



A Report to the
U.S. Department of Education
On Educational Challenges and Technical Assistance Needs
For the Western Region

Prepared by the
Western Regional Advisory Committee
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Table of Contents

Preface	v
Executive summary.....	1
Introduction	5
Parameters of the report.....	5
Background.....	5
Legislative background.....	6
Outreach efforts and data collection procedures.....	6
Arizona outreach	6
Nevada outreach.....	7
California outreach.....	8
Utah outreach.....	9
Public interest and input	9
Background and overview of the Western Region school and student demographics.....	11
Diversity and poverty.....	12
Special populations	13
Curriculum.....	18
Teacher demographics and qualifications.....	18
School and student demographics.....	20
Indicators of student achievement	22
State standards and assessments.....	24
Teacher preparation, qualifications, and certification.....	24
Program funding and resources.....	25
Identified challenges of the Western RAC	29

Challenge 1: Acquisition of the English language	29
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	30
Technical Assistance to Address This Challenge	30
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #1	31
Challenge 2: Data literacy and analysis	31
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	32
Technical assistance to address this challenge.....	32
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #2	33
Challenge 3: Administrator and teacher quality, preparation, support, and retention	33
Effect of challenges on stakeholders.....	34
Technical assistance to address this challenge.....	34
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #3	35
Challenge 4: Changing demographics, culture, and mobility	35
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	36
Technical assistance to address this challenge.....	37
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #4	37
Challenge 5: Educating the mild, moderate, and severely disabled population to grade level.....	38
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	38
Technical assistance to address Challenge #5.....	39
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #5	39
Challenge 6: Coordination and accessibility of services.....	40
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	40
Technical assistance to address Challenge #6.....	40
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #6	41
Challenge 7: Character and ethics toward personal responsibility	41
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	42

Technical assistance to address Challenge #7.....	42
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #7	43
Challenge 8: Technological challenges.....	43
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	43
Technical assistance to address Challenge #8.....	44
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #8	45
Challenge 9: Academic interventions to improve student achievement	45
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	46
Technical assistance to address Challenge #9.....	47
Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #9	47
Challenges 10: Lack of meaningful, two-way parental involvement.....	48
Effect of challenge on stakeholders.....	49
Technical assistance to address Challenge #10.....	49
Anticipated outcome from solving challenge #10	50
Appendix A: California enrollment statistics.....	53
Appendix B: Biographic information about members of the Western Regional Advisory Committee.....	55
References.....	61
Glossary	63
List of tables.....	67
List of figures.....	69

Preface

This report of the Western Regional Advisory Committee for Educational Needs Assessment was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education under a contract number ED04CO0043/0001 awarded to The CNA Corporation (CNAC). Members of the committee and their professional affiliations are listed below.

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The Western Regional Advisory Committee's Designated Federal Official, Mr. Bill McGrady of the U.S. Department of Education and CNAC, along with its partners, the Institute for Educational Leadership, The McKenzie Group, IceWEB, InterCall, and Kidz Online, helped prepare this report. The facilitation team for this committee included Dr. Diane S. Reed and

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Executive summary

The Western Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) is one of ten committees commissioned by the U. S. Department of Education. These committees will provide input to the Secretary of Education for the establishment of 20 comprehensive centers to provide technical assistance to state, local, and regional educational agencies and to schools, in implementing the goals and programs of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

The members of the Western RAC solicited input from the various stakeholders and states represented (California, Arizona, Nevada, and Utah) and directed them to provide input on the RAC website.

The Western RAC has provided considerable data on the demographics of the region. The data paint a picture of this very diverse and high-need region. California has the largest number of Title I students in the nation and has more total students than the three other states combined. All of the states in the region face the challenge of educating immigrant children. In California one in ten are recent immigrants and 25 percent of the students are English language learners (ELLs).

The Western RAC identified these ten challenges to meeting the No Child Left Behind requirements:

Challenge 1. *Acquisition of the English language*. This is by far the number one challenge for all of the states in the Western RAC. In California, for instance, one in ten students are recent immigrants.

Challenge 2. *Data Literacy and Analysis*. The challenge is to use data to improve student achievement. Every stakeholder down to the classroom teacher

needs to know how to use data to make good decisions about the instructional program.

Challenge 3. *Administrator and Teacher Quality, Preparation, Support, and Retention.* The Western RAC believes that teacher preparation and support is the single most important factor in student achievement. High quality professional development is needed for administrator preparation and to retain quality teachers.

Challenge 4. *Changing Demographics, Culture, and Mobility.* California, Arizona and Nevada in particular have a very young immigrant population with special educational, English language, and health care needs. These changing demographics have put a particular strain on the school system. Teachers at all levels pre-K through 12 need to be prepared for handling the unique characteristics of these learners.

Challenge 5. *Educating the Mild, Moderate, and Severely Disabled Population to Grade Level.* This challenge has come to light because many schools and districts have not made annual yearly progress (AYP) due to their special education sub-groups.

Challenge 6. *Coordination and Accessibility of Services.* The Western Region has fragmented and disconnected information and service delivery systems

Challenge 7. *Character and Ethics Toward Personnel Responsibility.* Teachers and schools need assistance in dealing with cultural, safety, and discipline issues in the classroom.

Challenge 8. *Technological Challenges.* Under-utilization of technology at every level of the system, including professional development, instruction,

assessment, intervention, enrichment, and communication, is a concern for the Western Region.

Challenge 9. *Academic Interventions to Improve Student Achievement.* There is a breakdown of effective, integrated systems of development and support at the school and district levels to meet the needs of underperforming students. A major paradigm shift from teaching to learning as a result of NCLB and standards-based learning has created a systemic challenge in our profession. Student achievement data in the Western region indicates that many students in AYP subgroups, especially ELL and special education students, are not meeting AYP requirements.

Challenge 10. *Lack of Meaningful, Two-Way Parental Involvement.* There is a lack of understanding by staff and administration on ways to meaningfully involve parents at every level on their child's education.

These are the challenges that the West RAC has identified as the most important in the four-state region and the areas where the most technical assistance is needed. The challenges in pre-K through 12 education in these states are enormous. The states, districts, and schools need substantive technical assistance to meet the increasing goals of No Child Left Behind to improve student achievement. The RAC feels that the quality of life, economic environment, and health systems will be strengthened as the schools become more successful in promoting the talents of their very diverse populations.

Introduction

Parameters of the report

This report addresses the challenges and needs of the Western Region around No Child Left Behind (NCLB) implementation. It is imperative to note that the Western Region has more Title I and English Language Learners (ELL) students than any other region in the nation. This report will be submitted to the US Department of Education in developing a Request For Proposal (RFP) for technical assistance centers in the United States. In creating this report, RAC members were restricted by the US Department of Education from suggesting needed alterations in the NCLB law itself or from suggesting needs for additional funding through the law. The consensus of this RAC is that current funding levels will severely limit the ability of centers to address the identified needs under NCLB law in this region. It is essential that the services that are provided are cost-effective.

Background

The Western Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) provides an assessment of the technical assistance needs of educators in our region in response to a directive from the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. This RAC is one of ten such committees appointed by the Secretary to conduct the assessment over the period of December 2004 through March 2005. This committee identified the major challenges facing the region in improving student achievement and implementing the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act. It then linked those challenges to the types of technical assistance that might enable educators in the region to overcome them.

Legislative background

Section 203 of Title II of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-279) directs the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education to establish 20 comprehensive centers to provide technical assistance to state, local, and regional educational agencies and to schools, in implementing the goals and programs of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. These centers will also provide assistance in the use of scientifically valid teaching methods and assessment tools by teachers and administrators in the following areas:

- Core academic subjects of mathematics, science, and reading or language arts
- English language acquisition
- Education technology
- Facilitating communication among education experts, school officials, teachers, parents, and librarians
- Disseminating information that will help improve academic achievement, close achievement gaps, and encourage and sustain school improvement—to schools, educators, parents, and policymakers within the region in which the center is located
- Developing teacher and school leader in-service and pre-service training models that illustrate best practices in the use of technology in different content areas

Outreach efforts and data collection procedures

Arizona outreach

The following organizations and entities in Arizona were contacted regarding the RAC process and were encouraged to provide input through the website:

- All principals and superintendents
- Arizona State Superintendent of Education, Mr. Tom Horne

- The Arizona Business and Education Coalition
- The Board of the Arizona Educational Foundation.
- Arizona State Board of Education
- Arizona PTA Board of Directors
- Arizona Colleges and Universities – Schools of Education.
- Arizona Charter Board and School Board Association
- Representatives of Arizona School Boards Association and Arizona Education Association
- The Arizona Education Coalition
- Arizona Governor’s Policy Advisor
- Arizona Teacher Education Partnership Commission
- Arizona superintendent’s annual conference staff

Nevada outreach

The following Nevada organizations and entities were contacted about the RAC process and were encouraged to provide input through the website:

- Superintendents and executive cabinets
- Executive directors of Nevada State School Board Association
- School administrators association, state education association
- State superintendent
- Nevada State PTA Board of Directors
- Local PTA boards of directors
- State PTA presidents within the Western Region
- National PTA board members
- Washoe County Public Schools

- Clark County Public Schools
- Charter Board of Nevada
- Legislative contacts
- Parents Empowering Parents organization
- Hispanic Outreach Luncheon, Clark County
- Various local education association (LEA)- PTA Programs

California outreach

The following California organizations and entities were contacted regarding the RAC process and were encouraged to provide input through the website.

- California State Board of Education
- California PTA Board of Directors.
- California Colleges and Universities – Schools of Education.
- Newspapers: *LA Times*, *LA Daily News*, *Antelope Valley Press*
- California county offices and district superintendents
- California Teachers Association
- Association of California School Administrators
- California School Boards Association
- Special education groups
- Northern California—Sonoma electronic mailing list
- California Latino School Boards Association
- California Latino Superintendents Association
- California Curriculum and Instruction Steering Committee
- Los Angeles Unified School District
- California Charter Schools Association

- Antelope Valley Secondary Principals' Network
- Antelope Valley Curriculum Articulation Council
- LA County Beginning Teachers Support and Assessment (BTSA)LAUSD
- Focus on Achievement Council
- California State Legislature
- California Migrant Education Association

Utah outreach

The following Utah organizations and entities were contacted regarding the RAC process and were encouraged to provide input through the website.

- Governor Huntsman of Utah
- Utah State Legislature
- Utah Education Association
- Utah Association of Secondary School Principals
- Utah Association of Elementary School Principals
- Utah State Superintendents Association
- Utah State Board of Education
- Utah School Boards Association
- Utah PTA Board of Directors
- Utah Local PTA Boards
- Departments of Education from Utah colleges and universities
- Director of Utah's Charter Schools

Public interest and input

The goal of the outreach efforts was to generate public interest and input to the RAC's deliberations. The RAC Website (www.rac-ed.org) provided the central point for public access

to the RAC. Table 1 provides a summary of these interactions. The first line in the table shows the number of enrollees on the RAC Website from the Western Region. The Website served as the information center for the RAC. The public was encouraged, in a variety of ways, to provide comments both of a general nature and on specific RAC ideas. The next section of the table shows the amount of input the Western Region RAC received through online comments and through the RAC Support Office, either through e-mail or regular surface mail. The third section of the table shows public interest in a more indirect way by capturing the number of times the public views comments on the Website. Public interest was also measured by attendance at RAC meetings. Each RAC convened four public meetings. In the meetings held in Washington, DC and Houston, Texas, the public was invited to observe the proceedings in person. The other two meetings were online teleconferences. For both the face-to-face meetings and the online teleconferences, the public was invited to observe through a link to the RAC Website. The last section of the table shows the number of public attendees at RAC meetings, either in person or through the Website.

Table 1: Public inputs for the Western RAC

Type of Input	Count
Enrollment on RAC Website	426
State Agencies	70
Local Agencies	121
School Board Members	4
Principals	27
Teachers	66
Parents	29
Business	11
Higher Education	20
Researchers	23
Others	55
Comments	66
On Website Forums	51
Through e-mail to the RAC Support Office	15
Through surface mail to the RAC Support Office	0
Views on the RAC Website	1616
Attendance at RAC Public Meetings (Orientation meeting, public meeting 1, public meeting 2)	22

* As of Feb 28, 2005

Background and overview of the Western Region school and student demographics

The Western Region consists of Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah. Of the four states, California has by far the most public schools (9,100), followed by Arizona (1,801), Utah (803), and Nevada (527)¹. Due to the diversity of the schools in the Western Region, the schools may not be accurately classified by the U.S. Department of Education labels— urban, suburban, and rural.

As the state with the highest enrollment in the nation, California has more students (6,356,348) than the other three states combined. California represents a growing crisis in the pre-K through 12 educational systems: major urban areas, remote rural areas, explosive growth, and extraordinary diversity (linguistic, economic, and cultural). California has the second largest school district in the nation, Los Angeles Unified School District. LA Unified has challenges in its size and cope equal to that of all the other populations within the Western Region It has

¹ The statistics for public schools were acquired from the Common Core of Data.

747,000 students, with over 800 pre-K through 12 school sites of which more than 200 are on multi-track year round calendars due to severe overcrowding throughout the district. In addition, it has high schools with over 5,000 students and more than 65 charter schools . In contrast, California also has remote rural schools where access to services is a major challenge. The San Joaquin Valley schools are experiencing issues associated with explosive growth, increasing diversity, and poverty.

Arizona is next in size, with 937,755 students, and has the largest number of charter schools, for its population in the nation. Arizona schools are as diverse as those in California; however, the issues are smaller in scale. There are major population concentrations in Phoenix, Tucson, Prescott, and Flagstaff. These are offset by Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools, which are located in remote areas of the state with limited access to services. Arizona has one of the fastest growing pre-K through 12 populations.

The data show that in Nevada, 70 percent of schools are suburban. In fact, out of 17 county districts, two are urban/suburban. Of those two, over 300,000 students are in one school district, making this the fifth largest district in the nation and rated one of the fastest growing districts over the last 15 years. With the exception of Washoe and Clark Counties, the rest of the state schools are rural

Utah has 495,682 students, 80 percent of whom live in one geographical area along the Wasatch Front. Consequently, Utah experiences the issues facing urban schools while at the same time having one of the highest percentages of rural public schools.

Diversity and poverty

Student enrollment by race shows wide disparities among the four states. California is the most diverse, with ethnic minorities representing two-thirds of the public school population. Hispanics are the largest single group, accounting for 44 percent of enrollment. Whites are next

at 33 percent, followed by Asians (11 percent). Eight percent of the student population is African American, and American Indians are less than 1 percent.

Ethnic minorities make up 50 percent of Arizona public school students. Hispanics are 37 percent of the school population, with American Indians and African Americans accounting for 7 and 5 percent of enrollment, respectively. Nevada also has a large Hispanic enrollment (29 percent), but the school system is majority White. Utah is the least diverse, as Whites represent 82.6 percent of all students. Hispanics are the largest minority group in Utah, with 11.5 percent of enrollment. Federal data do not reflect actual immigration to the Western Region, resulting in under funding and support. In the recently published RAND Corporation report (2005), *California's pre K-12 Public Schools How are They Doing?*, nearly 1 in 10 Californians is a recent immigrant, compared with 1 in 20 nationally. One in 5 children in California lives in a family with income below the poverty level. Child poverty is most evident in the Central Valley. The counties are in the poorest tenth of the nation's counties. This is illustrative of all states in the Western Region.

Nearly half of California public school students (47 percent) are poor based on eligibility for the free- and reduced-price lunch program. About one-third of students are low income in Nevada and Utah. Arizona has the lowest Western Region poverty rate among students, with 12 percent.

Special populations

Various data sources can be used to report about the region. Averages do not provide an accurate reflection of the extremes of conditions concerning poverty, language acquisition and the effects of rapid growth or decline throughout the Western Region. California has a large concentration of English language learners (ELLs), with 25 percent of public school students falling into this category. This represents one in four students with language acquisition needs.

Arizona, Utah, and Nevada follow closely behind California. In LA Unified, 52 percent of the students starting kindergarten are English language learners, which reflects student population trends throughout the Western Region. ELLs represent 16 percent of Nevada’s school population and 15 percent of students in Arizona. Utah has a lower rate with 9 percent. Migrant students are most populous in California, representing 4 percent of all students. In some larger city school districts in the Western Region, as many as 89 primary languages may be represented.

California has the largest percentage of poor students, as measured by eligibility for free and reduced-price lunch. With 47 percent of California’s students eligible for this program, the state’s proportion far exceeds the national average of 36 percent of public school students. Forty-six percent of Arizona’s students get free or reduced lunch. The other states’ percentages fall below the national average: Nevada at 34 percent, Utah at 31 percent.

Table 2 lists measures of cultural fluency. California stands out in all measures with higher numbers of immigration and language diversity. Utah, on the other hand, is the lowest in the Western Region in all three measures listed in the table.

Table 2: Measures of cultural fluency

	Percentage of population: foreign born	Percentage of population: born out of state	Percentage of population age 5-17: speak language other than English at home
Arizona	14	65	28
California	27	49	42
Nevada	17	77	27
Utah	7	37	10

Source: American Community Survey 2003: U.S. Census Bureau

The information in table 3 demonstrates the economic conditions in the region. For the region, California has the highest Gross State Product (GSP, a measure of the amount of goods and services produced in the state), median family income, and per capita income. Utah has the

lowest Western GSP and per capita income, whereas Arizona has lowest Western median family income.

Table 3: Economic indicators

	Gross State Product (in millions)	Median family income	Per capita income
Arizona	\$160,687	\$40,762	\$20,939
California	\$1,359,265	\$50,220	\$24,420
Nevada	\$79,220	\$45,395	\$22,830
Utah	\$70,409	\$46,873	\$18,905

Source: Bureau of Economic Activity (GSP) 2001, American Community Survey 2003: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 4 presents measures of poverty across the region. There is little variation in the percentage of households on public assistance. Using all poverty indicators, Arizona has a higher poverty rate than the other three states.

Table 5 shows the number of Title I students across the region. California has the highest number of Title I students in the nation (2,554,180) and the highest percentage of Title I schools in the nation (18.16). California has more Title I students than the other three states combined. This table also shows the huge number of English language learners (ELLs). California has 1,559,248 students that are ELLs, 25.2 percent of the entire student population. This is also more than 25 percent of all of the ELL students in the United States. When these data for California are further disaggregated we find that Southern California has twice the number of ELL students and twice the number of Title I students as Northern California.

The National Conference of State Legislatures (2005) reports that there is a conflict between NCLB and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). NCLB requires students with disabilities to be tested at grade level, while IDEA mandates that students be taught according to ability. Many schools and districts are being identified for program improvement based solely on their special education sub-groups. California exemplifies this problem: the requirement

places over 1500 schools into program improvement. The Western Region is committed to effectively educating students with disabilities without impediments presented by NCLB.

Table 4: Measures of poverty

	Number of households	% of households on food stamps	% of households on public assistance	% of households below the poverty level	Number of households with children under 18	% of households with children below the poverty level
Arizona	2,048,918	7	3	12	726,897	18
California	11,856,538	4	4	10	4,568,958	16
Nevada	833,679	4	2	9	284,392	12
Utah	752,030	4	2	8	333,899	11

Source: American Community Survey 2003: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 5: Demographics of Western Region

	2000		2000		2001-02		2000-01	
	Number of Title I Students	% Title I Students in the US	Number of Title I Schools	% Title I Schools in the US	Number of ELL Students	% ELL Students in the US	Number of Students w/ IEPs ^a	% Students w/ IEPs in the US
United States	14,061,829		41,853		4,747,763		6,003,071	
California	2,554,180	18.16	4,954	11.8	1,559,248	32.8	650,719	10.8
Southern California	1,669,667	11.90	2,358	5.6	1,007,607	21.2	359,775	6.0
Northern California	884,513	6.29	2,596	6.2	551,641	11.6	290,944	4.8
Arizona	322,726	2.30	1,104	2.6	135,503	2.9	89,809	1.5
Nevada	68,851*	0.50	100	0.2	69,896*	0.8	47,015*	0.6
Utah	62,905	0.40	228	0.5	43,299	0.9	53,921	0.9

a. IEP (Individualized education plan).

* Nevada data is for 03-04
 Source: LACOE and USDE

Curriculum

All four states in the Western Region have met the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) to create standards in math, reading, and science. *Education Week's Quality Counts 2005* report analyzed whether state assessments are aligned with state standards across grade spans and in four major subject areas (English, math, science, and social studies/history). California has the strongest record in the region, showing complete alignment in English and math. It also has aligned assessments and standards in all other areas except for middle school science and elementary-level social studies. Utah has aligned assessment and standards in English, math, and science across all grade spans. Arizona and Nevada have completed this work in only English and math.

Teacher demographics and qualifications

As expected, California has the most public school teachers in the Western Region with 307,672. Arizona, the second-largest school system in the region, has 47,101 teachers, followed by Utah (22,415) and Nevada (20,037). However, this region has some of the highest student/teacher ratios in the nation. Utah has the highest rate among all U.S. states with 22:1 ratio, and California is next at 21:1. The rates for other states are slightly lower, with Arizona at 20:1 and Nevada at 18:1. NCLB also requires a highly qualified teacher in each classroom for core academic subjects by the end of the 2005-06 school year. Progress in the region is uneven. As table 7 shows, 96 percent of classes in Utah and Arizona are taught by a highly-qualified teacher, the highest percentage in the region. However, the rates for Nevada and California are 50 and 52 percent, respectively.

Table 6: Teacher quality indicators

	Percent of classes taught by highly qualified teachers	Number of NBC teachers (SY2004)	NBC teachers as a percentage of all teachers	Percent of high school teachers with college major in the relevant core academic subject
Arizona	96	188	0	52
California	52	2664	1	59
Nevada	50	151	1	57
Utah	96	54	0	61

Sources: Center on Education Policy Year 2 of NCLB Report (2002-2003), Measuring Up: 2004 Education Week's Quality Counts 2005

Less than two-thirds of teachers in the region are teaching in their field of specialty. Individual state rates range from 52 percent in Arizona to 61 percent in Utah. Only 1 percent of teachers in California and Nevada are National Board Certified (NBC). Rates for Arizona and Utah are less than 1 percent.

The eight counties in southern California have 167,607 teachers. Of this group 147,526 are fully credentialed and have an average of 13 years of teaching. Statewide the average years of teaching are 12.7 years. In these eight counties there are nearly 20,000 first- and second-year teachers.

Salary data also show that teacher recruitment and retention is a challenge. All states except California paid less than the national average teacher salary of \$44,604 in 2001–02. Average salaries were less than \$40,000 a year in Arizona and Utah. California had the highest average salary at \$47,680. When adjusted to reflect purchasing power, the annual salary is \$38,845. (RAND Corporation Report, 2005).² The aging population of teachers and administrators rapidly reaching retirement, coupled with the limited numbers of entry level teaching and administrative candidates, exacerbates the recruiting and retention problems for districts. State-level data on teacher retention are difficult to find, but one 2002 study from the

² The California adjusted teacher salary is based on actual purchasing power.

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing found that 6 percent of teachers left after one year and 23 percent left after 3 years. A 2004 Utah State University report, tracking such data, claimed that some 30 percent of new teachers in Utah leave the profession within the first five years; most of those teachers leave due to pregnancy or to follow the career move of their spouses. These rates are actually better than those found in a national study conducted by Richard Ingersoll, (Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, University of Washington), which found that 13 percent of new teachers leave after their first year and 29 percent leave the field after three years.

School and student demographics

Table 7 shows the number of public, private, and charter schools by state for the most recent school year (SY) for which data are available. Among the states in the region, there appears to be significant variance in the number of charter schools. Nevada and Utah have 13 and 29 charter schools, respectively, whereas California and Arizona each have well over 400 charter schools. California, which has the largest overall public school population, also has the most public and private schools.

Table 7: Number of schools and students

	Public schools SY2002-2003	Public school students SY2002-2003	Private schools SY2001-2002	Charter schools collected 2003
Arizona	1,330	1,011,959	141	490
California	9,087	6,298,774	4,252	510
Nevada	542	369,498	66	13
Utah	920	495,682	48	29

Sources: Common Core of Data 2002-2003; Common Core of Data 2003-2004; NCES: Private School Universe Study 2002-2003, Center for Education Reform (www.edreform.com) November 2003; Utah State Office of Education, 2005

Table 8 shows the racial distribution of students attending public schools across the Western Region. The student population is between 33 and 83 percent White. The minority

population is primarily Hispanic, particularly in California where Hispanics represent the majority of public school students.

Table 8: Racial distribution of students in public schools (percent)

	American Indian/ Alaskan	Asian / Pacific Islander	African American, non- Hispanic	Hispanic	White, non- Hispanic	Other
Arizona	6.6	2.2	4.8	37.1	49.1	0.0
California	0.8	11.1	8.1	44.4	33.1	2.5
Nevada	1.7	6.4	10.5	28.7	52.7	0.0
Utah	1.5	2.9	1.2	11.5	82.6	0.3

Source: Common Core of Data SY2002-2003; Common Core of Data, SY2003-2004; Utah State Office of Education, 2005

Table 9 outlines the percentage of public school students enrolled in a number of federally supported programs designed to aid children with special needs, including the free and reduced lunch program and programs to serve the special needs of students who are English language learners (ELLs), migrant students, or special education students with individualized education plans (IEPs). The percentage of special needs students enrolled in free- and reduced-lunch programs (an indicator of poverty) ranges from almost 31 percent in Utah to just over 49 percent in California. California also has the highest percentage of students in the region who are in Title I programs, students identified as ELL, and migrant students.

Table 9: Student enrolled in federally supported special needs programs (percentage)

	Free and reduced lunch	ELL	IEP	Migrant	Students in Title I schools
Arizona	46	16	11.15	1.2	59
California	49	25.4	10.8	4.8	61.9
Nevada	34.0	15.9	11.5	0.1	40.5
Utah	30.6	8.9	11.5	0.8	19.4

Source: Common Core of Data SY 2003-2004; State Departments of Education, Western Region, 2003-2004

Table 10 shows the number and percentage of schools that failed to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) in SY 2002-2003, and the number and percentage of schools designated as “needing improvement.” These data indicate that between 20 and 35 percent of schools met

their state-established AYP goals, with California having the highest percentage and Arizona having the lowest. For the year 2004, California has 150 Program Improvement districts.

Table 10: Schools' AYP and Improvement (SY2002-2003)

State	Number of schools that failed to make AYP	Percentage of schools that failed to make AYP	Number of schools in need of improvement	Percentage of schools in need of improvement
Arizona	351	20	226	13
California	3198	34.7	1201	22
Nevada	146	28	22	4
Utah	244	31	NA	—

Sources: Center on Education Policy (CEP) Year 2 of NCLB

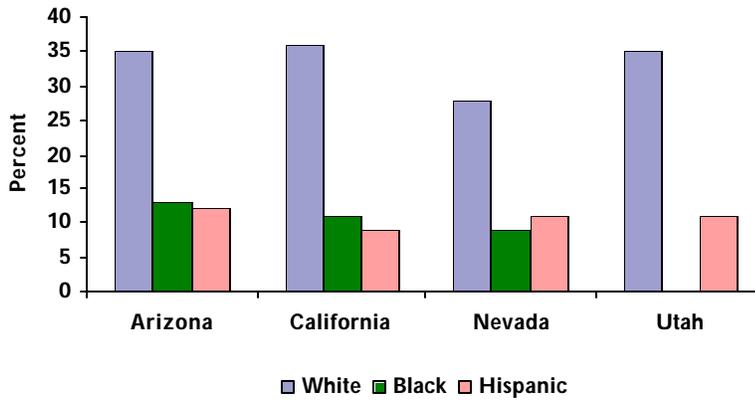
Indicators of student achievement

Figures 1 and 2 show, by race/ethnicity, the relative performance of fourth grade students on the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading and Mathematics Tests.³ These data indicate that White students score higher than minority students on all tests. The reading proficiency rate for Hispanics is slightly higher than the rate for African Americans, whereas the two groups appear to be about equal in math proficiency. The proficiency rate for Hispanics and African Americans across all the tests is at least 20 percentage points below that of White students. NAEP does not disaggregate for the English language learner populations. If this information were available, it could potentially identify an even greater need in the Western Region. In addition, NAEP data are based on nationally normed population and is not reflective of the high English language learner population in the Western Region.

Table 11 addresses the high school graduation rates of the region. These data are from 2001, Arizona was at 61 percent, California at 67 percent, Arizona at 69 percent, and Utah has the highest graduation rate in the region at 87 percent.

³ If results are not reported for a subgroup, this is due to an insufficient number of students to report on.

**Figure 1: NAEP 4th grade reading test:
percent proficient**



**Figure 2: NAEP 4th grade math test:
percent proficient**

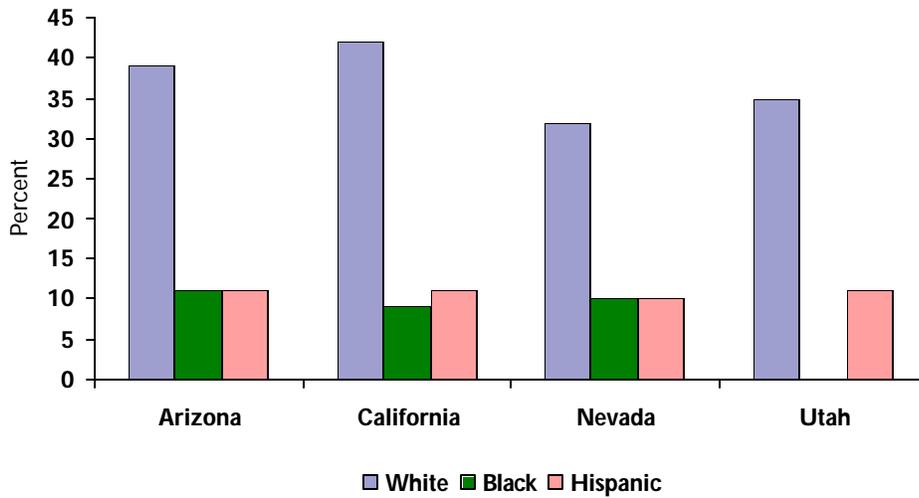


Table 11: High school graduation rates

	High school graduation rate, 2001	% of high school students taking upper-level math courses, 2002	% of high school students taking upper-level science courses, 2002
Arizona	69	NA	NA
California	67	33	18
Nevada	61	32	20
Utah	87	NA	NA

NA indicates data not available for this state.

Source: *Education Week's Quality Counts 2004*.

State standards and assessments

Table 12 reports information on the extent to which the states within the region are meeting the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act to establish state curriculum standards. It shows whether the state is meeting, partially meeting, or not meeting standards in the core curriculum areas of reading, mathematics, and science. Information reported by the Educational Commission of the States indicates that all states in the region are meeting the standards requirements outlined in the NCLB Act. All of the states in this region have adopted state content and performance standards in their core subjects.

Table 12: Meeting requirement to establish state standards

	Reading	Mathematics	Science
Arizona	Yes	Yes	Yes
California	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nevada	Yes	Yes	Yes
Utah	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Education Commission of the States NCLB database downloaded November 2004

Teacher preparation, qualifications, and certification

Table 13 gives information on the number of teachers for each state in the region and their salaries. The average beginning teacher salary ranges from just over \$28,000 in Arizona to just over \$29,000 in Utah. There is a greater gap in average teacher salaries across the region, with Arizona's teachers earning the lowest average salary of just under \$37,000, and California's teachers earning the highest average salary at just under \$53,693 (RAND Corporation Report, "California's pre K-12 Public Schools, How are They Doing?," 2005) The relative salary number reports the relationship between the average teacher salary and the salary of workers with at least a bachelor's degree in other occupations in the state. Arizona's teachers have the lowest relative salaries, earning 85 percent of what their non-teaching counterparts earn. California, Nevada, and Utah have relative salaries ranging from 97 percent to 101 percent.

Table 13: Number of teachers and beginning and average teacher salaries

	Number	Average beginning teacher salary	Average teacher salary	Source
Arizona	46,015	28,223	\$36,966	—
California*	309,296	\$35,127	\$55,693	RAND Corporation Report, 2005
Nevada	19,276	\$29,098	\$41,524	—
Utah	22,211	\$29,300	\$37,414	Utah State Office of Education, 2005

Source: American Legislative Exchange Council Report Card on American Education 2001-2002; Education Week 2002 - California data is for 2003-04

Table 14 profiles several indicators of teacher quality. Column 1 represents the percentage of teachers reported by states to have met their own state-defined standards of quality. Utah has the highest percentage of classes taught by high-quality teachers, with 96 percent, whereas only about half of the classes in California and Nevada are taught by high-quality teachers. All four states have one percent or fewer teachers with National Board Certification (NBC). Finally, Utah has the highest percentage of teachers who are teaching in their field of study, but no state in the region is below 50 percent in that category.

Table 14: Teacher quality indicators

	Classes taught by highly qualified teachers	Number of NBC teachers (SY2002-2003)	NBC teachers as a percentage of all teachers	College major in the core academic subjects for high school teachers
Arizona	NA	188	0	52
California	52	2644	1	59
Nevada	50	151	1	57
Utah	96	54	0	61

NA indicates data not available for this state.

Sources: Center on Education Policy Year 2 of NCLB Report (2002-2003), NBPTS (2002-2003), Measuring Up: 2004.

Program funding and resources

The U.S. Department of Education funding for various programs is reported in table 15. California, with the largest number of students, receives the most funding for all programs.

Table 15: U.S. Department of Education funding by program (in millions of dollars)

	Language arts state grants	State Agency: Migrant	Spec ed grants	Title I grants	Improving Teacher Quality grants	Ed Tech grants	Reading First grants	Rural and Low Income Schools	Small Rural School Achievement
Arizona	\$14,885	\$6,462	\$132,563	\$187,860	\$45,804	\$9,655	\$18,035	\$672	\$1,254
California	\$140,308	\$127,546	\$933,124	\$1,649,697	\$341,186	\$89,960	\$142,802	\$2,573	\$7,490
Nevada	\$4,702	\$226	\$49,853	\$53,216	\$14,571	\$3,215	\$5,328	\$0	\$33
Utah	\$3,146	\$1,750	\$81,887	\$45,809	\$18,493	\$3,215	\$4,835	\$0	\$86

Source: U.S. Department of Education FY2003 budget reported in thousands

Table 15 reports the level of federal funding for several key education programs.

Table 16 gives the percentage of school funding that comes from local, state, and federal sources. The cost of education in California is higher than the national average of 1.00, whereas the rest of the states are very close to the national average. Arizona receives a relatively higher portion of its funding from the Federal Government than does other states in the region due in part to funding to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Nevada has the lowest percentage of funding from federal sources and makes up the difference by receiving a higher percentage of local funding.

Table 16: Adjusted spending per student (in dollars?) and source of funding

	Regionally adjusted education spending per student	Cost of Education Index	% of funding: local	% of funding: intermediate	% of funding: state	% of funding: federal
Arizona	5,319	0.99	43	3	44	11
California	6,258	1.12	30	0	62	8
Nevada	6,095	0.95	66	0	29	5
Utah	4,895	0.95	34	0	59	7

Source: Derived from *Education Week* 2001

Note: Spending numbers may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Table 17 provides an indication of the technology resources that are available in each state.

Table 17: Technology resources by state

	Students per Internet-connected computer	Percentage of instructional computers that are 486 or less, or Apple II	Percentage of classrooms connected to the Internet	Percentage of schools with full-time district or school technology coordinator
Arizona	4.4	17	88	32
California	5.8	24	85	18
Nevada	5.7	9	90	31
Utah	5.8	26	95	24

Source: *Education Week's* Technology Counts 2004

Identified challenges of the Western RAC

Challenge 1: Acquisition of the English language

Acquisition of English for non-English speaking populations is considered the number one challenge for the entire Western Region. Major issues are:

- The numbers of non-English speaking youth are growing significantly throughout the region. This is the major challenge for educators in Arizona, California, and Nevada.
- Non-English speaking students are by far the largest group of students unable to pass the state graduation examinations.
- Proven results for increasing established, research-based ELL instructional strategies have not been adequately identified and disseminated.
- Lack of adequately prepared general subject matter teachers (Pre K- 12) makes it difficult to effectively teach English language learners.
- The higher cost of educating non-English speaking students is not reflected in funding formulas at most federal, state, and local levels (See *Flores vs State of Arizona*, 2004).
- Rural and suburban schools where non-English speaking Latino populations are rapidly growing cannot compete with their urban counterparts in the “salary market” in recruiting and retaining ELL-certified teachers.
- Inadequate academic preparation results in higher dropout rates in ELL students.
- Current assessment systems and measurements of progress used within the region do not do an adequate job of measuring academic language and content knowledge proficiency for English learners.

- In California and Arizona, state laws requiring English-only instruction have limited instructional options

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

This challenge may affect stakeholders in a variety of ways:

- NCLB has required states, districts, and schools to focus on the needs of English language learners in meeting academic requirements.
- All aspects of the quality of life, economic strength, poverty rates, health systems, etc. will be strengthened as the schools become more successful in promoting the academic talents of our large and diverse ELL population.
- The lack of English proficiency as well as early frustration and failure on the part of ELL students and parents leads to eventual student hopelessness, causing them to become dropouts. Parents of ELL students repeatedly confirm their desire to have their children meet high standards of performance, assuming that English fluency is first achieved.
- Educators, as stakeholders, are challenged to meet the individual needs of ELL students when facing large class sizes, varying levels of student abilities, and legal mandates.

Technical Assistance to Address This Challenge

The following means of technical assistance would help meet this challenge:

- In addition to our Western Regional Centers, create a thematic center for English language acquisition, as this is the most critical need facing the nation as our population continues to diversify.
- Establish a network among the thematic centers and other technical assistance centers.

- Development/dissemination of best practices in instruction, leadership, and organization to make sure all schools have access to culturally appropriate information about teaching ELL students.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #1

The RAC feels that the quality of life, economic environment, and health systems will be strengthened as the schools become more successful in promoting the talents of the large and diverse ELL population.

Challenge 2: Data literacy and analysis

The challenge is overcoming the obstacles to using data to improve student achievement at the student, classroom, school, district, and state levels. Current data gathering systems deal with school funding and test accountability more than data literacy. Information is not accessible to the local districts and data do not include “value added” measures relative to individual and sub-groups.

Data “mines” exist at state level, but not at point where information is accessible soon enough to schools/districts in formats useful for instructional purposes, such as textbook adoptions, curriculum development, and improving teacher performance. Major issues are:

- Many teachers and administrators do not know how to access, analyze, or use data to adjust and personalize instruction.
- There is a shortage of user-friendly, real-time student data management systems to allow teachers to use student data for the purpose of informing instruction.
- Smaller and rural school districts have a greater need for assistance in establishing student data analysis systems.

- There is inadequate professional development and sharing of “best practices” available for teachers and administrators in the use of data to inform instructional and curricular decision-making at teacher, school, and district level.

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

This challenge affects stakeholders in a variety of ways:

- Teachers are not empowered to make data based decisions relative to their instruction and interventions with children.
- Parents are not able to be full partners in the education of their children because data are not accessible in a variety of formats available to parents.
- Districts do not receive their state assessment data soon enough.
- There is no consistency in benchmarking assessments from local education agency (LEA) to LEA.

Technical assistance to address this challenge

Several means of technical assistance could help to overcome or lessen this challenge:

- Provide states and districts with consulting assistance and support for data collection and analysis.
- One or two national clearinghouses should investigate multiple technology databases and data management software that now claim to provide full service to schools and share the results with LEAs.
- Provide professional development to help teachers understand the data, interpret the data, explain the data to students and parents, and then use the data for instructional decision-making (i.e., “Data Retreat”).

- Identify and disseminate models of best practices in data literacy (including disaggregation and analysis of data and subsequent recommendations for improving instruction and curriculum).
- Disseminate information within the region regarding methods of data collection and analysis, including training models.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #2

Overcoming this challenge could produce the following results:

- Increased student achievement
- Improved teacher performance
- More effective use of available resources
- Increased ability to provide intervention to struggling students.
- Increased communication with community at large.

Challenge 3: Administrator and teacher quality, preparation, support, and retention

Research demonstrates that effective administrators and teachers are key to high achieving schools. The challenge is to ensure each school has engaged and highly qualified teachers and administrators. Major issues are:

- Continued shortage of highly qualified and highly effective teachers and administrators. Education is no longer a popular career choice.
- Emerging crisis due to the number of teachers and administrators nearing retirement.
- Need to prepare administrators who display transformational leadership qualities, who understand academic content standards, ongoing assessment, data-based decision-

making; and curriculum design, and who can ensure a safe and welcoming school campus environment.

- Costly high-quality professional development that is often difficult to schedule within the time constraints of the teacher work day and work year..
- Difficulty recruiting teaching/administrative applicants for rural locations in the U.S.
- Difficulty retaining quality teachers, especially during the first five years of their careers.

Effect of challenges on stakeholders

These challenges affect stakeholders in a variety of ways:

- Without effective administrators, students will not meet NCLB requirements, resulting in greater numbers of program improvement schools and districts.
- Demands on educators' time and budget constraints make professional development opportunities difficult to deliver.
- Problems facing pre K-12 education in general are exacerbated in rural areas due to geographic and financial challenges.
- Inadequate mentoring and support of new teachers and administrators cause them to leave the profession.

Technical assistance to address this challenge

Several means of technical assistance would help to resolve this challenge:

- Access and disseminate research on highly effective districts, schools, and classrooms.
- Require that the staff who would provide direct assistance to schools and districts facing program improvement have background and experience in the areas they will serve.

- Generate and disseminate best practices of professional development (i.e., sustained, cost-effective, ongoing, and job-embedded), such as e-learning, lesson study, action research, and case studies.
- Create partnerships with regional colleges and universities around critical areas including, but not limited to the following:
 1. Best practices in content area instruction
 2. Best practices in leadership
 3. Best practices in educating English learners
 4. Best practices in educating special education students.
- Identify existing models and participate in the generation of new models of systems that bring high-quality teacher and administrator candidates to high-risk schools.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #3

Addressing or solving this challenge could produce the following results:

- More students remaining in public school systems.
- Increased morale among staff.
- Adequate supply of highly qualified teachers and administrators.

Challenge 4: Changing demographics, culture, and mobility

The Western Region represents a wide diversity in demographics, culture, and mobility. These challenges significantly affect the ability of districts and schools to meet the requirements of NCLB. Some of the major issues involved are:

- Children of poverty need wrap-around health and human services to deal with various factors that inhibit them from meeting the high standards set by NCLB.

- High-risk three and four-year-old students need appropriate pre-school experiences in order to accelerate the development of social, emotional, early language, and literacy development.
- Highly mobile and transient students as well as those who are migrant, particularly in the large Western states, pose significant learning challenges. We need high-quality and comprehensive educational programs for these children to help reduce the educational disruption and other problems that result from repeated moves.
- There is a significant cultural awareness gap and apparent disconnect between teachers/administration and the populations they serve.
- Programs need a broader reach than is currently available. (For example, Head Start is too narrow, but Early Reading First is broad. However, we need Early Reading First in all schools, non-Title I included. All-day kindergarten should be expanded.) There is also a need for intervention program assistance specific to the needs of secondary students, teachers, and administrators.
- Research on best practices at all levels pre K-12 is still emerging. We need more definitive answers to these learning problems now.

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

This challenge affects the various stakeholder in several ways:

- Community perception of public schools is negatively affected by the changing demographics due to low student achievement.
- Children at the lowest level of the gap are particularly negatively affected.
- Children of ethnicity are not fully advantaged. Equity for all is denied.
- Children are coming into the public school system unprepared.

Technical assistance to address this challenge

Various means of technical assistance could be used to help overcome this challenge:

- Identify, disseminate, and provide professional development of culturally sensitive strategies and content to ensure equitable opportunities for academic success, personal development, and individual fulfillment. This development will enable teachers and administrators to gain cultural competence and the ability to function comfortably in cross-cultural settings and to interact harmoniously with people from cultures that differ from their own.
- Promote collaboration among teacher education (TE) centers and schools to facilitate greater coordination between TE centers, district, and schools in the preparation of teachers to meet this challenge.
- Encourage use of online infrastructure to provide ongoing, systemic assistance to county offices of education, districts, and schools.
- Provide ongoing assistance, training, and support to secondary teachers and administrators in secondary reading strategies.
- Technical assistance centers need to discover, evaluate, and disseminate best practices preK-12, and provide information and training to district and site administrators on best practices.
- Use online professional development that assists teachers in preparation for multi-cultural classrooms as a cost-effective means to serve all teachers in the region, especially those in remote areas.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #4

Solving this challenge could produce the following results:

- The coordinated efforts of best practices preK-12 will flow across the Western Region.
- An infrastructure of communication will be readily available to assist districts and states.
- Technical assistance would provide a more coordinated approach to curricula within and among district schools preK-12.
- Research-driven practices would be available and disseminated across the region.
- Student performance will improve, and pre-school children will demonstrate improved readiness for school.

Challenge 5: Educating the mild, moderate, and severely disabled population to grade level

The Western Region is committed to identifying and assisting special education students in meeting state and national academic proficiencies. The special education subgroup has recently caused schools and districts to be identified as needing program improvement. We want students receiving special education services, given the right opportunities and supports, to have every chance to reach proficiency. Major issues are:

- Recruiting, supporting and retaining highly qualified special education teachers with appropriate certification under new NCLB requirements. Finding these teachers has raised a concern among those responsible for implementing NCLB.
- Major conflicts between Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and NCLB legislation.
- Providing ongoing professional development for special education teachers to assist special education students to meet state and national proficiencies.

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

This challenge affects the various stakeholders in a variety of ways:

- The supply of highly qualified special education teachers does not meet demand and children's needs.
- Districts and schools are not in compliance with IDEA and NCLB regarding the provision of services by highly qualified special education teachers.
- Schools are not able to raise student achievement.
- Students who don't reach expected outcomes are not ready for employment or other postsecondary training options

Technical assistance to address Challenge #5

Several means of technical assistance can be used to lessen or overcome this challenge:

- Set up active and regular posting of amendments approved by the United States Department of Education so that all states are benefited by maximum flexibility given to any one state.
- Promote collaboration among states to compare a system of standards, assessment, graduation, diploma types, etc., as they relate to students with disabilities.
- Provide information to districts, schools, and teacher education institutions on best practices and programs within the preK-12 special education community.
- Promote programs for students and teachers that teach tolerance for special education students in the classroom.
- Provide professional development for districts and states on strategies for teaching special education learners.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #5

Dealing effectively with this challenge could produce the following results:

- The Western Region would have an increase in numbers of highly qualified special education teachers.
- Teams of educators will provide high quality instruction to special education students.
- Increased special education student achievement.

Challenge 6: Coordination and accessibility of services

The Western Region has fragmented and disconnected information and service delivery systems. Major issues are:

- Lack of timely distribution of information
- Lack of coordination with various state agencies and a lack of knowledge of the services of technical assistance centers
- Confusion about technical assistance centers with regard to services offered free and services offered for a fee
- Sometimes technical assistance centers are not as astute as desired on pressing matters in schools – they need real, live school interaction on a regular basis.

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

This challenge can affect various stakeholders in several ways:

- Confusion
- Miscommunication
- Inequity
- Slow response from US Department of Education and states/districts/schools

Technical assistance to address Challenge #6

Several means of technical assistance would help overcome this challenge:

- Assist with blending funding sources – what is available and how can it be used?
- Serve as a portal or conduit for compliance issues, giving directions, providing assistance.
- Provide a clearinghouse to identify and disseminate information related to available technology solutions to many of these communication, data, and coordination issues.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #6

- More clear communication structure, state to state and throughout the Western Region.
- Greater coordination of efforts among districts and states and with the Federal Government.

Challenge 7: Character and ethics toward personal responsibility

Teachers and schools need assistance in dealing with cultural and discipline issues in the classroom. Some student disruption/behavior is so well protected by demanding/ unreasonable parents and, in some cases, by case precedent citing amendment freedoms that it is frustrating to draw lines of appropriate behavior, which is what the majority of U.S. parents desire in their public schools. Often, administrators at local, district, or state levels do not provide for high standards of student performance and deportment in policies and procedures or of their own consistency in ensuring such standards. Schools are society's civic dialog battlegrounds today where opinions about what should or should not be taught of character, values, and ethics are regularly aired. Consequently, schools are reluctant to take a strong stand in any one direction, for fear of reprisal from either side of an issue. It makes schools lukewarm instead of cold or hot on any character issue. Absent strong parental guidance, this gives children no guide on which way to lean, leaving them to think that whatever they decide to do might be ok. The stakeholder most affected by this challenge is the child who needs guidance and assistance in decision-making and character formation into adult years. Major issues are:

- There is a need for dissemination of best practices in creating a positive peer culture in classrooms and schools.
- Schools need assistance to provide a safe school climate and to transform school cultures.
- Teachers and schools need assistance in dealing with cultural and discipline issues in the classroom.

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

Stakeholders are affected in various ways by this challenge:

- Classrooms and schools out of control.
- High level of teacher and administrator burn out and turnover.
- Lower student achievement
- Negative perception of public schools by parents and community.

Technical assistance to address Challenge #7

Several means of technical assistance can be used to help overcome or lessen this challenge:

- Professional development should be provided to assist teachers and schools with high quality character education: to help children judge what is right, to help teachers with conflict resolution, social skills, and reflective discussions integrated into the curriculum
- Professional development should be provided to teach tolerance of special education students in the total immersion classroom.
- Investigate, as a clearinghouse, programs that have a proven track record of improving school climate, student behavior, character and ethics, etc. Like *Consumer's Guide*, create a

method by which such programs are rated. Show stakeholders where such programs are successfully improving student behavior and increasing character and ethics.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #7

Overcoming this challenge could produce the following results:

- A positive peer culture will be evident.
- Discipline and classroom management will concentrate on problem-solving rather than rewards and punishments.
- The school is a community of learners in which there is a bond connecting the students, the staff, and the school. Student achievement will improve.
- Teacher and administrator retention and morale will improve.
- Public perception of public schools will improve.

Challenge 8: Technological challenges

Under-utilization of technology at every level of the system, including professional development, instruction, assessment, intervention, enrichment, and communication is a concern for the Western Region. Major issues are:

- Lack of adequate training and understanding of how technology can be used to enrich learning experiences.
- Lack of standards, norms, and methods for reviewing, purchasing, and implementing technology. There is limited and often ineffective integration of technology in the classroom.

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

This under-utilization of technology can affect stakeholders in several ways:

- Technology funds are not spent in the most efficient manner
- Teachers are not offered the most efficient professional development about technology to reach all students.
- Access to e-learning options is not available for many students.
- Ineffective and low-level software is purchased and utilized in classrooms, negatively impacting student achievement.
- Inappropriate use of technology and communication limits the timely dissemination of information to key stakeholders.

Technical assistance to address Challenge #8

Several forms of technical assistance can be used to help overcome this challenge:

- Provide E-Rate training to take advantage of available funding.
- Provide every student access to e-learning or virtual schools.
- Provide opportunities for teachers and administrators to participate in e-learning professional development.
 5. Provide professional development for teachers and administrators on integration of technology throughout the curriculum to achieve higher order thinking skills
 6. Provide online professional development for teachers on reaching all learners and increasing student achievement.
- Encourage the use of e-learning options for students to meet No Child Left Behind requirements.
- Technical assistance for teachers and administrators to help them use technology as a strategy to make instructional decisions.

- Professional development for administrators and teachers to use technology for assessment.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #8

Dealing effectively with this challenge would produce the following results:

- Schools and districts will make smarter technology purchasing decisions.
- The integration of technology will improve learning options for all students.
- Teachers and administrators will integrate the use of technology into curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Challenge 9: Academic interventions to improve student achievement

A major paradigm shift from teaching to learning as a result of NCLB and standards-based learning has created a systemic challenge in our profession. Student achievement data in the Western Region indicate that many students in AYP subgroups, especially ELLs and special education students are not meeting AYP requirements. Due to the subgroup requirements of NCLB, it is imperative that every school has highly integrated systems in place that identify students who are not meeting proficiencies. These systems should also provide a variety of intensive intervention and supplemental services within and outside the school day, provide comprehensive formative and summative assessments, and ongoing, job-embedded professional development for teachers in the use of instructional materials and differentiated strategies to raise the achievement level of all underperforming students. Major issues are:

- There is a lack of coordination within districts and schools of a coherent and comprehensive instructional system that includes and/or embeds differentiated levels of intervention based on identified student needs.

- Diagnosing individual student learning needs continues to be a challenge even with more targeted, ongoing formative assessment.
- There is a lack of adequate time for interventions in a high-stakes, standards-based system, implemented by states in response to NCLB requirements. Teachers must continue to move forward to meet the time constraints of the grade-level curriculum in order to adequately cover the assessed material.
- This issue is exacerbated at the secondary level by Master Programs that address the core curriculum but do not address the assessed intervention needs of the students. There is a lack of well-trained secondary administrative and counseling personnel that can develop Master Programs that incorporate academic intervention classes that meet the needs of all students, especially those that require intervention due to failure to make adequate progress.
- In schools required to provide supplemental services, there is a significant challenge to maintain communication regarding a student's progress between supplemental services (the teacher or an outside vendor), creating potential incoherence (Is *incoherence* the word you want to use?) in the student's academic learning.
- Quality and reliable outside supplemental services are often unavailable in rural or isolated districts.

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

This challenge affects stakeholders in a variety of ways:

- The general population of the western states will be negatively affected if students are not provided the learning interventions they need.

- Failure to provide appropriate interventions for various subgroups widens the achievement gap.
- Failure to address the academic needs of students will result in an increase in the number of dropouts.
- Supplemental services and interventions are complex and confusing to parents.
- Teachers are overwhelmed by requirements to accelerate students who are not meeting grade-level proficiencies while moving forward in the core curriculum with all students.

Technical assistance to address Challenge #9

Several means of technical assistance could help to overcome this challenge:

- Assist districts and schools in the development and dissemination of information and research about coordinated, coherent, and comprehensive instructional systems that include or embed differentiated levels of intervention in reading and math.
- Disseminate information and provide training on effective small groups and one-to-one intervention for reading, writing, and math.
- Provide research and information about diagnostic and benchmark assessments to support intervention programs.
- Provide professional development on best practices in formative and summative assessment analysis and decision-making, communication systems, and successful and time-effective support structures within districts and schools in support of students not meeting proficiencies.

Anticipated outcome from solving Challenge #9

Dealing effectively with this challenge could produce the following results:

- Classrooms in which teachers are using differentiated levels of instruction that promote student achievement among diverse student learners.
- Specialized services for which students have been adequately assessed and which carefully target specific learning difficulties.
- Student achievement will be increased due to comprehensive, well-articulated systems of differentiated assessment and instruction.

Challenges 10: Lack of meaningful, two-way parental involvement

There is a lack of understanding by staff and administration on what exactly is parent involvement. A few bad experiences with parents can color the attitudes of teachers, principals, and superintendents regarding parent involvement. Parent involvement is sometimes looked at as the “squeaky wheel” parent. The National PTA recommends these six standards:

Standard 1) *Communication*. Communication between home and school is regular, two-way, and meaningful.

Standard 2) *Parenting*. Parenting skills are promoted and supported.

Standard 3) *Student Learning*. Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.

Standard 4) *Volunteering*. Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.

Standard 5) *School Decision Making and Advocacy*. Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.

Standard 6) *Collaborating with Community*. Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning. Major issues are:

- Lack of school support for parent involvement: the perception that it takes too much time, especially when it is not related to fundraising.

- Ineffective use of resources for parent involvement.
- Difficulty of obtaining participation of the increasingly diverse parent populations.
- Time constraints and pressures on families.
- Providing opportunities for parents to be involved in school beyond the school day.
- Cultural disconnection between immigrant parents and educators.

Effect of challenge on stakeholders

This challenge may affect stockholders in a variety of ways:

- Parents may not be adequately prepared or informed to be able to participate fully in the education of their children or to negotiate the system to find appropriate services.
- Teachers are sometimes unable to assist parents in advocating for children.
- School districts struggle to get information to parents to assist them in being prepared and informed to fully participate in the education of their children.
- Lack of training leaves teachers unable to understand how to include parents in the six standards.
- Teacher/administrators, especially at the secondary school level, are often uneasy with parents in the school or classroom, and parents are often unsure of how to be more involved.

Technical assistance to address Challenge #10

Several means of technical assistance could help to overcome this challenge:

- Development of a website clearinghouse for all stakeholders to provide documentation on how parent involvement increases student achievement, to include programs and best practices, as well as a forums such as a bulletin board for discussion.

- Technical Assistance Center (TAC) to partner with existing organizations to provide a summit or symposium to train stake holders on the implementation of the standards of Parent Involvement set forth in NCLB. Demonstrate how parental involvement increases student achievement.
- Assist with networking nationwide and regionally on resources to reach stakeholders through various media outlets, workshops, conferences, etc.
- Provide translation/interpreter services as well as diversity training.
- Assist with providing parents, districts, and schools with lists of resources, outlining options, guidelines, etc. (e.g., creation of a web site).
- Support and expand the infrastructure for informing parents of NCLB rights (e.g., choices and supplemental services) and how to strengthen their children's academic performance.

Anticipated outcome from solving challenge #10

Dealing effectively with this challenge could produce the following results:

- By providing all stakeholders with information and best practices in parent involvement, the full educational team can be formed and work together to increase student achievement. Schools that have parent-teacher groups have higher student achievement than schools that do not.
- Assistance in creating networks to identify and support best practices will enlarge the opportunities for parents to be part of the education team, thereby increasing student achievement.
- Involving parents of other languages and cultures will enhance the resources available to the education team. It will further enable parents who don't understand or who fear the

education system to become more comfortable in contributing to the education of children.

- Enabling parents to understand the options and resources available will further help students to receive needed assistance to improve achievement.

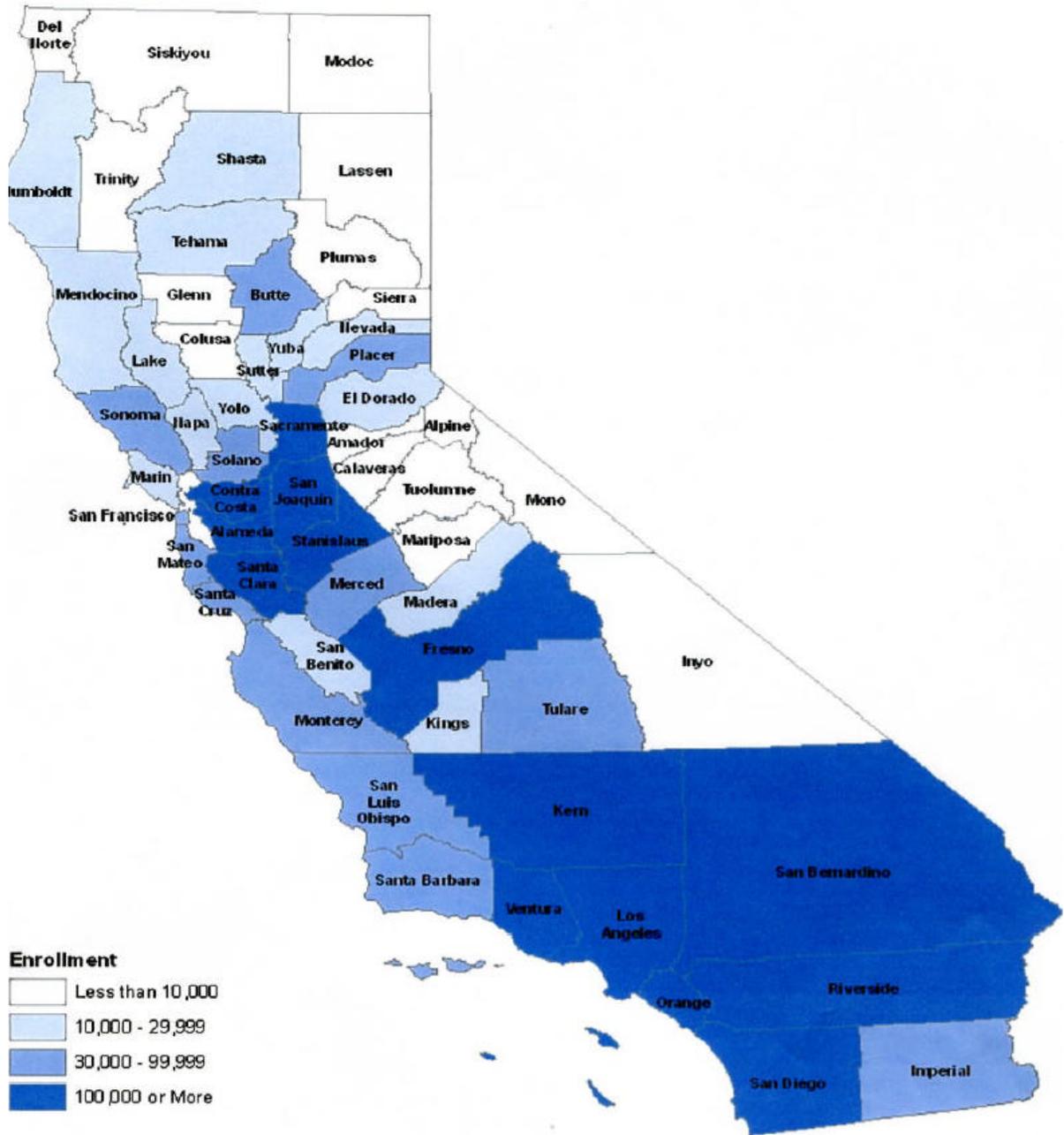
Appendix A: California enrollment statistics

Public K-12 Enrollment for the 2003-2004 School Year



Prepared by the California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, State Data Center

Public K-12 Enrollment for the 2003-2004 School Year



Prepared by the California Department of Finance, Demographic Research Unit, State Data Center

Appendix B: Biographic information about members of the Western Regional Advisory Committee

Dr. Mary E (Mikie) Loughridge, Chairman - an educator for over 25 years, has served as a special education teacher, alternative education teacher, high school vice principal and principal, and as a district office administrator for the Antelope Valley Union High School District for the past 16 years. She has served as a visiting educator for the California Department of Education, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and the Los Angeles County Office of Education. She currently supports Program Improvement for secondary principals and their districts as a Principal Coach. Dr. Loughridge holds a B.S. degree in Human Services and an M.S. degree in Special Education from California State University, Fullerton, as well as a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Southern California. She has served as an adjunct professor at four universities over the past twenty years. Dr. Loughridge is the author of: *Leading Effective Secondary School Reform: Strategies That Work*, co-authored with Loren Tarantino from the Sweetwater Union High School District. It was published by Corwin Press, December 2004. She is deeply committed to ensuring that all students successfully achieve to their highest potential.

Mr. Lynn Figurate - works for Val Verde Unified School District in Perris, California and has been a teacher for 8 years. He currently serves as the Literacy Coordinator at Columbia Elementary School. In this role, his primary responsibility is to model standards-based lessons in primary and upper elementary classrooms. Mr. Figurate also designs and presents regular professional development opportunities for teachers district-wide. As a result of dramatic increases in API and AYP in every demographic subgroup during his years as a classroom

teacher, he has been granted the honor to present at a variety of conferences on collaboration and data analysis. Recently, Mr. Figurate was spotlighted by the U.S. Department of Education for his efforts in helping all students succeed. This afforded him the opportunity to assist in a variety of initiatives established by the USDE, including regional and national roundtables, the Research-to-Practice Summit, Teacher Updates, Education News Parents Can Use and participation as a national presenter at the Teacher-to-Teacher Summer and Fall Workshops.

Dr. Michael Awender - is the current Vice Provost for Academic Affairs at Arizona State University, Western Campus. He also holds the rank of Professor of Education. Before serving as Vice Provost, Dr. Awender was Dean of the College of Education. Prior to his appointment at Arizona State University, at the Western Campus, he served for 12 years as the Dean of Education at the University of Windsor, in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. In 1999-2000, he was elected as the Chair of the Ontario Association of Deans of Education. Prior to his Decanal appointments, Dr. Awender taught at both the elementary and high school levels and served as a principal and then as a superintendent of a county school district. He also has served as a management consultant for several sports organizations. Dr. Awender's academic background is in the areas of government, management, and educational administration, with his specific research interests lying in the area of the politics of education. He has a B.A. degree in English and political science and a M.A. degree in political science from the University of Windsor, a M.Ed. degree in administration from the University of Toronto, and a Ph.D. degree from Claremont Graduate School in California. The latter degree is in government and education.

Rosemarie Smith - is in her 34th year as an educator in Utah. Having served as an elementary school principal for 24 years, she comes to the No Child Left Behind initiative with realistic views of building implementation. She has guided both Title I and non-Title I schools

and taught special education prior to her administrative posts. She is a graduate of Brigham Young University, having received her B.A. in special education and her M.A. in special education and regular education. Then she went on to complete her Educational Specialist in Educational Administration. She is a recipient of the Milken Award in 1998 and the UAESP Instructional Leader of the Year in 1996.

Dr. Maria G. Ott - is the Senior Deputy Superintendent of Educational Services for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Maria Ott earned her bachelor's and master's degrees at Mount St. Mary's College and completed her doctoral studies at the University of Southern California, majoring in educational policy, planning and administration. Maria Ott worked in the Los Angeles Unified School District as a teacher, principal, and central office administrator in the Office of Instruction. In 1993 Dr. Ott was appointed Superintendent of the Little Lake City School District, serving the cities of Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, and southeastern Downey for seven years before returning to LAUSD in 2000. Dr. Ott provides leadership and support to LAUSD's eight local districts, Standards-Based Education and Educational Services Divisions, including Adult and Career Education, Early Childhood Education, Extended Day Programs, Special Education, Specially Funded and Parent/Community Programs, and Student Health and Human Services. Dr. Ott has earned numerous awards, including AEOE Outstanding Administrator Award; AMAE Homenaje a la Mujer Recipient; Lamplighter in Education Recognition, Mount St. Mary's College; Distinguished Educator, California State University, Los Angeles; Educational Leadership Award, Council of Mexican American Administrators; Hispanic Woman of the Year Award, Mexican American Opportunity Foundation; and USC Rossier School of Education R.O.S.E. Award.

Mr. Pete Turner - is in his 5th year as Superintendent of the Liberty School District, a rapidly growing K-8 district about 20 miles southwest of Phoenix. Prior to that, he was a teacher for 12 years and a principal for 12 years, all in the Liberty District. Mr. Turner has been honored with several awards, including Arizona's National Distinguished Principal Award in 1996, and Arizona Superintendent of the Year for medium-sized districts in 2004. In addition to serving on a number of local and statewide education-based committees, he co-chairs the Teacher Education Partnership Commission, a statewide coalition of P-20 educators that deals with quality teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention issues.

Mrs. DJ Stutz - is the President of Nevada PTA and also sits as a member of the National PTA Board of Directors. DJ has been advocating for education at the local, state, and national levels for 21 years. She currently serves on the National Governors Association Task Force for the Recruitment and Retention of Teachers and the Nevada Department of Education Task Force for School Improvement and has served on various other committees in the past. DJ has 4 children and 3 grandchildren.

Dr. Patti Harrington - was appointed Utah State Superintendent in June 2004. She received her B.A. and M.A. at Brigham Young University and her Ed.D. at University of Utah with an emphasis in education administration and business leadership. She was the Utah High School Distinguished Principal of the Year in 1997. She has served as an associate superintendent for Utah, a local district superintendent in Provo, Utah, a high school and elementary principal, and a teacher of special education. Superintendent Harrington has a track record of improving reading achievement in Provo District and, together with the Utah State Board of Education, the state's governor, and legislature; she is bringing an increased focus to student achievement in the state of Utah.

Ms. Ruth Solomon - is Policy Advisor to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. She served as a member of the Arizona State House of Representatives from 1988-1994 and member of the State Senate from 1994-2003. Ruth Solomon served as Assistant Minority Leader in the Senate and was the chairperson of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the Joint Legislative Budget Committee and the Joint Committee on Capital Review. She also served as chairman of the Committee on CPS and Child Related Services. She is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of the University of Arizona.

Mr. Gavin Payne – since January 2003, has served as Chief Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction for California’s State Superintendent Jack O’Connell. Prior to his current position in the California Department of Education, he worked for fourteen years as Chief-of-Staff to then-State Senator O’Connell. In that position, Payne directed a broad legislative portfolio to increase educational accountability, enhance teaching, and adequately finance schools. He has extensive experience in legislative processes, educational policy, and fiscal issues. At the Department of Education, he manages all policy and operational activities ranging from school facilities to curriculum, including the apportionment of over 40 billion dollars per year to local school districts. Payne earned his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of California, Davis, and served as a Coro Foundation Fellow in Public Affairs. In addition to his public duties, he serves as President of the Board of Directors of Redbud Montessori Preschool. He and his wife, Susan Strachan, live in Davis, California with their two young daughters.

Ms. Jane Escobedo - is the director of English Language Learner Services at the Sonoma County Office of Education in northern California. Jane’s program provide certification for in-service teachers who are serving the rapidly growing population of English learners in the area north of San Francisco Bay to the Oregon boarder. The program also provides training to

teachers, schools, and administrators on instructional strategies and observation techniques that are research based and proven to support English language learners. Before joining the county office of education, Jane served as a principal, categorical project manager, and teacher in schools in both northern and southern California. She is the co-author of *Making Connections*, a resource for teaching mathematics to English language learners. Jane is married and has one son.

Dr. Jim Hager - is a Professor at UNLV in the College of Education's Department of Educational Leadership. He has served as Superintendent of Schools in Reno, Nevada; Kent, Washington; Beaverton, Oregon; and Boulder, Colorado. Dr. Hager has been involved in public education since 1964 as a teacher, principal, director of secondary education, deputy superintendent, and superintendent. Dr. Hager received a B.S. degree in science from St. Benedict's College in Atchison, Kansas; an M.S. degree in educational administration from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas; and a Ph.D in Educational Administration and Curriculum from the University of Iowa in Iowa City, Iowa

Ms. Linda Nelson - is in her fourth year as Superintendent of Chino Valley Unified School District. Chino Valley is in rural Arizona north of Prescott. Nelson serves on the Board of the Education Foundation of Yavapai County. Nelson is the Region 2 Representative for the Arizona School Administrators Association (ASA), serves on the ASA Legislative Committee and the State Department of Education's Teacher Career Ladder Committee. With all but the dissertation from Stanford University's Administration and Policy Analysis Program, Nelson has worked as a research associate at Far Western Laboratory and has been a principal of elementary, middle and high schools in Pennsylvania and California.

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Education resource Information Center (ERIC) www.eric.ed.gov

(ED225301) Parents and Federal Education Programs: Preliminary findings from the Study of Parental Involvement.

(ED337278) The Parent Principle: Prerequisite for Educational Success

The complexities of educating English Language Learners are well-documented. In the December 2004/January 2005 issue of *Educational Leadership*, published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, educating language learners is the main theme.

Federal reports such as *The Provision of an Equal Education Opportunity to Limited – English Proficient Students* (OCR) provide directives to school systems.

State policy reports such as *Five Shoes Waiting to Drop in Arizona* (2001, The Morrison Institute) and Arizona Department of Education Advisories from the English Acquisition Services Unit are intended to provide guidance to schools and districts implementing the various federal and state mandates for ELL services to students and families.

Glossary

AYP—Adequate yearly progress, defined in the NCLB Act as a way to measure the academic achievement of elementary and secondary school students in relation to individual state student academic achievement standards.

CHARTER SCHOOLS—public schools that are largely free to innovate and often provide more effective programs and choice to underserved groups of students. Charter schools are subject to the “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) and other accountability requirements of the NCLB Act.

COMPREHENSIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS—centers authorized by Section 203 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-279). Appropriations for the centers in fiscal year 2005 would enable the U.S. Department of Education to support 20 centers, 10 of which must be in current regions.

COMMON CORE OF DATA—the National Center for Education Statistics’ comprehensive, annual, national statistical database of information concerning all public elementary and secondary schools and local education agencies.

CONSOLIDATED STATE PLAN FOR NCLB—plan from each state that demonstrates it has adopted challenging academic content standards and challenging student academic achievement standards that will be used by the state, its local educational agencies, and its schools.

CORE SUBJECTS—means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography [Section 9101(11)]. While the federal statute includes the arts in the core academic subjects, it does not

specify which of the arts are core academic subjects; therefore, States must make this determination.

DFO—Designated Federal Official. A DFO acts as a liaison between a federal advisory committee and federal agency and must be present at all committee meetings.

ELL—English language learner

FACA—Federal Advisory Committee Act was created in 1972 (Public Law 92-463) by the U.S. Congress to formally recognize the merits of seeking the advice and assistance of our nation’s citizens. Congress sought to assure that advisory committees: provide advice that is relevant, objective, and open to the public; act promptly to complete their work; and comply with reasonable cost controls and recordkeeping requirements.

HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS—States must define a “highly qualified” teacher. The requirement that teachers be highly qualified applies to all public elementary or secondary school teachers employed by a local educational agency who teach a core academic subject. “Highly qualified” means that the teacher: has obtained full state certification as a teacher or passed the state teacher licensing examination and holds a license to teach in the state, and does not have certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis; holds a minimum of a bachelor’s degree; and has demonstrated subject matter competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, in a manner determined by the state and in compliance with Section 9101(23) of ESEA.

IDEA—Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEP—Individualized educational plan required by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IES—Institute of Education Sciences, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education that was established by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002

LEA— Local education agency

OESE—Office of Elementary and Secondary Education in the U.S. Department of Education

RACs—Regional Advisory Committees that are authorized by Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-279)

RAC QUORUM—is a majority of appointed members. A RAC must have a quorum to meet or hold an official meeting.

REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORIES—federally-supported regional institutions that have operated since 1966 and reauthorized by Section 174 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002

SCIENTIFICALLY-BASED RESEARCH—Section 9101(37) of ESEA, as amended by *NCLB*, defines scientifically based research as “research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs.” (P.L. 107-279)

SEA—State education agency

STATE—references to “States” include the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the freely associated states, and the outlying areas.

SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES—additional academic instruction designed to increase the academic achievement of students in schools that have not met state targets for increasing student achievement (AYP) for three or more years. Services may include tutoring and after-school services by public or private providers approved by the state.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE—assistance in identifying, selecting, or designing solutions based on research, including professional development and high-quality training, to implement solutions leading to improved education and other practices and classroom

instruction based on scientifically valid research; and improved planning, design, and administration of programs; assistance in interpreting, analyzing, and utilizing statistics and evaluations; and other assistance necessary to encourage the improvement of teaching and learning through the applications of techniques supported by scientifically valid research (P.L. 107-279

WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE (WWC)— clearinghouse established in 2002 by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences to provide educators, policymakers, researchers, and the public with a central and trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education.

List of tables

Table 1: Public inputs for the Western RAC.....	11
Table 2: Measures of cultural fluency.....	14
Table 3: Economic indicators.....	15
Table 4: Measures of poverty.....	16
Table 5: Demographics of Western Region.....	17
Table 6: Teacher quality indicators.....	19
Table 7: Number of schools and students.....	20
Table 8: Racial distribution of students in public schools (percent).....	21
Table 9: Student enrolled in federally supported special needs programs (percentage).....	21
Table 10: Schools' AYP and Improvement (SY2002-2003).....	22
Table 11: High school graduation rates.....	23
Table 12: Meeting requirement to establish state standards.....	24
Table 13: Number of teachers and beginning and average teacher salaries.....	25
Table 14: Teacher quality indicators.....	25
Table 15: U.S. Department of Education funding by program (in millions of dollars).....	26
Table 16: Adjusted spending per student (in dollars?) and source of funding.....	27
Table 17: Technology resources by state.....	27

List of figures

Figure 1: NAEP 4 th grade reading test: percent proficient.....	23
Figure 2: NAEP 4 th grade math test: percent proficient.....	23