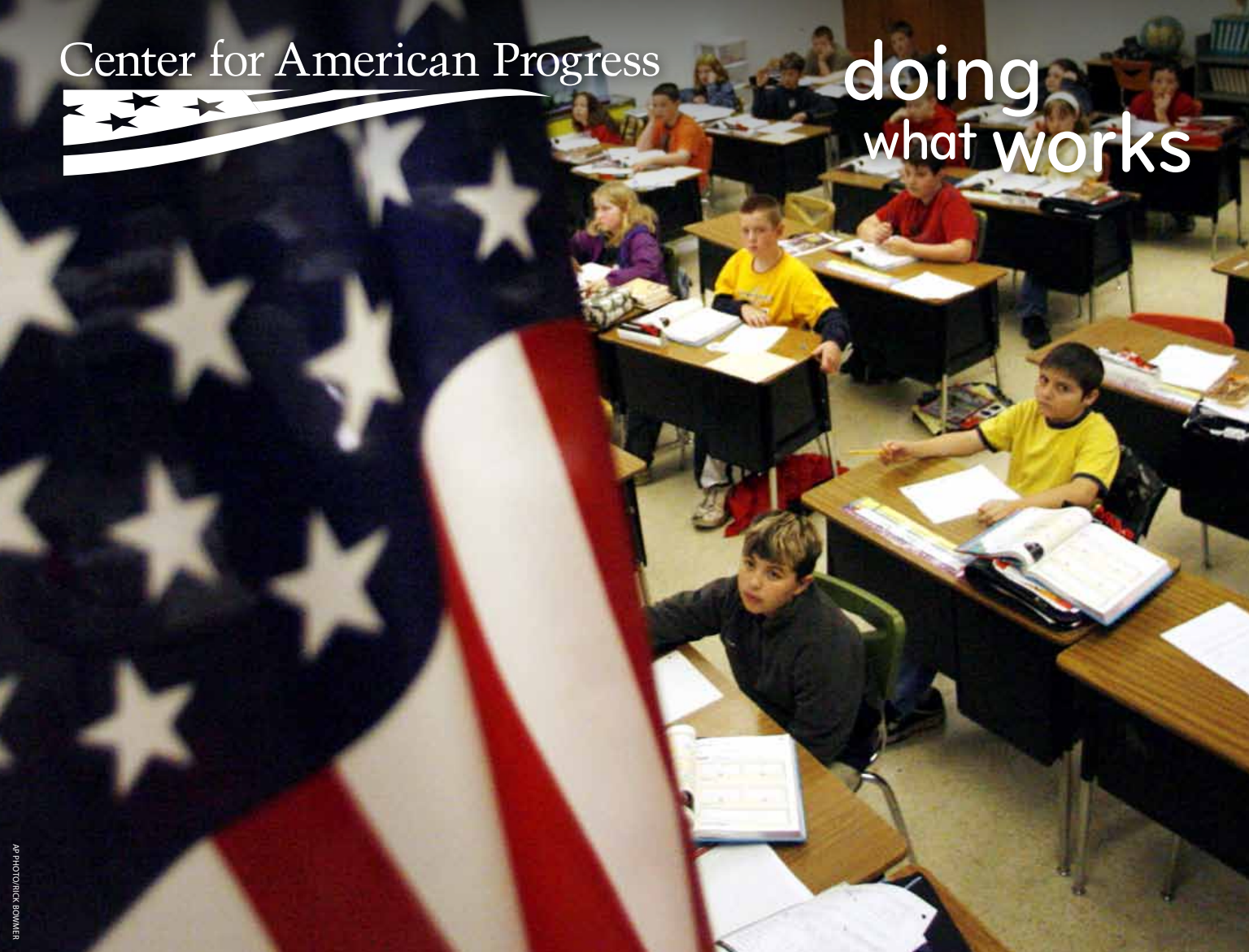


Center for American Progress

doing
what works



Education Transformation

Doing What Works in Education Reform

Glenda L. Partee April 2010

Center for American Progress



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This publication is a product of CAP's Doing What Works project, which promotes government reform to efficiently allocate scarce resources and achieve greater results for the American people. Doing What Works specifically has three key objectives: (1) eliminating or redesigning misguided spending programs and tax expenditures focused on priority areas such as health care, energy, and education; (2) boosting government productivity by streamlining management and strengthening operations in the areas of human resources, information technology, and procurement; and (3) building a foundation for smarter decision making by enhancing transparency, performance measurement, and evaluation. Doing What Works publications and products can be viewed at http://www.americanprogress.org/projects/doing_what_works.

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Introduction and summary

All of America's children need a high-quality education to prepare them for the changing needs of our workforce and increasingly intense global economic competition. To ensure they receive an excellent public education that meets our increased expectations requires that local, state, and federal policymakers and educators invest in effective programs, personnel, schools, and services. It requires support for strategies known to work and delivery mechanisms that ensure these reforms reach the neediest and those who can most benefit. It requires strict alignment of funds spent with the policies designed to support federal, state, and local education goals.

The federal government is a critical and vested partner in improving public education opportunities and outcomes. As the Obama administration and Congress pursue an ambitious education reform agenda to establish the right course for education, savings can be generated to boost educational results by eliminating or reforming education programs that are ineffective, duplicative, or outdated.

The administration and Congress must use taxpayer resources wisely and to the maximum benefit for all. Every dollar spent must address current or emerging needs and provide results. Federal education funds must support national needs and interests and drive change as well as complement state and local efforts. Where programming is effective and critical needs go unmet, greater federal investments and new initiatives may be necessary. Where needs are met through other sources, or programming is ineffective, or funding has little impact, federal leadership requires new approaches, redesign, defunding, or jettisoning of old strategies. This is the new results-focused approach being adopted at the U.S. Department of Education.

This report analyzes federal education programs that are candidates for elimination, consolidation, or restructuring, and discusses lessons derived from program funding and implementation. It reviews discretionary project grant programs and pre-college education programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I, Part A formula grants to local schools and districts with large numbers of poor children were not reviewed here because of their programmatic complexity. These grants support critical accountability elements of current federal education policy such as academic assessment, school improvement, and parental choice.¹ For similar reasons, ESEA Title III that supports programs for English language learners is not reviewed.

Although the focus was on pre-college programs, some programs outside ESEA were reviewed, such as adult education in the context of intergenerational literacy, and postsecondary career and technical education in the context of high school reform and student achievement. Additionally, programs in the Department of Education's Offices of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Federal Student Aid, and Postsecondary Education were not a part of this review.

The recommendations offered in this report wed budgetary priorities to a new vision of education policy embraced by the Obama administration that focuses on targeting funds to support schools and districts with the neediest students and those with extra education needs. This vision supports flexibility, experimentation and innovation, and accountability for results that boost student achievement for all and close persistent achievement gaps between disadvantaged and minority students and their more advantaged peers. This vision also includes the development of a highly effective education workforce and other priorities such as common academic standards and better tests.

Increased flexibility is a means to an end, not an end itself. We want state leaders, local decision makers, and educators to try different approaches. But these approaches must be rigorously evaluated to determine what produces the greatest benefits and educational outcomes. The Department of Education should use this information to publicly spotlight both exceptional and poor performers, actively promote strategies that work, and eliminate funding for those that do not. Flexibility should happen within the context of what we know works. That is why support for evaluation, research and development, and for dissemination of positive interventions is so critical.

Within this framework, Department of Education grant programs are identified that support ineffective approaches, often at greater costs than other documented practices, or programs that allow for such a wide range of activities so that it is difficult to evaluate their impact. The Department of Education also supports small, low-impact programs with narrow purposes (such as teaching history, fostering civic responsibility, and arts education). Many represent noncompetitive earmarks to specific recipients. These programs are inconsistent with the Department of Education's new results-focused approach and should be eliminated.

Some programs are clearly outdated and should be eliminated or updated to explicitly reflect current priorities. These include the Women's Education Equity Act and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers programs, to name a few. Funding should also be aligned with the goal of increasing student academic achievement and closing achievement gaps. Yet, some older programs, such as the Magnet Schools Assistance Program, were not designed with the primary goal of closing achievement gaps, but rather to limit racial isolation and desegregate public schools. Meanwhile, the newer Voluntary Public School Choice Program was established to boost achievement gains. It might make sense to consolidate these programs—which overlap in their efforts to expand educational options—and in the process, refocus the magnet school program on the goal of closing achievement gaps.

Opportunities exist to consolidate other programs as well. Related education programs are sometimes spread over multiple agencies and within the Department of Education. The Head Start program is located within the Department of Health and Human Services. Yet it overlaps significantly with Department of Education programs focused on school readiness, including Even Start and Reading First. Teacher recruitment and professional development programs are similarly diffuse. Consolidating related programs would help eliminate duplication, ensure coordination, and achieve cost savings.

The goal of improving student achievement demands that funding be distributed based on student needs—something that currently does not always happen. A number of programs continue to be formula funded (see box for definitions of different education programs) and result in spreading dollars too thin to make much of an impact. They also fail to target schools with the greatest needs and/or the most effective solutions. The recently defunded Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities-State Grants program is an example. Awarding larger, competitive grants to a smaller number of vulnerable school districts would provide more bang for the buck.

Explanation of Grant Terminology

The following defines grant terms that are used throughout this report.

- **Formula grants** are allocations of funds to states or their subdivisions in accordance with distribution formulas prescribed by law or administrative regulation, for activities of a continuing nature not confined to a specific project. Examples include: ESEA Title I, Part A to local education agencies and schools with large numbers of poor children to ensure that they meet challenging state standards; Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities State Program; Even Start; and Migrant Education.
- **Project grants** represent funding for fixed or known periods of specific projects, including fellowships, scholarships, research grants, training grants, traineeships, experimental and demonstration grants, evaluation grants, planning grants, technical assistance grants, survey grants, and construction grants.
- **Competitive grants** are project grants for which multiple applicants submit bids and compete for funding. Examples include: Race to the Top, in which states must compete for funding based on rigorous criteria that includes comprehensive plans to reform their schools; Mentoring Grants; Advanced Placement Incentive Program; and Academies for American History and Civics.
- **Sole-source grants** are required to be unique, innovative and highly cost effective. Sole source grants are typically used only when one entity is reasonably able to meet a grant or intended purpose. Examples include the noncompetitive awards authorized by direction of Congress through the Arts in Education Program to VSA arts, which fosters awareness of the need for arts programs for persons with disabilities and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for its arts education programs for children and youth.
- **Earmarks** are funds provided by Congress for projects or programs that circumvent the competitive allocation process of the executive branch or specify the location or grant recipient, according to the definition provided by the White House Office of Management and Budget.

The cuts and reforms recommended by this report are not intended to address the federal budget deficit. Indeed, the amount of money involved is minuscule in the context of the deficit. But they are offered in recognition that resources are scarce. Despite additional funding requests in the fiscal year 2011 budget, the Department of Education may have to undertake its ambitious reform agenda without a significant infusion of new resources. This reality creates an imperative to ensure that every dollar is well spent and every investment is calculated to produce a positive return. These recommendations are intended as a point of beginning, not a final answer. More assessment will be needed to identify further opportunities to achieve savings and boost results. What is clear, however, is that business cannot continue as usual.

Key findings and recommendations

Budgetary priorities should reflect the new education policy priorities

The Center for American Progress believes that a new federal education policy should rest on the following principles:

- **Education funds should be distributed based on student need and focused on closing educational achievement disparities.** It seems obvious to say that education funds should be directed where they are needed most. But this is often not the case. Federal funding should increase assistance to students with extra needs, including low-income pre-schoolers and students in K-12 schools, students with disabilities, English language learners, students in high schools with elevated dropout rates, and financially needy college students, among others. These funds should be used to close vast disparities in educational achievement between low-income and minority students and their more affluent peers.
- **State and local officials and educators should have flexibility in determining how best to spend federal education funds.** Education policy is moving to a performance-based model that gives recipients of federal funds flexibility to develop strategies to boost student achievement and meet other educational priorities. This approach encourages more dynamic experimentation and innovation that focuses on results.
- **In return for flexibility, fund recipients and educators should be held accountable for boosting student achievement and meeting other educational priorities.** Accountability depends on rigorous measurement of educational outcomes. Such measurement should reveal what strategies work, what strategies fail, and where changes are necessary. The Department of Education should use this information to publicly spotlight both exceptional and poor performers, actively promote strategies that work, and eliminate funding for those that do not.

- **A highly effective education workforce is essential to boost student achievement.**

Research shows that high-quality teachers and principals can deliver significant gains in student achievement. Federal education funding should reflect this research by providing incentives to adopt proven strategies to improve workforce quality and effectiveness.

The Obama administration, led by Education Secretary Arne Duncan, embraces these policy principles. Now the challenge is bringing budgetary priorities in line. This report identifies a number of programs that should be eliminated or reformed as part of this effort.

Narrow, low-impact programs should be eliminated

The Department of Education supports numerous, mostly small grant programs that serve niche purposes. Many of these programs should be eliminated, including:

- **Academies for American History and Civics.** This program, which provides workshops for teachers of American history, is not coordinated with other professional development programs within the Department of Education and is not based on the needs of states and localities.
- **We the People.** This program is an earmark grant to the Center for Civic Education to instruct a small number of students on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights.
- **Cooperative Education Exchange.** This program is another noncompetitive grant to the Center for Civic Education to support curricula and teacher training programs in civics.
- **Close Up Fellowship Program.** This is a small noncompetitive grant to the Close Up Foundation of Washington, D.C., for financial assistance to economically disadvantaged students who participate in Close Up programs.
- **Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Education.** This program supports research and demonstration efforts to enhance the ability of elementary and secondary schools to meet the needs of gifted students. Elimination of this funding will have limited impact on gifted and talented programs, which will continue as part of state and local educational programming.
- **Exchanges with Historic Whaling and Trading Partners.** This program is earmarked for culturally based educational activities targeted at Alaska Natives, native Hawaiians, children and families of these groups living in Massachusetts, and members of any federally recognized Indian tribe in Mississippi.
- **Excellence in Economic Education.** This is a small grant program designed to promote economic and financial literacy among K-12 students.

- **Arts in Education.** This program provides grants for arts education, including two non-competitive grants that should be eliminated.

These programs may serve deserving groups of students and educators, but they represent narrow, prescribed funding streams with limited reach. This is inconsistent with the new flexible, results-oriented approach to education funding that seeks to maximize bang for the buck.

Outdated programs should be eliminated or updated

There are a number of outdated education programs that should be eliminated or redesigned. These programs include:

- **Women's Education Equity Act.** Federal funds should be focused on closing disparities in educational achievement, yet on most indicators of academic achievement, girls perform as well or better than boys. In most cases, large gaps that once existed between males and females have been eliminated and have significantly decreased in other cases. Women are still underrepresented in some fields of study, as well as more generally in doctoral and first-professional degree programs, although they have made substantial gains in the past 30 years.² The Women's Education Equity Act is a victim of this success. It is a small program that is no longer needed.
- **21st Century Community Learning Centers.** The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program is a voluntary out-of-school time program (before- and after-school time, weekends, and summer) for needy students. There is a movement, supported by the Obama administration, to expand formal learning time and enrichment activities by lengthening the school day and/or year, which research suggests can produce far greater benefits in student achievement.³ This program should be redesigned to bring it in line with this vision for expanded formal learning time as is proposed by the Obama administration in its recent blue print for reauthorization of ESEA and the proposed FY 2011 budget.
- **Magnet Schools Assistance Program.** The Magnet Schools Assistance Program is designed to assist in the desegregation of public schools. But education policy is currently focused on closing achievement disparities. Research suggests that the Magnet School program does not appreciably boost minority student achievement. This may not be surprising given that the program's original mission was aimed at integration, not closing achievement gaps. The magnet school program should be rethought to better align its mission with current priorities.

Programs should be better coordinated and sometimes consolidated

There are education programs with similar purposes spread over multiple government agencies and within different parts of the Department of Education. Some of these programs should be eliminated. Others could benefit from better coordination and possibly consolidation. These programs include:

- **Childhood mental health programs.** The Department of Education's childhood mental health programs suffer from redundancy. Specifically, the Mental Health Integration in Schools program and Grants to Improve the Mental Health of Children program (also known as Foundations for Learning) duplicate other efforts, including programs in the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities and National Activities program. They should be eliminated.
- **Teacher recruitment programs.** Teacher recruitment programs would benefit from consolidation into a single new "Transition to Teaching" program. This program would bring together Troops for Teachers, which is run out of the Department of Defense, with the National Teacher Recruitment Campaign and Teach for America, which now operate as separate programs within the Department of Education. A consolidated program would bring focus and free resources in the effort to deliver quality teachers to high-poverty and low-performing schools. The Obama administration recently offered a similar proposal in its blueprint for reauthorizing ESEA and its FY 2011 budget with the Teacher and Leader Pathways program.
- **Early childhood readiness programs.** The Head Start program is located within the Department of Health and Human Services. Yet it overlaps significantly with Department of Education programs focused on school readiness, including Even Start and Reading First. This structural separation impedes strategic coordination of resources to ensure that disadvantaged children enter school ready and prepared. Head Start should be better coordinated with related programs at the very least. But it might make more sense to co-locate Head Start with these programs in the Department of Education. Even Start should be eliminated or restructured as part of a more comprehensive program of school readiness and literacy for low-income children. The Obama administration offers a more comprehensive approach with its Pre-K-12 literacy fund proposed in the blueprint for reauthorizing ESEA and the FY 2011 budget.
- **Employment programs for the disabled.** There are also some Department of Education programs that seem to fit better elsewhere. Many programs in the Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration are focused on helping those with disabilities prepare for gainful employment (including the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program, Projects With Industry, Rehabilitation Training, and Supported Employment State Grants). These programs more logically fit within the Department of Labor, which operates similar programs and is focused on employment.

Programs should have clear goals

The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities-State Grants program provided support to state education agencies for both drug-abuse and violence prevention. This divided attention clouded the program's purpose and diluted funds across a large number of small efforts that showed little evidence of reducing drug abuse or violence. Moreover, funds were not targeted at schools with the greatest needs. Congress consequently ended funding for the program in FY 2010, consistent with President Obama's budget request.

Among other programs that would benefit from clearer, more focused goals is the:

- **Perkins Vocational-Technical Education (Career and Technical Education) program.** This program was reauthorized in 2006 after a number of studies found the program lacked clarity of purpose. The reauthorization sought to address this criticism by increasing the focus on academic achievement, strengthening connections between secondary and postsecondary education, and improving state and local accountability. These reforms should be monitored and evaluated to see whether they have effectively addressed the program's underlying problems.

Results should drive funding decisions

Decisions about whether to eliminate or reform programs should be based on performance. President Obama proposed and Congress acted to eliminate FY 2010 funding for the Education Department's Mentoring Grants program, which sought to provide mentors for needy children in grades 4 through 8, after a recent evaluation found the program did not produce statistically significant results.⁴

Funds are also going to other programs that are not as effective as available alternatives. These include:

- **Title II of the Elementary-Secondary Education Act.** Title II of ESEA supports a wide range of state and district-level activities that are meant to improve teacher and principal quality. Some of these activities are worthwhile, but funding is not targeted at proven strategies. Indeed, school districts use the bulk of their Title II funding to support professional development and class-size reduction, both of which have shown limited benefits for boosting student achievement when implemented on a large scale. These funds should be redirected and targeted at efforts that actually improve teacher quality.
- **Teaching American History.** This program, which was appropriated almost \$119 million in FY 2010, provides grants to local education agencies to improve teachers' knowledge of traditional U.S. history. A 2005 evaluation found the program may not target teachers

most in need of professional development, training provided did not always employ proven strategies, and the program lacked demonstrated effectiveness.⁵ This program should be eliminated.

Performance evaluation and transparency should be strengthened

It is not easy to determine which education programs are effective, efficient, targeted at current priorities, and thus deserving of continued support. A dearth of studies and objective tools exist to assess program success. This limited research seeks to identify program implementation and impact evaluations as well as program performance reports, but in many cases programs have not been evaluated, or evaluations are just getting underway or are still ongoing.

Moreover, performance information that does exist is often not current, does not address outcomes related to program impact, and may be of questionable objectivity. These limitations are reflected in performance information reported by the Department of Education (and other federal agencies) under the Government Performance and Results Act and the Bush administration's Program Assessment Rating Tool, or PART.⁶ The movement toward more data-driven, evidence-based approaches in education promises to close these knowledge gaps. In the meantime, decisions about education spending will be somewhat clouded.

In the pages that follow, this report will detail the analysis that underpins all of our recommendations presented here. Doing What Works, in the case of the education program reforms presented in this paper, is largely supported on Capitol Hill and embraced by the Obama administration. But getting the program details right is a complex task. This paper provides a start.

Programs eliminated in FY 2010

Congress eliminated several education programs in fiscal year 2010 (see table). The largest cost savings were generated by the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities State Program and Mentoring Grants. The Center for American Progress supports elimination of these programs. The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities State Program spread funding too thin across too many goals and Mentoring Grants received a poor impact assessment and is redundant with other programs.

Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities State Program

The Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities State Program, authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended, Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1, Sections 4111-4117, was appropriated almost \$295 million in FY 2009 and eventually defunded in the FY 2010 appropriations process. It provided formula grants to state education agencies for a variety of drug-abuse and violence prevention activities. These activities were meant to help schools and communities create safe, disciplined, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement. There are important lessons to be derived from the history of this program that may provide guidance for future efforts.

The formula grant program was criticized on programmatic and structural grounds for:

Education programs that are history

Programs eliminated in fiscal year 2010

Programs eliminated in FY 2010	FY 2010 appropriation in millions	Explanation
Safe & Drug-Free Schools & Communities State Program	\$294.8	Funding spread too thin across too many goals
Mentoring Grants	\$47.3	Redundant with other programs
Character Education	\$11.9	Redundant with other programs
National Institute for Literacy	\$ 6.5	Redundant with other programs
Total	\$360.5	

Source: Department of Education Fiscal Year 2011 President's Request.

- Failing to target high-need schools and communities
- Providing minimal levels of per-pupil support
- Supporting programs of limited size that are too small to make a significant impact
- Showing little evidence of effectiveness in reducing violence or drug use
- Lacking focus and having confusing goals among school safety, drug prevention, and violence prevention
- Failing to link prevention activities to the broader goals of the education reform movement, so the focus is on building school environments that are proven to boost student achievement⁷

A 2007 report of the statutorily required Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Advisory Committee made recommendations to address many of these challenges.⁸ In particular, the committee recommended targeting funds to priority areas and establishing competitive grants to provide larger, needs-based assistance to a limited number of local school districts.

The committee also noted that the program suffered from excessive demands and could benefit from a narrowed focus. Over the years, the program's goals had extended beyond preventing drug and alcohol use to include school violence, emergency planning, external threats to school security, and natural disasters, among others. The committee generally felt that the program should shift from responding to drug and safety problems to focus on prevention, early intervention, and personal safety such as bullying.

For FY 2010, the Obama administration proposed and Congress acted to terminate the program and redirect a portion of its funding to another program under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. The program for national activities increased from \$140.2 million in FY 2009 to \$191.3 million in FY 2010 appropriations. This redirected funding provides competitive grants for targeted school safety and drug prevention and education efforts. Grants are to be made in amounts deemed sufficient to make an impact and in areas that would add to the national knowledge base on program effectiveness and best practices. The Obama administration's blueprint for reauthorizing ESEA and FY 2011 budget request consolidates a number of related programs into a new Successful, Safe and Healthy Students program authority.

Mentoring Grants

The Mentoring Grants (authorized in ESEA, Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2, Section 4130) program, which received \$47,264,000 in FY 2009, was eliminated in FY 2010. It was designed to provide needy children in grades 4 through 8 with guidance from a mentor to improve academic performance and interpersonal relationships and reduce dropout rates, juvenile delinquency, and gang involvement.

Mentors were targeted for children living in rural areas, high-crime areas, or troubled home environments, or who attend schools with violence problems. An impact evaluation found that the program did not lead to statistically significant impacts on any of the measures studied.⁹ It also was redundant with other federal efforts.

Character Education

In FY 2009, the Partnerships in Character Education Program (ESEA, Title V, Part D, Subpart 3, Section 5431) provided \$11.9 million to state and local education agencies to support programs focused on teaching students about civic virtue, citizenship, caring,

respect, and responsibility. The program was recommended for elimination in the FY 2010 budget and eventually eliminated in the appropriations process due to duplication with a newly proposed initiative under National Activities of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act.

National Institute for Literacy

The National Institute for Literacy (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Section 242) was funded at \$6.5 million in FY 2009 to provide national leadership on literacy issues, coordinate federal literacy policies and programs, and serve as a national resource for adult education and literacy programs. After nearly two decades of operations, the administration felt that federal literacy activities remained diffuse and duplicative, and the Office of Vocational and Adult Education would be better positioned to serve the NIFL function. Eliminating NIFL would also allow resources to be used for national activities rather than administrative redundancies.

Programs recommended for elimination

We recommend that the list of federal education programs presented in Table 2 should be eliminated. Most of these programs are either too narrowly focused or redundant with other programs. We'll examine each of them in turn, suggesting that some programs be ended entirely and that others have their objectives (and sometimes their funding) shifted to other programs.

Small niche programs

There are numerous small education programs that are limited in scope and people served. Often these programs represent sole-source grants or congressional earmarks, which should be limited. It was beyond the purview of this report to determine whether recipients meet the requirements of sole-source grantees, which requires that they be unique among other potential grantees and possess capacity for innovation and cost-effectiveness. But the question is whether these arrangements work, are superior to other options, and represent the highest value for the public investment. Based on these concerns, the following programs should be eliminated:

- **Academies for American History and Civics**, authorized under the American History and Civics Education Act of 2004, provides workshops for both veteran and new teachers of American history and operates Congressional Academies to instruct high school students. This is a small program with no supporting evaluation or performance reports. The teacher workshops are not coordinated

Time to Go

Recommended Cuts and Savings

Programs to eliminate	FY 2010 appropriation in millions	Explanation
Academies for American History & Civics* (competitive)	\$1.8	Program too narrow
We the People* (earmark) (Civic Education)	\$21.6	Program too narrow
Cooperative Education Exchange* (Civic Education) (competitive & non-competitive)	\$13.4	Program too narrow
Close Up Fellowships* (no-competitive)	\$1.9	Program too narrow
Jacob Javits Gifted & Talented* (competitive)	\$7.4	Program too narrow
Exchanges with Historic Whaling and Trading Partners (earmark)	\$8.7	Program too narrow
Excellence in Economic Education (competitive)	\$1.4	Program too narrow
Arts in Education (only earmarked parts)**	\$15.5	Program too narrow
Teaching American History (competitive)	\$118.9	Program lacks demonstrated effectiveness
Women's Education Equity Act (competitive)	\$2.4	Goals of program are achieved; no longer needed
Mental Health Integration in Schools (discretionary)	\$5.9	Redundant with other programs
Grants to Improve the Mental Health of Children (Foundations of Learning)* (competitive)	\$1	Redundant with other programs
Even Start* (formula)	\$66.5	Redundant with other programs
Total	\$266.4	

* Indicates programs also recommended for elimination by the Obama Administration for Fiscal Year 2010.

** The FY '09 appropriation for non-competitive awards was \$15.5 million, which represents only one component of Arts in Education. The appropriation for the program for FY 2010, which in addition to these non-competitive grants, also included competitive grants for innovative Arts Models and Professional Development for Arts Education, totaled \$40 million.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Fiscal Year 2011 President's Request, January 27, 2010.

with ESEA Title II professional development programs, which support increases in the number of highly qualified teachers and principals, or based on the needs of states and localities and those of teachers and students.

- **We the People**, authorized under ESEA, Title II, Part C, Subpart 3, Sections 2341-2346, is a noncompetitive, direct earmark grant to the Center for Civic Education to operate an instructional program for elementary, middle, and high school students on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, called “We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution.” The program has had a positive evaluation.¹⁰ Yet the Center for Civic Education’s curricula and materials serve a small number of students annually. The Obama administration proposed elimination of the program in the FY 2010 budget because it is too small to have an impact on history and civics achievement nationally.
- **Cooperative Education Exchange**. Authorized under ESEA, Title II, Part C, Subpart 3, Section 2345, is a noncompetitive grant to the Center for Civic Education to support exemplary curricula and teacher training programs in civics, government, and economic education for educators from the United States and other eligible countries. This program lacks a performance evaluation. The Obama administration proposed to replace it with a broader grant competition (along with “We the People” described above) under the Fund for the Improvement of Education.
- **The Close Up Fellowship Program**, authorized under ESEA, Title I, Part E, Section 1504, is a grant to the Close Up Foundation of Washington, D.C., to increase civic responsibility and understanding of the federal government among middle school and secondary school students. Grant funds provide financial assistance to economically disadvantaged students who participate in Close Up programs. This is a noncompetitive, small grant program that lacks impact evidence, performance reports, or evaluations, and has not published information on the numbers of students that have received fellowships.
- **Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Education**, authorized under ESEA, Title V, Part D, Subpart 6, funds gifted and talented projects in elementary and secondary schools and supports a coordinated research program through the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. NRCGT investigates issues of gifted education, including what programs and services most benefit gifted students and whether high-performing approaches also yield positive results for students not identified as gifted. There has not been a published evaluation of the program. Federal support for specific gifted and talented projects is not needed and should be eliminated. The research efforts should continue with federal support from the Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences and be documented in the IES What Works Clearinghouse.
- **Exchanges with Historic Whaling and Trading Partners**, authorized under ESEA Title V, Part D, Subpart 12, is an earmarked program that supports culturally based educational activities, internships, apprentice programs, and exchanges to assist Alaska

Natives, native Hawaiians, children and families living in Massachusetts linked by history and tradition to Alaska and Hawaii, and members of any federally recognized Indian tribe in Mississippi. This is a small grant with limited focus on four states.

- **Excellence in Economic Education**, authorized under ESEA Title V, Part D, Subpart 13, is a small grant to a national nonprofit education organization that is meant to promote economic and financial literacy among students in kindergarten through grade 12. The FY 2010 appropriation was \$1,447,000.
- **Arts in Education**, authorized under ESEA, Title V, Part D, Subpart 15, is actually three grant programs, including: congressional earmarks to Very Special Arts and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts—the former to promote arts programs for persons with disabilities and the latter to provide arts education for children and youth; the Model Development and Dissemination Grants Program, a competitive grant program for local education agencies and organizations to integrate the arts into elementary and middle school curricula; and Professional Development for Arts Educators-Arts in Education, which provides professional development for arts educators in high-poverty schools. The FY 2009 appropriation was \$15,477,000 for the two earmarks to Very Special Arts and the Kennedy Center. Funds from Professional Development for Arts Educators should be redirected to the Model Development and Dissemination Grants Program. The FY 2010 appropriation totals \$40 million for the three programs.

These programs, most of which are noncompetitive grants, are too narrow and do not reflect the new flexible, results-focused vision for education policy. They should be eliminated.

Teaching American History

Teaching American History, authorized under ESEA Title II, Part C, Subpart 4, provides grants to local education agencies to improve teachers' knowledge of traditional U.S. history. A 2005 evaluation found that grants funded projects in districts with high-need students, and participants reported positively on the effectiveness and quality of projects.

But the evaluation also concluded that the projects may not have reached teachers typically considered most in need of additional professional development. The evaluation also found that the training provided did not always match research-based definitions of effective professional development, and that internal evaluations lacked the rigor to measure projects' effectiveness accurately.¹¹ The FY 2010 appropriation was \$118.95 million. This program is subject-specific with limited reach and lacks demonstrated effectiveness. It should be eliminated.

Women's Education Equity Act

The Women's Education Equity Act, authorized under ESEA Title V, Part D, Subpart 21, promotes education equity for women and girls through competitive grants to help educational agencies meet the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The program designates most of its funding for local implementation of gender equity policies and practices. Research, development, and dissemination activities also may be funded.

This small program is a victim of its success and national changes in opportunities for women and girls in education. Females in elementary and secondary school and in college are now doing as well as or better than males on most indicators of educational achievement and attainment. Large gaps that once existed are gone or dramatically reduced. Women are still underrepresented in some fields of study, as well as more generally in doctoral and first-professional degree programs, but they have made substantial gains in the past 30 years.

This program also overlaps with the Equity Assistance Centers program, authorized under the Civil Rights Act, 1964, Title IV, which is designed to provide technical assistance and training to public school districts and other governmental agencies to promote equitable education opportunities in areas of race, sex, and national origin. This is a small program whose goals have been largely achieved and which is redundant to other federal efforts. It should be eliminated.

Childhood mental health programs

There are two childhood mental health programs that we find redundant. The first is Mental Health Integration in Schools, authorized under ESEA, Title V, Part D, Subpart 14, Section 5541, which provides grants to state and local education agencies and Indian tribes to link school systems with local mental health systems to increase student access to quality mental health care. The Obama administration proposed to eliminate this program because its small size and broad reach make it difficult to evaluate performance and measure outcomes. Indeed, no impact evaluation exists. Other federal programs also perform similar functions. The program's FY 2010 appropriation was \$5.9 million.

The other is the Grants to Improve the Mental Health of Children, authorized under ESEA Title V, Part D, Subpart 14, Section 5542), which is also known as Foundations for Learning. This program supports services for children's emotional, behavioral, and social development to ensure school readiness. These include services that facilitate access to community resources, including those related to mental health, physical health, substance abuse, education, domestic violence prevention, child welfare, and social services.

This program is duplicative of National Activities programs under the Safe and Drug-Free

Schools and Communities Act. The Obama administration has also indicated that similar goals could be met through larger investments in programs such as the Early Learning Challenge Fund, a central component of the president's Zero-to-Five Initiative proposed in the FY 2010 budget, Special Education Preschool Grants (authorized in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B, Section 619), and Special Education Grants for Infants and Families (authorized in IDEA, Part C, Section 631).

These two programs are redundant of other federal efforts. They should be eliminated.

Even Start's early childhood and family literacy programs

After more than 40 years of funding early childhood and family literacy programs, the federal government still has no systemic, coordinated effort to ensure that young disadvantaged children reach school ready and prepared to achieve at the same levels as their more advantaged counterparts. Instead, these programs are scattered across various federal agencies, serving similar missions but not working in concert with each other.

A 2005 Government Accountability Office report identified 69 child care and early childhood education programs administered by 10 agencies.¹² Similarly, family literacy programs—defined as intergenerational programs that work with the family rather than the child or the adult separately—operate under a host of laws administered by different agencies.¹³

Chief among the early childhood programs is Head Start, established in 1965, which is designed to promote school readiness and a comprehensive array of nutrition, health, and social services to 4- and 5-year-old preschoolers and their families.¹⁴ The Administration for Children and Families within the Department of Health and Human Services administers this program.

The Even Start Family Literacy Program followed Head Start in 1989.¹⁵ This program, which is run out of the Department of Education, is designed to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and low literacy in low-income families. It specifically targets low-income parents and their children up to age 8 by integrating early childhood education, adult literacy, parenting education and various support services, such as transportation, child care, counseling, nutrition assistance, health care, and meals to help families participate in the program.¹⁶

Other Department of Education programs overlap with Even Start as well as Head Start. Among them are:

- Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which provides funds to local education agencies for preschool programs, covers children from birth up to the age of school entry.

- Title I of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which offers funding to expand or supplement Head Start and Even Start as well as other early childhood programs, includes programs providing comprehensive services, professional development for teachers working in Title I preschools, and assistance in transition to kindergarten. Head Start will receive \$1 billion under the act, and Early Head Start, which targets children from birth to age 3, will receive \$1.1 billion.
- A number of smaller federal programs support implementation of specific literacy approaches in the preschool and early childhood years, such as Reading First, a formula grant program that supports states and districts in implementing scientifically based reading research and proven instructional and assessment tools, and Early Reading First, which supports local efforts to enhance the early language, literacy, and pre-reading development of preschool-age children from low-income families.
- Adult Education Basic Grants to States fund local adult education and literacy services that also include workplace literacy, English literacy, integrated English literacy-civics education, and GED (high school diploma equivalency) preparation. More than 2.4 million adults participated in services funded by the program in 2006–07,¹⁷ with adult English language learners as a substantial and growing proportion. In program year 2006-07, 46 percent of participants enrolled in state-administered adult education programs were in English as a Second Language classes. This percentage did not include those served in adult basic education and adult secondary education classes. Population projections for the next 10 years indicate that the number of adult English language learners in the United States will continue to grow.¹⁸
- The vast majority of states also support their own programs to boost achievement of low-income and disadvantaged children. In 2002, 46 states and the District of Columbia provided funds for some type of preschool program for children under age 5, and a number of states supplemented Head Start programs.¹⁹

There is now limited evidence that intergenerational family literacy programs—serving both children and adults—produce positive results. But there is no evidence that they produce greater results, or are more cost effective, than programs that solely target either children or adults.²⁰ Thought should be given about how to best direct investments—to child-focused, adult-focused, or intergenerational programs.

Both Head Start and Even Start have received less than favorable evaluations over the years. Studies indicate that low-income children from Head Start programs perform significantly below their more advantaged peers in reading and mathematics once they enter school.^{21, 22}

Three four-year national evaluations of Even Start have been conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. The 1995 experimental evaluation showed modest positive impacts for parents and children in Even Start.²³ The third study found no significant differ-

ences between control group children, parents, and families and treatment children, parents, and families, respectively, on any measures except one—teacher ratings of fewer behavior problems of school-age experimental group children over control group children.²⁴

This third evaluation has come under criticism for a number of reasons, mostly related to methodology. These criticisms include:

- The sample was not geographically representative or representative of the Even Start universe of participants—Hispanic English Language Learners in programs located in urban areas were overrepresented.
- The study understated the program’s effectiveness, particularly within the Hispanic community.
- Analyses of children and parents were done only in English, and literacy measures were not designed for bilingual children.
- Results from recent statewide evaluations suggest the effectiveness of the program.²⁵

Definitions of school readiness also are changing in response to new research on reading development. For Head Start, this is causing a shift in focus from developing social competence to the promotion of school readiness, including a stronger focus on early reading and math skills and other cognitive and conceptual abilities. This shift includes greater focus on child and family literacy goals, producing even more overlap with Even Start, which also promotes academic achievement of children and adults.

For Even Start, changes have involved a number of improvements, among which are:

- The use of instructional activities based on scientifically based reading research
- Stronger staff qualification requirements
- Enrichment and instructional services during the summer months
- Projects built on “high-quality” existing community resources
- Independent local evaluations for program continuous improvement
- Improved participant literacy achievement results

Even Start’s purpose and program components overlap a number of federal literacy and early childhood programs that also serve many of the same types of participants. But Even Start families represent a more highly disadvantaged segment of society than Head Start, and are disproportionately Hispanic. When compared to Head Start Families, Even Start programs participants have lower incomes, are less likely to be employed, and are more educationally disadvantaged.²⁶ In California, 85 percent of Early Start families are Latino, according to National Council of La Raza.²⁷

A number of initiatives are underway to meld the Department of Health and Human Services’ traditional focus on healthy child development with the Department of Education’s longstanding commitment to academic readiness. These initiatives are also

intended to address the lack of coordination and duplication of early childhood and family literacy programs across the federal government and the states.

President Obama has proposed creating an Early Learning Challenge Fund, a joint collaboration between the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. This initiative would provide awards to:

- High-capacity states that are already pursuing models of reform and excellence in early learning and wish to take such improvements to scale
- Developing states that show promise for strengthening and expanding their early learning system, but that need additional assistance to launch a standards-based, outcomes-driven system

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 also provides grants worth \$100 million to states to establish advisory councils for improved coordination between Head Start, Early Head Start, and state-run early childhood care and education programs. And Congress continues to address the issue of comprehensive literacy initiatives. The Literacy for All, Results for the Nation, or LEARN Act (S. 2740/H.R. 4037) was introduced in November 2009. This legislation would support comprehensive state and local literacy initiatives for children from birth through 12th grade to ensure success in school and beyond. The critical role of parents in children's language and literacy development is addressed in this legislation.

Meanwhile, the Obama administration and the Senate Appropriations Committee proposed to eliminate funds for Even Start in the FY 2010 budget. The House Appropriations Committee has consistently supported funding for Even Start and the program maintained its FY 2009 appropriations level of \$66.45 million in FY 2010.

We agree that high-quality preschool education provides critical benefits to disadvantaged children, especially when supported by literacy in the home. Yet early childhood education and family literacy programs are fragmented across agencies, which provide common, but slightly different focuses and targeted populations. This signals the need for better alignment under fewer agencies. The Even Start and Head Start programs must be considered in this context.

Even Start should be eliminated or restructured as part of a more comprehensive program of school readiness and literacy for low-income children. This can be done by folding it into a new early childhood program that comprises early literacy programs with proven records of success. Doing so would require special attention to the clients currently served by Even Start, including large numbers of disadvantaged Hispanic children and families, English language learners, and children of migrant workers. Equal attention should focus on ensuring sufficient capacity of adult education programs that currently provide life skills or English as a Second Language classes, family literacy programs, and English literacy/civics programs.

It is also necessary to close the structural separation of Head Start in the Department of Health and Human Services and school readiness programs in the Department of Education. The co-location of these important programs within one agency makes logical sense. This suggests moving Head Start to the Department of Education, given the program's increasing focus on school readiness, including boosting reading and math skills.

In short, Even Start overlaps significantly with Head Start and other school readiness programs. Even Start should be eliminated or restructured as part of a more comprehensive program of school readiness and literacy for low-income children. As part of this restructuring, Head Start should be better coordinated and possibly co-located with other school readiness programs in the Department of Education.

Education programs recommended for reform

We recommend that the list of federal education programs presented in Table 3 should undergo reform. These programs are either not targeted at high-performing strategies or should be relocated or consolidated with other programs. Let's now evaluate each of them in turn.

Time for a change

Education programs that could achieve greater value and results

Programs to reform	FY 2010 appropriation in millions	Recommendation
Title II of ESEA* (Preparing, training, & recruiting high-quality teachers and principals)	\$3,533	Maintain funding, but spend it on demonstrated high-impact reforms such as improving teacher effectiveness
Federal teacher recruitment programs (e.g. The National Teacher Recruitment Campaign, Troops to Teachers, and Teach for America, Transition to Teaching)**	\$106.1	Combine these programs into one competitive grant program and change the regulations to allow programs such as Teach for America that only require a two-year time commitment for participants
21st Century Community Learning Centers	\$1,166.2	Restructure program to shift focus away from less effective voluntary out-of-school time programs to more effective expanded learning time programs
Magnet Schools Assistance Program	\$100	Possibly combine with other programs intended to foster school choice or thematic schools and increase focus on student achievement outcomes
Perkins Vocational-Technical Education (Career and Technical Education) Program**	\$1,217.7	Provide greater focus on boosting student achievement. If recent reforms prove unsuccessful, shift funding towards better-performing strategies
Head Start	\$7,234.8	Possibly relocate from HHS to Department of Education

*There is overlap between Title II programs and Federal teacher recruitment programs referenced in the chart.

** President Obama's fiscal year 2010 budget also proposes significant reforms to these programs, as described in the next chapter.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Fiscal Year 2010 Congressional Action, December 18, 2009.

Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Title II of ESEA supports state- and district-level activities that improve teacher and principal quality to boost student achievement. But there is little proof that the program is achieving this goal. Most of the funding in Title II is in Part A of the program—Improving Teacher Quality State Grants. The Part A program provides funding to such a wide range of activities to improve teacher qualifications and quality that it is difficult to evaluate their impact.

Most of the Part A funding (95 percent) supports district-level activities. Many of these activities are worthwhile, but funding is not specifically targeted to activities that are likely to yield a significant return on investment. Districts use the bulk of their Title II funding to support professional development and class-size reduction, which both show questionable benefits when implemented on a large scale. In the 2008-09 school year, districts used 39 percent of funds to support professional development activities and 38 percent of funds to reduce class size.²⁸

There is very little empirical evidence that professional development under Title II is effective. Researchers at

the Southwest Regional Educational Laboratory recently reviewed 1,300 studies of professional development programs and found only nine were sufficiently rigorous to include

in their evaluation. These nine studies found positive effects. Professional development of extended duration (an average of 49 hours) boosted student achievement by about 21 percentile points. But no professional development training lasting 14 or fewer hours had a positive impact on student achievement.²⁹

It appears most teachers do not participate in Title II-funded professional development over an extended duration, according to numbers from a recent survey by the Department of Education. This survey found that more than 4.3 million teachers took part in full-day workshops, and more than 2.8 million teachers attended after-school professional development activities, both of which were less than 14 hours, while only 1.6 million teachers participated in longer-duration daily learning team sessions.³⁰

Class-size reduction is popular with teachers and parents. But its extremely high cost raises questions about whether there are more cost-effective ways to boost student achievement. Research shows that giving students highly effective teachers produces far greater gains in student achievement than reducing class size. One study found that students of top-quartile teachers scored an average of 10 percentile points higher in mathematics than students of bottom quartile teachers.³¹ By contrast, “a random assignment evaluation of a classroom-size reduction in Tennessee found that schools could improve achievement by half as much—5 percentile points—by shrinking class size in early grades.”³²

Research on the impact of class-size reduction in later grades provides little support for its use as a strategy to raise student achievement. Furthermore, class-size reduction policies tend to exacerbate the shortage of effective teachers in high-poverty schools, thus undermining attempts to close achievement gaps.

There are also a number of smaller programs within Title II, such as the National Writing Project, Civic Education Program, Advanced Credentialing program, and Teaching American History. Some of these programs have worthwhile purposes, but it might make sense to fold them into larger programs or to eliminate them given their limited reach. Teaching American History, for one, is recommended for elimination above.

Not mentioned in this discussion is the Teacher Incentive Fund, or TIF, a competitive program for local education agencies, state education agencies, and nonprofit education organizations to develop and implement performance-based teacher and principal compensation systems in high-need schools. TIF is a separate funding stream in the appropriations process (via Title V, Part D of ESEA), but is a potential model for how Title II can also support competitive grants. Appropriations for TIF went from \$97.3 million in FY 2009 to \$400 million in FY 2010.

The Obama administration has also proposed an expanded Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund in its blueprint for reauthorizing ESEA and its FY 2011 budget. This program would reward states and districts for implementing better systems for recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers and principals in high-needs schools. As

Robin Chait states in a forthcoming publication from CAP, “Competitive grants like the Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund are more likely than formula grants to spur innovation, reform, and to reward high-quality programs.”

Therefore, funding levels for Title II teacher quality efforts should be maintained, but funds should be better targeted at proven, cost-effective strategies. It may be wise to allocate a large chunk of funds to a competitive grant program like the Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund. Consideration should also be given to eliminating some of the smaller programs within Title II or folding them into other larger programs.

Teacher recruitment programs

A number of programs focus on teacher recruitment in high-need schools and districts. These programs are located in different parts of the Department of Education and one is located in the Department of Defense. They include the following:

- National Teacher Recruitment Campaign, authorized under ESEA section 2151 (a), assists high-need local educational agencies in recruiting teachers.
- Troops to Teachers, authorized under ESEA, Title II, Part C, Subpart 1, Chapter A, Section 2301-2307, is a competitive grant program that assists eligible members of the armed forces in obtaining teacher certification or licensing, and which helps them find employment in high-need local education agencies or charter schools.
- Teach for America, authorized under the Higher Education Act, Title II, Part F, is a noncompetitive grant that expands efforts by Teach for America, Inc., to recruit, select, train, and support outstanding recent college graduates who commit to serve as teachers for at least two years in high-need schools and districts in low-income urban and rural communities.
- Transition to Teaching, authorized under ESEA, Title II, Part C, Chapter B, is a competitive grant program that supports the recruitment and retention of highly qualified recent college graduates who did not major in education and mid-career professionals, including qualified paraprofessionals, to teach in high-need schools and districts.

These programs have similar missions. They should be consolidated or incorporated into a larger Transition to Teaching program as the Obama administration has proposed with its Teacher and Leader Pathways Program. Teach for America should no longer be a stand-alone, noncompetitive program. Rather, it should compete for funds under the Transition to Teaching program.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, which is authorized under ESEA Title IV, Part B, supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during nonschool hours for children—particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. It is a voluntary, out-of-school time program, including before- and after-school, weekend, and summer services with questionable benefits. This program received a FY 2009 appropriation of \$1.13 billion and a \$1.17 billion appropriation in FY 2010 to:

- Help students meet state and local standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and math
- Offer students a broad array of enrichment activities that can complement their regular academic programs
- Offer literacy and other educational services to the families of participating children

Under the program, the Department of Education awards grants to state educational agencies, which in turn manage statewide competitions and award grants to eligible entities such as local school districts, community- and faith-based organizations, and consortia of public and private agencies. Priority is given to applications that are jointly submitted by a local educational agency and a community-based organization or other public or private entity.

The effectiveness of this program is in question. The federal government sponsored a controversial evaluation that looked at results achieved by elementary and secondary school participants during the program's start-up phase.³³ The evaluation's findings raised alarms and created skepticism about potential benefits, though the methodology also was challenged.³⁴

Since that study, independent evaluation organizations conducted numerous longitudinal studies of after-school programs to examine the complex picture of longitudinal outcomes for at-risk youth who have access to stable and continuous after-school program opportunities. These studies found there are not always straight-line connections between test score achievement and after-school program participation, but there are clear academic, social, and developmental outcomes documented among students who participate regularly in out-of-school time programs (defined variously as more than 45 days to as much as 100 days). The critical factors here are not only quality of program but regular and continuous student participation.³⁵ The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program suffers from the voluntary nature of its programming when program effectiveness has been linked to the intensity of student involvement in program activities.

The Full Service Community Schools competitive grant program, authorized under ESEA Title V, Part D, Subpart 1, which received \$5 million in FY 2009, offers a more comprehensive approach to extended learning time. Congress first appropriated funds for this program

in 2008 to encourage the coordination of education, developmental, family, health, and other services through partnerships between public elementary and secondary schools and community-based organizations and public-private ventures. Services may include:

- Early childhood education
- Remedial education and academic enrichment activities
- Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy
- Mentoring and other youth development programs
- Parent leadership and parenting education activities
- Community service and service-learning opportunities
- Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled
- Nutrition services
- Job training and career counseling services
- Primary health and dental care
- Mental health counseling services
- Adult education, including instruction of adults in English as a second language

Full Service Community Schools function as anchors of the community and are open to students and community members all day, every day, evenings and weekends.

In addition, the proposed Time for Innovation Matters in Education, or TIME, Act in the Senate would provide far greater support to states, local education agencies, and schools for expanded learning time. The act proposes to fund initiatives to expand learning time (ideally by 300 hours per year) for students in high-need schools through school redesign and partnerships between schools, local education agencies, and external organizations.

The upshot: A movement, supported by the Obama administration, is underway to extend formal learning time in high-need schools—one that should redesign the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program to bring it more in line with the full-service community school model and the aspirations of the TIME Act to expand formal learning time. Both full-service community schools and extended learning time should be models under a redesigned 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, and should be competitively awarded as is proposed by the Obama administration in its blueprint for reauthorizing ESEA and its FY 2011 budget.

Magnet Schools Assistance Program

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program, authorized under ESEA Title V, Part C, provides competitive grants to local education agencies so they can establish magnet schools that are designed to desegregate public schools with substantial numbers of minority students.³⁶ These schools typically offer innovative, high-level education opportunities that cannot be or are not offered in comprehensive neighborhood schools.

There are few rigorous studies of the magnet school program's effects on important student outcomes. But available research shows limited benefits for minority student achievement. A 2003 Department of Education study found that, "While MSAP schools adopted innovative practices and worked to align their programs with state and district systemic reforms, overall they made only modest progress in reducing minority group isolation and improving student achievement during the three-year funding period."³⁷

The magnet school program is a longstanding popular choice to desegregate schools—and the program helped create strong thematic schools. But as education policy takes a new results-focused approach, the question should be asked: How could these programs do more to support the primary goal of closing achievement disparities between minority and majority students?

Clearly our nation has not achieved the goal of interracial schooling and communities, which is why there continues to be a role for magnet programs. Yet a magnet school program that does not appreciably support improvements in minority student achievement needs revisiting.

The Voluntary Public School Choice Program, ESEA, Title V, Part B, Subpart 3, offers a possible opportunity to rethink the magnet school program. The program supports efforts to provide parents whose children attend low-performing public schools with expanded public education options and public-school choice. A 2008 Department of Education evaluation found that students participating in this program showed higher achievement gains than students not participating.³⁸

The choice program boasts different goals than the magnet program, but the two overlap in their efforts to offer expanded, higher-level educational options. They could be consolidated with an improved focus on student achievement, possibly also generating cost savings. The magnet school program had an FY 2010 appropriation of \$100 million. The school choice program had an FY 2010 appropriation of \$25.8 million.

For these reasons, it is our recommendation that the Magnet Schools Assistance Program should be rethought and possibly consolidated with the Voluntary Public School Choice Program to provide a stronger focus on improving student achievement.

Career and technical education

The Department of Education supports career and technical education under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act.³⁹ This program:

- Helps states provide vocational–technical education programs and services to youth and adults via Title I, Basic Grants to States. This help is in the form of a formula grant that was appropriated \$1.16 billion in Fiscal Year 2010.

- Supports state grants under Title II, Tech Prep Education to consortia of local education agencies and postsecondary institutions for programs spanning the last two years of secondary education and at least two years of postsecondary education that provide tech-prep education leading to an associate degree or a two-year certificate. This is also a formula grant that was appropriated \$102.9 million in FY 2010.
- Supports national activities, including competitive grants and cooperative agreements for research, evaluation, information dissemination, technical assistance to states, and other activities to improve the quality and effectiveness of career and technical education. National Programs appropriated at \$7.86 million in FY 2010.

The Perkins program has been restructured a number of times, most recently after the 2004 National Assessment of Vocational Education found it fell short on key goals.⁴⁰ NAVE's assessment concluded that secondary vocational courses improve students' later earnings "but have no effect on other outcomes that have become central to the mission of secondary education—such as improving academic achievement or college transitions."⁴¹

The NAVE Independent Advisory Panel responded to these findings by recommending substantial modifications to policy, curriculum, and teacher training to put greater focus on student achievement.⁴² Congress followed many of these recommendations in the reauthorized Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, or Perkins IV in legislative parlance. This reauthorization specifically:

- Directed states to create "programs of study," which are supposed to establish coherent sequences of career and technical education courses that progress from the secondary to the postsecondary level, include rigorous and challenging academic content along with career and technical content, and lead to an industry-recognized credential or, at the postsecondary level, to an associate or baccalaureate degree
- Called for national leadership to strengthen the role of community colleges in expanding access to postsecondary education for youth and adults and advancing workforce development
- Aligned performance indicators for secondary students with state academic assessments conducted under the No Child Left Behind Act as well as other outcome-based indicators, such as high school graduation rates, technical skills and proficiency credentials, and employment
- Set performance indicators for postsecondary students based on retention, attainment, and job placement
- Established a national research center to conduct scientifically based research and evaluation to increase the effectiveness of career and technical education programs and to improve the preparation and professional development of teachers

This revised framework offers promise to significantly improve the Perkins program. But the new “programs of study,” which is under Title I, Basic Grants, of the act, closely parallels the design of Title II, Tech-Prep education. This raises the question of whether the basic grants and tech-prep programs should be merged.

Effective implementation of the recent changes will also be critical to ensure that program goals are realized. These implementation efforts should establish strong alignment between career and technical education and high school reform, including greater coordination with state and local No Child Left Behind efforts, teacher quality and credentialing, professional development, student retention, and student preparation for postsecondary education and careers. Likewise, supports to strengthen community colleges should be linked to improvements in high school programs of study in career pathways.

Effects on student achievement should then be carefully monitored and evaluated. If these changes fail to produce expected improvements, then it might be necessary to pursue a more limited mission for federally funded career and technical education efforts. The goals of academic preparation and transition to postsecondary education and the workforce might better be accomplished through funding to improve the quality of high school education.

Overall, recent changes to the Perkins program offer the promise of significant improvements, but this promise is still unrealized. The Obama administration must give priority to implementation, closely monitor effects on student achievement, and consider other options if performance does not improve. Consideration should also be given to consolidating Tech-Prep education, Title II of the Perkins Act, with Basic Grants, Title I of the act.

The Obama administration's fiscal year 2011 budget proposals

The president's fiscal year 2011 budget incorporates many of the principles and budgetary concerns described in this report and seeks to avoid many of the identified problems of inefficiency and duplication.⁴³ The president's budget specifically proposes to:

- Increase funding to elementary and secondary education to serve critical needs and build on existing investments
- Achieve potential savings through changes in student loan programs
- Implement critical reorganizations and consolidations to provide coherence and structure to related efforts

The FY 2011 budget request reflects an effort to move away from fragmented and unfocused grants that lack evidence of effectiveness and that do not address the achievement gap head on. It seeks to encourage and reward innovation and success, disseminate information on promising practice, and invest in data systems, research, and development in the form of promising practices. The administration aims to provide clearer directions to grantees, often incorporating a program's goal into its name. Case in point: Title I, Part A of ESEA, currently Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies, is renamed "College and Career Ready Students" in recognition of this priority.

The administration's proposed approach is to create more cogent programs that build on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act's funding to support critical reforms in our schools and the Race to the Top investments designed to reward state efforts leading to coherent, comprehensive statewide reforms—all in anticipation of a reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2010. Among the principles embedded in the new budget is a focus on increased competition among grantees with a move away from earmarks and noncompetitive grants. There is also the intent to seek greater returns from formula grants while increasing and concentrating funds where most needed. A layered strategy seems to be in place that overlays formula grants with competitive grants that incentivize innovation and ultimately provide content and evidence of success to be used by formula grantees.

Among strategies used is the consolidation of a number of small grants into larger, more flexible programs for states and local education agencies to configure as needs dictate. The proposed consolidations are designed to "reduce duplication and administrative costs

and improve program management, accountability” and the provision of services.⁴⁴ The administration’s ESEA reauthorization proposal will consolidate 38 existing programs into 11 new authorities. The new authorities include:

- Excellent Instructional Teams that includes three authorities: Effective Teachers and Leaders; Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund; and Teacher and Leader Pathways
- Effective Teaching and Learning for a Complete Education that includes: Effective Teaching and Learning: Literacy; Effective Teaching and Learning: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, or STEM; Effective Teaching and Learning for a Well-Rounded Education; and National Activities
- College Pathways and Accelerated Learning
- Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students
- Expanding Educational Outcomes

The president’s budget also presents a comprehensive early education through postsecondary education continuum of reforms based on a set of new expectations and goals that:

- All students will graduate from high school—college and career ready.
- The pre-K-12 accountability systems, standards, curriculum, and instruction will support these goals.
- Low-performing schools can be improved.
- More pathways and options will exist for students to graduate and successfully enter postsecondary education and training.
- Postsecondary innovations will support student retention and graduation.
- A focus on innovations will lead to better policies and instructional practices.
- The quality of the teaching force will improve based on aggressive and innovative recruitment and support strategies.
- Educators can and will be held accountable for the educational growth of their students.
- Data systems will be created to inform teachers, education leaders, parents, and funders.
- Research and evaluation efforts will determine the efficacy of federal, state, and local policies and programming.

The administration’s FY 2011 budget request identifies fewer programs for direct elimination than its FY 2010 request, which included the elimination of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities State Grants and the Mentoring, Character Education, and the National Institute for Literacy programs, allowing for the redirection of \$360.3 million to other program areas.⁴⁵ Instead, for this fiscal year, more programs are proposed for consolidation in keeping with the administration’s focus on fewer, more effective programs.

Among proposed consolidations for FY 2011, the administration requested \$410 million for a new Successful, Safe, and Healthy Students program authority, which will consolidate six programs: Alcohol Abuse Reduction, Elementary and Secondary School Counseling,

Foundations of Learning (also known as Grants to Improve Mental Health of Children), Mental Health Integration in Schools, Physical Education, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities National Activities.

The new program exceeds the FY 2010 total of the consolidated programs of \$365 million. Its purpose is to increase the flexibility of states and local education agencies to design strategies that support their needs. It also includes a national activities authority to support school emergency preparedness, comprehensive drug and violence prevention projects, and a clearinghouse of best practices.

The proposed Excellent Instructional Teams authority pulls together many of the teacher recruitment and improvement programs in ways that hopefully can begin to catalyze changes in the ways teachers are paid, rewarded, and retained. This proposal addresses many concerns raised earlier about disparate teacher quality, recruitment, and professional development programs. Under Excellent Instructional Teams are three components:

- Effective Teachers and Leaders State Grants, which provide formula grants to states and local education agencies to enhance the teaching profession, including efforts to support recruitment, preparation, retention, evaluation systems, and improvements in management of human capital. This program subsumes the Improving Teacher Quality State Grants and Ready to Teach, a national telecommunications-based program to improve teaching
- Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund, which provides competitive grants to states and local education agencies to implement bold approaches to improving the education workforce in high-need schools and the conditions to build strong leadership teams. This program subsumes the Teacher Incentive Fund and Advanced Credentialing.
- Teacher and Leader Pathways, a new program to support the creation of high-quality pathways for teachers and school leaders to turn around low-performing schools. This program subsumes Transition to Teaching, Teacher Quality Partnership, Teachers for a Competitive Tomorrow, Teach for America, and School Leadership.

Together these three components represent a \$3.855 billion request in the FY 2011 budget and an increase over the total of the antecedent programs of \$3.505 billion in FY 2010. The teacher recruitment program Troops to Teachers was transferred by statute to the Department of Defense in a move to simplify program management.

The four-component Effective Teaching and Learning for a Complete Education authority consolidates many of the subject specific programs, including literacy, STEM, and technology, and begins to address concerns expressed about the preponderance of disjointed professional development programs in discrete content areas.

The Effective Teaching and Learning for a Well-Rounded Education component would support competitive grants to high-need local education agencies and states in partnerships with high-need local education agencies to develop and expand innovative practices in foreign languages, the arts, civics, geography, economics, and other subjects. This larger program would replace Excellence in Economic Education, Teaching American History, Arts in Education, Foreign Language Assistance, Academies for American History and Civics, Close Up Fellowships, and Civic Education (including We the People and Cooperative Education Exchange) with a more flexible approach for local education agencies. The combined FY 2010 appropriation for these programs was \$226.1 million. The FY 2011 request for the Effective Teaching and Learning for a Well-Rounded Education program is \$265 million.

Even Start is proposed for consolidation, along with other literacy programs (Literacy Through Libraries, National Writing Project, Reading is Fundamental, Ready-to-Learn Television, and Striving Readers) into the Effective Teaching and Learning Literacy component. The FY 2011 budget request for the consolidated Literacy program is \$450 million. This represents an increase over the total of the antecedent programs (\$413.3 million in FY 2010).

Funds for the Javits Gifted and Talented Education would be folded into the proposed College Pathways and Accelerated Learning program along with the High School Graduation Initiative and Advanced Placement. The focus of the College Pathways program is to increase graduation rates, improve college preparation, and support accelerated learning opportunities in high-poverty schools. The FY 2011 request for the consolidated program is \$100 million, slightly less than the total appropriation for the three antecedent programs in FY 2010 of \$103.3 million.

The Voluntary Public School Choice program has been consolidated into a larger competitive Expanding Educational Options program that includes the antecedent Charter School Grants, Parent Information and Resource Center, and Smaller Learning Communities. The FY 2011 request for Expanded Education Options is \$490 million, an increase over the \$409.1 million appropriation for the combined programs in FY 2010.

Finally, Career and Technical Education, Tech Prep State Grants, representing \$102.9 million in FY 2010 appropriations, would be folded into the Basic State Grant Program whose charge encompasses similar programs.

Programs that will remain with some modifications include the Women's Education Equity Act program, with a requested \$2.3 million for a more targeted program focus on improving the achievement of women and girls in mathematics and science, and the Magnet Schools Assistance program with a \$110 million request focused on funding models or magnet schools with records of raising student achievement and reducing racial isolation.

Also remaining but with modification is the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, for which a redesign is proposed that would expand learning time for academic and enrichment opportunities, and allow more time for teachers to collaborate and improve instruction. The program would also support the implementation of full-service community schools. Instead of funneling dollars through formula grants, the program will make competitive grants to states, districts, and district-nonprofit partnerships. The administration's FY 2011's budget proposal is at the FY 2010 level of \$1.17 billion.

Although the administration's proposed FY 2011 budget does not represent a belt tightening of the federal girth, its efforts to reorganize, eliminate, and combine existing programs into larger, more inclusive ones is commendable and aligned with many of the observations made in this report. A number of programs recommended by the Center for American Progress for elimination will be continued, but they will be given a fresh face in line with the lessons learned from past evaluations, new research, and new priorities of this administration.

Conclusion

More disadvantaged students are reaching academic proficiency, according to recent state testing data. But we are still not on pace to meet the goal of 100 percent proficiency by the 2013-14 school year, as set forth by the No Child Left Behind Act. Although this deadline would be superseded by the Obama administration's blueprint for reauthorizing the No Child Left Behind Act, the current version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, expectations for student achievement would actually be raised as college- and work-ready standards are put in place. Reaching this new goal will require us to marshal all available resources and array them in new ways.

Currently, we are not maximizing the returns on our education investments. Many federal education grant programs are too narrow—serving niche purposes of limited reach. Others are too general—permitting resources to be wasted on ineffective strategies. And others are duplicative—serving similar purposes, students, and educators.

The cuts and reforms recommended in this report represent a new approach to education spending. This approach favors competitive, flexible grants over weakly targeted or underfunded formula grants and sole-source grants. It targets funding at proven strategies, where need is greatest, and in amounts sufficient to make a difference.

The Obama administration and many leaders in Congress express support for this approach. With the FY 2011 budget now in process, it is time to question old practices, hold firm to principles, and redirect funding to support the goal of increasing student achievement and closing achievement gaps. Now is the time to act.

Endnotes

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Glenda L. Partee’s career extends over three decades in research and youth policy, including education and employment preparation, in the public and nonprofit sectors, and community involvement in the District of Columbia. She served with the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education, formerly the State Education Office, in a variety of positions, including assistant superintendent for postsecondary and workforce readiness and director of policy research and analysis. She also worked extensively on citywide efforts, including the Mayor’s Literacy Initiative, the Double the Numbers effort to increase the numbers of D.C. youth who graduate from high school and succeed in postsecondary education, and an interagency group to improve and coordinate services for the incarcerated. Prior to her work with District of Columbia government, Partee served for 10 years as the co-director of the American Youth Policy Forum, developing learning events and policy reports to enhance the professional effectiveness of senior policy aides in education and youth development. For a decade she worked at the Council of Chief State School Officers on a variety of education issues, including school-to-work, youth employment, early childhood, and family education.

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