

The proposed Title I sets forth a goal of educational excellence and equity for all students. It sets high standards, something that has not been done in the past.

CHAPTER 1: A Time For Change

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As background to the history of Title I, renamed Chapter 1 in 1981, one must review a series of demands placed upon the American educational system during the postwar years. These demands were unprecedented in scope and magnitude. The deferment of capital outlays for school improvement after ten years of a depression resulted in many old, deteriorating, and overcrowded buildings. The postwar baby boom placed great strains on American schools. In 1955, 1,351,000 students graduated from American high schools, by 1965, that number jumped to 2,567,000.¹ Concurrently, with the school population growth was the knowledge and technology explosion. Sputnik, in 1957, dramatized the educational shortfalls of American public schools.

Along with these demands on the American educational system, domestic decisions and legislation in the areas of civil rights and poverty provided important benchmarks in the development of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. In 1954, with the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, the Supreme Court overturned the longstanding *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling which declared that racial segregation was permitted in "separate but equal" schools. The *Brown* ruling declared that separate facilities are inherently unequal. The *Brown* ruling also made visible the condition of the education of African-Americans in this country and further emphasized the social, economic, and educational costs of prejudice, segregation, economic deprivation, and poverty. Passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a powerful tool in advancing the Supreme Court's desegregation ruling. A consequence of this historic decision and legislation was the flight of white middle-class citizens to the suburbs as American public schools, particularly in cities, were faced with an influx of pupils unfamiliar with the traditional middle-class orientation of urban education.

By the early 1960s, poverty and cultural deprivation became key issues to the nation's economic health. Large areas of unemployment and poverty were evident in the cities and rural areas. Poverty legislation was addressed by President

Johnson's Task Force on the War Against Poverty. The result was the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 which created various programs such as the Job Corps, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, Adult Basic Education and Community Action Programs. The War on Poverty entered into the schools with the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. A major step toward alleviating poverty and cultural deprivation was Title I of the Act, which authorized more than 1 billion dollars per year to be spent on meeting the needs of educationally disadvantaged children. The purpose of Chapter 1 remains the same today to provide financial assistance to local education agencies (LEAs) to meet the special needs of educationally deprived children who live in areas with high concentrations of children from low-income families.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Title I/Chapter 1 operated at the federal and state levels essentially as a financial aid program, relying on compliance with two key statutory provisions: 1) comparability meaning that Chapter 1 schools must receive state and local resources comparable to those given other schools in the district; and 2) supplement, not supplant meaning Chapter 1 funds at the school were in addition to, not in place of, state and local funds. Students were to receive the same basic program as other children, and receive additional instruction through Chapter 1 funds. Together, these two provisions were designed to ensure that Chapter 1 students received more funds and hence more services than non-Chapter 1 students. The underlying principle was that, if you could ensure that Chapter 1 schools received their fair share of state and local resources (comparability) and that Chapter 1 funds supplemented normal services, the performance of Chapter 1 students should improve. There was no need to change the regular education program. Rather, Chapter 1 could be added to it. Federal and state efforts, therefore, were directed toward compliance with these statutory provisions, and the performance of Chapter 1 students did indeed improve but not as much as hoped.

Poverty and Achievement

Title I and Chapter 1 have been based on the premise that a relationship exists between school achievement and poverty. It is a widely held belief that poor children are more likely to experience academic difficulty in school. Lawmakers have continuously debated the issue of who should be eligible for funds, poor students regardless of their academic achievement or low achieving students regardless of their family's income level. In spite of appeals to change allocation to the basis of achievement, Congress decided to continue the procedure of the allocation of funds to schools and school districts on the basis of poverty levels.

in part because of the dubious feasibility of implementing an achievement criterion and in part because achievement criteria would effectively reward those school districts which had large numbers of low-achieving students, thus perhaps encouraging them to teach their students less rather than more.²

Once school districts have been selected and services established in schools, the students are chosen on the basis of educational need rather than on the basis of the family's income level. The student who participates in Chapter 1 is there due to both circumstances and academic performance.

Research has demonstrated that the official poverty status of a family is weakly related to student achievement but a strong association exists between student achievement and the intensity of the student's poverty experience.³ A family's official poverty status does not reflect the intensity of the poverty experience. It should be noted that Chapter 1 uses the official poverty status of a family as reported by the census data to allocate funds.

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Student achievement also declines as school poverty increases. According to the Prospects Study, the average achievement for all students in high poverty schools is about the same as the average achievement for Chapter 1 students in low-poverty schools. Chapter 1 students in high-poverty schools score below other Chapter 1 students.⁴

Current Operation

Today, Chapter 1 is the largest federal program of assistance to elementary and secondary schools. Chapter 1 now serves one in every nine school-age children in the United States.⁵ In 1988, Chapter 1 of Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 was amended as part of the Augustus F. Hawkins–Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments (P.L. 100–297) which expired September 30, 1993. However, general education law provides an extension through September 30, 1994.

For school year 1990–91, 4.8 billion dollars in Chapter 1 funds were allocated to local school districts and 5.5 million students were served at prekindergarten through senior high school levels.⁶ Chapter 1 currently serves virtually every school district in the country. Funds are allocated to every county that has more than 10 poor children as determined by census counts. Three-fourths of all public elementary schools, about one-half of middle/junior high schools and one-fourth of senior high schools participate in Chapter 1. In addition to serving more than 5 million students in 52,000 public schools, Chapter 1 serves about 168,000 students who attend private schools. The majority of private school students receiving Chapter 1 services attend Catholic schools, live in public school attendance areas served by Chapter 1, and are low achieving students. Seventy percent of Chapter 1 public schools are elementary schools, 12 percent are middle or junior high schools, 5 percent are senior high schools and the remainder are combined elementary and secondary schools (8 percent) or combined junior and senior high schools (2 percent).⁷

Reading and mathematics are the primary subjects for instruction in Chapter 1. At the elementary level, 96 percent of the schools provide reading instruction in the Chapter 1 program and 69 percent of the schools provide instruction in mathematics in the Chapter 1 program. At the middle/senior high school level, 94 percent of the schools provide reading instruction while 69 percent provide mathematics instruction. Language Arts instruction, also prominent in Chapter 1 programs, was reported in 41 percent of elementary schools and 43 percent of middle/senior high schools.⁸

Multiple instructional designs are allowable, with the selection of a design the responsibility of the local school district. The limited pullout and in-class instruction dominate Chapter 1 program design. Eighty-two percent of school districts report using the limited pullout design where students receive Chapter 1 instruction outside of the regular classroom during the regular school day. This instruction may not exceed 25 percent of the total instructional time in that subject matter. Sixty-two percent of school districts report using the in-class design where students receive Chapter 1 instruction from Chapter 1 teachers or aides in the regular classroom.⁹

Large school districts (more than 25,000 students) are more likely than smaller school districts to offer variety in program design. Similarly, high poverty school districts are more likely than low poverty school districts to offer more diversity in program design. For the school year 1990–91, the median number of students served in both the in-class and limited pullout design settings for each instructional period in both reading and mathematics was four. This is a decrease from the median of five students estimated by Chapter 1 teachers for the 1985–86 school year. The median minutes of instruction per week in the reading limited pullout program was 150. For in-

class Chapter 1 instruction, the median was 135 minutes. The median minutes of instruction per week for mathematics was slightly less.¹⁰ One should note caution in using the median number with district level data because many school districts serve few students while there are large numbers of Chapter 1 students in the big city school districts. District level data, which counts very small districts the same as very large ones, may produce distorted information.

Reform in the 1988 Legislation

The basic purpose of Chapter 1 has remained constant to provide extra educational services to low-achieving students who live in low-income neighborhoods. The debate over how to increase the program's effectiveness in improving the education of the students it serves is also constant. Thus, in preparation for the program's reauthorization in 1988, Congress mandated a study of Chapter 1's effectiveness. The report concluded that, while Chapter 1 had been effective in raising the achievement of the disadvantaged students it served, it had not been effective in closing the gap between Chapter 1 students and their more advantaged counterparts. Relying on data from a number of sources, including aggregate achievement data collected by the U.S. Department of Education, the study reported three major effects of the program on student achievement.

- Students receiving Chapter 1 services experience larger increases in their standardized achievement test scores than comparable students who do not receive Chapter 1 instruction. However, their gains do not move them substantially toward the achievement levels of more advantaged students.
- Students participating in Chapter 1 mathematics programs gain more than those participating in Chapter 1 reading programs.
- Students in early elementary Chapter 1 programs gain more than students participating in later-grade programs.¹¹

These findings led to a new approach to meeting the goal of improving the education of low-achieving students from low-income neighborhoods, called program improvement, but program improvement presented a dilemma for school administrators. For the first time, the federal government required that school districts identify schools that failed to show improved achievement for the lowest achieving students and resources must be targeted for those schools which did not show improvement. The regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education reflected the position that the federal government should not set standards for improvement, except to reinforce the stated intent of Congress that Chapter 1 students should show improvement "beyond what a student of a particular age or grade level . . . would be expected to make during the period being measured if the child had no additional help."¹²

This legislative provision mandates that a school district evaluate annually the effectiveness of its Chapter 1 program. To achieve this mandate, local school districts are required to establish realistic and measurable program outcomes. At least one of these outcome measures, aggregate achievement, must be stated in terms consistent with the national method for evaluating Chapter 1 programs, which currently uses gains in normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores derived from norm-referenced tests. A normal curve equivalent is a standard score derived by dividing the normal curve into 98 equal intervals. There are 98 equidistant NCEs between the 1st and 99th percentiles. Chapter 1's reliance on standardized tests has been the subject of considerable controversy. Cultural bias, non-alignment with the curriculum, narrowness of the test and other general criticisms of standardized tests apply to their use in Chapter 1 program evaluation. In addition, this reliance has led

to the charge that, to avoid identification as schools in need of improvement, Chapter 1 has focused instruction on the low level skills which tests often measure. Thus, the test has determined what is taught, rather than the curriculum prescribing what should be tested.

Both state and local educational agencies urged that the respective agencies should establish the gain standards. The regulations subsequently adopted by the Department of Education took the position that any gain in terms of NCEs, even a fractional one, would suffice. The regulations were neutral on the setting of additional standards by state educational agencies or local school districts, although the intent of the law appears to differentiate between achievement gains on standardized norm-referenced tests and desired outcome measures. While most states have placed more emphasis on student outcomes and program improvement and less emphasis on monitoring for compliance, the majority of states have established standards which make minimal gains in achievement acceptable and, in general, few states have adopted additional outcome measures. Table 1 documents the standards in terms of gain scores used to determine aggregate performance and the state implementing the standard. Gain scores are derived by pre- and post-testing Chapter 1 students on a 12 month cycle (e.g., spring to spring), ranking the matched scores on a normal curve equivalent scale, and comparing the scores from year to year.

Table 1. Chapter 1 Aggregate Performance Standards for the 1992-93 School Year

Standard State/Agency	
NCE gain must exceed 0.	HI*, IL*, KS*, AL, AK, CA, CT, GA, ID, IA, MT, NE, NH, NJ, NM, PA, PR, TX, UT, VT, WA
NCE gains must exceed 1.	AZ, DC, DE, IN, KY, LA, ME, MA, MN, MO, MS, NY, NC, OH, OK, RI, SC, SD, VA
Gains must exceed +1 percentile.	FL
NCE gains must exceed 2.	BIA, CO, MD, NV, ND, OR, TN, WV, WY
NCE gains must exceed 2.5.	AR
NCE gains must exceed 3.	MI, WI

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Chapter 1 coordinators survey (Unpublished data), 1993.

*Note: States which use a second standard.

Hawaii— Sixty percent of the Chapter 1 students will score greater than 0 NCE.

Illinois— Twenty-five percent or more of the Chapter 1 students show 0 or less NCE gains.

More than one-third of the grade levels in individual school buildings show 0 or less NCE gains.

Kansas— More than 50 percent of the grades will have positive gains.

The legislative intent, to improve the academic achievement of Chapter 1 students, presents a dilemma that stems from other provisions of the legislation and from regulations related to program improvement. Schools which fail to make substantial progress in achieving their specified outcomes are identified as in need of program improvement. This targeting procedure promotes the establishment of low standards for student achievement so that schools can avoid the label of "in need of improvement," creating two problems. First, major

effort is expended on the identification process with lesser attention on program improvement activities. Second, it leads to the false assumption that the schools not identified as ineffective but in reality, having little success in improving student performance, do not need to improve. Thus, little attention may be paid to schools which are at best marginally successful.

Linking program improvement to the identification of ineffective programs, while logical, also poses a problem for state and local education agencies when they set standards. If school administrators set high standards to comply with legislative intent, they will identify many schools for program improvement, the school district will be subject to criticism, and the states will be unable to help the large number of schools identified as in need of improvement. If administrators set low standards, they will identify few schools for program improvement, and schools with marginal gains will be perceived as effective. Thus, the dilemma emerges between the negative connotation of identification and the positive connotation of the goal of program improvement.

To further complicate the issue, the minimum standards adopted by the states are below the current average gain score in basic skills achieved by Chapter 1 students. In the 1987-88 school year prior to the 1988 amendments, the average NCE gain score for students in reading was 3.0 and for mathematics was 4.3.¹³ Congress, in enacting the program improvement provisions, indicated that these gains were not acceptable and sought further improvement. However, in setting acceptable gain scores for schools, the states consistently set levels below the average gains achieved prior to the reauthorization. Thus, the states set levels for acceptable progress which Congress had already determined were not acceptable. For the 1990-91 school year, the most recent year for which national data are available, the U.S. Department of Education reported that the average gain in basic skills for Chapter 1 students in reading based on a 12-month testing cycle was 3.5 NCEs and the average mathematics gain was 4.9 NCEs.¹⁴ Yet, only two states, Michigan and Wisconsin, set standards near the national average.

State and local education agencies identified 13,419 schools in need of program improvement during the 1992-93 school year. Twenty-five percent of all Chapter 1 schools were identified using the current standards.¹⁵ In spite of its drawbacks, program improvement has increased accountability, since, prior to its adoption, no effort to identify and help poor performing schools was required.

The statutory provision that reauthorized Chapter 1 does not limit evaluation solely to national standards but allows state and local educational agencies to establish other desired outcomes in terms of basic and more advanced skills. The Chapter 1 policy manual for local educational agencies encourages the use of additional evaluation measures and provides specific suggestions. The policy manual also stresses that these outcomes should be consistent with those expected for all students.

Other statutory provisions were strengthened to increase the effectiveness of Chapter 1 programs. In particular, the reauthorization expanded schoolwide projects, which provided added flexibility for programs in very high poverty schools. A schoolwide project is designed to upgrade the entire educational program in a school. Schools with a high percentage of students in poverty (i.e., 75 percent or more) may initiate schoolwide projects without the pre-1988 requirement of matching funds for non-disadvantaged students. The legislation requires that schoolwide projects demonstrate that Chapter 1 eligible students are benefitting from the program. Most important, however, is that schoolwide projects, unlike other Chapter 1 projects seek to change the basic instructional program students receive rather than add to the program.

Thus, the basic program, not a Chapter 1 add-on activity, becomes the focus for Chapter 1. The original Chapter 1 focus, like Head Start, is based on the deficit model, with the students having the deficiency. Schoolwide projects, on the other hand, view the deficit within the school.

Unfortunately, schoolwide project participation has not been widely embraced by school districts. For the 1992-93 school year, only 33 percent of eligible schools were conducting schoolwide projects. More importantly, a survey of principals operating schoolwide projects for the school year 1991-92 found that the major reasons for implementing a schoolwide project were management related (e.g., can serve more students; student needs can be met more effectively; smaller class size; more flexibility, better use of materials and equipment; improved scheduling of services etc.) rather than general improvement of the instructional program in the school. Indeed, increased student achievement was rated 17th out of 23 responses to the major advantages of having a schoolwide project.¹⁶

The 1988 legislation also mandated that attention to advanced skills, in addition to basic skills, be part of the Chapter 1 program. Yet basic skills continue to dominate Chapter 1 programs. For the 1991-92 school year, Millsap, Moss and Gamse¹⁷ reported that 84 percent of elementary school teachers indicated that practice in basic skills drill was a major focus of Chapter 1 reading instruction. Only 29 percent reported that development of higher order thinking skills was the major focus of the Chapter 1 reading instruction. The picture is even more dismal for mathematics. Ninety-seven percent of elementary teachers indicated that drill and practice characterized Chapter 1 mathematics instruction while only 21 percent responded that the development of higher-order thinking skills was the major focus of Chapter 1 mathematics instruction. This situation may be partially the result of the use of norm-referenced tests, which more directly measure basic skills than advanced skills as required by Chapter 1's evaluation mechanism and the determinant for "in need of program improvement."

Major issues for reauthorization

Many lessons have been learned from the Title I/Chapter 1 experience over the years. Studies have produced significant findings to support policy change. During the 1970s, Chapter 1 focused on equal educational opportunities and basic skills. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed a decrease in the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their more advantaged counterparts. In more recent years, progress appears to have stalled and according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the achievement gap may be widening. Prospects, a longitudinal assessment of Chapter 1 students' progress, presents evidence that Chapter 1 is no longer closing the gap between disadvantaged students and their more advantaged counterparts. The study reported:

- Chapter 1 participants did not improve their relative standing in reading or math in the 4th grade or in math in the 8th grade; only 8th grade reading participants showed improvement relative to their peers.
- The progress of Chapter 1 participants on standardized tests and on criterion-referenced tests was no better than that of nonparticipants with similar backgrounds and prior achievement.¹⁸

In addition, the report indicated that the performance of students in the highest poverty schools (i.e., at least 75 percent poor students) actually declines as the student progresses through the grades. These students enter school academically behind their peers in low poverty schools and the achievement gap increases.

As with previous reauthorizations, a number of reports were issued with recommendations for changes in Chapter 1. A major report was issued by the Independent Review Panel of the National Assessment of Chapter 1. This panel was established by Congress in the 1990 National Assessment of Chapter 1 (P.L. 101-305). The Panel issued a list of deterrents in the Chapter 1 program which hinder the quality of education provided to the nation's disadvantaged students.

- The Chapter 1 program is strongly rooted in the notion that 30 minutes a day of individual instruction will raise a child's achievement to what is "expected" for the child's age or grade. In fact, the whole school program needs reforming.
- The highest de facto aim of the Chapter 1 program is to help children achieve low-level basic skills; the program is considered a success if children do not fall further behind. In fact, basic and higher-order skills need to be learned together, and high standards set for all children.
- The current system for allocating funds serves as a disincentive to raising the performance of participants to the highest levels they are capable of achieving, because once test scores show improvement, funds are reallocated to students and schools with lower scores. Chapter 1 funds should be allocated to eligible schools on a per-poor-pupil basis and retained to sustain academic improvement.
- Money is spread among too many districts and schools. Many high-poverty schools and very low achieving students receive no assistance, while affluent schools receive funds for some students who score above the 50th percentile. Funds need to be better targeted on schools with high concentrations of poverty.
- Testing requirements are burdensome and fail to serve any of their multiple intended purposes well. Norm-referenced, multiple-choice tests often are an impediment to good teaching and high achievement because teachers drill students on discrete items of information instead of engaging them in interpretation and problem solving. A new assessment system is needed.¹⁹

Concurrently, The Commission on Chapter 1, a group independent of U.S. Department of Education, convened to develop a new framework for Chapter 1. The Commission on Chapter 1 brought together a diverse group of individuals with differing experience and expertise but they shared concern on the plight of economically disadvantaged students in the public schools. Like the Independent Review Panel, the Commission also developed a list of critical deficiencies related to Chapter 1. Their list included:

- A continued focus on remediation that denies the richness of learning to those who need more, not less, of what makes education engaging and exciting;
- So much focus on accounting for dollars that attention is deflected from results;
- Resources spread too thinly to make a difference in the neediest schools;
- Methods for evaluating progress that are antiquated (and downright harmful); and
- A perverse incentive structure that discourages schools from working hard to improve student performance.²⁰

The last item is in reference to Chapter 1's method of allocating dollars to schools based on educational achievement. If schools do well and have fewer low performing students, they receive less money. The Commission also added that a more basic problem with the Chapter 1 program is its add-on instructional design. Both reports included problems with instructional design, fund allocation, low standards, and testing and evaluation.

Both the Panel and the Commission issued recommendations for changes in the Chapter 1 legislation based on identified deficiencies or deterrents to the program's effectiveness. The Independent Review Panel presented 13 recommendations centered around five themes:

- Reforming the whole school, establishing high standards, and implementing new assessments;
- Preventing learning failure, intervening early, and including all students;
- Targeting to reach schools and students most in need;
- Resources required to support the new focus for Chapter 1; and
- Special Chapter 1 programs (e.g., private school students or migrant students).²¹

Closely related recommendations were issued by The Commission on Chapter 1. The Commission's Framework consisted of the following:

- Component One: Have states set clear, high standards.
- Component Two: New systems to assess progress toward standards.
- Component Three: Inform parents on how well their children are progressing toward the standards and how they can help.
- Component Four: Invest heavily in teachers, principals, and other adults in the school.
- Component Five: Match funding to need and assure equity.
- Component Six: Replace accounting for dollars with accountability for results.
- Component Seven: Integrate health and social service support.
- Component Eight: Reward schools that progress and change those that don't.²²

The U.S. Department of Education closely reviewed these reports in preparation for the reauthorization. In addition, the Department summarized a number of problems, identified in previous evaluations and reports, to document why Chapter 1 has not achieved its intended goal and why changes must be made. The problems identified in the structure and operations include the following:

- Chapter 1 programs have reinforced low expectations.
- Chapter 1 operates as an add-on program that works on the margins.
- As a supplementary program, Chapter 1 has little effect on the regular program of instruction, where children in Chapter 1 spend almost their whole day.
- Chapter 1 frequently does not contribute to high-quality instruction.
- Chapter 1 is not generally tied to state and local reform efforts, either in assessment or in the instruction it drives.
- While the 1988 Hawkins-Stafford Amendments established new parental involvement requirements, this effort needs to be strengthened.
- Chapter 1 is not doing enough to ensure that the multiple needs of students in high poverty schools are met.
- Dollars are spread too thinly to be effective.²³

The Department's proposal for reauthorization acknowledges the fact that the current Chapter 1 structure is not adequate to enable the nation to meet the National Education Goals or to achieve the high standard of performance envisioned by the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. The Department's proposed plan for Chapter 1 attempts to reform the program so that all students in America "will develop the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind we once expected of only our top students."²⁴ The proposed plan also reverts the name from Chapter 1 back to Title I.

It should be noted that it is not only Chapter 1 which is to be reauthorized by this Congress but the entire Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The proposed program

has been submitted to Congress under the title "Improving America's Schools Act of 1993." It is difficult to separate the changes in the Chapter 1 program from the other sections of the proposed Act because the themes of reform appear in each program. Thus, the Department has developed its proposal for all of ESEA around five major themes or directions:

- High standards for all children with the elements of education aligned, so that everything is working together to help all students reach those standards.
- A focus on teaching and learning.
- Flexibility to stimulate local school-based and district initiative, coupled with responsibility for student performance.
- Links among schools, parents, and communities.
- Resources targeted to where needs are greatest and in amounts sufficient to make a difference.²⁵

High standards are a major priority in the Department's proposal. Under the proposal, Title 1 would be tied directly to state and local reform efforts which would include challenging performance and content standards for all children. States would develop content and performance standards as well as assessments which would ensure that the performance expectations of Title I students would be the same as other students. The proposal includes three benchmarks or levels of performance: proficient, advanced and an unnamed level below proficient which would be used to determine if the lowest performing students are moving toward proficiency, but would be not at an acceptable level.

Additionally, the schoolwide projects program would be expanded in the 1995-96 school year to first include all schools with a 65 percent poverty level, and beginning in 1996-97, schools with a 50 percent poverty level would be included. This change is based on the premise that in order for students in high poverty schools to achieve high standards of performance, their entire instructional program, not simply the Title I program, must be altered.

Title I schools would be required to demonstrate sufficient yearly progress toward achievement of the high state performance standards based on state assessment systems established under Goals 2000 or for states not participating in that program under Title I. Schools failing to make sufficient progress would be identified as in need of improvement and would receive technical assistance from their school district while schools which regularly surpass state standards of progress would receive recognition. Likewise, school districts with large numbers of schools which fail to make sufficient progress would be provided technical assistance, and school districts which regularly exceed the state standards of sufficient progress would be recognized.

The proposed Title I focuses on teaching and learning through the promotion of school based decision making in conjunction with the school district in determining the most efficient use of funds to best meet the needs of students. The proposal also emphasizes intensive and on-going professional development. The professional development would facilitate the development of curriculum and instructional strategies which assist students in meeting the state performance standards. A new section in the legislation would authorize the support of demonstration projects which show exceptional promise of improving the achievement of students in high poverty schools. This section of the proposal would also provide for a national evaluation of the demonstration projects and the dissemination of effective projects for replication at new sites.

Flexibility is illustrated by the expanded schoolwide project regulations, school based decision making to allow the most efficient use of funds, and simplification of selection procedures for limited English proficient students (LEP) or students with disabilities. It is often difficult to establish that a student's limited educational progress results from a disadvantaged

background rather than a disability or limited proficiency in English. This section of the proposed legislation would reduce unnecessary assessment procedures.

In addition, accountability procedures would be strengthened through the use of new state assessment systems aligned with the state content and performance standards. The standards and assessment systems would be used to measure the achievement of all students.

Linkages between schools, parents and communities would be fostered in a number of ways. Increased parent involvement would be emphasized through "1) policy involvement at the school and district level; 2) shared responsibility for high performance, embodied in school-parent compacts; and 3) building school and parent capacity for involvement."²⁶ Additionally, school community relations would be strengthened to better meet the needs of Title I students by encouraging the concept of integrated services with other educational agencies, particularly Head Start, and social service programs. Specifically, LEAs would be required "to ensure the provision of health screening to children in high-poverty elementary schools for early identification of health problems that hinder learning."²⁷

Finally, the proposal would attempt to target resources where the need is the greatest through a revised allocation formula. The major change in the formula would be to adjust the amount of funds currently allocated to concentration grants which only are awarded to higher poverty school districts from 10 percent to 50 percent and to change the poverty threshold for concentration grants to 18 percent (the current national average) from the current 15 percent. Under the current allocation formula, the highest poverty quartile school districts receive 43 percent of the Chapter 1 funds while the lowest poverty quartile school districts receive 11 percent of the Chapter 1 funds. Under the proposed allocation formula, the highest poverty quartile school districts would receive 50 percent of the Title I funds and the lowest poverty quartile school districts would receive seven percent of the Title I funds. Forty-five percent of the nation's poor school-age children are included in the highest poverty quartile while only 10 percent of the nation's poor school-age children are included in the lowest poverty quartile. Another requirement would mandate school districts to serve all schools with at least 75 percent of children in poverty before serving other schools. This requirement would ensure that that high poverty middle/junior high and high schools receive Title I assistance.

Conclusions

The proposed Title I sets forth a goal of educational excellence and equity for **all** students. It sets a standard for what will be expected of **all** students. It sets high standards, something that has not been done in the past. It is a Federal commitment to helping disadvantaged students achieve the national goals. Most important, it recognizes that changes must be made in the basic instructional program to improve the achievement of educationally disadvantaged students and that the basic program, not a Chapter 1 add-on program, is responsible for results. The proposal is a major step forward providing a logical approach based on research findings. However, there are unanswered questions.

- Will members of Congress from less poor areas support loss of funds in their area to increase funds for more needy areas?
- Chapter 1 funds constitute a small portion of total public school dollars. The Department's approach seeks to use Title I/Chapter 1 funds to leverage expenditure of state and local dollars. Will these funds be sufficient to promote total school restructuring?

- Do educators truly believe that **all** students can achieve high standards in the public school setting? While it may be politically correct to accept this proposition, that may be a long way from true acceptance.
- Implementation of the proposal is a major step which is not addressed. It is easy to say that **all** students will achieve high standards but very difficult to achieve. The Department's proposal may appear naive to educators who each day must confront problems far beyond the scope of the school. Who will design new instructional strategies, how will the school day be restructured to provide more time for learning, how will the multiple needs of students be addressed?

More than 25 years of experience and multiple research studies have shed much light on the needed changes. Whatever the outcome of the legislation, the result should be an improved Chapter 1/Title I the largest federal programs to public elementary and secondary schools.

Endnotes

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3. See note 2.
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25. See note 18, pp. Introduction 5—Introduction 16.

26. See note 18, p. Title I-11.

27. See note 18, p. Title I-11.