



No Child Left Behind: Expanding the Promise

Guide to President Bush's FY 2006 Education Agenda



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February 2005

U.S. Department of Education

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Margaret Spellings

Secretary

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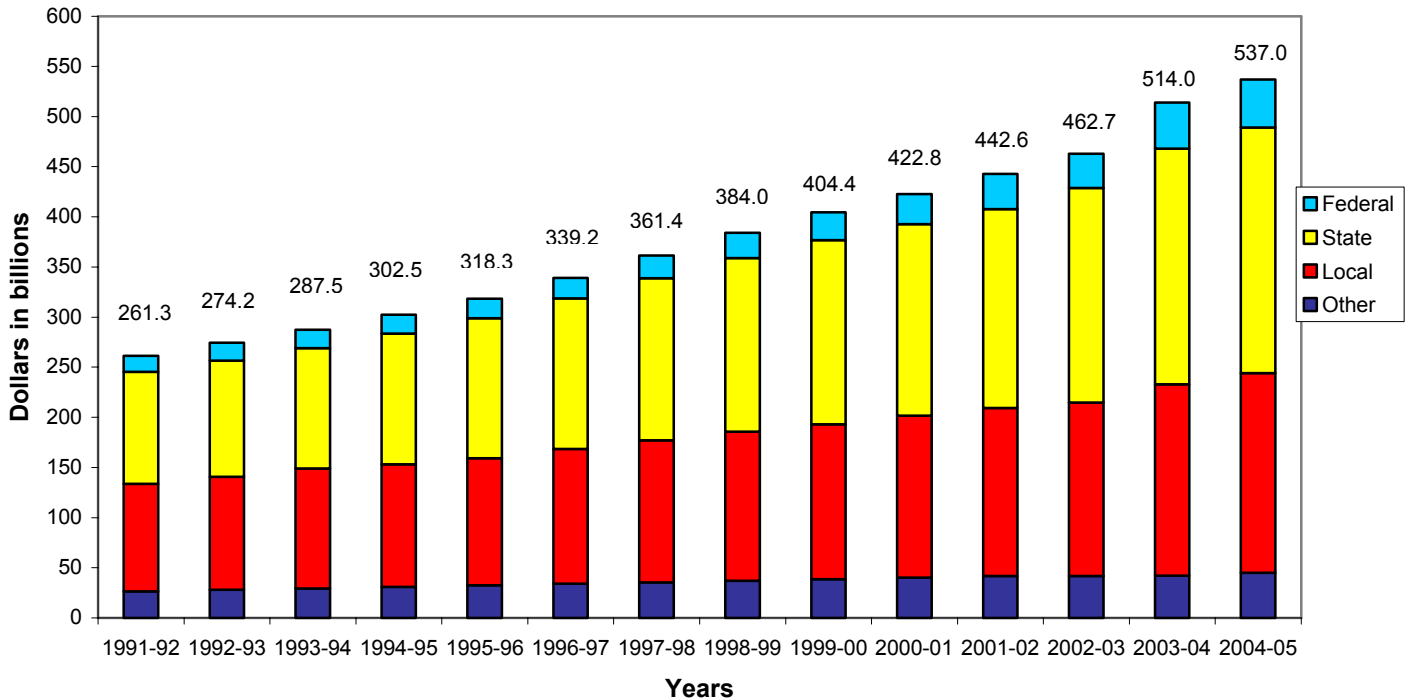
NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: EXPANDING THE PROMISE

Guide to President Bush's FY 2006 Education Agenda

Three years ago, President George W. Bush signed into law the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*, which reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*. The new law reflected an unprecedented, bipartisan commitment to ensuring that all students, regardless of background, have the opportunity to obtain a quality education and reach proficiency in core academic subjects. To reach this goal, *NCLB* refocused federal education programs on the principles of stronger accountability for results, more choices for parents and students, greater flexibility for states and school districts, and the use of research-based instructional methods.

Since the enactment of *No Child Left Behind*, President Bush and the Department of Education have worked with Congress to provide states, school districts, and schools with the resources and other assistance needed to quickly and effectively implement the new law. The president's FY 2006 budget proposal would result in the following increases since FY 2001, the last year before the passage of *NCLB*:

Expenditures for Elementary and Secondary Education



- An \$8 billion, or 46 percent, increase for *No Child Left Behind* programs;

- A \$10.3 billion increase in overall funding for federal elementary and secondary education programs;
- An increase of \$4.6 billion, or 52 percent, for Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies—the key driver of *NCLB* reforms; and
- A \$4.8 billion or 75 percent increase for Part B Grants to States under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA).

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, standards are higher, test scores are on the rise, and we're closing the achievement gap for minority students.

--President George W. Bush

This increased funding is justified by the stronger accountability that *No Child Left Behind* has brought to our education system. States have set academic achievement standards and adequate yearly progress measures to ensure that all students are proficient in reading and mathematics by school year 2013-14. Beginning in the 2005-06 school year, all students in grades three through eight will be assessed in reading and math to measure school and school district performance, and to help teachers and principals identify weaknesses and make needed changes in instructional practice. A critical change—and the key to ensuring that no child is left behind—is that schools are considered to have made adequate yearly progress only if all student groups, including poor and minority students, students with limited English proficiency, and students with disabilities receive the quality education they deserve.

Schools and districts that do not make sufficient progress toward proficiency goals are identified for improvement, and students attending such schools are given the option of transferring to better-performing public schools. Low-income students attending schools identified for improvement for two or more years may obtain supplemental educational services, such as tutoring and other academic assistance, from the public- or private-sector provider of their choice, with costs paid by the school district.

According to the *Chicago Sun-Times*, Chicago public school children who transferred from schools in need of improvement to higher-performing schools under *NCLB* showed substantial improvements in reading and math scores.

This combination of increased funding and stronger accountability is beginning to produce real results. Recent studies of state achievement data show that reading and mathematics scores are up in most states and that achievement gaps among racial and ethnic groups have begun to narrow. While many have claimed that *NCLB* sets the bar too high, a majority of states reported that more schools met adequate yearly progress (AYP) targets in the 2003-04 school year than in the previous year.

A SECOND-TERM EDUCATION AGENDA

President Bush begins his second term of office determined to continue the work started by the *No Child Left Behind Act*. His FY 2006 budget request would begin this task by strengthening the

impact of *NCLB* in our high schools and by reforming the Pell Grant program to ensure its financial stability. Pell Grants offer critical financial assistance to help lower-income students—the very students who are the focus of *No Child Left Behind*—pursue a postsecondary education. The Pell Grant increases would be paid for through a comprehensive set of student loan program reforms that would deliver a total of more than \$27 billion in benefits to postsecondary students over the next 10 years. In addition, the State Scholars program, for which President Bush’s budget provides \$12 million, works to ensure that more high school students have the solid academic foundation necessary to succeed in both postsecondary education settings and in an increasingly competitive labor market.

We see more students reaching higher levels of achievement on state tests... more districts and schools moving out of academic emergency and academic watch. And we see more districts and schools meeting adequate yearly progress goals under the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*.

--Ohio State Superintendent

At the same time, the 2006 budget continues to provide increased investment in core federal elementary and secondary education programs like Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies and Part B Grants to States under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*. These programs allow states and schools greater flexibility to focus resources based on their own specific needs.

HIGH SCHOOLS LAG BEHIND

While *No Child Left Behind* is already beginning to produce improved achievement in the early grades, a wide range of reports and statistics demonstrate that our high schools are not adequately preparing students to compete and succeed in higher education or in the workforce:

- Nationally, of 100 ninth-graders, only 68 will graduate from high school on time and only 18 will end up graduating from college on time.

We're leaving behind the old attitude that it's okay for some students just to be shuffled through the system. That's not okay.

--President George W. Bush

- The rates for minority students are even lower. For example, of 100 African-American ninth-graders, only 49 will graduate from high school on time and only nine will end up graduating from college on time.
- Only 24 states require at least three years of math to graduate from high school and only 21 states require at least three years of science.
- According to the College Board, only 60 percent of high schools offer at least one Advanced Placement course.

These statistics have a profound impact on life after high school. According to the American Diploma Project, 73 percent of employers rate high school graduates' writing, grammar and spelling skills as "fair" or "poor"; 63 percent rate their basic math skills as "fair" or "poor." College professors give very similar ratings. And those who do not even complete high school face a lifetime of lowered expectations and lower income. For example, in 2000, the average full-time annual earnings of a male high school graduate were \$36,770, compared to \$28,832 for a non-graduate and \$24,692 for a worker with an eighth-grade education. The benefits of college were even more striking, with male college graduates earning almost \$78,000 annually. Young people who do not graduate from high school also suffer from significantly higher unemployment rates than graduates.

THE PRESIDENT'S RESPONSE

In response to lagging achievement and completion rates in the nation's high schools, the president's High School Initiative would hold high schools accountable for teaching all students and provide timely intervention for those students who are not achieving at grade level. The goal of this initiative is to ensure that every student graduates from high school with the skills to succeed in either higher education or our globally competitive workforce. In addition, the president's budget shifts more decision-making power to states by consolidating programs dedicated to a specific purpose and reallocates that money to states to use in order to get better results. In, the FY 2006 budget request, the president includes nearly \$1.5 billion for the two key components of the High School Initiative:

- A High School Intervention program that would provide \$1.24 billion to support specific interventions, including performance plans for each student, designed to improve the academic achievement of students at greatest risk of not meeting challenging state academic standards and not completing high school; and

We've learned a new equation: accountability plus high expectations plus resources equals results.

--Secretary Margaret Spellings

- A new High School Assessments proposal that would provide \$250 million to add, by the 2009-10 school year, annual assessments at two additional high school grades, which, along with the one grade currently required by *NCLB*, would ensure that students are assessed at least three times during high school. Coupled with the current testing requirements of *NCLB*, students will be tested every year from grade 3 to grade 11.

The president's 2006 budget also includes more than \$400 million for related proposals to strengthen high school achievement, including \$200 million to expand the use of research-based interventions for high school students who read below grade level and thus are at greater risk for dropping out of school; \$120 million to accelerate the mathematics achievement of secondary school students through research-based professional development for math teachers; \$52 million to increase the availability of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs in high-poverty schools; \$12 million to encourage students to take more rigorous courses through the State Scholars program; and \$33 million in Enhanced Pell Grants for State Scholars as they start their higher education pursuits.

In addition, the president would support improvement efforts at all levels through a new, \$500 million Teacher Incentive Fund to reward effective teachers, create incentives to attract qualified teachers to high-need schools, and support innovative, performance-based compensation systems for the nation's teachers.

PAYING FOR A POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

The success of *No Child Left Behind*, as well as the promise of the president's High School Initiative, demands changes in federal postsecondary student financial assistance programs to help ensure that those students who successfully complete a challenging high school education can afford to go to college or other postsecondary training.

President Bush already has substantially increased the amount of grant and loan assistance available to postsecondary students and their families. For example, over one million more low-income college and other postsecondary students are receiving Pell Grants this year than when the president first took office; and under the 2006 request, funding for the Pell Grant program will have grown by \$4.9 billion, or 56 percent, since FY 2001. One major component of expanded access to Pell Grant funding is the use of a combination of mandatory and discretionary funds that would increase the maximum Pell Grant award by \$100 annually over the next five years, from \$4,050 to \$4,550, while retiring the \$4.3 billion Pell Grant shortfall accumulated from fiscal years 2002 to 2005.

Similarly, overall postsecondary student financial aid would increase from \$48 billion in FY 2001 to \$78 billion in FY 2006, with the number of recipients rising from 7.7 million to more than 10 million.

However, a cumulative funding shortfall in the Pell Grant program threatens the stability of the program while limiting increases in the maximum Pell award needed to maintain the purchasing power of the Pell Grant in the face of rising college costs. At the same time, the current structure of the student loan programs unfairly burdens taxpayers with program risks, resulting in excessive subsidies for lenders and other program participants.

The president's 2006 budget includes a comprehensive set of proposals to reauthorize the *Higher Education Act (HEA)* that would increase financial assistance to students while improving the effectiveness of the Pell Grant and student loan programs. In total, these proposals would generate more than \$27 billion in benefits to students over the next 10 years, including the following:

Pell Grants make it possible for people to go to school who otherwise won't go to school. I think that is money really well spent.

--President *George W. Bush*

- Providing greater access to disadvantaged students to pursue a high-quality education is a major objective of President Bush's FY2006 budget proposal. Major budget assistance components include strengthening the Pell Grant program by eliminating its budget shortfall while increasing annual disbursements to qualified students; Enhanced Pell Grant funding of \$33 million intended to encourage students to take demanding high school courses; and increased student loan limits to some undergraduate, graduate and professional students;

- Making permanent the expanded loan forgiveness provisions of the *Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act of 2004*, which forgive up to \$17,500 in student loans for highly qualified math, science and special education teachers serving low-income communities;
- Investing \$50 million in a new presidential Math and Science Scholars Program in order to encourage students to enter the vital fields of mathematics and science; and
- Providing \$125 million for Community College Access Grants through the Department of Education to expand dual enrollment programs designed to boost college enrollment and completion, especially among low-income students.