at the student data. You look at the overall class data. You look at the year data. You look at the content data. And that is how decisions are made. That was not so a few years ago. We had different data sources but they were not consistent. They were not accurate. They were not measurable and they were not given to us in a timely manner. So No Child Left Behind, having the data in front of us to make decisions based on actually what we need and not what we think we need has really allowed many schools to move forward because No Child Left Behind really focuses on each individual child. And I think sometimes when we think about it, that kind of gets lost, that each individual child deserves to learn and the data and the legislation brings it down to each individual child.

I think that sums up my position.

The CHAIRMAN. Just quickly, on the special needs children and the 3 percent that we have out there, could you just address that? You know, that's the limit—that's the regulation in the No Child Left Behind Act. How have you been able to deal with that? I mean, the way you express this is so uplifting, but how have you been able to deal with that kind of limitation in the legislation, working with the disabled children, special needs children?

Ms. JOHNSON. That would not apply to many of my students. We're only talking about 2 to 3 percent at any given time but the other special needs students still need to be given the access to the rigorous curriculum.

Further, how do we go about categorizing those particular students that then don't deserve to be in those classes? So that's segregating them and taking them backwards because of a disability when we haven't given them the opportunity to show us what they're made of. And a disability can be speech. It can be anything and then you think about why is a child disabled? And the over coating of different minority groups, different socio-economic groups. So there are a lot of things that go into why a student is special ed, what are their actual needs and No Child Left Behind with the testing, can actually have a student moved out because they can demonstrate for you, proficiency and they no longer need those special ed services. But if we don't give them the opportunity, we'll never know.

The CHAIRMAN. Alana Turner is a teacher in Easton, Maryland.

**STATEMENT OF ALANA DALE TURNER, TEACHER, EASTON  
HIGH SCHOOL, EASTON, MD**

Ms. TURNER. Good morning, Chairman and the rest of the committee members. I have been a teacher for 30 years.

The CHAIRMAN. Put the mic up just a little closer.

Ms. TURNER. Is that coming out louder? I've taught for 30 years. I've been teaching mathematics. The key to any new No Child Left Behind or any teaching is the students themselves. You have to get

the student engaged. Without the student buying into his education, it's very hard to get them to learn anything.

What we've done in Talbot County is started a one-to-one laptop initiative. Last year was the first year we did this, in 2005, and every 9th grader was issued a laptop computer. This year we added the 10th graders so that ninth and tenth now have laptop computers. We plan to do this for the next 2 years, so at the end of that time, all of our students will have a laptop computer to use.

The benefit from that is they really get to see what's going on in the outside world. They're not limited to a textbook. They're not limited to the four walls. They get to go out and use it as the Webquest. They get to have virtual field trips. They get to really bring everything that's out there into the classroom.

We also have used it to improve our math scores because we have the Carnegie Learning Cognitive Tutor Program. That's for the Bridges to Algebra of Algebra I, for geometry. They can then do that in the classroom. Forty percent of the classroom time but it's on their laptop. They can also do it at home. They can do it at other places in the building. We've had wireless put in so it's very easy and very assessable for them to make use of it. They're not just sitting there with a textbook and paper and pencil anymore. So it gets them engaged. They get excited. It's almost more like the games that they're going to do on their Playstations and so forth but it's technology and they're really interested and involved in that.

Other people have addressed the special education, the special needs children. We have started a collaborative teaching process in which we do have a special education teacher and a content teacher working together at the same time in the same classroom. And with that process, the teachers plan together. The special education teacher presents some of the content. The content teacher works with the special ed students. It's like two for one and you can't really tell if there is that much difference between the two teachers. All students benefit from it. Anybody that is in the classroom gets the extra help that they need and they just feel more comfortable. They're not the outsider or they don't feel embarrassed to be there. They really enjoy the classes.

We also, because of this, have a lot of staff development going on. The teachers have to be instructed on how to use this new technology. They had to be willing to use it. It doesn't do any good if the teachers are sitting there with a laptop and they're closed. So the teachers do get training in that and they are very open to it. They're very successful with it. Out of the Governor's Academies that Maryland has offered, we've had 16 of our teachers attend just last summer and they brought back to the others, teachers in the department, what they learned—shared the activities, shared how to use the computers and all the technology that is out there.

With that, our attendance rate has really improved. We're up—at a high school, our attendance rate is 94.7 percent, which is very good. The graduation rate is 90.85 percent, which is increasing at all times. So between the computers, teachers working together, the new schedule—we have a four-by-four block that is 90-minute classes so teachers could teach 90 minutes and really get their attention, get them focused. They wouldn't have to leave after 40

minutes so that helped. This year, we did go to a hybrid schedule and some of the classes are 90 minutes while some are 60 minutes and the 60-minute classes go all year and that focuses on our high school assessment classes, so again, students who learn at a different rate anyway, get more time and can focus on that material.

As for the data, we started using Performance Matters. That puts all the data from our classes and I can access my students, how they've performed on the math, how they did on the English, what they've done in other classes. Just turn on the computer, analyze it, see how that is going to help me see where their strengths are, see where their weaknesses are.

We've also put in Parent Connect, which is a way for parents to contact the school and look at their grades and their discipline records and their improvement and what's lacking and so many times a parent will call and say, "Well I see Johnny got a zero in such and such. What happened? Why did he do it?" So the students know the parents can check it a lot faster, get back to the teachers and therefore that keeps them on task. They are more engaged and wanting to get the information done.

So the major thing with the laptops is engagement, so that we can have the students involved because they all do learn at different rates. They're not carbon copies and they have different interests. However, the challenges are keeping the teachers there because there is so much work they have to do, the retention rate is not very good. So we have to encourage them and give them mentors, give them ways to stay in the profession and learn all the technology along with the students.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Turner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALANA DALE TURNER

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to speak with you today. It's with great pride that I tell you I have been a classroom teacher of mathematics for 30 years, and I currently teach geometry at Easton High School in Easton, Maryland. I graduated from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Campus, with a Bachelor of Science in Education and hold an Advanced Professional Certificate in general science and mathematics for grades 5 through 12.

I am pleased to be with you here today to discuss some school improvement strategies that have worked at my school, including student engagement, intensive professional development, after-school hours for extra help, and the school's one-to-one laptop initiative (every 9th and 10th grader is given a laptop). In addition, it is important to recognize that every student is different and that teachers have to make content relevant to all of them—they are not robots, they can't be taught in the same way.

I was asked to focus my comments on two areas of questioning, as follows:

*Question 1.* What specific strategies, programs or policies have been effective in addressing the progress of school improvement? What outcomes or progress have been made as a result of these strategies?

*Answer 1.* Easton High School in Talbot County, Maryland, has implemented the one-to-one laptop initiative. We are using the Carnegie Learning Cognitive Tutor Programs for Bridges to Algebra, Algebra I and Geometry. The laptop initiative allows students to access these programs at any time rather than just during math class time. So, students who need help can go online anytime, anywhere and access the tutoring programs in these math subjects. What I've seen with the laptop initiative is amazing—the students are more engaged in their education because they're using tools that are part of their daily lives outside of school. The world has changed, so we as educators need to change to respond to the needs of our students. One of the most critical aspects of helping any student, particularly one who is struggling, is to find innovative and creative ways to make the content come alive for that student. Keeping them interested and engaged is one of the most important things we do in the classroom—and it's an essential ingredient in increasing student

learning and achievement. Educators need the support to make lesson plans and individualized instructions more relevant to every student. That's a key element to success for every child.

We have also established an extra help class for identified students so they may get extra help and time on algebra within the school day. We have also implemented a pullout and after-school intervention program to help students prepare for the High School Assessments (HSA). These supports are offered to ensure that every child has access to the tools they need to succeed in school. The use of technology to help students stay focused on academics during out-of-school time is beneficial. The other after-school initiative is that all teachers have after-school hours, so that students can drop in anytime for extra help.

We have aligned our curriculum to the Voluntary State Curriculum and there has been significant growth in the enrollment of our Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Maryland School Assessments (MSA), Scholastic Assessment Tests (SAT) and AP data show appropriate services are in place for Gifted and Talented students.

We undertook these strategies because it is paramount that the curriculum is aligned with State standards and that assessments be aligned with the curriculum and instruction provided to students. We know that all students should have access to a rigorous, comprehensive education that includes critical thinking, problem solving, high-level communication and literacy skills, and a deep understanding of content. Curriculum must be aligned with standards and assessments, and should include more than what can be assessed on a paper and pencil multiple choice test.

At Easton, we know that high-quality staff development is critical to keep pace with the increased academic standards. Sixteen teachers attended the HSA Governor's Academies. There is continual mandatory professional development given on the use of technology in the classroom. In addition, more teachers are taking AP Training. The higher standards are meeting more of our students' needs. Our attendance rate has improved to 94.7 percent and is above the State targets. Our graduation rate has increased to 90.85 percent, which exceeds the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) of 80.99 percent.

While these results are impressive, we are not resting on our laurels because there is more work to do. Academic standards are updated periodically and educators need to keep pace with developments in education that will help us do our jobs better. In addition, I believe there should be federally funded salary incentives for teachers who achieve National Board Certification, with additional compensation for teachers with specific knowledge and skills who take on new roles to assist their colleagues. Furthermore, we should expand opportunities for education support professionals to broaden and enhance their skills and knowledge, including compensation for taking additional courses or doing course work for advanced degrees.

At Easton, special education services are delivered in the inclusive setting of the regular classroom using a collaborative teaching model. All schools in Talbot County met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for this population. Our English Language Learners (ELL) have additional teacher time for direct instruction. We have a full-time ESOL-trained teacher in the building. The MSA and HSA performance of our ELL students is generally improving. These results show what can be done with a commitment to improvements as well as the necessary resources to meet goals. Providing adequate funding to develop and improve appropriate assessments for students with disabilities and English Language Learner students is imperative.

We have moved from the 4x4 block schedule to a hybrid schedule having 45-minute, 60-minute, and 90-minute classes. The 60-minute classes are year-long and are mainly the HSA subjects. This gives students more time to learn and absorb the material covered. The school will then only need to give the HSAs once a year instead of twice a year so less class time is disrupted.

During the 2005–2006 school year, Talbot County implemented Performance Matters, an online data management system for administrators and teachers. The program will integrate local assessment data with MSA data and local benchmarks so administrators and teachers will be able to monitor the progress of their students. Once teachers learn the program, it will be a very beneficial tool for teachers and help save them time. In other words, the time for “assessment literacy” has come, with educators and parents needing to know about some of the details of assessments so that they can ensure that students have the requisite knowledge as they prepare for assessments.

Parents can use ParentConnect to check their student's progress in any class, their attendance, and their discipline record. They can also e-mail teachers directly with the program. With more parent involvement and support, students are challenged to do better work. In addition, we encourage parents to get involved in other aspects of the school, with the goal of having programs and resources for the school to become the hub of the community. To smooth the transition to a parental involve-

ment model, we recommend that as a requirement for professional development programs funded through ESEA, educators receive training in the skills and knowledge needed for effective parental and family communication and engagement strategies.

*Question 2.* What challenges did you encounter in your school improvement efforts, and how did you address those challenges?

*Answer. 2.* The number one challenge is funding. Improving the level of technology available—wireless, projectors, laptops—is expensive. Providing ongoing training for teachers is mandatory and expensive. Upkeep of such an elaborate system is expensive. We do get some funding for the Board of Education through the City Council and from business partners, but it's not enough to meet our needs.

I'm proud to be a member of an association that has put together such a comprehensive, positive agenda for reauthorizing the ESEA law. That agenda is very clear: educators, like you Mr. Chairman, believe full funding of ESEA programs is essential for improving our schools. In addition, if we truly are going to demonstrate our commitment to school improvement, the budget should reflect that goal by establishing a separate ESEA funding stream for school improvement programs to assist districts and schools, and adequate funds so that students have the benefit of assessments that measure higher order thinking skills.

The new demands on teachers are becoming astronomical. This causes frustration, burnout, and low retention rates. Besides teaching, teachers have extra pressure on them to get every child to meet high standards on one assessment (humanly impossible ones in some cases). They have to learn and use new technology, which involves time and equipment. They have to keep extensive data to show progress at all times, which takes time. They are held accountable for their students' results. They have to continually earn credits to maintain their certificate, which again takes time and money. With more demands being put on teachers, we do not have a high retention rate. A lot of educators leave the field within 5 years. That increases the size of classes and the demands for those remaining, which in turn adds to the frustration and burnout rate.

Keys to turning this situation around include:

- Providing States and school districts with the resources and technical assistance to create an effective program of professional development and professional accountability for all employees;
- Providing Federal grants that encourage districts and schools to assist new teachers by pairing them with an experienced mentor teacher in a shared classroom;
- Providing financial incentives—both direct Federal subsidies and tax credits—for retention, relocation, and housing for teachers and support professionals who work in schools identified as “in need of improvement” or high-poverty schools, and stay in such schools for at least 5 years; and
- Providing hard-to-staff schools with an adequate number of well-trained administrators and support professionals, including education support professionals, counselors, social workers, school nurses, psychologists, and clerical support.

It is not easy to turn around schools that are struggling to meet their goals; however, our students deserve no less. Working collaboratively, policymakers, educators, and administrators can implement strategies that will help schools become better so that students reach their full potential.

The CHAIRMAN. Paul. Paul Reville.

**STATEMENT OF PAUL REVILLE, PRESIDENT, RENNIE CENTER FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH AND POLICY, CAMBRIDGE, MA**

Mr. REVILLE. Thank you, Chairman Kennedy and Senator Enzi and members of the committee. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have a chance to talk with you today. There are a variety of issues that merit attention in the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, among them fixes to the accountability system, improvements in the way in which we measure progress and success, coherent strategies for the improvement of teaching, more focus on early childhood education and other prevention strategies and extended learning time for both teachers and students but the specific focus of my testimony today is to focus on this issue of State capacity to meet the needs of the growing number of districts and schools who have been declared in need of improvement, corrective action or re-

constitution. These State agencies are a step removed from the testimony we've been hearing today but after all, the intermediate unit that exists between the Federal Government and the schools and districts that we've been hearing about this morning are sorely in need of attention.

I think the imposition of an accountability system in public education then creates sort of moral imperative as well as an educational imperative that if we are going to point out and call to public attention matters of under performance in schools, we need at the same time, then to have the capacity to help rectify that situation of under performance. My colleague at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Dick Elmarr, calls it reciprocal accountability. For each additional element of expectation we add to a school system, we have to provide a concurrent element of growth in their capacity to meet that new standard or the accountability system really isn't genuine.

This is a tall order when we think of State education agencies because historically, they've been compliance agencies. They are relatively modest in size. They have no political constituency in most of our State that promote State education agencies. But under standards-based reform, there are responsibilities that are arguably tripled. They have to set the standards. They have to develop assessments and accountability systems and at the same time, they are now being looked to provide support in matters of school improvement.

Yet at the same time, they lack the resources, the personnel and often the expertise to carry out their critical support and technical assistance functions.

We looked at this matter in Massachusetts, the Rennie Center, a couple of years back, the State education agencies were all in intervention and Massachusetts is a fairly high reform, high performance State in terms of standards-based school reform and still, we found some significant issues.

For example, in 2004, we had 376 of roughly 1,400 schools identified for performance deficits and the State was capable of providing review to roughly 16 of those schools. There were 132 districts so identified. The State was able to provide review and support services to 17. Now in 2006, our numbers have gone up to 629 schools identified, a jump from 420 in 2005 and we've had no concurrent increase in State capacity to meet these needs and there are other States who have far more schools and districts as a percentage classified than we do.

In our study, we asked our superintendents what they need from the State in order to realize the ambition of education reform, which is, after all, all students of proficiency and not surprisingly, they referenced the kinds of things that you've been hearing from other members of the panel today. More help on curriculum and instruction. More professional development. More help in developing leaders and a pipeline of leadership for public schools and increased learning time for both teachers and students.

Again, a tall order for a State where the State education agency staff is roughly half of what it was in the mid-1980s, when again, their responsibilities have roughly tripled. The State education agencies' budget, which is a share of all State spending, is now less

than one quarter of 1 percent. So there isn't a substantial commitment there. Indeed, the Boston Public Schools, it serves 6.5 percent of all the students in the Commonwealth and has an administrative staff that is larger than that of the State Department of Education.

So as I say, Massachusetts is simply an illustration of a broader, larger problem. We've done some national survey work on this and again, the needs that emerge from schools and districts, the needs that they articulate for help from State education agencies have to do with strengthening the support and assistance in the area of planning and implementation, helping to develop leadership and pipelines for new leaders, providing better, more thorough, more timely, usable data on student performance, helping to develop curriculum and identify promising curriculum and instructional supports, providing meaningful, quality embedded professional development at school sites and focus on building the capacity of districts as the intermediate agencies between the State and the school to develop their own internal district capacity to help in school improvement.

So by way of conclusion, in 2005 and 2006, when we look out there on the school improvement landscape, 26 percent of the Nation's schools are now not meeting AYP. Fourteen percent are in need of improvement, three percent more in corrective action. We're moving toward a goal in 2014 of 100 percent at proficiency so we can expect the number of schools and districts in need to grow exponentially. So it is crucial that State education agencies receive the support that they need to assist schools with identified performance problems.

No Child Left Behind's aspirations are in jeopardy without attention to the issues of limited SEA capacity that I've described. We are now trying to do a new job in public education. We once did a job where it was okay for just a few students to reach proficiency. We've now declared our goal to be all students at proficiency and we're getting serious about that but we can't do it by raising the bar alone. We've got to provide the support, the technical assistance, the guidance and direction that educators need if they are to realize this incredibly ambitious goal in education, which serves all our children. So I thank you for your time and attention and I urge you to attend to this issue of the resources needed to build State education agency capacity.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Reville follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PAUL REVILLE

THE CHALLENGES OF BUILDING STATE CAPACITY

INTRODUCTION

The context in which State education agencies (SEAs) operate has changed significantly in the last 5 years. Once focused primarily on compliance monitoring, SEA's, as a result of No Child Left Behind and a variety of State-level initiatives, have been thrust into a new leading role in the implementation of standards-based reform. SEA's now set standards, design and implement systems of assessment and accountability, and attempt to provide support and capacity building services for improvement efforts in schools and districts throughout their States. While this unprecedented shift in direction from compliance to service provider might seem sufficiently challenging in itself, State departments of education have to grapple with the realities of meeting the needs of a growing number of schools while being woe-

fully under-resourced, under-staffed and generally unprepared to meet these new challenges.

#### THE CONTEXT

State education agencies are sailing in uncharted waters. The logic of standards-based accountability systems has changed the environment, calling for schools and districts to be held accountable for getting all students to higher levels of proficiency, necessitating that robust support services be provided to enable “underperforming” schools to reach the mandated standards. Thus, SEAs, having designed these accountability systems, are now responsible for providing resources and support to local schools and districts and for leading school improvement efforts. The problem is that SEAs, generally, have relatively little historical knowledge or skill in school improvement. In addition, little research has been done on State and district supports or interventions in low-performing schools, so these SEAs have virtually no place to turn to build their knowledge and skills.

SEAs and districts are also operating in an environment with diminished resources where funding levels have not kept pace with the increasing demands. States simply have not adequately funded their departments of education to meet these growing needs. This lack of resources also relates to human resources. State department of education staff members, with their history of monitoring compliance, often do not possess the skills necessary to provide support and guidance for improving schools and districts. In addition, the salaries and working conditions for SEA employees are often far below market value, leading to a dearth of qualified applicants for SEA positions. Finally, the size of the State department of education staff is often significantly lower than the number required to adequately serve all the schools and districts in need of improvement.

Compounding the challenge, NCLB accountability measures are identifying an increased number of low-performing schools and districts and these numbers will likely continue to grow, along with the speed with which improvements must be made. According to the Center on Education Policy, in school year 2005–2006, 26 percent of schools in the Nation were not making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) with 14 percent of schools deemed in need of improvement and 3 percent in corrective action. As the AYP targets continue to increase toward the goal of 100 percent proficiency for all students in reading and math by 2014, the number of schools deemed in need of improvement and thus in need of support and resources is certain to steadily rise.

At the same time, school districts are struggling with their own capacity issues. At the district level, leaders are working to create a culture focused on results and committed to instructional improvement that can be sustained over time. District leaders are striving to align critical policies to guide practice, support improvement and provide the appropriate resources to implement the needed reforms. Districts are increasingly striving to use data and evidence to drive decisions and revise strategies. Clear expectations about classroom practice are another area of focus along with complementary supports for teacher learning and adequate investments in professional development. Finally, districts are struggling to develop communities of practice in the central office and in schools so that the entire staff shares a common vision of good practice and beliefs about teaching and learning. (The Education Alliance, 2005).

In this new context, both SEAs and districts are faced with challenges and choices when it comes to allocating resources in ways that are appropriate to the level of need. Both also struggle to determine the intensity and duration of support required by each school under their supervision.

#### REACHING CAPACITY: MASSACHUSETTS CASE STUDY

In 2005, the Rennie Center undertook a modest research project to analyze the status of the State’s capacity to meet the growing needs of schools in need of improvement. The key research question was: What components are needed in a State system to support low-performing schools & districts? We conducted interviews with superintendents, principals, State DOE & policymakers and talked with leaders in other States and internationally as well as performing a literature & web review. From this research, we proposed recommendations for improvements to the current system and carried out a cost analysis of the impact of the proposed changes.

We found that while 376 schools had been identified for performance deficits in school year 2003–2004, only 16 schools had been reviewed by the State. One hundred thirty-two districts had been identified, but only seventeen were reviewed. The State simply does not have the resources to review the number of schools identified for improvement and, to compound the problem, the number of these schools con-



tinues to grow. In 2006, 629 schools were identified as compared with 420 in 2005 and 376 in 2004.

When we asked superintendents what services they would need to add, expand or improve to get all students to proficiency, almost all superintendents interviewed cited professional development and curriculum support as areas of need. Support in data and assessment and increased time on learning were close seconds.

We asked superintendents to report on the degree to which they found the budget crisis to be an obstacle to improvement. Seventy-nine percent of those interviewed cited the budget crisis as a problem.

This case study also analyzed Massachusetts' total education budget versus the DOE budget and found that the DOE's percent of the total budget had decreased from .44 percent of the total in 1994 to .24 percent of the total in 2004. Instead of receiving more resources commensurate with an increased role, the DOE has received a diminished proportion of resources from the State and a reduction in its capacity to meet a growing set of demands.

Next, we looked at the size of the staff at the DOE and found that in 1980, the DOE had 990 employees, and in 2005 the DOE employed 510 staff. Although the DOE's responsibilities had arguably doubled over that time period, the staffing had been reduced by nearly half. As a comparison, the Boston Public Schools central office employs 548 administrators to oversee a district of approximately 60,000 students or 6.5 percent of the State's student enrollment.

Finally, our case study examined the median annual salary of DOE employees as compared with public school teachers and administrators and found that the median salary for DOE specialists, coordinators, and managers was nearly \$10,000/year below the median salary of a teacher and nearly \$25,000/year below the median salary of principals.

Based on our research and interviews with those in the field, we made a set of recommendations for building the State's capacity to support districts and schools in need of improvement. We recommended that the State provide curriculum & professional development by increasing its leadership and guidance in helping districts select curricular programs and professional development providers. We also recommended that the State increase its role in the area of data and assessment, providing districts with data and help in analyzing it. Leadership and strategic planning was another critical area in which we recommended that State increase its role—especially in terms of building administrative capacity and developing a pipeline of new leaders. Last, we recommended that the State seriously consider funding additional learning time for both teachers and students as an added resource for schools and districts seeking to improve.

We concluded our report with recommendations for the State department of education's infrastructure. We suggested refining and improving the State's intervention process to make it more of a service for schools and districts. This also implies that the DOE adopt a "service-mentality" where they listen and respond to the needs of schools and districts. We advised that the SEA focus on improving the quality of staffing by addressing the inequities of the pay scale and reducing bureaucratic hurdles in the hiring process. We also encouraged the DOE to foster more capacity-building efforts at the regional level by exploring partnerships with educational collaboratives and local education funds. Finally, we recommended that the department create a research mechanism to support State-level decisionmaking.

#### KEY COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

Through our work in Massachusetts and a more recent national survey of State initiatives, we have developed a list of key components for statewide systems of support. These components provide a model for SEAs as they seek to meet the diverse needs of schools and districts.

It is important to note that before States develop key components of an effective system of support, they must develop a coherent strategy designed to achieve critical and well-defined goals. SEAs must have in place a "theory of action"—a collective belief about causal relationships between action and desired outcomes—to guide their work and ensure that it is focused and directly tied to the needs of schools (Public Education Leadership Project at Harvard University).

As mandated in the NCLB legislation, the first key component of any statewide system of support is **planning and implementation**. In this phase, the SEA works with schools and districts to help them identify root causes and develop and implement action steps to effectively address challenges. A critical aspect of this phase is differentiating the level of support provided to each school/district based on their individual needs rather than creating a "one-size-fits-all" approach to school improvement.

**Leadership support** is another critical component and includes building *instructional* leadership that is focused on results, as well as developing “professional learning communities” among all school/district staff, and addressing the supply of new leaders. Leadership support might take the form of leadership coaches, mentor principals or a program that creates a pipeline of new leaders.

Schools and districts are also in need of **better access to and use of data**—especially at the school level—so that data can be used to inform instruction. SEAs must provide systems that produce timely and useable data and must support schools in the use of that data to drive decisions and instructional strategies. This might include developing formative and benchmark assessments tied to State standards, providing professional development in classroom-based analysis of student data for instructional improvement or developing State assessments based on growth.

**Curriculum and instructional support** are other critical areas of support. This type of support includes providing guidance in curriculum selection and content area professional development. States must also play a role in providing support for improving teachers’ practice and pedagogy so that they receive support in both the content and the skills necessary to teach that content well.

A related component is **professional development**, which includes supporting the development of communities of practice and ongoing, embedded professional development focused on improving instruction and increasing student achievement. The State might provide guidance on professional development providers as well as providing incentives for schools to make time for regular professional development for teachers.

SEAs also need to provide assistance to districts by focusing on **building district-level** capacity. The State can assist in building district leadership to support school- and classroom-level improvement through professional development focused on student achievement for superintendents and other central office leaders, assistance in developing district improvement plans based on meeting diverse needs of individual schools, and conducting central office reviews.

#### CONCLUSION

It is crucial that State departments of education receive the support needed to assist schools in need of improvement. Without urgent attention to limited capacity issues at the State level, the promise of education reform that is at the heart of No Child Left Behind is in jeopardy. Standards-based accountability asks educators to reach higher than they have ever reached to bring not just some, but ALL students to proficiency. With these increased expectations comes an obligation to provide the resources and support to realize these new goals. As States are being asked to do more with less, the future of our Nation’s youth hangs in the balance. We know that these laudable goals are within reach, now we must provide the capacity building assistance to make them reality.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much. Marvelous panel, covering a wide variety of different subject matters but I think we are all impressed about the quality of the people that have testified. We can see at least why you’re such leaders in your community and why you’re such successes.

Well, we’ve got a participation here but we’re limited to 5 minutes so people get a chance to ask just a couple of questions.

Paul, to help and assist the States, we had 4 percent allocation of title I. If the title I was going to expand, 22 States but the title I has gone down so the States aren’t getting that resource. And then there was the authorization for school improvement, which has never been funded and the continuing resolution now is \$125 million on the school improvement.

Maybe at some time, you might have some recommendations, specific recommendations of how we might—whether those are satisfactory ways of trying to help the States do the kinds of things that you’ve outlined here and that have been mentioned here. If those aren’t the ways to do it, if you have other suggestions, just very, very quickly.

Mr. REVILLE. Yes, I'd be happy to work on the specifics of that. I think the State education agencies would welcome any increased commitment of resources and support. I was talking with Gene Willhoyt, the Executive Director of the Chief's Day School Officers, Mike's colleagues, this morning and the Chiefs nationally, are very concerned about this and very eager to work with you on outlining an approach to providing the kind of additional support in key areas that I've talked about.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Coleman, you've mentioned about your Saturdays, 25 Saturdays. You talk about your extended day. We've done that in Massachusetts. We've had really important success in Richmond programs where that extra hour or hour and a half—we've got a number of different schools, graduation rates, promotion rates and all the rest. What has been the reaction? Give us the reaction to the Saturdays, the extended times. Give us the reaction from the students, from the teachers and from the parents and from the community, just quickly, if you would, please. And the results, too, quickly.

Mr. COLEMAN. The reactions have been interesting. One of the things we've taught our children and I talked earlier about the social structure, the academic and the moral and the belief system. We've taught our children to believe how important education is so when we talk about coming to Saturday School and they come from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., our children typically wear uniforms but they're allowed to wear their regular clothes on Saturdays and we've taught them that it's important to extend their learning and we've tried to motivate them to get excited about coming to Saturday School, just so they can master the work. So self integrity, looking at their future, being visionaries—Saturday School supports that kind of a theme.

From our parents, certainly our parents have been very supportive of Saturday School because it takes the kids out of the house.

[Laughter.]

We have busses that—I mean, there is a cost factor. We have the school busses that pick the children up to come to Saturday School but when we have an environment where children enjoy learning and they're taught that the culture of the building is positive, we find—what I've found over the years, particularly when I was principal of the school, when I was handing the letters to children that were going to Saturday School, the ones that were not invited were sometimes insulted. So that's the kind of culture that we've tried to establish with the extended learning.

One of our challenges has been when our kids leave 8th grade and go into high school, they go to one of our local high schools and they are not—the expectations have changed and we don't have the extended learning. We don't have the extended—the longer day. We don't have the Saturday School. We don't have the intersessions. We've seen significant changes in student performance.

Student performance with our children in grades kindergarten through 8th grade have been significantly higher than the children in the rest of our school district because of the additional extended learning time. Ninety-six percent of our kids, as I mentioned earlier, are on free or reduced lunch. Ninety-seven percent of them are

African-American children and we've out-performed the other kids in the district. We've closed the achievement gap because of the amount of time on task.

Now, more time, if we're not using strong strategies, more time and money really doesn't help us. But using money effectively and using our time and resources based on the data, it has had a significant impact on our test scores. We've made adequate yearly progress, of course, every year and we've been fully accredited. So it makes a significant difference for our children and our parents.

The CHAIRMAN. Fifteen seconds, Paul and then I'll yield to the Senator.

Mr. REVILLE. Mr. Chairman, once when I was a member of the State Board of Education in Massachusetts, I had the opportunity to chair the Massachusetts Commission on Time and Learning and it seems to me, a central business of education reform now and the reauthorization is to reconsider this time paradigm in education. The notion that we can get all students to proficiency when they begin at such very different levels, by providing everybody the same amount of time and the same educational treatment is an illusion we can't afford any longer. So I think one of the last frontiers of education reform has got to be breaking the time barrier and giving children the amount of time and the kind of instruction they need to get to proficiency.

The CHAIRMAN. Excellent.  
Senator Enzi.

Senator ENZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I really want to thank all of you for participating in this and I hope that you will continue to participate in our process. We always encourage Senators to submit written questions. Sometimes those are more detailed than they want to ask in a public situation. You've been a wealth of information and I have a whole bunch of questions here that I'd like to get a little bit more specificity from you on them so that I can understand it better as we go through this process.

It's easy to see why the schools that you work with are successful. I appreciate the ideas and your willingness to share them so that we can make sure that all the kids in the country have the opportunity to succeed. It's very exciting to listen to this.

Ms. Mahaley-Johnson, the turnaround schools. I've got a whole bunch of questions, but I did note that you're paying 25 percent more to teachers who are national board-certified and have a record of excellence. That's outstanding. We're trying to get more nationally board-certified teachers in Wyoming and there is kind of a competition across the country to see who can get the highest percentage of those teachers. But a 25 percent bonus for teachers teaching in the schools that need it the most equals a bonus of \$10,000. I'm disappointed that the Omnibus appropriations bill that we're going to be dealing with in a few days, has eliminated funding for teacher incentive pay. So we'll have to see if we can do something to re-institute that money.

Ms. Turner, I'm going to have to get more information from you on the Carnegie Tutor Program on math that works on a laptop and has helped these kids. I'm sure there are a lot of programs out there that we don't even know about and this concept of having a

laptop for each of the kids over a period of 4 years, that has to put quite a stress on resources.

Ms. TURNER. Yes, it does, but we have a lot of community support. We have businesses supporting us. We have the City Council. They finally bought into it after the long talk of our superintendent. They had background support that it was really good work but it really engages the students and it helps them do it at their own pace. Like they were saying, everybody doesn't learn at the same rate. But they can use it on their own time, use it in the classroom, use it with other teachers. So it's really been good. It's through Carnegie Learning, is the one we use. But as you mentioned, there are others out there that are available.

Senator ENZI. I'll have to get some more information on that, too and I hadn't realized until Ms. Kimberly Johnson mentioned that teachers, as part of the curriculums, are going through the school year and don't get their students' data analysis. They may now but I can tell from all of your testimony how important being able to analyze what the kids are doing is for improving instruction.

Mr. Coleman, I'll give you a specific question, here. You were mentioning this increased school day from 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturdays. I assume that the compensation covers the extra days and extra hours?

Mr. COLEMAN. Yes, it does. We pay teachers about \$4,000 more per year for the extended day. They get paid by the hour for Saturday School. During these intersessions that I mentioned in this year-round or balanced calendar, they are also paid by the hour to come in and teach. So we have to have committed teachers that understand what the mission is.

Senator ENZI. How does that set with the rest of the district?

Mr. COLEMAN. Well, there was one other school in our district that had a balanced calendar also and many places, we find that—many people have come into public education because people think we have our summers off and we go home at 3 o'clock and that's just not the case. What we're finding is that teachers need to be compensated for the additional hours because in many cases, they're in the school. What we do is provide the opportunities for the teachers and the children to be at the school at the same time so that they can get the extended day. For our teachers that come on Saturday, sometimes we have teachers from our building. Other times, we have teachers from neighboring schools or school districts that come and work on Saturdays as well.

I think that for the most part, teachers understand that again, children do not process at the same speeds and because of the clientele that we have coming to our school, we recognize that we need the additional time and so it's just part of our mission and we've gained agreement in capacity within those adults in our district that it's something that is necessary and something that our district has—the new school district has supported. It's part of a partnership that was established when An Achievable Dream was established.

Senator ENZI. Thank you very much. As I said, I've got just a bunch of questions for all of you. I come from a mining community so I'm going to try and mine this wealth of knowledge that you

have and make use of it. We have several other people that are here that would like to ask questions, so I'll yield.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Senator Enzi and thank you for a very informative presentation by the panelists.

Ms. JOHNSON, one of the—we're working on the No Child Left Behind Act but it tends to intersect with other provisions and other acts and one was the Higher Education Act. I understand Chicago has an Urban Teaching Residency Program.

Ms. JOHNSON. We do.

Senator REED. Which is, as I understand, a mentoring model based upon the, sort of roughly, internships like they do for medical professionals. Can you comment upon that? How successful is it? How much has it contributed to enhanced professional development?

Ms. JOHNSON. Yes. Well, it's been incredibly successful and I'm happy to see Senator Obama here and I notice—he knows a lot about the program. So it's been around for several years, at least 5 and we have lots of data that shows that the individuals who have gone through that mentorship program, that training program, are making a difference. What is unique about it is that the teachers are specifically trained to go into challenged communities and unlike schools of education, the individuals who are participating are mid-career professionals who often come with other talents and skills and a level of maturity that you don't necessarily find from recent graduates. So we have lots of data, which I could share with you on the effectiveness of the program. But we do use it in our Turnaround Schools.

Senator REED. And you collaborate with postsecondary, higher education institutions?

Ms. JOHNSON. Yes. So there is a partnership with National Lewis University. The way it works is that the individuals apply for this program. There are several hundred who apply every year and about 30 are accepted. They are given a \$30,000 stipend for participating in the program and the Academy of Urban School Leadership is partnered with National Lewis University so they also leave with a Masters Degree and Certification. One other aspect is that they get two experiences. They work in a school in one of our—I would say wealthier communities in Chicago. They spend half their time there and then they spend half their time in a more challenging neighborhood.

Senator REED. Well, thank you very much.

Ms. JOHNSON. You're welcome.

Senator REED. Let me follow up with Ms. Johnson, the issue of professional development and Senator Enzi alluded to the national board certification issues—Kimberly Johnson. I've got my—I'm confusing myself, forgive me.

Kimberly, how many teachers in your school do you have pursuing the national board certification?

Ms. JOHNSON. I currently have three.

Senator REED. Out of, I'm told, 115?

Ms. JOHNSON. Total staff, professional staff, about 75.

Senator REED. Seventy-five. And how can we get more teachers to do this? Do you have any ideas or alternatively, why are those three teachers pursuing this credential?

Ms. JOHNSON. To be very honest with you, with all of the data analysis and all of the standards and all of the expectations on making highly qualified status, teachers are overwhelmed. And there are a lot of pieces that go into teaching students on a daily basis whereas you no longer have a classroom of 30 students. You have a classroom of 30 students that fit into subgroups that then have special needs and other outside factors. So it's no longer the profession of teaching just 30 and as you said, going home at 3 o'clock. It's just—teachers are overwhelmed. I would think that you would need to provide an incentive for compensation, Senator Enzi just mentioned. But they are doing the after-school programs, they're doing the Saturday School programs. They are working to capacity at this point.

Senator REED. So those three are just, for their own reasons, want to go on to—

Ms. JOHNSON. Professional development, additional. They have Masters degrees and they don't want to go into administration.

Senator REED. Yes, very good. Just in general, can you comment on the environment of professional development in your school, Kimberly? It's so central to what I think we all want to do. That's the great lever, I think, in terms of making this—going from where we are with No Child Left Behind forward.

Ms. JOHNSON. Definitely and I actually review data on a monthly basis, if not sooner. We receive reports on all benchmarks within curriculum so that before we get to State testing, we should know how a student is performing. We also use data analysis and all of the data analysis comes by way of professional development. There is a process that my staff developer teaches the content area teachers to look at their data because essentially, to some, it's just numbers on a page whereas to me, it's like opening the bible and reading from there and understanding why life is the way it is. So teachers do get that professional development and using the data but the data that they use has to be every day, all day and they have to be supported by a staff developer. We have a full time staff developer who is fully released to work with teachers and using data. That would be our primary focus through the lens of their particular content.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Very interesting.

Senator Murkowski.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate the comments from the panelists. When I first looked at where everyone was from, I was concerned that this was going to be a real urban perspective and coming from a largely rural State, perhaps I wouldn't be gaining much from it. But I have to tell you, I'm walking away with great pearls of wisdom that I'm going to take north with me.

I'm very curious about the Urban Teacher Residency Program. We've got challenges in the State where we have teachers who are fully prepared to come and teach in a normal classroom and they get out to a very remote village, different issues facing them, not

the least of which are their teaching challenges. But perhaps if we could have some kind of an urban residency teacher program that some from the more rural States could collaborate on, that might give us some ideas.

I want to ask you and anybody may speak up on this. One of the challenges that we have faced in Alaska with our teacher retention issue is we'll get bright young energetic individuals ready to come and then within their first 2 years, they decide, "I'm not being paid enough. This isn't what I thought it was going to be." And it really has affected our ability to retain good teachers in the State. We have recently focused on a mentoring program that allows for a pairing between a new teacher and a successful, experienced teacher at least through those first 3 years when teachers are making that decision whether or not to stay within the teaching profession as a career.

Can you speak to me or give me some ideas as to what you are doing with specific mentoring within your schools that you have seen to be productive or useful that you can share?

Dr. Brandon.

Ms. BRANDON. Yes. We have developed a partnership with our business community, for one, that provides incentives for our new teachers to remain in—

Senator MURKOWSKI. Financial incentives?

Ms. BRANDON. Not financial but by way of low-interest loans on cars, mortgage, some of the apartment owners have provided reduced rental rates. We have a business partner who provides a social atmosphere for our new teachers so that they can get to know each other and bond and develop a support system because a lot of our teachers come from outside of Richmond, outside of the State.

With the shortages in mathematics, science and special education, we've had to recruit from as far away as Jamaica. We have a teacher who came to us from France. So we've expanded our recruitment efforts. We also have an external and internal mentoring program. We use retired teachers from the external side. We use teachers within that same school from the internal side to walk with the teachers, to support them. There are a lot of challenges within the classroom and someone who is right out of college, it's a matter of time management, balancing what's important and then learning everything there is about teaching. It's not like it was when I started 5 years ago. I know I'm telling a tale—29 years ago. It wasn't like that. We came in. We had the ability to teach a lot of things that we felt that we were comfortable with. Now we're asking teachers to expand beyond their level of comfort. Our elementary school teachers are not very comfortable teaching math and science so we have to engage them through professional development activities and provide the content for those teachers and help walk them through it, hold their hands, give them as much support within a classroom as we possibly can.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Anybody else? Mr. Flanagan.

Mr. FLANAGAN. Thank you, Senator. I want to bring into the conversation about this, the university system, at least in Michigan. We have 32 universities and college that produce teachers and as a new State superintendent, a year ago, I asked the deans to meet



and we decided that—we have some leverage with them on renewing their opportunity to do teacher education and what we're working toward with them right now, to be blunt, is they won't be renewed if they don't help us with this mentoring issue. Parents pay 4 or 5 years tuition, sometimes 8 or 9 years tuition. My daughter is a first year high school teacher right now, got out of what I think by even Ed Week and others acclaim, that Michigan State is pretty much the top teacher ed institution in the country. She's struggling. And we still have a 50 percent—in effect, drop out rate, I think, in our State and I bet most States are like that, that in 5 years, most—about half the teachers leave. And she's been to this excellent school, which it is, but without the follow up mentoring that I think the universities are in a position to help us with, we're going to have this same failure rate.

Senator MURKOWSKI. So you haven't put into place yet, then, where the university is assisting with the mentoring. You're doing that currently, is that correct?

Mr. FLANAGAN. We're doing that currently but with the result, they know that will be in place if they don't help us make gains in that respect, we wouldn't renew them as teacher ed institutions. And they're stepping up. I mean, I'm working with a small panel of the deans right now but there is tremendous—the reason I bring this up isn't so much a carrot—it sounds more like the stick but the carrot is that universities have tremendous resources in terms of people. I mean, people that really get this and a lot of them have fine mentor programs. But when you get the districts trying to support their own with all the other work that we all require—State agencies do, certainly No Child—appropriate work. It's just a natural place that I would invite the committee to think about in terms of trying to solve that problem, would be our excellent universities.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Ms. Turner, are you a mentor?

Ms. TURNER. Yes.

Senator MURKOWSKI. You are mentoring?

Ms. TURNER. Yes, I'm a mentor for a math teacher. We usually keep it in the department but it doesn't have to be and I've helped the new teachers with the I Can Do It Program, which is good for the first- to 5-year teacher. They go through the program and they get to work with others. They get programs that we follow and it's really been helpful. I think a lot of the colleges need to improve on what they prepare the teachers for because they're not really ready for the classroom when they come out of college. So we need to work at that level.

The CHAIRMAN. If I could, we're told that we're going to vote—probably, we were going to be at noon time but I think it's going to be backed up a little bit. So we've got three more Senators, if it's all right? Then we'll come back, if that's okay?

Senator MURKOWSKI. I appreciate it. I know that Dr. Barber had wanted to just speak up.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, well, please.

Ms. BARBER. And probably causes what I do in my current job—I'm a principal coach, which is a mentor. I coach principals. In the State of Alabama, Reading Initiative and with the Reading First grant, we have infused all of our schools with onsite reading coach-

es. And these reading coaches provide direct professional development to teachers and they target those teachers who are new and who are at need. They provide explicit—they model. They do the modeling for the teachers and then they do the side-by-side with the teachers. So those teachers are more comfortable because they have somebody there, right there and they are working in the environment in which we are expected to perform. It's not as though they're going out somewhere. It's job embedded. And that has proved to be a positive for us in the State of Alabama and we've taken it to another level. They have hired 25 principal coaches and we work with those principals on connecting the instructional piece to the leadership piece. And working with them on implementing those strategies—that's going to help them move those teachers. When teachers are—and we don't do the—not a lot of the tangible rewards but we feel that we take them back to their original reason for going into education, to make a difference in the lives of students. So when we're there with them and they see the results—even before they change the way—before they change their belief system. If we can get them to change their behaviors and give it a chance that this strategy might work. Once they change their behaviors and then something works, then they start changing their beliefs. OK. This is gratifying. I can do this. I can move these kids to where they need to be. So throughout the State, we do—we have a coaching process in place on all levels.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Obama.

Senator OBAMA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank everybody here but I have to make a special commendation to Ms. Mahaley-Johnson and the great work that is being done in Chicago. I'm very familiar with some of the work that has been done, Mr. Chairman, at the Teachers Academies in Chicago in matching mentors to new teachers in the classroom and it's working terrifically well.

I'll be very brief. It strikes me that part of the struggle that Mr. Flanagan was referring to with his daughter—my sister is a teacher, so she went through the same thing—is needing that mentor. There are some other elements as well. Making sure that teachers have some flexibility in the classroom. Providing opportunities for professional development that are built into the school day. An ongoing complaint and concern that I'm hearing is the issue of assessment and making sure that even as teachers are held to a high standard, that we have good tools to define what teachers are performing well and which ones need more help.

The interesting thing is I think there is pretty good anecdotal information. If you poll teachers inside a school, you'd probably get a pretty good sense of those who folks consider to be good teachers and those that need some assistance. But I think a lot of teachers tend to be skeptical as to whether those are fully reflected in test scores alone, so I'd first be interested in anybody's comments about either how we can more effectively structure the school days and curriculum to help retain and develop excellent teachers and second, have any of you been doing work on the assessment side so that you're able to identify the teachers that are doing really well and support them and identify those teachers that are having prob-

lems that may not show up on test scores but nevertheless, would determine how you might intervene or provide them more help.

Ms. JOHNSON. Senator Obama.

Senator OBAMA. Go ahead.

Ms. JOHNSON. If I can speak. Montgomery County, Maryland is the forerunner, I think, in staff development, in having it embedded within the school day. There are several levels that a teacher can participate. That would be the original staff development that is school-based. They also receive a consulting teacher when they are new to the classroom that comes out and observes them. There is also the Peer Assistance and Review process, whereas a teacher who is not doing well, they go before a panel and the principal presents the data, based on their instructional practices and the teacher is then given a year to improve with additional support. So it's a process that is supported by their colleagues and by administrators in the county.

As to teachers coming out of college, one of my teachers made a comment that they came out of college wanting to be a teacher and now they've turned into a statistician. So it's a very huge disconnect with, I think, what they're taught and what they're actually asked to do and I think that's where you get the apathy or you get the decline in teachers wanting to return to the profession. So I think it's a combination of making sure that teachers are well prepared to come out and hit the ground running in the classroom with all of the standards that we are now being held to and then also, the support that is embedded in the classroom and outside, county level and also district level or State level.

Mr. REVILLE. There were two parts of your question, Senator that on the first part, we have a 53 percent attrition rate in Boston in 3 years. That is 53 percent of people leaving the profession. So we have to take that as a statement that we don't have a very attractive profession that we're offering people these days and people with choices are moving elsewhere. And I think that mentoring, while necessary to creating a climate in the profession that will attract and hold people is not sufficient, as you said in your opening comments and there are a whole bunch of factors in terms of creating reflective community of practice at the school site, rewarding excellence in terms of performance, giving people the opportunity to advance without leaving the field, giving teachers some other prerogatives that we associate with other professions, like their own computers and telephones and offices and especially a schedule that allows them not to be in front of children every minute of their day but allows them the time to work with another to strategize on how to be more effective at the work they're doing, to do the sort of data analysis that we've heard about here today and for the most part, while American school days and years are typically shorter than those in most other countries, American teachers are typically in front of children for more time than other teachers are anywhere else and we've got to somehow, again it goes back to this time issue that I raised earlier—create an amount of time within the school day that allows teachers to be true professionals and to work together to strategize to make their work more effective.

Senator OBAMA. I don't know. I may have run out of time.

Mr. FLANAGAN. Maybe just one quick reaction.

The CHAIRMAN. The comments are so good—please.

Mr. FLANAGAN. To take the fear factor out of data. Right now, I think if teachers are honest, they are concerned that part of the assessment that is required under No Child Left Behind is going to be used against them at some point. If you think about an athlete, you really think about knowing some of their weaknesses so that you can identify them and work on them. We think about that the same way with teachers, that we have this tremendous data stream now so you may know that over a period of 5 years, a 5th grade teacher is really struggling in math because of the results of the students over 5 years. That shouldn't be an indictment of that teacher. That should be a target and a diagnosis for professional development, just like you would with someone like me who used to strike out a lot in baseball.

Mr. COLEMAN. If I could respond—I'll be very brief. What we are finding in our school—teachers are willing to learn in a nonthreatening environment so when we have 5th grade teachers that collaborate together, if one is not doing well and then one is doing very well and they start sharing their data, again, in a non-threatening environment, we are finding that the master teachers are right there within our midst. We don't have to pay for specialists or anyone to come in and do the work for us or have an administrator sometimes involved. A couple of years ago the 4th grade team wasn't doing well but we had one teacher who had students that were in the 85th percentile. The rest of the teachers had kids that were in the 60th percentile and having them sit down and talk to each other and share their teaching strategies in the classroom because they had the same clientele made a significant difference.

Ms. BARBER. May I add to that, briefly? You mentioned taking the fear factor out. If we are proud of our profession, then we shouldn't be fearful. We have to—the tone has to be that we are here to learn from each other and we need to work collectively to make a difference in the lives of boys and girls. We have to make a difference in leaders in the lives of our teachers. We can't fire every teacher that comes through our door. So we have to set a tone that says that we are going to embrace what you bring to the table. We're going to look at the data as it relates to you, as it relates to your students and we're going to make—we're going to affirm those things that are working but we're also going to make a plan of action for those things that are not working. We have to have the culture so that people are not afraid to be—to look at the data. And not be afraid about what No Child Left Behind says or any of the other accountability because it's easier to train the teachers and not have such turnover and when teachers understand that we're here for them, then we're not going to have that factor because the day is going to be structured so that you can have more time. Nobody ever gave me a schedule and said you have to have this, this and this. I had to set up what was going to work for teachers. Thirty minutes planning is not adequate. They needed more time because there was a wider gap that had to be overcome. So we have to take that fear factor out and make education what it should be. It should be something that we're proud to be a part of.

The CHAIRMAN. We'll come back to this in a minute but unless Senator Roberts and Senator Allard—I know they'll have some questions and then depending when we're going to have this vote, we'll have a chance to come back to it.

Senator ROBERTS. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Thank you—thank you for your dedication, thank you for your expertise. This has been an outstanding hearing. I have three questions and then I have some comments, if I can get them in.

No. 1, now this is for Mr. Flanagan.

In your testimony, you talked about the need for resources and obviously we have to have more resources. We promised years ago to fund IDEA at 40 percent. It has become one of the greatest unfunded mandates of all time. And Senator Harkin and I have introduced legislation, along with many, to put the current funding level, which is about 16 to 16.5 percent up to 40 percent. If IDEA was fully funded at the level promised by Congress, wouldn't that help Michigan schools to better fund No Child Left Behind and your answer is yes.

[Laughter.]

Mr. FLANAGAN. You know, my answer is yes, sir. But let me tell you—

Senator ROBERTS. I have an open question. Growth models have been discussed by educators in my State as a better way to assess students, especially those with disabilities and English language learners. In other words, if you go from A to B to C, tremendous growth, why shouldn't that be considered on some kind of a percentage basis? I know No Child Left Behind may be D and E but if that student who came from zero or minus, got that far, why can't that be taken into account?

Mr. FLANAGAN. Can I just mention on my yes answer, which I do agree with. I was a regional superintendent and Detroit was in my area at that time. We had 35,000 special needs kids. Half of them were learning disabled. If we had some of the resources that were available under IDEA—but also—

Senator ROBERTS. Promised.

Mr. FLANAGAN. Promised and if we also had what I would say are some stronger preschool programs, 80 percent of those learning disabled kids would never have been labeled learning disabled. We would have been in a position where these kids would have moved in a very different fashion through their education. So I mean, I would agree with you on the IDEA.

Mr. REVILLE. Can I say something to the growth thing?

Senator ROBERTS. Certainly.

Mr. REVILLE. I mean, the name of the game should be about improvement. If we have an accountability system, which we do in many States, that is basically looking at this year's 4th graders against last year's 4th graders and measuring progress in that way, we're really measuring more of the difference between the two cohorts than we are as to whether or not anybody has learned anything. We ought to rather be looking at how this year's 4th graders are doing next year as 5th graders so we can see how much growth there has been during that interval.

Senator ROBERTS. So you're supportive of the growth model?

Mr. REVILLE. Absolutely.

Senator ROBERTS. Eight percent, when I first ran for Congress, were non-Caucasian and today it is 53 percent. The same thing is happening all over southern Kansas. The same thing happening a lot in our southern States. Why can't, if we're going to reach a proficient reading level after 1 year of instruction, why can't we extend—why can't we expand that to 2 years? That would really be beneficial because that—if you can't read, you're not going to get reading in math and science scores and it takes longer than 1 year and we have a lot of drop outs among those students. So why can't we extend that from 1 year to 2 years?

Mr. FLANAGAN. Our written testimony asks for 2 years. I really agree with that.

Senator ROBERTS. I thank you. Mr. Coleman.

The CHAIRMAN. Could the Senator just yield on that?

Senator ROBERTS. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Generally speaking, I think in Massachusetts, we're 1 year, aren't we, Paul? What are we—a lot of States have passed initiatives or rules or regulations to set times. I don't know precisely but I know—

Senator ROBERTS. It's not realistic.

Mr. FLANAGAN. But it's not realistic.

The CHAIRMAN. I know but that's the point I want to make, is that it does exist in many places. I think Senator Roberts point is absolutely right. I want to support it. I just was interested in the fact that in many communities, they have legislated that, have they not?

Mr. REVILLE. That's right. It's a collective exercise in wishful thinking.

Senator ROBERTS. I'm always glad to hear from the Chairman when he agrees with me.

[Laughter.]

Mr. Coleman, An Achievable Dream Academy. 8:15 to 4:30, you get these kids in and pardon me, young people and then on Saturday morning and you're doing amazing work. What do you do? You have busses.

Mr. COLEMAN. Yes.

Senator ROBERTS. Do you have a post-school kind of program here?

We do, in Kansas City, Kansas in one school, where an extension service, of all things, out of agriculture pays for it. Amazing. And we have quite a program. And it's fun. And it keeps the kids—or the latchkey kids who may not even have a parent at home. And it's in an area, if they go from the school to home, they're in trouble. So do you have that capability as well?

Mr. COLEMAN. Please repeat that question, Senator.

Senator ROBERTS. OK. You're teaching people from 8:15 to 4:30.

Mr. COLEMAN. That's correct.

Senator ROBERTS. What do you do after 4:30?

Mr. COLEMAN. After 4:30, we send them home on the bus.

Senator ROBERTS. On the bus. You send them home.

Mr. COLEMAN. Yes.

Senator ROBERTS. You do not have a program, perhaps if there is a working mother who is not home?

Mr. COLEMAN. No we don't. They are sent on the bus. Actually, we dismiss at 4:30. By 4:15, the buses are taking all the kids home. So it's not designed to be an after-school program. We just extend the curriculum.

Senator ROBERTS. All right. I just want to have one other comment and I'm over time and I apologize. If you're going to get good teachers, you've got to pay them. And you've got to open up the back door. For people who want to teach without having to go through Ed Psych I, Ed Psych II, Standard Deviation. Basically, it's a labor of love. I know a teacher who was in the service who had a newspaper out in Arizona. He was asked to join the faculty because one of the teachers was absent. He taught speech, English, journalism, took over the newspaper, the yearbook, American History, was an assistant coach and a referee. And he also had a newspaper to run. That was me. For thirty-eight hundred bucks. I did it for 3 years. Couldn't afford it. But at any rate, we have got to get teacher salaries to a—I don't know what your daughter makes, sir, but it's not enough.

Mr. FLANAGAN. Right.

Senator ROBERTS. And so I don't know how we do that. That's been something that's bugging me for a long time because teachers leave, as you say, after 5 years. Got to open up that back door. If a businessman—if you're a military person, even a Senator or whatever, I'm qualified to give a lecture at the University of Kansas. But I can't teach in the secondary system because I'm not qualified, even with all the years I've had of public service because you've got to take X, Y or Z, even if I wanted to. I guess I could become a guest lecturer or something like that. That's not right. I'm done.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Allard.

Senator ALLARD. How much time do we have?

The CHAIRMAN. You've got—it just started. So we'll stay here with you, 5, 8 minutes.

Senator ALLARD. OK, very good. And I don't see a time clock. I'm new here but I just—

The CHAIRMAN. No, we'll—

Senator ALLARD. All right, very good.

The CHAIRMAN. We'll go together.

Senator ALLARD. Ms. Turner, I was fascinated with your comments about the computer and the role that it plays in education. There is also plenty of opportunity for abuse with the Internet. I assume it has access to the Internet.

Ms. TURNER. Yes, it does.

Senator ALLARD. So how do you control potential abuse with the computer within your system?

Ms. TURNER. There are a lot of filters on it. There are a lot of blocks put on by the technology specialists so students can't access certain sites, so they can do that.

Senator ALLARD. Now, if that's anything like my experience with computers in my office, you need a lot of support. They pick up viruses, they break down, they become dysfunctional one way or another. Does that require quite a bit of extra support within the system, to manage those computers from a maintenance standpoint?

Ms. TURNER. Right. There is a lot of maintenance to it. It's a lot of upkeep. We have to keep the system going. There are so many times during the classroom and you want to use the Internet and the Internet is down. So you have to have a backup plan. So yes, there are problems with it. But it's also the move into the 21st century, like you said, in your office—we're trying to do better, faster things and that breaks down, too. So we just keep on top of it. We have a good staff that supports it.

Senator ALLARD. So the way I gather your testimony, even though there are disadvantages that you have to learn to deal with in the system, I suppose when you first start out, you have more disadvantages but as you get the system working and you get the expertise in your staff, then those disadvantages work away.

Ms. TURNER. True. Actually in our case, it worked a little bit backwards. The first time, we didn't have quite as many problems because fewer students were using it. When we added the 10th grade on, the network got bigger so that added more problems. But then the teachers were more qualified. They had had the professional development so they had backup plans. They could work with it. So the good outweighs the bad.

Senator ALLARD. Mr. Reville, if you look at the No Child Left Behind program now, what two aspects of that do you think are most effective and what two aspects would you say is least effective?

Mr. REVILLE. Overall—

Senator ALLARD. And the goal would be in terms of student achievement. Which two goals are most effective or two strategies are most effective? What two strategies would be least effective, in your mind?

Mr. REVILLE. Well, I think one of the most effective things about No Child Left Behind has been the identification of subgroups and the insistence, as we've heard from a number of panel members, I'm looking at each and every student and holding schools accountable for the performance of each child. I think that's been critical and has drawn attention to a lot of underserved populations.

I think also just the general imposition of an accountability system that requires progress in each and every—it requires every State to set high goals for students, to set high standards and to measure progress. Now at the same time, I will say one of the greatest weaknesses, I think, the way in which we measure that progress needs a lot of work. We need to move toward a growth model in the way in which we do this. Some of our assumptions that schools can improve on a linear trajectory by the same amount each year—

Senator ALLARD. That was adequate, but my time is running out. On the growth model, if you say you expect them to advance a certain percentage each year, doesn't that even further have the potential of further disadvantaging the one who starts out at the very bottom? In other words, 5 percent of 5 is much less than 5 percent of 10 and as that extrapolates up grade to grade, you have the potential of further disadvantaging a student if you're not careful with that kind of model.

Mr. REVILLE. Well, I think it is possible to have differential expectations depending upon the gap between yourself and proficiency and that suggests differential treatment in the schools.



Again, it goes back to my earlier comment, which is, if we are giving the same amount of time and the same amount of instruction to everybody, irrespective of their distance from proficiency, then we're not likely to get everybody to the same standard at the same time. It would be a bit like running your hundred-yard dash. Some kids are starting at 300 yards from the finish line. Other kids are starting 25 yards from the finish line and we're suggesting, well everybody ought to finish at roughly the same time. So I think there are ways in which we can say, if you are a long way from the standard of proficiency, you're going to need more time and more help because you've got to have a rate of progress that's higher than the rate of progress that we're expecting of other students who may be closer to the standard.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we want to thank all of you. Was there any other—we're going to run out of time. So I guess we won't have a chance to listen to other kinds of comments but this worked just the way that we had hoped. It was enormously informative to the members of the committee we want to thank you all. We want you to be part of this. We're not going to let you go after today and we're going to be working on this legislation and we're serious about it. We're going to keep the record open for questions but we're going to draw on you as we draft the legislation and a lot of good suggestions about how we can make some progress. Splendid recommendations, a lot of life experience and by people who have been dealing with this issue for the last 4 or 5 years. It can be invaluable, I think, for the children of the future to benefit from your experience. So we're very, very grateful to all of you.

We'll stand in recess.

[Whereupon, at 12:01 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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