DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 209 635 CS 006 342

TITLE Oversight Hearing on Reading and Writing Achievement. Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, House of Representatives, Ninety-Seventh Congress, First Session.

INSTITUTION Congress of the U.S., Washington, D.C. House Committee on Education and Labor.

PUB DATE May 81

NOTE 106p.; Not available in paper copy due to small type.

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; *Government Role; Hearings; *National Competency Tests; National Surveys; Parent Role; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Skills; Teacher Role; Writing Evaluation; Writing Instruction; *Writing Skills

IDENTIFIERS *National Assessment of Educational Progress

ABSTRACT

This transcript of a hearing held by the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the United States House of Representatives focuses on the findings of two surveys conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP): the third national reading assessment and the third writing assessment. The transcript contains statements by Roy H. Forbes, director of NAEP; Marjorie Farmer, representing the National Council of Teachers of English; Roger Farr, past president of the International Reading Assocation; William H. Gray, a Representative from Pennsylvania; and Phyllis Schlafly, president of the Eagle Forum. In addition to these statements, the transcript provides prepared statements, letters, and supplemental materials pertinent to the hearing. (FL)

OVERSIGHT HEARING ON READING AND WRITING ACHIEVEMENT

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY, AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C., ON MAY 7, 1981

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and Labor

U.S GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1981

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OVERSIGHT HEARING ON READING AND WRITING ACHIEVEMENT

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 1981

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY,
AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m. in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Dale E. Kildee presiding.

Members present: Representatives Kildee, Ford, Hawkins, Goodling, Erdahl, and Petri.

Staff present: John F. Jennings, counsel; Nancy L. Kober, staff assistant; and Richard D. DiEugenio, minority legislative associate.

Mr. KILDEE. The subcommittee will come to order.

The Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education is conducting an oversight hearing today on reading and writing achievement.

The main focus of this hearing will be two surveys conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, their third national reading assessment and their third national writing assessment.

The third reading assessment, which was released on April 29, found that the reading skills of 9-year-olds have improved steadily over the past decade. In addition, this assessment shows substantial gains for disadvantaged and minority elementary students. The assessment also found that 13- and 17-year-olds' reading achievement has remained stable during the past 10 years.

I am encouraged by these results, particularly by the significant gains for disadvantaged students. To me this data strongly suggests that our Federal education programs, especially title I, which focuses on elementary students from disadvantaged backgrounds, are working well.

The third national writing assessment, released in January, found no major change during the 1970's in the writing abilities of American students. This survey showed that while the majority of students have mastered the basic conventions of writing, a sizable minority have serious problems with writing.

Today we will hear from Dr. Roy Forbes, Director of the National Assessment, who will summarize the two surveys. In addition, we will hear from a panel who will react to the National Assessment's findings and also make some other observations on reading and writing achievement.

I think the National Assessment is doing a real service in providing us with valuable national data about the strengths and weaknesses of our Nation's youth in the basic skills.

Our first witness then is Dr. Roy Forbes, and he has been joined at the table by Dr. Roger Farr, Dr. Marjorie Farmer, and Mrs. Phyllis Schlafly, president of Eagle Forum, Alton, Ill.

You may proceed.

STATEMENT OF ROY H. FORBES, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS, EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

Dr. FORBES. Thank you, Congressman.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide you with a summary of the latest National Assessment results.

My formal statement provides information about both reading and writing performance of our Nation's youth. For my oral summary I will limit my remarks to reading data.

Mr. KILDEE. Very good, and your total summary will be included in the record.

Dr. FORBES. The National Assessment is authorized by Congress to monitor changes in student academic performance over time. The program is a project of the National Institute of Education and is administered by the Education Commission of the States. We assess students at ages 9, 13, and 17.

Reading has been assessed three times; 1970-71; 1974-75; and 1979-80. The findings of the 9-year-old are encouraging. For 13-year-olds we have a couple of success stories. At age 17 our data show a "no change" situation. This is counter to the common-held perception that students' overall reading ab ty has declined over the last 10 years. The data do, however, pro de a caution in that our older students are declining in inferential comprehension, in their ability to apply some of the more basic reading skills.

To describe the reading data I would like to refer to four charts I have with me. We assessed reading by asking questions designed to measure literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, and reference skills.

The assessment provides data at the national level and for specific groups of students: Regions of the country; size of community; race/ethnicity; male/female; level of parental education; and type of community.

The charts I will use provide data for three by types of community; economically advantaged and economically disadvantaged urban areas and for rural areas; by black and white; and by region of the country.

If I may move to the chart.

For the people in the audience, I will speak loud enough.

The first chart shows the literal comprehension performance of the students at age 9. We can see all of the lines are going up. We have made some rather dramatic improvements where students that attend schools serving rural areas and for students that attend schools serving the economically disadvantaged urban areas.

Black students have made a rather dramatic increase and students from the Southeastern part of the United States who have performed historically below the rest of the Nation have also im-

proved to the point now there is no longer a statistically significant difference in the performance of the Southeast with the rest of the Nation.

At age 13 in literal comprehension we have a couple of success stories. Overall for all students the percent went up by 1.6 percentage points.

Black students again made a rather dramatic improvement in their literal comprehension skills during this period of time. Between the first two assessments, 1970 and 1974, we had a slight drop for the economically disadvantaged urban student, but there were rather dramatic gains between the last two assessments which erased that initial drop and they ended up with some overall improvement.

The reference skills, that is, being able to use an index or knowing which encyclopedia to go to, et cetera, have a similar pattern of some increase. We found some drops in reference skills between the first and second assessments, but between the second and third assessment we had rather dramatic improvements that erased those earlier declines, and we ended up with some closing of the performance gap between students at all three age levels.

For the inferential comprehension area, again at age 9 we have the same increases for the rural, disadvantaged urban students, the black students, the Southeast student.

At ages 13 and 17, we have some drops in the ability of students to infer from what they have read. There was a small drop; the size of my lines really does not pick it up for white students at age 13. For all students at age 17, there was a significant decline in their ability to infer from what they have read.

When we looked at all these three groups of items, the literal comprehension, the reference skills and inferential comprehension, and look at it as a composite, we found the following:

Again, at age 9, rather dramatic improvements of the disadvantaged urban and rural students. Black students gained almost 10 percentage points over this decade, and the Southeast again, a rather dramatic improvement of 7.5 percentage points.

Statistically, at age 13 we did not pick up any overall change and statistically at age 17 we did not pick up any overall changes in the performance of students during this 10-year period.

This is rather counter to some other data and some common held perceptions that people have about what was going on in performance in the reading area over the last 10 years.

Knowing the committee would be interested in title I related information, we prepared a summary of data that should be useful. It comes in three parts:

First, when we collect data we identify schools as either being eligible or not for title I funds. Therefore, we are able to analyze our data using title I eligibility as a variable. Before summarizing the results, however, I need to mention several limitations.

First, not all eligible schools receive funds, our title I eligible data includes data from some schools that did not have title I programs.

Second, not all students in a title I eligible school receive services and our sample is taken from all students. These two limitations

tend to dilute the measurement of gains made by students served by title I.

Two things are clear from our data: First, funds are being targeted on those in most need of help, the lower performers and, second, there is a trend toward the closing of the performance gap between students attending title I eligible and noneligible schools.

Now these data are not very conclusive by themselves, given the limitations, but with two additional pieces of information, we will see a new pattern. For our reading data we developed a new variable, an achievement class variable, that looks at the changes in achievement for four different levels of performers.

Across the board, the data show that the greatest gains were found for the lower performers, those title I was designed to serve. As a matter of record, it is the higher performers who registered declines at ages 13 and 17 and the lower performers who registered increases at ages 9 and 13.

We have a pattern of the lower performers improving their skills.

The final bits of data relating to title I are those describing the performance of students attending schools serving economically disadvantaged urban areas and students attending rural schools, schools that historically have received title I funds. At age 9 both of these groups demonstrated gains, 5.2 and 6 points. At age 13, although not statistically significant, the gains were 3.6 and 1.8 percentage points for the disadvantaged urban and rural students.

At age 17, the place where there is less targeted funds, the pattern of improvement did not occur.

If the above information is considered in its totality the following observation can be made:

Something very positive is happening to younger students who need help in improving their academic skills, those for whom compensatory education programs were designed, students attending schools where compensatory services are provided, the historically lower performing students, those are the students gaining, they are closing the performance gap.

I believe that for younger students' compensatory education programs are paying off.

When I review the reading data, I also believe that we can be proud of the progress of our younger students. But the data also indicate that even at the younger age the task is not complete. We have students who need the services of compensatory education programs.

When we examine the declines in inferential comprehension, the declines registered by our better performing older students, in the context of other declines, for example, the ability of students to write a persuasive statement and the ability to solve mathematical word problems, I believe there is a reason for concern.

Most students have the most basic of skills, probably 75 percent; 25 percent do need help. But it is also apparent that many of the 75 percent who have the basics need to be better trained in the application of those skills. There are two needs, both of which need to be addressed.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Forbes follows:]

Prepared Statement of Roy H Forbes, Director, National Assessment of Educational Progress, Education Commission of the States

National Assessment is a congressionally mandated program designed to monitor changes in student academic performance. It is a project of the National Institute of Education and is administered by the Education Commission of the States.

The data released yesterday by National Assessment on the reading performance of 9, 13 and 17-year-old students, coupled with the data on writing performance reported last January, describe the changes that have occurred during the last decade in these two important learning areas. Reading and writing were both assessed three times during the 1970-80 period.

Results from the reading assessment indicate that 9-year-olds made significant gains during this period, while 13 and 17-year-old students' overall performance remained stable. Some of the highlights of the results are:

- Nationally, 9-year-olds' overall reading performance level rose 3.9%. They made significant gains in reference skills (4.8%), literal comprehension (3.9%) and inferential comprehension (3.5%).
- Nationally, 13-year-olds' overall performance did not change by a statistically significant amount, but they did register a significant increase (1.6%) in performance in literal comprehension from the first to the third assessment.
- Nationally, the level of 17-year-olds' overall performance did not change by a statistically significant amount, but they did decline significantly (2.1%) in inferential comprehension.

The following tables show how the three age populations of students performed in the three assessments.

National Mean Percentages and Changes in Correct Responses for 9-Year-Olds in Three Reading Assessments#

	Years			Changes		
	1971	1975	1980	1971-75	1975-80	1971-80
Total reading exercises (57)	64.0%	65.2%	67.9%	1.1*	2.6*	3.9*
Literal comprehension	65.7	66.8	69.6	1.0	2.3*	3.9*
Inferential comprehension	60.5	61.4	61.9	0.9	2.5*	3.5*
Reference skills	64.8	67.0	69.6	2.3*	2.6*	4.8*

Figures may not total due to rounding.
* Indicates significant change in performance between assessments.

National Mean Percentages and Changes in Correct Responses for 13-Year-Olds in Three Reading Assessments#

	Years			Changes		
	1970	1974	1979	1970-74	1974-79	1970-79
Total reading exercises (71)	60.0%	59.9%	60.8%	0.1	0.9	0.8
Literal comprehension	61.1	61.8	62.7	0.7	1.9	1.6*
Inferential comprehension	56.1	55.3	55.5	0.8	0.2	0.6
Reference skills	65.8	64.1	66.7	1.7*	2.6*	0.9

Figures may not total due to rounding.
* Indicates significant change in performance between assessments

National Mean Percentages and Changes in Correct Responses for In-School 17-Year-Olds in Three Reading Assessments#

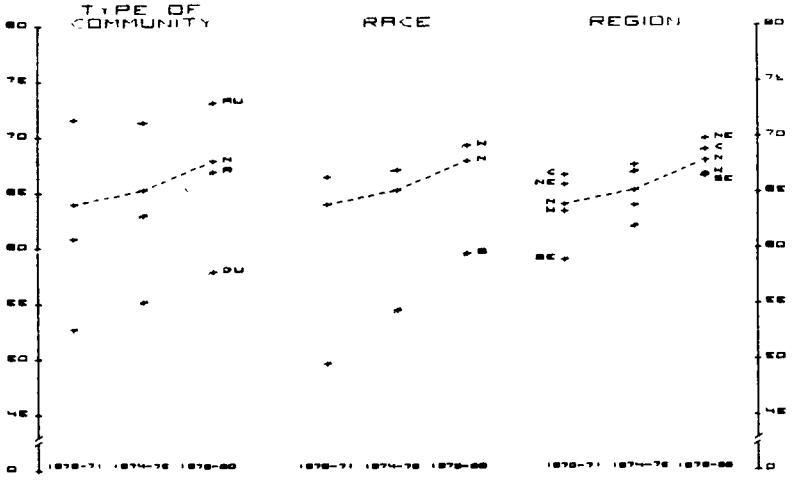
	Years			Changes		
	1971	1975	1980	1971-75	1975-80	1971-80
Total reading exercises (71)	68.9%	69.0%	68.2%	0.0	0.8	0.7
Literal comprehension	72.2	72.7	72.0	0.5	0.7	0.2
Inferential comprehension	64.2	63.3	62.1	0.9	1.2	2.1*
Reference skills	69.4	70.1	70.2	0.6	0.2	0.8

Figures may not total due to rounding
* Indicates significant change in performance between assessments

The National Assessment data also provide achievement information for groups of students. The following three charts illustrate the performance of 9, 13 and 17-year-old students who live in rural or economically advantaged or disadvantaged urban areas, who are black or white and who live in the northeast, southeast, central or western regions of the United States.

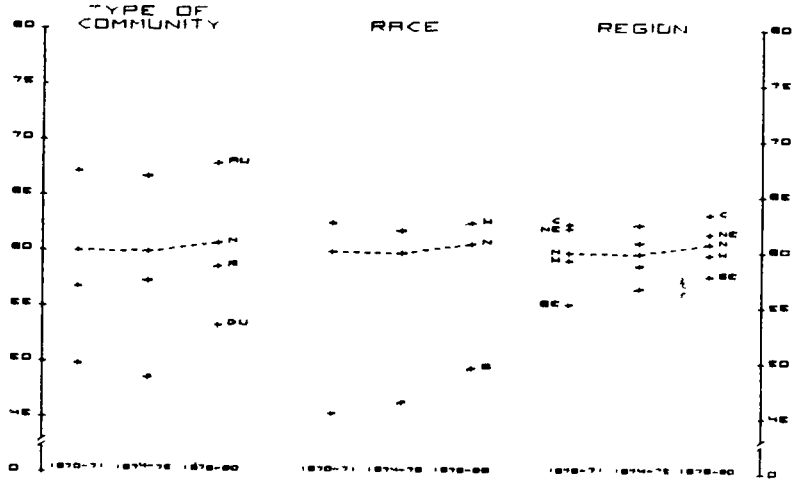
ALL EXERCISES

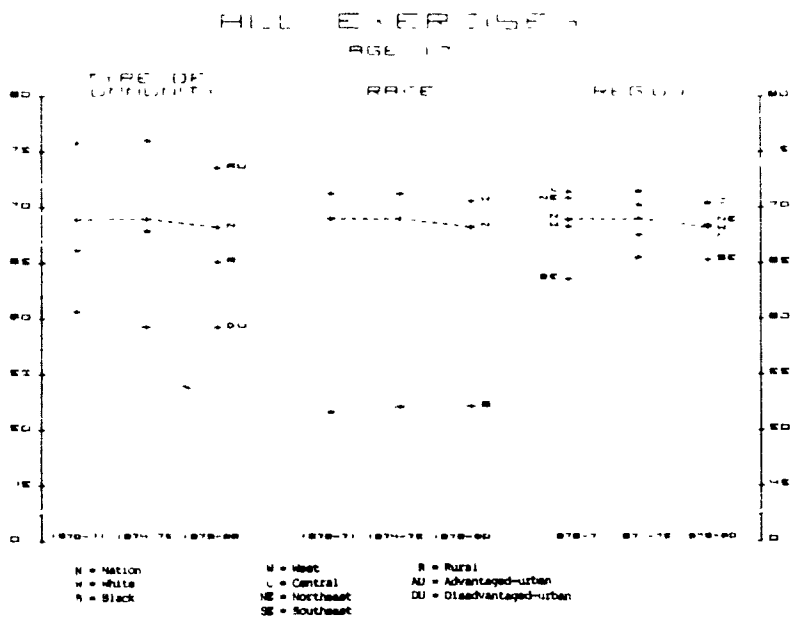
AGE 9



ALL EXERCISES

AGE 13





With few exceptions the slopes of the lines in the preceding charts for 9 and 13-year-old students are positive, indicating gains. Some of the more striking results for the different groups are:

- The largest gains among 9-year-olds occurred for black students (9.9%), students who reside in the southeast (7.5%), those who attend schools in rural communities (6.0%) and those who attend schools in disadvantaged-urban communities (5.2%).
- The only significant gain among 13-year-olds occurred for black students (4.2%).
- At each of the three ages, students in the southeast, blacks and males narrowed the gap between themselves and the nation, although they continue to perform below the national level.

National Results by Achievement Classes: Mean Percentages and Changes in Correct Responses for Ages 9, 13 and In-School 17 in Three Reading Assessments#

	Age 9: 57 Exercises§					
	1971	Change 1971-75	1975	Change 1975-80	1980	Change 1971-80
Nation	64 0%	1 3*	65.2%	2.6*	67 9%	3 9*
Achievement class 1	38.4	3.8*	42.2	5.0*	47 2	8 8*
Achievement class 2	61 7	1 4	63 1	2 6*	65.7	4 0*
Achievement class 3	72 1	0 4	72.6	1 6	74 2	2 0
Achievement class 4	83 7	-0 6	83.1	1 4	84 5	0 8

	Age 13: 71 Exercises					
	1970	Change 1970-74	1974	Change 1974-79	1979	Change 1970-79
Nation	60.0	-0 1	59 9	0 9	60 8	0 8
Achievement class 1	36 2	2.1*	38.2	1.5	39.7	3 6*
Achievement class 2	54 9	0.9	55.8	1 3	57 1	2.2*
Achievement class 3	67 0	-0 6	66.4	0.4	66.8	-0.2
Achievement class 4	82.0	-2.7*	79.3	0 3	79 5	-2 4*

	Age 17: 71 Exercises					
	1971	Change 1971-75	1975	Change 1975-80	1980	Change 1971-80
Nation	68.9	0.0	69 0	-0.8	68.2	-0 7
Achievement class 1	44 6	2 1*	46.7	-1 0	45 8	1 2
Achievement class 2	64 7	0.8	65.5	-1 0	64.5	-0 2
Achievement class 3	76.9	-0 8	76 1	-0 7	75 4	-1.5
Achievement class 4	89 6	-1 9*	87.6	-0 4	87 2	-2.3*

#Figures may not total due to rounding
§There were 58 exercises in the second and third assessments.
**Asterisk indicates significant change in performance between assessments*

Note: Achievement class 1 = lowest one-fourth
Achievement class 2 = middle lowest one-fourth
Achievement class 3 = middle highest one-fourth
Achievement class 4 = highest one-fourth

The reading report also contains information on the performance of students by achievement class groupings. Student performance was categorized into four groups, from the lowest quarter of performers to the highest quarter. The table on the following page displays these results.

Highlights of these data show:

- o Low achievers improved by 8.8 percentage points at age 9 and 3.6 percentage points at age 13.
- o High achievers declined by 2.4 percentage points at age 13 and 2.3 percentage points at age 17.

National Assessment also analyzed the performance of students attending schools that were eligible for Title I ESEA funds. These results are summarized in the table on the following page.

The overall pattern shows a narrowing gap between Title I and non-Title I eligible schools over the course of the decade, suggesting that students in Title I schools are improving at a faster rate than students in non-Title I schools. Although these gains cannot be attributed directly to the Title I program, it is safe to assume that the program, in concert with other compensatory education efforts, is having a positive effect.

National Results by Achievement Classes: Mean Percentages and Changes in Correct Responses for Ages 9, 13 and In-School 17 in Three Reading Assessments

Age 9: 67 Exercises§

	1971	Change 1971-75	1975	Change 1975-80	1980	Change 1971-80
Nation	64.0%	1.3*	66.2%	2.6*	67.9%	3.9*
Achievement class 1	38.4	3.8*	42.2	5.0*	47.2	8.8*
Achievement class 2	61.7	1.4	63.1	2.6*	65.7	4.0*
Achievement class 3	72.1	0.4	72.6	1.6	74.2	2.0
Achievement class 4	83.7	-0.6	83.1	1.4	84.5	0.8

Age 13: 71 Exercises

	1970	Change 1970-74	1974	Change 1974-79	1979	Change 1970-79
Nation	66.0	-0.1	65.9	0.9	66.8	0.8
Achievement class 1	38.2	2.1*	38.2	1.5	39.7	3.6*
Achievement class 2	54.9	0.8	55.8	1.3	57.1	2.2*
Achievement class 3	67.0	-0.6	66.4	0.4	66.8	-0.2
Achievement class 4	82.0	-2.7*	79.3	0.3	79.5	-2.4*

Age 17: 71 Exercises

	1971	Change 1971-75	1975	Change 1975-80	1980	Change 1971-80
Nation	68.9	0.0	69.0	-0.8	68.2	-0.7
Achievement class 1	44.6	2.1*	46.7	-1.0	45.8	1.2
Achievement class 2	64.7	0.8	65.5	-1.0	64.5	-0.2
Achievement class 3	76.9	-0.8	76.1	-0.7	75.4	-1.5
Achievement class 4	86.9	-1.9*	87.6	-0.4	87.2	-2.3*

*Figures may not total due to rounding.
§There were 68 exercises in the second and third assessments.
*Asterisk indicates significant change in performance between assessments.

Note: Achievement class 1 = lowest one-fourth
Achievement class 2 = middle lowest one-fourth
Achievement class 3 = middle highest one-fourth
Achievement class 4 = highest one-fourth

Differences in Mean Reading Performance Between Students in Title I Eligible and Non-Title I Eligible Schools: Three Assessments

By Assessment Year

	1970-71			1974-75			1979-80		
	Mean % Correct Students in Eligible Schools	Mean % Correct Students in Non-Eligible Schools	Difference	Mean % Correct Students in Eligible Schools	Mean % Correct Students in Non-Eligible Schools	Difference	Mean % Correct Students in Eligible Schools	Mean % Correct Students in Non-Eligible Schools	Difference
Age 9	61.9	67.1	5.2	63.6	67.9	4.3	66.1	70.6	4.5
Age 13	58.2	62.6	4.4	58.7	61.3	2.6	59.2	61.3	2.1
Age 17	67.9	70.6	2.7	67.6	70.6	3.1	[illegible]	72	1.0

The writing data released several months ago indicated that, in large part, writing ability remained stable over the decade. Following are highlights of the results:

For 17-year-olds:

- Holistic evaluation did not reveal a major decline or improvement in the writing performance of 17-year-olds between 1969 and 1979. However, it did suggest a slight decline in quality.
- Rhetorical skill (measured by primary trait evaluation) on a narrative task declined between 1969 and 1974, but rose considerably from 1974 to 1979. In 1979, three-fourths of the 17-year-olds wrote competent narratives.
- Rhetorical skill on a persuasive writing task declined between 1974 and 1979. Proportions writing minimally acceptable papers dropped from 78% to 73%, and those writing successful papers declined from 21% to 15%.
- A measure of cohesion in writing revealed that between the 1969 and 1979 assessments, the percentage of papers displaying good cohesion rose from 80% to 86%. Also, between 1974 and 1979, there was an increase in the percentage of coherent paragraphs in the descriptive essays.
- Although significantly fewer blacks wrote adequate papers than the nation as a whole, the gap between their performance and that of the nation narrowed on all but one of the writing tasks.
- The disadvantaged-urban group, while still performing below national levels, improved with each assessment.
- Proportions of mechanical errors in the papers changed little over the decade. Punctuation problems, misspellings and awkward sentences continued to plague the majority of students, but there was no substantial increase or decline in these problems between 1969 and 1979.
- Very few students — 7% — said they are routinely engaged in all of the following activities: prewriting, creating multiple drafts, receiving written and oral comments about their writing from their teachers, and working to improve their papers after they are returned.

For 13-year-olds:

- Holistic evaluation reveals that between 1969 and 1978 there was a decline in the quality of the descriptive essays written for the assessment. Most of the decline took place between 1969 and 1973; little changed during the late seventies.
- Rhetorical skill (measured by primary trait evaluation) on an expressive task requiring creation of a mood dropped slightly (4%) over the decade. Nevertheless, about two-thirds of the students demonstrated at least minimal skill in each assessment.
- There was a decline in the percentage of students successfully writing a persuasive letter. Although 69% were able to do a marginal job in 1973, the proportion dropped to 64% in 1978. The proportion of letters judged competent or better dropped from 28% to 20%.
- Eighty percent of the 13-year-olds wrote successful letters to a mail order firm.
- Black 13-year-olds improved on some tasks and did not decline as fast as the nation on others, with the result that they narrowed, and in some cases, erased any significant difference between their performance as a group and the national performance.
- Basically, proportions of mechanical errors in the papers did not change between 1969 and 1978.
- Three-quarters of the students reported that writing instruction takes up to one-third or less of their class time. The better writers indicated that they had had more writing instruction than had the poorer writers.
- Very few students — 3% — appeared to be engaging in all of the following activities: prewriting, creating multiple drafts, receiving written and oral feedback from their teachers, and working to improve their papers after they are returned.

For 9-year-olds:

- Holistic evaluation did not reveal significant changes in the average writing performance of 9-year-olds between 1970 and 1979. However, the trends (particularly a 6% increase in better papers) indicate that there may have been an increase in quality.

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- Rhetorical skill on a narrative task declined between 1970 and 1979 in terms of the percentage of competent papers. In 1979, only 1 student in 10 wrote an adequate story.

- Rhetorical skill on a persuasive writing task remained the same between 1974 and 1979. Proportions of students able to include some appeals remained at somewhat less than half, while about 16% in both assessments wrote letters containing good appeals.
- Rhetorical skill on a routine business letter suggested that 9-year-olds have less difficulty with straightforward tasks. In 1979, about half wrote a successful letter to order a calendar through the mail.

In light of the above data, three important observations can be made:

1. The reading achievement of groups of young students who have historically performed below national levels has improved dramatically. Compensatory education efforts apparently are "paying off".
2. But while gains have been made, the need for compensatory programs has not vanished. The writing data vividly suggest that this need exists for between 10 and 25 percent of the students who appear to have serious problems with writing.
3. The decline in inferential comprehension and in the ability of 17-year-old students to write persuasively coupled with the decline in mathematical problem-solving skills reported earlier by National Assessment, strongly indicate that older students are having difficulty applying basic skills. Although the National Assessment survey data do not identify the cause for these declines, it may be that the narrow definition used by some in the "back to the basics" and the "minimal competency" movements is having both a positive effect on the "basics" and a negative effect on the "application of the basics." This should be a cause for concern.

HAS TITLE I IMPROVED EDUCATION FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS?

EVIDENCE FROM THREE NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS OF READING

National Assessment data gathered between 1970 and 1980 indicate that students attending Title I eligible schools* have improved their reading performance at a somewhat faster rate than students in schools not eligible for Title I assistance.

Table 1 presents mean reading achievement percentages for 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds and 17-year-olds enrolled in Title I and non-Title I eligible schools at three points in time -- the 1970-71 school year, the 1974-75 school year and the 1979-80 school year. The figures demonstrate that the reading performance of students in Title I eligible schools is lower than the performance of students in noneligible schools. That is to be expected. But the table also shows that the differences between eligible and noneligible schools shrank between 1970 and 1980.

Tables 3, 4 and 5 present a more comprehensive view of the situation. Here we see that the effects of Title I eligibility differ for different population groups.

- At age 9 (Table 3), the differences between black children in Title I eligible and noneligible schools shrank from 5.1 to 4.3 points over the decade, whereas the eligible/noneligible difference for Hispanic children grew from 6.1 points to 7.5 points between 1975 and 1980.

- Black 9-year-olds in predominantly white eligible schools gained ground on their peers in predominantly white noneligible schools, whereas the reverse appears to be true for blacks in predominantly black elementary schools: their eligible/noneligible difference might have increased slightly between 1975 and 1980.

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*See Table 2 for percent of eligible schools in each national assessment.

- The greatest closing of the gap at age 9 took place in the Southeast. At the beginning of the decade, Soutneastern students in eligible schools were 11.5 points behind their fellow students in noneligible schools; at the close of the decade, the gap had narrowed to 6.3 points. Western students in eligible schools, on the other hand, fell farther behind their colleagues in noneligible schools.

- Thirteen-year-old students in eligible schools appear to heve made their greatest gains between 1970 and 1974 and then lost a bit of the gain between 1974 and 1979 (Table 4). Again, the most dramatic change was for Southeastern students in eligible schools, who narrowed the gap from 8.7 points to 4.9 points over the decade.

- Seventeen-year-old students in eligible schools improved most between 1975 and 1980 (Table 5).

- Black 17-year-olds in eligible schools began the decade about five points behind blacks in noneligible schools. But by the end of the decade, there was no difference between the two groups.

- Southeastern 17-year-olds narrowed the gap between eligible/noneligible schools from 6.5 points to 1.9.

These significant changes and the overall pattern of a narrowing gap for most population groups at all ages strongly suggest that students in Title I schools are improving at a faster rate than students in non-Title I schools.

TABLE 1. Differences in Mean Reading Performance Between Students in Title I Eligible and Non-Title I Eligible Schools, Three Assessments*

	Reading Assessment Year								
	1970-71			1974-75			1979-80		
	Mean % Correct,** Students in Eligible Schools	Mean % Correct, Students in Noneligible Schools	Difference	Mean % Correct, Students in Eligible Schools	Mean % Correct, Students in Noneligible Schools	Difference	Mean % Correct, Students in Eligible Schools	Mean % Correct, Students in Noneligible Schools	Difference
Age 9	61.9	67.1	5.2	63.4	67.9	4.5	66.1	70.6	4.6
Age 13	58.2	62.6	4.4	58.7	61.3	2.6	59.2	62.3	3.1
Age 17	67.9	70.6	2.7	67.9	70.0	2.1	67.5	68.8	1.3

*See Tables 3, 4 and 5 for standard errors.
**Refers to the percentage of reading items correct. Reading items consisted of literal comprehension, inferential comprehension and reference skills items.

TABLE 2. Percent of Schools in NAEP Sample Eligible for Title I Assistance

Age	1970-71	1974-75	1979-80
9	59.0	59.1	59.6
13	58.3	52.5	48.4
17	62.6	47.3	40.1

TABLE 3. Differences in Mean Reading Performance Between Students in Title I Eligible Schools and Non-Title I Eligible Schools, Three National Assessments, Age 9

	1971						1975						1980					
	Eligible Schools	SE[1]	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff[2]	Eligible Schools	SE	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff	Eligible Schools	SE	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff
Nation	61 9	0 4	67 1	0 5	5.2	0.7	63.4	0.5	67.9	0.5	6.5	0 7	66 1	0 6	70 6	0 8	4 6	1 0
Community Size[3]																		
Big cities	58 4	0 8	66 1	0 8	7 7	1 1	56 0	0.8	64.0	0.9	8 0	1.2	61 5	1 2	69 2	1 3	7.6	1 8
Fringes	66 1	0 9	68 5	0 9	2 3	1 2	67.6	0.9	69.3	0 8	1 9	1 2	65 7	1 5	72 0	1 2	6 3	1 9
Medium cities	59 8	0 9	67 8	1 0	8 0	1 3	62.9	1.0	67 7	0 9	4 8	1 4	67 0	1 7	71 4	1 6	4 5	2 3
Small places	62 1	0 5	65 6	0 8	3 6	1.0	64 0	0.6	69.0	0 8	4 9	1.0	67.2	0.8	69.5	1 3	2 3	1 5
Race																		
White	65 2	0 5	68 1	0 6	2.9	0.7	66 6	0.5	69.2	0 6	2.6	0 8	68 8	0.7	71 5	0.8	2 7	1 1
Black	48 7	0 7	53 8	1 4	5.1	1.6	53.4	0.8	57 9	1.3	4.5	1 5	56.0	1.2	63.0	2 3	6 3	2.5
Hispanic	•	•	•	•	•	•	53.1	1.4	59.3	2.3	6.1	2 7	57.6	1 8	65 1	2.3	7.5	2 9
Racial Composition[4]																		
White X 0-59	•	•	•	•	•	•	61.7	1 3	66 0	1.6	4.2	2 1	66.7	1 8	68 4	3 0	1 7	3 5
White X 60-100	66 2	0 5	68 2	0 6	2.1	0.8	66.9	0 5	69 5	0 6	2 6	0 8	69.0	0 7	71 7	0 8	2 7	1 1
Black X 0-59	•	•	•	•	•	•	52.2	0.8	55 8	1.7	3 6	1 9	57 9	1.3	64 0	3 4	6 0	3 7
Black X 60-100	55 3	2 1	59 8	2 9	4.5	3.7	56.8	1.4	60 6	1.9	4.0	2 6	60 6	2.2	62 4	2 0	1 8	3 6
Region																		
Northeast	65 2	0 7	66 7	0 9	1.5	1.1	65.4	0.7	70 1	0.9	6 7	1 2	68 2	1 1	71 5	1 3	3 3	1 7
Southeast	55 9	0 6	67 8	1 0	11 9	1.2	59 8	0.7	66 6	1 0	6.9	1.2	65 1	1.0	71 4	1 6	6 3	1 9
Central	64 6	0 7	69 1	0.8	4 5	1.1	66.4	0.7	69.1	0.8	2.7	1 1	68 8	1 0	70.9	1.4	2 9	1 7
West	61 5	0 8	64 8	0 8	3.3	1.1	61.0	0.8	66.3	0.8	5.2	1 2	62 3	1 2	69.6	1 1	7 3	1 7
Sex																		
Male	59 6	0 6	64 7	0 7	5 2	0.9	61 8	0 6	66 2	0.7	5 2	0 9	63 8	0 8	69.4	1 0	5 6	1.3
Female	64 1	0 6	69 5	0 7	5 4	0.9	65.9	0.6	69 7	0.7	3.8	0 9	68 6	0.8	71.9	1 0	3.6	1.3
Type of Community[5]																		
Rural	60 6	0 8	72 1	3.6	11 5	3.7	62 3	0.9	68 2	2 4	6.0	2.6	67.0	1.3	•	•	•	•
Disadvantaged-urban	52 1	0 9	55 3	1 7	3.2	1.9	59 4	0 9	59.0	2.2	4.5	2 6	57 5	1 4	59 5	2 6	2.0	3.0
Advantaged-urban	71 4	1 4	71 6	1 8	0 1	1 7	71.2	1 5	71 4	1 0	0 2	1 8	•	•	73.1	1 3	•	•

• Sample sizes are too small to permit reliable estimates

[1] The standard error (SE) is an estimate of potential sampling variability. Generally, we are confident that the "real" percentage will fall within plus or minus two standard errors of the given percentage in at least 95 out of 100 samples.

[2] If the difference is at least twice its standard error, we are very confident that it is a real difference and not an artifact of sampling variation.

[3] Big cities = population 200,000+. Fringes = metropolitan areas on fringes of big cities. Medium cities = population 25,000-200,000, not in fringes. Small places = population under 25,000, not in fringes.

[4] Racial composition refers to the percentage of white students in a school. White X 0-59 means white students in schools with 0-59% white students, Black X 0-59 means black students in schools with 0-59% white students.

[5] Type of community is based on characteristics of the community the school serves. Rural students attend schools in areas with a population under 10,000 where many of the residents are farmers or farm workers. Disadvantaged-urban students attend schools in or around cities having a population greater than 100,000 where a relatively high proportion of residents are on welfare or are not regularly employed. Advantaged urban students attend schools in or around cities having a population greater than 100,000 where a high proportion of the residents are in professional or managerial positions.

TABLE 4. Differences in Mean Reading Performance Between Students in Title I Eligible Schools and Non-Title I Eligible Schools, Three National Assessments, Age 13

	1970						1974						1979					
	Eligible Schools	SE[1]	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff[2]	Eligible Schools	SE	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff	Eligible Schools	SE	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff
Nation	58.2	0.4	62.6	0.5	4.4	0.6	58.7	0.5	61.3	0.5	2.6	0.7	59.2	0.7	62.3	0.7	3.1	1.0
Community Size[3]																		
Big cities	52.3	0.8	61.4	0.7	9.2	1.0	51.4	0.9	57.4	0.8	6.0	1.2	53.0	1.2	60.9	1.3	7.1	1.8
Fringes	62.0	0.7	64.2	0.8	2.2	1.1	62.4	1.0	64.2	0.8	1.8	1.3	62.8	1.7	62.9	1.1	0.1	2.0
Medium cities	56.8	0.8	63.0	1.0	6.2	1.2	57.4	1.0	59.9	1.0	2.5	1.4	59.0	1.3	62.3	1.4	3.3	1.9
Small places	57.9	0.5	62.8	0.7	4.8	0.9	59.6	0.6	61.2	0.8	1.6	0.9	60.3	0.8	62.3	1.0	2.0	1.3
Race																		
White	61.2	0.4	64.4	0.5	3.2	0.7	61.9	0.5	63.9	0.5	1.6	0.8	62.8	0.7	64.8	0.7	1.2	1.0
Black	44.3	0.7	47.9	1.0	3.6	1.2	45.5	0.9	48.1	1.1	2.6	1.4	48.4	1.3	51.6	1.7	3.2	2.2
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	48.3	1.5	49.8	1.0	(1.5	2.3	49.7	1.8	55.5	2.4	5.8	3.1
Racial Composition[4]																		
White X 0-59	*	*	*	*	*	*	55.6	1.5	59.1	1.5	3.5	2.1	58.2	2.8	62.4	2.1	4.2	2.9
White X 60-100	61.8	0.5	65.2	0.5	3.4	0.7	62.3	0.5	63.8	0.6	1.6	0.8	63.2	0.8	64.2	0.8	0.9	1.1
Black X 0-59	*	*	*	*	*	*	43.6	1.8	46.8	1.5	2.4	1.8	48.6	1.4	50.9	2.2	2.2	2.6
Black X 60-100	47.5	1.6	52.5	2.1	5.0	2.7	49.5	1.5	49.9	1.7	0.4	2.2	48.0	2.6	52.7	2.6	4.7	3.7
Region																		
Northeast	61.0	0.6	64.3	0.8	3.3	1.0	60.1	0.7	62.2	0.9	2.1	1.1	61.2	1.1	62.2	1.2	1.0	1.6
Southeast	52.6	0.6	61.3	0.9	8.7	1.0	54.6	0.8	59.3	0.9	4.6	1.2	55.4	1.2	60.3	1.2	4.9	1.7
Central	61.4	0.6	64.0	0.7	2.6	1.0	61.7	0.7	63.5	0.8	1.9	1.1	63.7	1.1	63.2	1.1	-0.4	1.5
West	57.4	0.7	60.8	0.7	3.4	1.0	57.3	0.8	60.1	0.8	2.8	1.2	56.2	1.2	63.0	1.1	6.8	1.6
Sex																		
Male	55.7	0.5	60.6	0.6	4.9	0.8	56.5	0.6	58.9	0.6	2.4	0.9	57.1	0.9	60.5	0.9	3.4	1.2
Female	60.6	0.5	64.5	0.6	3.9	0.8	60.9	0.6	63.7	0.6	2.8	0.9	61.1	0.8	64.1	0.9	3.0	1.2
Type of Community[5]																		
Rural	56.7	0.8	57.0	1.3	0.3	2.0	57.2	1.0	57.7	1.6	0.5	1.9	58.3	1.4	61.0	2.7	2.7	3.1
Disadvantaged-urban	48.4	0.8	51.8	1.2	3.3	1.4	48.7	1.0	48.8	1.5	0.1	1.8	52.1	1.4	55.4	1.9	3.4	2.4
Advantaged-urban	66.5	1.2	67.7	0.8	1.2	1.4	66.1	1.7	66.8	0.9	0.7	2.0	64.7	2.2	69.5	1.4	4.8	2.7

* Sample sizes are too small to permit reliable estimates

[1] The standard error (SE) is an estimate of potential sampling variability. Generally, we are confident that the "real" percentage will fall within two standard errors of the given percentage in at least 95 out of 100 samples.

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[4] Racial composition refers to the percentage of white students in a school. White X 0-59 means white students in schools with 0-59% white students. Black X 0-59 means black students in schools with 0-59% white students.

[5] Type of community is the characteristics of the community the school serves. Rural students attend schools in areas with a population under 10,000 where many of the residents are farmers or farm workers. Disadvantaged-urban students attend schools in or around cities having a population greater than 200,000 where a relatively high proportion of residents are on welfare or are not regularly employed. Advantaged-urban students attend schools in or around cities having a population greater than 200,000 where a high proportion of the residents are in professional or managerial positions.

TABLE 5. Differences in Mean Reading Performance Between Students in Title I Eligible Schools and Non-Title I Eligible Schools, Three National Assessments, Age 17

	1971						1975						1980					
	Eligible Schools	SE[1]	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff[2]	Eligible Schools	SE	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff	Eligible Schools	SE	Non-Eligible Schools	SE	Diff	SE Diff
Nation	67 9	0 4	70 6	0.5	2 7	0.7	67.8	0.5	70.8	0.5	2.1	0 7	67 5	0 8	68 8	0 6	1 3	1 0
Community Size[3]																		
Big cities	64 8	0 8	69 5	0 8	4 6	1 2	58 3	1.2	66 6	0 8	6.3	1 4	62 6	1 6	65 7	1 1	2 7	1 9
Fringes	71 2	0 8	72 7	0 9	1.5	1 2	70 8	1 1	71 8	0 8	1 0	1 3	69 4	1 8	71 7	1 2	2 3	2 2
Medium cities	68 5	0 8	71 9	1 0	3 4	1 3	68 4	1 1	69.7	0 9	1.8	1 4	66 8	1 5	69 6	1 3	2 8	2 0
Small places	67 4	0 5	69 0	0 9	1 4	1 0	68.7	0.4	70 5	0 8	1 8	1 0	68 0	1 0	68 7	0 9	0 7	1 4
Race																		
White	70 5	0 5	72 4	0 6	1 8	0 7	71 2	0 6	72 4	0 5	1 2	0 8	70 4	0 8	71 7	0 7	1 3	1 1
Black	50 2	0 8	55 0	1 2	4 8	1 5	50.3	1.0	54 4	1 1	4 1	1 5	52 9	1 8	51 9	1 5	-1 0	2 3
Racial Composition[4]																		
White % 0-59	61 8	1 1	66 4	1 4	2 8	1 8	68.2	1.6	69.4	1 5	1 3	2 2	73 4	2.1	69 1	2 5	-4 1	3 3
White % 60-100	71 0	0 5	72 7	0 4	1 7	0 8	71.4	0.6	72 5	0 5	1 1	0 8	69 8	0 9	71 8	0 7	2 0	1 3
Black % 0-59	49 3	1 8	53 0	1 4	3 8	1.9	49 4	1 1	54 1	1.5	4.6	1.9	53 0	2 1	51 6	2 8	-1.4	2 9
Black % 60-100	51 7	1 3	56 1	1 6	4 4	2 1	52 9	1 8	55 0	3 5	2.1	2 4	52 7	2 9	52 2	2 0	-0 5	1 5
Region																		
Northeast	70 3	0 7	71 3	0 8	0 9	1 3	67 6	0 8	72 6	0 8	5 0	1 2	67 1	1 3	69.2	1 2	2 6	1 8
Southeast	61 8	0 7	68 3	1 0	4 5	1 2	62 2	0 9	67 8	0 8	5 6	1 2	64 1	1 5	66 [illegible]	1 1	1 9	1 9
Central	71 9	0 6	70 0	1 0	-1 8	1 2	70 4	0 8	72 6	0 8	2 1	1 1	69 9	1 2	71 0	1.0	1 1	1 6
West	65 3	0 7	71 4	0 8	6 0	1.1	68 6	0 9	66 6	0 8	-1 9	1 2	67 4	1 4	68 6	1 0	1 2	1 7
Sex																		
Male	65 9	0 6	69 3	0 7	3 4	0 9	66 2	0 6	68.2	0 4	2 0	0 9	66 0	1 0	67 5	0 8	1 5	1 3
Female	69 9	0 5	71 9	0 7	2 0	0 9	69.5	0.6	71 7	0 6	2 2	0 9	69 0	1 0	70 1	0 8	1 1	1 3
Type of Community[5]																		
Rural	66 4	0 9	63 4	2 1	-3 0	2 3	67.4	1 0	69 4	1 8	2 0	2 0	65 6	1 4	62 5	2 4	-3.1	2 8
Disadvantaged-urban	61 4	1 0	60 2	1 3	-1 3	1 6	57 4	1 2	61 0	1 1	3.6	1 7	58 8	1.7	60 2	1 8	2 2	2 5
Advantaged-urban	76 1	1 4	75 5	0 9	-0 6	1 7	74 2	1 7	76 5	1 0	2 3	1 9	73 1	2 9	73 7	1 4	0 6	3 2

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[4] Racial composition refers to the percentage of white students in a school. White % 0-59 means white students in schools with 0-59% white students; black % 0-59 means black students in schools with 0-59% white students.

[5] Type of community is based on characteristics of the community the school serves. Rural students attend school in areas with a population under 10,000 where many of the residents are farmers or farm workers. Disadvantaged-urban students attend schools in or around cities having a population greater than 200,000 where a relatively high proportion of residents are on welfare or are not regularly employed. Advantaged-urban students attend schools in or around cities having a population greater than 200,000 where a high proportion of the residents are in professional or managerial positions.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much for your testimony.

The next witness will be Dr. Roger Farr, director of the H. L. Smith Center, Indiana University, past president of the International Reading Association.

STATEMENT OF ROGER FARR, DIRECTOR, H. L. SMITH CENTER, INDIANA UNIVERSITY, PAST PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

Dr. FARR. I too have a copy of my testimony which I will submit and I will merely review some of the major points from that testimony.

First of all, from the perspective of the International Reading Association, I am very pleased that we have the kind of data that National Assessment provides, and I am pleased that the Federal Government has seen fit to fund this important assessment activity. NAEP provides us with a basis for knowing where we are and gives us some understanding of where we need to improve.

There are some problems identified by the NAEP data. While the data indicates that schools are doing a good job teaching basic skills, there is obviously a problem with the higher level, critical reading, thinking skills. There also are some problems with the data in that the data does not provide us with an opportunity to evaluate progress in local school districts and States. We need to have more State assessment data to better understand the reading progress of students in our schools.

One concern that I, and I believe most members of the International Reading Association have is the continuing statements about national literacy that one finds in newspapers and magazines. Most of these statements are based on limited facts.

It is pleasing that National Assessment has data that can provide a factual basis regarding literacy trends. More important is how open NAEP has been in its development of that data. NAEP has involved a wide variety of groups in reviewing how the tests are developed, the objectives to be measured, and the analysis of the data.

I would like to put the results of National Assessment in an historical perspective, not just for the past 10 years, but for the past 40 or 50 years. These results do fit an historical pattern. There is no question that basic literacy in this Nation has been increasing for at least 40 or 50 years, and probably longer. We don't really know about periods more than 50 years ago because we don't have any kind of data before that period of time.

When we did a study in Indiana comparing students reading in grades 6 and 10 for in 1944 and 1976, we found that the 1976 6th and 10th graders were reading about 1 full year better than their 1944 counterparts. In addition, there were more minority students in schools in 1976 and indeed the dropout rates had declined very dramatically between 1944 and 1976.

Despite the positive results, we should examine the NAEP data to see where it suggests that schools need to improve. One of those areas is in the application of reading skills and the teaching of critical and inferential reading skills. Those kinds of skills are usually developed in high school classrooms.

While I want to emphasize that that is an area of concern, I would also like to emphasize that the increases in basic literacy far outstrips the declines in the inferential skills for the 17-year olds. Those people who would argue that basic literacy in this Nation is declining are obviously wrong. Basic literacy levels in this Nation are improving.

At the 13- and 17-year-old levels, basic literacy is stable, and at the 9-year-old level, the increases are very pronounced. Also, the data that we have available indicates that America is a nation of readers. Those who would argue that we are not are wrong.

A recent study conducted by Yankelovich, Skelly & White, Inc., for the book publishers who wanted to know what Americans are reading and how much they are reading, concluded that America can accurately be described as a nation of readers. They interviewed, in 1-hour interviews, a very carefully selected population of people age 16 and over. According to the survey, over 90 percent of those people were regular readers of books, magazines, and newspapers, and a mere 6 percent indicated that they read nothing.

This 6 percent is a significant group, but when you understand that this included all people in our country, except for those who were institutionalized, the percentage becomes more understandable.

In a recent review of studies regarding reading habits, Bob Ellis, concluded that over 90 percent of Americans read some type of publication: newspapers, magazines, or books with great frequency.

His review revealed that the 5 percent who could accurately be described as nonreaders were in some way visually handicapped or were readers of other languages.

I would like to briefly mention the studies that have been conducted comparing reading in the United States with reading in other nations.

When the top 9 percent of our 12th grade students are compared with other nations, it turns out that our students compare quite favorably. You might wonder why only the top 9 percent of the 12th graders. The study had to take the lowest common denominator, because many other nations do not have the same percentage of youngsters in school in the 12th grade that we have. When you consider that while are performing quite well with the top 9 percent, we still have most of the other students in our classrooms.

I think that American education can be proud of both its efforts to produce quality and equality in public education. Nevertheless, we still have much to do for students in certain population areas of this Nation.

Literacy is not as high as it ought to be; and there is no question that the literacy demands in the Nation are increasing. We need studies on how difficult everyday reading materials are to read and the kinds of reading that people have to do to survive in our society.

We seem to have a paucity of some of these kinds of studies. The higher level thinking/reading skills are something schools need to promote. We need to to find out what we can do to encourage the teaching of reading/thinking skills beyond the basic skills.

I would like to suggest that there are a number of ways that the Federal Government could continue to play a role in assessing literacy trends in the Nation.

First, it is important that we have the National Assessment data, and I would encourage the Federal Government to continue to fund the collection of that data so that decisions about improving education are based on facts.

I would also suggest that we make better use of that data. All too often newspapers and magazines report only the bad news. Public opinion and policy is often based on the limited reporting in the public media.

I hope that we all understand that this is a nation that is not declining in basic literacy skills, but indeed has been increasing for a long period of time. More importantly this has occurred at the same time that we have been including more youngsters in our Nation's schools.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Roger Farr follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROGER FARR, DIRECTOR, H L. SMITH CENTER, INDIANA UNIVERSITY, PAST PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

For years we have been reading in our newspapers and magazines about the decline in basic reading ability among school-aged children in the United States. It is not uncommon to read concerns such as the following voiced in our local or national newspapers and magazines, in legislative halls, at board of education meetings, and at meetings of civic groups:

"What's wrong with our schools? Why don't they teach students to read?"

"Kids can't read, write, or spell today!"

"High school students don't read because they don't know how. In my day we ..."

How justified are these often-repeated criticisms of our schools? Certainly they reflect a real concern that shouldn't—and can't—be ignored. If students aren't learning to read as well as they used to, we need to do something about it. But first, we need to determine how well our children do read—in urban schools and small town and rural schools, in the different areas of the country, and at all grade levels. If the teaching of reading is as weak as some of the critics proclaim, it must be improved. Even if we are making significant inroads on improving the situation, we must do better The questions we need to begin with to determine if the criticisms are valid include: Are students learning to read? How well? Are students learning to read better than in the past? Regardless of the answers to these questions, we must then ask What can we do to improve the effectiveness of reading programs? Where do we start?

The concern over the supposedly declining reading ability of our nation's youth has been one aspect of the continuing criticism of education in general. Today's critics of education voice the same concerns and deal with the same issues as did those of twenty or thirty years ago.

A brief review of those criticisms may help to put today's criticisms in proper perspective. The long running debate about the effectiveness of today's education was exemplified in Arthur E. Bestor's "Educational Wastelands" in 1953 He insisted that "educationists" had taken intellectual disciplines out of the educating process, and as a result, children were not being taught how to think. More frequently, however, attacks on the development of language skills in the schools were less intellectual than Bestor's, citing merely examples of poor spelling and grammatical usage by children and teachers.[1] The unscientific technique of evaluating our educational efforts is still used today,[2] as is exemplified by the most recent edition of Newsweek, which takes today's teachers to task

Criticism of reading instruction was focused in 1955 with the appearance of Rudolph Flesch's "Why Johnny Can't Read," which contended that phonics instruction in the schools had been replaced by a "look-say" method and that as a result,

[1] E g , an English teacher exemplifies language incompetence as spelling errors in the Chicago Tribune, Feb 16, 1962, p 8

[2] Apr 27, 1981

the children of the nation were unable to read Flesch s book had considerable impact and generated substantial lay and professional response.

In reviewing and writing about the book, most periodicals included critical responses: In Newsweek, William S Gray stressed that there were more than one method to teaching reading; [3] in Time, Ruth Dunbar called the book a "hue and cry directed at a strawman." [4] Flesch was subjected to analyses that pointed out numerous errors in his book, that argued that he was writing about pronouncing—not understanding—words, and that insisted that phonics were being taught, in conjunction with other methods. Several publications initiated lengthy series about how reading was being taught [5] It was a flare-up in a debate that continues yet today.[6]

The concern whipped up by Flesch boiled over with the advent of Sputnik in 1956. Although initially focused on science training, it quickly expanded to education in general and reading in particular. U.S. schools were compared with Russian schools in an attempt to explain how our nation lost the first lap in the race into space Flesch's contention that phonics were a key answer being ignored became the battle cry of the critics; an attempt in the Saturday Review to suggest that reading instruction is more complex than a phonics versus "look-say" dilemma earned a tart response from a reader: "There is a real war on in reading, and for the future well-being of American Education, it is important that the right side win." [7]

Arthur Trace exemplifies the impact of the space race on educational criticism. His "What Ivan Knows That Johnny Doesn't" (1961) insisted that, contrary to popular opinion, Russian schools did not neglect training in the humanities in favor of math and science. Rather, he insisted, they did a much better job than U.S schools. In the Saturday Evening Post,[8] Trace compared the controlled vocabularies of American school reading texts to what he claimed were the much larger lexicons developed at the earliest ages in Russian pupils.

Trace's book, and a collection edited by Charles C. Walcutt (1961) were typical of criticism in the early 1960's; they were not heavily supported with data. Oddly, there was no tendency in such debate to apply achievement trend data, which in those years would have shown marked gains in comparison to any previous periods.

A third great wave of concern and criticism has come with concern over the reported decline in some test scores—particularly on college entrance exams—and it is, once again, highly attentive to reading and reading-related areas

The data pool that is available on the trends in reading achievement, however, strongly contradicts the claims of the critics. The data do not support the claims that children today are poorer readers than those of previous generations. In fact, if one is concerned with basic literacy—as represented by the comprehension of everyday reading matter—the data tend to support the conclusion that today's children are better readers than children from any period in the past and that improvement in this area has been continuous in the history of education in the United States.

The results of the 1979-80 National Assessment in reading certainly support the conclusion that basic literacy levels are increasing. The National Assessment test in reading is a test designed to assess basic reading ability in three broad categories: literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, and use of reference skills. The focus of the NAEP reading tests on comprehension is especially noteworthy: as a nation we want to know if our children are learning to read—and reading means comprehending

The NAEP tests were administered in the 1970-71, 1974-75, and 1979-80 school years to a broad sample of nine, thirteen, and seventeen year olds representing all geographic sections of the country. The sample was selected to provide adequate representation of both males and females, students from both majority and minority racial groups, students whose parents had achieved varying levels of education, and students from communities of various types and sizes.

The test questions developed by NAEP sample a wide variety of reading comprehension skills and include reading tasks representing both in-school and out-of-school reading activities The NAEP reading tests were developed to reflect the important goals of reading as determined by a consensus of groups of educators and lay persons It is important to note that in these days of truth in testing, the planning, development, and interpretation of the NAEP reading tests has always been open to review.

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[3] Mar 21, 1955
[4] June 20, 1955
[5] E g , Christian Science Monitor, beginning Oct 7 1955
[6] Witness Flesch's re-emergence to revoice his argument in Family Circle, No 1, 1979
[7] "But there is no peace," Saturday Review, Apr 21, 1962, p 54 A response to comment in that periodical January 20, 1962
[8] May 27, 1961, p 30+.

What, then, can one conclude from the three administrations of the NAEP reading test? What do the test results suggest about trends in reading ability among school-age children in the United States? The following five conclusions are of primary importance:

First, for the first time in our nation's history, we have a valid and reliable estimate of trends in reading achievement. The fact that these estimates of ten-year trends in reading achievement exist is extremely important. No longer, can misinformation or lack of data be an excuse for misinterpreting trends in the development of literacy in this nation.

Second, the results strongly contradict claims of declining literacy and instead reveal a pattern of increasing or stable literacy levels over the past ten years. One notable exception to that pattern is the decline in inferential reading comprehension among seventeen year olds, but is should be emphasized that the increase in basic literacy is considerably large while the decline in inferential comprehension is small.

Third, the largest increases are among those populations which have been the primary focus of supplemental educational programs. These groups include the youngest students and those most educationally and socio-economically deprived.

Fourth, the stability of reading achievement among thirteen and seventeen year olds over the past ten years suggests that extra effort is needed at these levels if improvements similar to those at the nine year old level are expected.

Fifth, the decline of inferential reading skills among seventeen year olds exists primarily among the most able students.

Overall, the NAEP results suggest that the basic reading skills of schoolage children are improving and that we may be at a national all-time high in basic literacy achievement. However, a note of caution relates to the decline of inferential reading skills among seventeen year olds. It seems that students are learning to read, but they are not expanding and developing their reading skills at the most advanced levels.

There are other studies that provide important information regarding reading and literacy levels in the United States. These studies support the most recent NAEP data, but more importantly they provide a broader perspective from which to interpret the NAEP reading survey. Several examples of these studies follow:

One study concludes that "Americans can accurately be described as a nation of readers." In 1978, Yankelovich, Skelly, and White, Inc.[9] examined the nature of reading and book buying habits and motivations of the United States population, age sixteen and over. According to the survey, 55 percent of the population had read at least one book in the preceding six months, and these people also read magazines and/or newspapers. Of these, 45 percent had read more than ten books during that period. Another 39 percent of the total population read magazines and newspapers rather than books. Only six percent read nothing.

A review of a number of studies by Robert A. Ellis[10] also endorses us as a nation of readers. Ellis studied readership surveys that were conducted (including Gallup, 1975; Lieberman, 1975; Simmons, 1970 and 1975; Target Group Index Study, 1972 and 1975) to determine the state of American reading habits and skills. His review concluded that over 90 percent of Americans read some type of publication—newspaper, magazine, or book—with some frequency. The five percent who could accurately be described as nonreaders were usually characterized as being visually handicapped or readers of other languages.

Examination of the survey data also indicates that reading habits are established very early in life. Two major influences are parents' habits and interests and successful experiences in the beginning school years. Children whose parents read to them were found to be better readers and exhibited a greater interest in books than children whose parents did not read to them, and children who experienced success during their first few years in school developed into readers

An Indiana study shows today's children may read at least as well as—and probably better than—students their age thirty years ago. This study compared the reading achievement of sixth and tenth graders in that state in 1944-45 to that of children in the same grades in 1976 (Farr, Fay, and Negley, 1978).[11] The same edition of the Iowa Silent Reading Tests was administered both times. When the grade equivalent scores obtained were considered, the students in 1976 scored about the same overall as they did 30 years earlier.

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[9] Yankelovich, Skelly, and White, Inc for The Book Industry Study Group "Consumer Research Study on Reading and Book Purchasing," BISG Report No 6 October 1978

[10] Ellis, Robert A "The State of American Reading Habits and Skills," February 1978 (unpublished paper)

[11] Farr, R, Fay, L and Negley, H "Then and Now Reading Achievement in Indiana" (1944-45 and 1976). Bloomington, Ind School of Education, Indiana University, 1978

However, the 1944-45 sixth grade students were found to be approximately 10 months older than their 1976 counterparts, and the 1944-45 tenth graders were found to be 14 months older than the 1976 tenth graders. When the scores were adjusted for these age differences, the 1976 sixth graders outscored their earlier counterparts significantly on every subskill measured and on total score. The adjusted scores of the 1976 tenth graders were also significantly higher than those of the 1944-45 students on all subtests except one. Both sophomore groups performed the same on the paragraph comprehension subtest. The major conclusion of the Indiana study was that the reading achievements of the 1976 students were markedly improved over those of the 1944-45 students when the age differences were taken into consideration.

Contrary to popular opinion, American students compare quite favorably to students from other countries throughout the world. The results of a 1977 study (Wolf)[12] showed the top 9 percent of the twelfth graders in the United States performed better on a test of reading comprehension than comparable students elsewhere. That is, they outperformed students in their last year of secondary school in Belgium, Chile, England, Finland, Flemish Belgium, French Belgium, Hungary, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Scotland, and Sweden. One may well be concerned that the comparison was only between the top nine percent in each country.

But there are important factors that must be considered when cross cultural comparisons are made. For example, the United States advocates an educational program that is available to everyone—unlike many other countries where it is determined very early in a student's educational life whether s/he is qualified to attend secondary school at all. Over 75 percent of the twelfth-grade population in the United States was enrolled in school in 1977, while the other fourteen countries had a median percentage enrollment of 17 percent; thus that 9 percent cited earlier achieves significance.

An analysis by Donald Fisher[13] of the data collected in several surveys does not support claims that schools of today are less effective than the schools of yesterday. Fisher examined the data from a number of studies concerning functional literacy that were completed during the 1970s. He concluded that our schools—elementary and secondary—are more effective than ever in increasing literacy throughout the United States.

The misconception about declining reading achievement is based primarily on the decline on the Scholastic Aptitude Test performance by college bound high school juniors and seniors. While the score declines on such tests need to be studied, they should not be used as an overall evaluation of the nation's schools or of particular skills they do not measure. The prestigious Wirtz report[14] on the SAT decline stressed this point:

Any generalization from the SAT statistics has to be carefully qualified. It should not be extended to cover the situation of American Youth as a whole or the overall effectiveness of the learning process.

". . . recently published College Board Guidelines on the Uses of College Board Test Scores and Related Data warn sharply against their misuse as measures of the broader effectiveness of elementary and secondary education in general."

Furthermore, the SAT tests do not assess basic reading ability. Indeed, approximately a ninth grade reading ability is needed for a student to even read the questions on the SAT. A useful analogy may be drawn between swimming ability and reading. If it were discovered that our Olympic swimmers were achieving poorer times over a number of years, we would not be able to conclude that the basic swimming ability of all swimmers in the country is declining. In the same vein, because those students who are ambitious for college are scoring lower on the SAT tests, we should not conclude that the basic reading ability of all students is declining.

In addition, the SAT-taking population has incorporated a broader span of abilities due to a national commitment to enlarge opportunities for higher education for segments of our population who could not hope for such opportunity in the past.

Equally important, the SAT does not measure basic reading skills. In order to determine the trends in reading achievement, we need to assess the reading achievement of various levels of students at different times.

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[12] Wolf, Richard M. "Achievement in America: National Report of the United States for the International Educational Achievement Project," New York, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1977.

[13] Fisher, Donald. "Functional Literacy and the Schools." Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education, 1978. (ERIC ED #151760)

[14] Wirtz, Willard, et al. "On further examination: report of the Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test score decline." New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1977.

All of these results have implications for education Perhaps the most important of these implications is the need to reaffirm the value of our nation's public schools and our commitment to equality and quality as the twin goals of our education system.

One of the advantages of a democratic society is that it promotes continual public scrutiny of its public schools and allows for citizen participation in changing the educational system. It is ironic, therefore, that this process now threatens to lead us to abandon the basic goal that our public education system was created to achieve: the promotion of democracy itself. My primary recommendation to Federal legislators who would build a background for educational action in the 1980's is that they begin by reaffirming this historic goal.

A recent article by R. Freeman Butts reviews how our public schools were established as a politcal investment in the future of democracy [15] In revising the laws of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson ". . . proposed a system of public schools, governed by public officials and supported by public funds, to overcome the political inequities and privileges inherent in private education." It was Jefferson's contention that public schools would help break down family, class, and economic privileges and help guarantee that each citizen would have an opportunity to develop his or her potential. This, Jefferson believed, would not only promote democracy, but would also create an alert citizenry eager to sustain democracy.

As Butts notes, this principle gained its national acceptance state by state, and our commitment to it remains in the state constitutions. Yet as Federal funds have financed an increasing percentage of public school operation and educational development, these funds have been allocated with stringent stipulations that they be spent in a manner that helps eliminate inequities in educational opportunity. The Federal government has sometimes found it necessary to exercise this control defensively—by withholding from states and cities where there is disparity in the quality of educational opportunity This fact demonstrates that we have not yet effected fully equal opportunity in education—even within local systems; but it also indicates that the Jeffersonian goal for education is Federal as well as state policy.

I believe that two objectives can be logically deduced from our goal of democratizing America by creating equal educational opportunity for all our citizens: (1) As there is no one curriculum that can fit every individual, we have pursued an objective of building diversity into our educational programs. This objective has tried to meet the diverse needs, abilities, talents, and interests of our citizens at all economic levels in all geographic regions. (2) At the same time, we have been committed to developing each citizen's potential into as viable a commodity in modern society as possible so that both the society and the individual can achieve success. Thus our goal to provide equality in public education has been bound to an objective which would provide quality education at the same time.[16]

The goal of democratizing our society by attempting to guarantee everyone quality education has developed slowly but continuously in our nation And much of our progress has been relatively recent. In a powerful argument for what our schools have accomplished, Harold Hodgkinson [17] writes that in the past 30 years, we have done for over 75 percent of our students in elementary and secondary grades what we were expected to do for a fourth of them in 1950—get them prepared for the higher education they seek. He points out that this has drastically broadened the group of students taking college entrance exams and that although we might have expected a very dramatic drop in the scores on such exams, the scores have actually fallen off by only a few questions.

Although Hodgkinson's point is an effective response to critics who cite declines on college entrance exams as an argument that our schools have failed, it does not point out that our comprehensive, public schools have been intended to serve the non-college-bound student as well. In arguing that we are beset with "compelling problems that must be solved if free public education is to survive," Virginia Sparling, president of the national PTA, recently acknowledged that "U.S. schools educate more people to a higher level than any other nation, . . ." [18] If literacy is defined in terms of very basic competency, we have achieved nearly total national literacy for all citizens who are not physically or psychologically handicapped to

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[15] Educational Vouchers The Private Pursuit of the Public Purse Phi Delta Kappan, (61/1), September 1976, 7-9

[16] I am obligated to note that Butts' article indicates he would not agree that meeting individual needs or interests or preparing citizens to succeed in jobs can be deduced from Jefferson's political purpose in proposin public education

[17] What's Right with Education Phi Delta Kappan (61/3), November 1979, 159-162.

[18] Kids, Teachers, and Parents "Give Us Better Schools" U S News and World Report, (87/11), Sept 10, 1979, 31

degrees that make them uneducable.[19] Understandably, this is not yet adequate. Even if the literacy necessary to function effectively in society did not change as society develops, we would be eager to educate our citizens to much higher levels of literacy. This ambition explains some of the criticism that prods our educational system to develop more effective methods, materials, and teachers.

Our intense concern over education in the U.S. has, when coupled with its democratizing purpose, guided our comprehensive system to the position of world leadership that Sparling noted. That success has led other nations to turn to it as a model. Yet, even in the face of this external recognition, internal public expectancies, criticism from both our educational and lay communities, and media focus on the negative are promoting educational trends which threaten the very existence of our comprehensive public schools by locking us in on a course that would abandon Jefferson's goal.

As Daniel Tanner notes in a recent article,[20]

"It is ironic that in the 1970s various American commissions and panels advocated that we abandon the American invention of comprehensive schooling at a time when advanced nations, after a long and continuing effort toward educational reform, are beginning to make significant progress toward instituting this model. . . . This movement reflected the need for a more highly educated populace to meet the industrial and technical demands of post-war development and also as a means toward social and political justice in terms of social mobility and economic quality.' "[21]

It appears that the critical concern that may lead us to toss the baby out with the bath water has not clouded the objective perspective of nations such as Sweden and Great Britain, which see the best students in the U.S. performing at least on a par with their own[22] and who note the rest of our citizenship being better prepared for the technological age by our comprehensive schools than their citizens are prepared by their elitist, separatist educational systems. Their observation is verified, for example, by the number of U.S. citizens who have won Nobel prizes in science the past 20 years. Seventy-three have gone to Americans. The country that is closest to that distinction is Great Britain with 22.[23]

I would not want this subcommittee to conclude that I believe there is no room for improvement in reading education. I believe that the Federal Government has an important role to play in this effort—both by helping to clarify the present status of reading achievement in the United States so that fully informed educational decisions can be made and by supporting research and experimentation related to reading instruction. Therefore, I would like to make the following four recommendations:

1. First, the Federal Government can establish a system, precedure, or apparatus to continually re-evaluate educational needs. Such a procedure would need to probe the various aspects of contemporary citizenship to determine what kind of literacy and mathematical skills, for example, are basic to the success of society and the individual. It could determine how basic the development of critical thinking skills are to the sustenance of a democratic nation and what values relate to that objective. This would assure both that societal changes are defined for the consideration of educational change and that those changes would not abandon the principle of providing educational opportunity to all citizens.

2. With a continuously updated validity of needs as objectives, the Federal Government could promote careful assessment of what our schools have accomplished, are accomplishing, and must yet accomplish in order to meet those objectives. This would allow us to build on our strengths. The Federal Government could commission very carefully structured trend studies that would collect and create significant data, and which would make viable interpretations of that data to suggest possible conclusions about the status of education. Such studies must, of course, consider all relevant test, educational, and societal factors.

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[19] For a book-length analysis of literacy in the United States, see Cook, Wanda Ranksza "Adult Literacy Education in the United States." Newark, Del: International Reading Association, 1977.

[20] Splitting Up the School System: Are Comprehensive High Schools Doomed? Phi Delta Kappan, (61/2), October 1979, 94

[21] The internal quotation is cited from "the International Context." In Caroline Benn and B Simon, "Half Way There: Report on the British Comprehensive School Reform." London: McGraw-Hill, 1970, p 1

[22] Wolf, Richard M. "Achievement in America: national report of the United States for the International Educational Achievement Project." New York, N Y: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1977.

[23] "U S scientists' hold on Nobel prizes seems likely to loosen soon." The [Louisville] Courier-Journal, Oct 31, 1979, p A11

It is vital that this continual assessment of where we are consider process as well as product As noted, the power of tests to reveal educational accomplishment is limited, and we know embarrassingly little about what actually is happening in the classroom. New research methodologies are developing to allow us to portray typical teacher behavior and professionalism, and the Federal Government should give heavy endorsement to this descriptive effort.

3 Coupled to a current description of (a) where we need to go with education, (b) how far along that path we are, and (c) what we are now doing to close the gap, the Federal Government can encourage educational research and development to attempt to discover more effective methods and procedures to get there. We need extensive efforts to determine what methodologies are most effective in the classroom.

I believe this third and very vital phase of Federal involvement should place a heavy emphasis on research related to procedure as opposed to product. There has never been a pronounced Federal emphasis on improving teacher practices or teacher education. Thus the Federal Government should contribute to the improvement of teacher education by increasing its funding of experimental preservice and inservice training. I believe that the role of the teacher is the key to improved instruction. Yet the average elementary teacher will take less than one year of courses in professional education preparatory to beginning teaching and the secondary teacher will take less than a semester. There is no guarantee that any one course will deal with the best practices and methodologies.

Teacher education programs that incorporate a fifth year of intern teaching, or differentiated staffing, or increased field experiences in schools should be encouraged. In addition, government funds can be of vital assistance to school systems and education institutions in upgrading the preparation of teachers by promoting the development of better courses.

The Federal Government should encourage and fund additional educational research efforts that are directed toward the solution of known problem areas in education. For example, it is a well established fact that children from low socioeconomic backgrounds are more apt to experience reading difficulties than children from middle or high socioeconomic backgrounds. We need to continue to expend resources to develop reading methods, materials, and programs that can be used more effectively with such populations, taking account that children do not all have the same background of experiences and opportunities. Thus, a child from one locality can differ extensively from a child in another locality. Because of this, their needs—and consequently the appropriate instructional methodology and materials to be used—should differ.

In promoting such development, Federal incentives should encourage changes that more effectively link instruction within the school itself to the educational opportunities in and responsibilities of our society at large. This effort should not only make education more effective but should help educate the public that it is unwise to expect schools to accept sole responsibility for the intellectual and skill development of our children.

4 Finally, the Federal Government has the obligation to effectively disseminate the information it generates with public funds. This has not always been the case in the past. For example, the Federal Government cut funding of the National Assessment study to a point where the contractor has been unable to carry out effective dissemination of its findings.

If teachers, professional educators, parents, decision makers, and the public at large are to express their concern and have input into decisions affecting education, they need to exercise that input from a fully informed perspective

Mr. KILDEE. The two bells which you heard ring indicate there is a recorded rollcall in the House. It will take the members of the subcommittee no more than 10 minutes to go to the House chamber and respond to that. Then the hearing should not be interrupted following that, because there will be a long debate on the pending matter on the House floor. We will resume this hearing following a 10-minute break.

[A short recess was taken.]

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much for waiting.

I would like to call upon the Honorable William Gray, Member of Congress, to introduce the next witness.

STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM H. GRAY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. GRAY. Thank you.

I have the distinct honor and privilege to introduce Dr. Marjorie Farmer, a constituent of mine from the Second District of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Farmer has been employed since 1975 as executive director of reading and English curriculum and instruction for the Philadelphia public schools.

In this role she is responsible for direction, planning, budgeting, management supervision, and curriculum development for the comprehensive instructional program in English, reading, and related communications skills.

She received her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Temple University in Philadelphia, and has done postdoctorate work at the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Farmer is also past president of the National Council of Teachers of English, and is also a past president of the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English. She is an active member of numerous professional and scientific organizations, including the International Reading Association, American Association of School Administrators, and the National Council of Teachers of English-ing Task Force on Career Education.

Dr. Farmer brings years of experience and knowledge concerning the issues and problems in education and no doubt will be an asset in your deliberations today and in the future.

She has been an outstanding leader in the city of Philadelphia, and indeed in the State of Pennsylvania, not only in educatior but in many other fields, and it is my pleasure simply to introduce her to this committee and to you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Congressman Gray.

Dr. Farmer?

STATEMENT OF MARJORIE FARMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ENGLISH AND READING CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL DISTRICT, REPRESENTING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

Dr. FARMER. Thank you very much, Congressman Gray, Mr. Kildee.

I thank the committee for the privilege of offering some remarks in this session.

As the earlier speakers have said, we see in the achievement trends that are reported through the assessment a very clear reflection of the impact on education of major legislative support for education from the mid-sixties through the seventies, so we know—with more certainty now that we have the assessment than was ever possible for us before—that educational legislation and educational funding do indeed play a crucial role in setting patterns for educational achievement.

We believe that the decisions that are to be made by this committee and by the Congress regarding legislative implications of these assessments are critical decisions which will affect the direction of the education and the lifetime careers of a generation of young people.

In my brief remarks I want to do just three things:

First, comment briefly on the direction of major trends in reading and writing achivement; second, offer some recommendations for ways of improving achivement in both reading and writing; and, third, propose to this committee, for your consideration, certain specific legislative directions.

First, then, a comment on achievement trends in reading and writing, I will look at those trends in two ways:

First in terms of age groups (9-, 13-, 17-year-olds) and second, in terms of three important cross-age groupings—students in disadvantaged urban areas, black students, and male students.

With some variations in the specific competencies that are being assessed, there is a general downward trend not in achievement, but in the rate of achievement gain, as students progress through their years of schooling.

We see reflected in the substantial gains of 9-year-olds, the successes of extensive early childhood programs in the late sixties and seventies. I want to point out three important characteristics of these programs.

The first characteristic is very strong parental and family involvement. Parent participation is actively encouraged in early childhood programs, providing learning both for parents and for teachers, as teachers have the opportunity to see their students from the parents' point of view.

Second, there is considerable attention given in those programs to all aspects of language development and use: not just to reading, but to oral communication and to writing as well. These competencies are developed through the youngsters' emerging interests, through many different kinds of activities. Children are given opportunities to use language in many ways.

The third characteristic worth noting here is that during this decade, particularly, there has been a great deal of research in the profession into the principles and practices of language development. Our early childhood programs have given us the opportunity to put into practice much of what we have learned. There has been significant family involvement, and attention to all aspects of language development, as well as extensive research and study in this field.

As students move through the grades, we see an increasing specialization in reading instruction, and we see the separation of reading instruction from other school subjects. and from the out-of-school lives of children.

Through most of the decade, the title I definition of basic skills as reading and mathematics has led to a very narrow focus on reading skills. That narrow focus is reflected in greatly diminished attention to the teaching of writing in the middle and secondary grades, and in a decline in writing performance at age 13, which is continued at age 17.

In both reading and writing assessments, as earlier speakers have reported, the significant areas of decline are those that deal with the higher level intellectual operations, such as inferential comprehension.

Students are generally able to give the literal meaning of what they have read, and to write an acceptable business letter, but they

are less likely to be able to connect what they have read with the rest of their knowledge and experience, or to use their writing skills to express original ideas or produce a persuasive letter.

Those are skills that would enable students to make use of language for learning and for solving the problems they will meet throughout their lives.

On the other hand, when we look at the cross-age groupings that I have mentioned, three groups whose achievement has long lagged considerably behind national levels, we see an upward trend at each age level.

The first of these groups—students in disadvantaged urban school settings—have been served by compensatory programs such as title I, making it possible for us to provide new levels of staffing, additional community resources, and increased involvement of parents; and to make additional professional expertise available to serve those young people.

We have been able here, too, to put into practice some of the best of what we know about teaching, just as we were able to do with our early childhood programs.

The second group of learners are black students. We believe that in addition to the many black students who have benefited from title I services, all black students have benefited from the civil rights movement, through the broader participation of black parents and black professionals in education.

We think that the growing field of Afro-American studies has also contributed significantly to this improvement, as students of all races have come to understand the intellectual gifts of black people. We know that actual achievement and the expectation of achievement are closely correlated; as expectation has risen, so has achievement.

The third group are boys, in many ways the last disadvantaged group in our schools. It seems likely to me that boys have been the unexpected beneficiaries of the women's equity movement. As we have learned that girls can achieve in mathematics, we have seen that boys can succeed in reading and writing.

I believe that we are closing the gap in what have been differential levels of service offered to different groups of learners, as we have become free of our stereotyped perceptions of the abilities of particular groups of learners.

I want next to offer a few recommendations for improving achievement in reading and writing. There are several characteristics that we find constant in programs that seem most successful.

First is a mastery approach to teaching and learning. That is the expectation that all students can achieve mastery not only of language skills but of the content that we teach through those skills, replacing a narrower expectation of minimum competency achievement for certain groups of learners.

This approach is described in a 1980 curriculum publication of the National Council of Teachers of English, called "the English Curriculum for the 1980's," and is exemplified in the Chicago mastery learning program and in many title I services.

The second is a comprehensive approach to the teaching of all the skills of language and communication in relation to one another. Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

exemplifies this as well as Pennsylvania's comprehensive reading communication arts plan.

The third characteristic of successful reading and writing programs is that in those programs, language skills are used and expanded as youngsters apply them to the learning of all areas of a fully balanced curriculum, including literature and the arts, sciences, the foreign languages, physical education and technical subjects.

The Organizations for the Essentials of Education is a cooperating group of over 20 professional associations that are supporting this work. In Philadelphia we have developed a basic language skills plan based on this principle of the interdependence of curricular elements.

The fourth characteristic of successful programs is that, just as we saw in successful early childhood programs, connections are maintained to the out-of-school lives and interests and lifetime goals of students, through such efforts as increasing parent participation, involving volunteers, expanding library services, using the mass media effectively, and promoting career education through all areas of the curriculum, so that youngsters see education moving them to productive futures.

The last characteristic is that continuous education is provided for all professionals, to enable us to meet the changing needs of our students in our changing social context.

The key to the success of all these programs, I believe, is a rapidly growing movement toward cooperation among specialists in education, and increasingly effective communication among educators, parents, and government.

Finally, I just want to suggest some legislative concerns for your consideration.

First, we urge that consideration be given to replacing the narrow title I definition of the basic skills with the broader language and mandate of title II—that is, defining the basic skills as reading, written and oral communication and mathematics, and providing support for the development of effective programs, particularly in oral communications and writing.

Second, we urge continued support for legislation that funds early childhood programs, and for legislation that prohibits educational discrimination by race, by sex, or by handicapping conditions; and we urge that support be given to improving the secondary schools comparable to that provided for early childhood programs.

Next, we urge that support be provided for these important extensions of language and literacy—school and public libraries, arts and media programs, and all of the other avenues that provide community based experiences in literacy education.

Next, we urge that you support expanded career education programs, providing for the infusion of understandings of career development throughout the curriculum.

Finally, support continuing education for teachers, that will enable us to teach all language skills to our changing clientele—a multi-lingual, multi-cultural clientele, coming to us with widely differing talents and handicapping conditions.

The National Assessments of Reading and Writing will reward any amount of study that we can give to the data, especially study that considers the findings of one set of assessments in relation to others, as we know that each area of learning supports others. Oral communication needs to be assessed. Those groups that have not been included in earlier assessments—speakers of other languages and handicapped learners—must have their progress assessed.

The National Council of Teachers of English and the other professional associations that are cooperating as the Organizations of the Essentials of Education want to make available to this committee the advice of our specialists, both teachers and researchers, to provide information as you consider educational legislation.

We are encouraged by your interest. We are encouraged by the optimistic report of these assessments, and we believe that they demonstrate that our teaching has been effective, that funding has been wisely made available and well-used, and that together we can achieve our goals.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Marjorie Farmer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARJORIE FARMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ENGLISH AND READING CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL DISTRICT, REPRESENTING THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

I am Marjorie Farmer, Executive Director of Reading and English Curriculum and Instruction for the Public Schools of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I am speaking also as a member of the Washington Task Force of the National Council of Teachers of English, a professional association of teachers, supervisors, and professors of English in public schools and colleges throughout the country

For myself, and on behalf of my colleagues, I want to thank Congressman Perkins and Members of this Subcommittee for the privilege of being heard in this important session

In the achievement trends reported through these Assessments, we see a clear reflection of major legislative support for education from the mid-1960's through the 1970's. We know, therefore, with greater certainty than was ever possible for us before, that educational legislation and funding do indeed play a crucial role in determining patterns of educational achievement. The decisions that will be made by this Committee and by the Congress regarding the legislative implications of these Assessments are, we believe, critical decisions, affecting the direction of the education and the lifetime careers of a generation of young people.

In my remarks, I will (1) briefly summarize the direction of major trends in reading and writing achievement, commenting on the relationships between those trends and related trends in educational practices, social processes, and legislative support; (2) offer recommendations for improving achievement in reading and writing; and (3) propose specific legislative directions for your consideration.

1 ACHIEVEMENT TRENDS IN READING AND WRITING

I'll look at these findings in two dimensions: first, the relative progress of students by age-groupings—9, 13, and 17-year-olds; second, the relative progress of three important cross-age groupings—students in disadvantaged urban areas, black students, and male students

With some variations in specific competencies assessed, there is a general downward trend in the rate of achievement gain as students progress through their years of schooling

Substantial gains of the 9-year-olds in levels of reading and writing achievement reflect the successes of the extensive early childhood programs of the late 1960's and the 1970's. Significant characteristics of these programs include strong parental and family involvement; attention to all aspects of language (oral communication, reading, and writing) used for communication, for exploration of ideas, and for learning, extensive research into the principles and practice of language development; and an emphasis on the continuing professional education of teachers

As students progress through the grades, the increasing specialization of reading instruction and its separation from other school subjects and from the out-of-school lives of students are reflected in slower rates of reading growth at ages 13 and 17. Throughout most of the decade, a narrow focus on reading skills, based on the Title I definition of the basic skills (reading and mathematics) is reflected in greatly diminished attention to the teaching of writing in the middle and secondary grades, and in a decline in writing performance at age 13, continued at age 17.

In both reading and writing assessments, significant areas of decline are those representing higher level intellectual operations. Students are generally able to give the literal meaning of what they have read, and to write an acceptable business letter; they are less likely to be able to connect what they have read to the rest of their knowledge and experience, or to use their writing skills to express original ideas or to produce a persuasive letter. These are the skills that would enable students to make use of their language skills for learning and for solving the problems they will meet throughout life.

On the other hand, looking at three cross-age groupings whose achievement has long lagged behind national levels, we see an upward trend at every age level.

Students in disadvantaged urban school settings, black students, and male students all experience significant rates of improvement throughout the decade. Social, legislative, and educational forces have all, I believe, contributed to this improvement.

Compensatory programs—chiefly Title I— have made new levels of staffing, community resources, and professional expertise available to serve inner city youths. We've been able to put into practice here some of the best of what we know about teaching reading, as we have done with younger children through the highly effective early childhood programs.

Black students have benefited from the civil rights movement, with the consequent broader participation of black parents and professionals in education. The growing field of Afro-American studies, for example, has helped promote better understanding of the intellectual gifts of black people; we know that actual achievement and the expectation of achievement are closely correlated.

It seems that boys have been the unexpected beneficiaries of the women's equity movement. As we have learned that girls can achieve in mathematics, we have seen that boys can succeed in reading and writing.

We're closing the gap, then, in our differential levels of service to different groups of learners, as we become free of our stereotyped perceptions of their abilities to learn.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING ACHIEVEMENT IN READING AND WRITING

The decade of the 70's was a period of greatly accelerated professional activity in this field—study, research, curriculum development, analysis of classroom practice, evaluation of instructional programs—along lines closely related to the nature and level of government support for education.

On the basis of review of that activity, and with the supporting evidence of these Assessments, we can identify five significant characteristics of programs that are associated with achievement in reading and writing

First, there is a "mastery" approach to teaching and learning: the expectation that all students, given the time and the teaching techniques appropriate to their needs, can achieve mastery of essential language skills and of the content taught through these skills. This approach, as described in "A Guide for Developing an English Curriculum for the Eighties," (by Allan Glatthorn for the National Council of Teachers of English), is exemplified in the Chicago Mastery Reading Learning Program (Chicago, Illinois, Board of Education), and in many Title I services throughout the country

The second characteristic of such programs is a comprehensive approach to the teaching of all the skills of language and communication in relationship to one another This approach is exemplified in the language of Title II, ESEA, and in the "Comprehensive Reading Communication Arts Plan" (by Morton Botel for the Pennsylvania Department of Education)

Language skills grow as they are used for learning in all areas of the balanced curriculum, including mathematics, the arts, sciences, foreign languages, and physical education. This practice is promoted through the work of the Organizations for the Essentials of Education (attached), and is exemplified in the Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) Public Schools' "Blueprint for Academic Achievement."

Successful programs maintain connections to the out-of-school lives, interest, and goals of students, through such means as parent participation programs, school volunteers, library services, mass media studies, and an emphasis on career education throughout the curriculum

And, as the essential support for all this work, there is provision for the continuous professional education of teachers and administrators. The National Writing Project (directed by James Gray, University of California at Berkeley) is an outstanding example of the effectiveness of teachers teaching teachers, improving the teaching of writing in schools and colleges across the country.

Key to the success of these programs is a new and rapidly growing movement toward cooperation among specialists in education, and increasingly effective communication among educators, parents, and government.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION PROPOSED FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Especially in a period of federal austerity it is important that limited funds be directed to essential services.

(a) Replace the narrow Title I definition of the basic skills with the broader language and mandate of Title II, ESEA (reading, written and oral communication and mathematics), include support for expanded programs in oral and written communication.

(b) Continue support for legislation that funds early childhood programs, and for legislation that prohibits educational discrimination by race, sex, or handicapping conditions, add support for secondary school renewal.

(c) Provide support for school and public libraries, and for arts and media programs, and other avenues to broader community involvement in all aspects of literacy education.

(d) Provide support for expanded career education programs infusing these understandings in the total curriculum.

(e) Support continuing education for teachers, enabling us to teach all language skills to our changing clientele multilingual and multicultural, and with differing talents and handicapping conditions.

CONCLUSION

The National Assessments of Reading and Writing will reward further study, especially in relation to the findings of other Assessments. Achievement in other areas should be reviewed in terms of mutually supportive relationships to reading and writing progress. Oral communication must be assessed, as well, and groups that have been excluded from earlier Assessments—speakers of other languages and handicapped learners—must have their progress examined.

The National Council of Teachers of English and the other professional associations that are cooperating as the Organizations for the Essentials of Education (attached) are pleased to make available to this Committee the advice of specialists—teachers and researchers—to provide information, as you consider educational legislation.

We are all encouraged by your interest, and by the generally optimistic reports of these Assessments. They demonstrate the effectiveness of our teaching and our willingness as a profession to continue learning and improving our service.

THE ESSENTIALS OF EDUCATION

Educators agree that the overarching goal of education is to develop informed, thinking citizens capable of participating in both domestic and world affairs. The development of such citizens depends not only upon education for citizenship, but also upon other essentials of education shared by all subjects.

The interdependence of skills and content is the central concept of the essentials of education. Skills and abilities do not grow in isolation from content. In all subjects, students develop skills in using language and other symbol systems, they develop the ability to reason, they undergo experiences that lead to emotional and social maturity. Students master these skills and abilities through observing, listening, reading, talking, and writing about science, mathematics, history and the social sciences, the arts and other aspects of our intellectual, social and cultural heritage. As they learn about their world and its heritage they necessarily deepen their skills in language and reasoning and acquire the basis for emotional, aesthetic and social growth. They also become aware of the world around them and develop and understanding and appreciation of the interpendence of the many facets of that world.

More specifically, the essentials of education include the ability to use language, to think, and to communicate effectively, to use mathematical knowledge and methods to solve problems, to reason logically, to use abstractions and symbols with power and ease, to apply and to understand scientific knowledge and methods, to make use of technology and to understand its limitations, to express oneself through the arts and to understand the artistic expressions of others, to understand other languages and cultures, to understand spatial relationships, to apply knowledge

about health, nutrition, and physical activity; to acquire the capacity to meet unexpected challenges; to make informed value judgments, to recognize and to use one's full learning potential, and to prepare to go on learning for a lifetime.

Such a definition calls for a realization that all disciplines must join together and acknowledge their interdependence. Determining the essentials of education is a continuing process, far more demanding and significant than listing isolated skills assumed to be basic. Putting the essentials of education into practice requires instructional programs based on this new sense of interdependence.

Educators must also join with many segments of society to specify the essentials of education more fully. Among these segments are legislators, school boards, parents, students, workers' organizations, businesses, publishers, and other groups and individuals with an interest in education. All must now participate in a coordinated effort on behalf of society to confront this task. *Everyone* has a stake in the essentials of education.

ORGANIZATION FOR THE ESSENTIALS OR EDUCATION

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
American Theater Association.
Arts Education and Americans, Inc.
Association for Education Communications and Technology
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
Association of American Publishers.
Council for Basic Education.
Home Economics Education Association.
International Reading Association.
Modern Language Association.
Music Educators National Conference.
National Art Education Association.
National Association of Elementary School Principals.
National Association of Secondary School Principals.
National Business Education Association.
National Committee for Citizens in Education
National Council for the Social Studies.
National Council of Teachers of English.
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
National Education Association.
National Science Teachers Association.
Speech Communication Association.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much.

Our next witness is a fellow mid-westerner, Mrs. Phyllis Schlafly, from Alton, Ill., president of the Eagle Forum.

STATEMENT OF PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY, PRESIDENT, EAGLE FORUM

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. Thank you for the privilege of appearing before this committee to present another point of view from a citizen and parent who is outside the word of educational professionals.

My name is Phyllis Schlafly.

I am an author, journalist, lawyer, and volunteer president of Eagle Forum, a national profamily organization.

I am the wife of Fred Schlafly and the mother of six children. I hold a B.A. from Washington University, an M.A. from Harvard University, and a J.D. from Washington University Law School. I am here today because of my unique first-hand experience in teaching my children to read.

In 1955, when my first child was 5 years old, I wanted to give him a headstart by private tutoring so that he could enter a class for gifted children. I took him for a series of lessons to the home of the Alton public school teacher who was in charge of the gifted

students. During the tutoring, I would wait for my son while reading a book on her porch.

After a few lessons, it became apparent to me that she wasn't teaching my son to read at all. She was merely teaching him to memorize a few words by associating them with pictures on the page. When I tested him at home, I found that he had memorized a few words, but it was clear that he had no comprehension of the letters or the syllables.

It proved to be my great good fortune that 1955 was the year when Rudolf Flesch's landmark book, "Why Johnny Can't Read," became an overnight bestseller and shook the educational world by exposing how the progressive educationalists had eliminated the teaching of phonics from the first grade. His book made a highly persuasive case that phonics is the essential key to learning to read the English language.

Since I consider the ability to read well to be the indispensable tool for all learning, I determined to give my son the very best. I bought the books which Mr. Flesch recommended: "Reading With Phonics by Hay and Wingo," published by J. B. Lippincott Co., plus the teacher's manual and three workbooks. A friend gave me a little first grade desk, and I also bought the Calvert Correspondence School used by many American children who live abroad and do not care to enter foreign schools.

I had never been a teacher, and all this was new to me. I followed a regular schedule and gave my oldest son, John, the first grade at home, using the 100 percent Hay-Wingo phonics system. After about 2 months, he was reading the comic strips himself and anything else he wanted to read. It was all easy going after those first 2 months. I hardly ever needed to tell him another word.

The following September, I presented him to the local parochial school and requested entrance into the second grade. A dubious principal insisted on giving him an entrance test. He passed and entered without any problems.

I followed the same pattern with each of my six children: four sons and two daughters. I gave each one the entire first grade at home, using the "Hay-Wingo Reading With Phonics" reader and workbooks.

My project was a total success. They all entered directly into second grade without any difficulty, were always among the best readers in their classes, and have all gone on to high academic achievement:

John, B.S.E.E. and J.D.; Bruce, B.S.E.E. and M.D.; Roger, B.S.E.E. and Ph. D.; Liza, B.A. and to receive her J.D. next year; Andrew to receive his B.S.E.E. this year; Anne is still in high school.

Teaching a child to read does not require money or fancy schools or specially trained teachers. It simply requires teaching the child by the phonics method at the age of 5 or 6, before he has been spoiled by the sight reading or other wrong methods.

The plan I followed with my six children was watched with interest by my black housekeeper of 26 years, Mrs. Willie Bea Reed. When her own child was 5 years old, she wanted to give her the very best, too. She was smart enough to know that being a good reader would open more doors for her daughter than any other skill. I gave her the same dog-eared books plus some new Hay-

Wingo workbooks, and lent her the little desk. Mrs. Reed followed the same procedure that I had used.

The moment of truth came when Mrs. Reed entered her child in school and sought admission directly into the second grade. The daughter passed the test with flying colors, was rated as reading 2 years above her age level, and has been grinding out straight A's on her report cards ever since.

When I compare the reading method I used with those used in most schools today, the difference is obvious. The illiterate pupils in the schools today have been deprived of their birthright, their right to read. They simply have not been taught the phonetic sounds of the English language.

You can measure the decline in reading skills by comparing current readers with the old McGuffey readers. The McGuffey readers, which were widely used across the United States in the early 20th century, are about 2 years advanced over modern readers of the same grade level in all reading skills, including vocabulary, comprehension, spelling, writing, pronunciation, grammar, and intellectual and spiritual content.

I used the McGuffey readers with my six children because the stories in most of the widely used readers, such as the Dick and Jane series were so stupid. The McGuffey readers use some language that is a little old-fashioned for today's world, but the stories are about real people and they hold the child's interest.

In addition, the McGuffey stories teach the time-honored virtues, love of God, patriotism, thrift, honesty, respect for elders, where there's a will there's a way, the Golden Rule, true courage, manliness, kindness to the less fortunate, obedience to parents, the value of prayer, the consequences of idleness and truancy, crime doesn't pay, and why virtue and love are worth more than material riches. The old McGuffey readers teach morals, faith, and family love.

Modern readers, on the other hand, are completely different. The characters merely run and play, they look up and look down, they hear the duck quack and the cat meow. Their lives are utterly devoid of the standards, the values, the morals, the inspiration, and the ideals, as well as of the reading and writing skills of the McGuffey readers.

My conclusion is that what American youngsters need is a good 2- to 4-month course in reading-through-phonics in the first grade, plus some good readers on which they can practice their reading skills and at the same time learn the morals and values that built this great Nation. The literacy crisis in the United States today doesn't need any Federal money, any new studies or new programs, any more highly trained teachers, or any new schools.

I concur with the recent column written by William Raspberry—copy attached—in which he states:

> Faulty techniques for teaching reading have crippled a thousand times more children than cultural deprivation, dyslexia, and incompetent parenting put together.

We'd all be better off if we just gave the Hay-Wingo phonics books to every parent with a 5-year-old child and said, "Teach your child yourself."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The information follows:]

[From the Washington Post Apr 29 1981]

Faulty Teaching Fails Children

(By William Raspberry)

It has been a year since we talked about it, and I still can't get the conversation out of my mind We were talking about former superintendent Vincent Reed's plan to cut an end to automatic school promotions, insisting that no child be promoted until he has mastered the grade he was in

School board member Frank Smith Jr had voted against the proposal, a vote that raised my eyebrows practically off my face How on earth could he opposed such a sensible notion? Surely it made sense to have a child who failed to master the material appropriate to his grade level try it again, perhaps with special remedial help

"You have in mind a concept of special help being offered on an intensive, perhaps one-to-one basis," Smith told me, reading my mind correctly "That concept may make sense in terms of what you and I remember from our own school days, but it doesn't square with the reality of what is happening in many of our local schools

"I constantly walk into classrooms where teachers tell me that only five or six of their 25 students are reading and doing math up to grade level If you are talking about holding back those 20 students, it would probably wreck the system"

Now since Vincent Reed's proposal dealt only with grades one through three, I've been wondering how it can be that in some schools the *overwhelming majority* of elementary school youngsters can be so far behind in reading and math

I hear the various explanations—hunger, parental apathy, cultural deprivation and the rest. I hear about the higher incidence of learning disabilities in some parts of town, or problems with discipline or the absence of role models. It all sounds vaguely reasonable until I think of one thing. These children all (or very nearly all) come to school on Day One knowing their colors

Now what does knowing one's colors have to do with learning to read? Only this A child who starts school already knowing his colors (and his alphabet and the rudiments of counting) has already learned so much that you cannot make me believe he is stupid.

Think about it. Here's a kid who at age 4 or earlier has been shown an apple and told "This is red." Then he's handed a piece of wrapping paper or a cap or a crayon and told "This is red."

After an astonishingly short time of such instruction, the child is able to deduce that what you are talking about is not shape, texture or edibility, but the fact that these various objects all reflect light waves of approximately the same length Once he deduces what you are looking for, he easily learns green and blue and yellow

And yet educators insist that I must accept that a child who has demonstrated this rather astounding ability to abstract one of an endless variety of qualities and to build on the abstraction is too stupid to learn to read

I don't believe it. I don't believe it of middle-class children, and I don't believe it of the children of the slums, who in addition to learning such fun things as colors and numbers as a routine part of growing up must frequently also learn how to look out for themselves in ways that would shame a child of affluence. (What middle-class parent would deem his own 6-year-old capable of going to the neighborhood store without being struck by a car at the first intersection?)

And yet I don't doubt that Frank Smith is correct, that a lot of inner-city youngsters of proven learning ability don't learn after they are in school They may start off at or near the national norms for their age group, but almost routinely they fall further and further behind as they move through school. Why? Surely there must be an answer that doesn't postulate diminished mental ability

Rudolf "Why Johnny Can't Read" Flesch is sure he knows the answer It is that Johnny can't read because he hasn't been properly taught—that is, he hasn't been taught phonics.

He made the point 25 years ago, and he makes it again in his latest book, "Why Johnny *Still* Can't Read." Thousands of schools, he says, still don't use phonics as a *system* for teaching reading, although nearly all primary teachers will tell you that they do use phonics. The trouble, says Flesch, is that they do a smattering of phonics in the general context of look-say. The result is that the children can't handle words they haven't been specifically taught, which is to say they can't read

Tell me that Flesch overestimates the value of phonics, and I'll tell you that I believe faulty techniques for teaching reading have crippled a thousand times more children than cultural deprivation, dyslexia and incompetent parenting put together

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Mrs. Schlafly, for your testimony.

We will start with some questions now.

Congressman Bill Ford has joined us and we also have Congressman Petri here.

I will start off with a question, and then I will defer to my colleagues.

I will address this question to Dr. Forbes, but any of you may join in responding to it.

D. Forbes, since your data shows that elementary school children from disadvantaged areas have gained the most in achievement and that secondary school students in general have gained the least and may have declined somewhat in achievement, do you believe that this data shows that Federal programs which have concentrated on disadvantaged areas and on early elementary schools have indeed succeeded?

In fact, if anything, perhaps does your data show that if the Federal programs had been better funded they might have been able to reach into the high schools and reverse some similar problems occurring there?

Would you care to comment on what may have happened, say, if title I and programs like that had reached higher up into the schools?

Dr. FORBES. If I may expand the question to include all compensatory education programs because I have difficulty separating out the State, Federal, and local effort and all the things which are going on.

I believe the data quite clearly show that we have made tremendous progress at the earlier ages. In talking with some of my colleagues, it could be that we have learned how to train younger students, and that we still have some learning to do ourselves in dealing with the more difficult reading skills, like inferential comprehension skills we need to learn how to do this better.

Additional resources to address that problem and to make sure that the support system that is available for the younger student, especially those from disadvantaged homes that do not have a family support system, resources that would provide funding K through 12 probably would show up in the same types of gains that we have seen at the 9-year-old level.

Mr. KILDEE. Since we right now perhaps do not know the reason for the study's findings in the inferential comprehension skills, in addition to perhaps dollars going into programs in high school, is there another area where additional funding might help in research to find out why that failure takes place?

Dr. FARMER. May I comment?

I think that many of us feel very strongly, I certainly do on the basis of my work in a city school system, that at least part of the decline in inferential skills is related to the specialization of which I spoke earlier, when that means that reading is separated from the work that youngsters do in other parts of the school program.

That is the reason that we are working very hard in my own city, as I know people are in others, to promote the use of textbooks that are lively and interesting and engaging to youngsters, as well as literature that is significant and that has a value for their lives, so that youngsters are applying—and we have all said

this in different ways—the skills that we are succeeding in teaching them, to things that are important in their lives.

What needs to happen at the secondary level is providing additional help to teachers of other disciplines. Our reading specialists are working with teachers of other disciplines to help them teach students to use in the science class and in the history class, and in reading the daily newspaper, the reading skills that they have developed. This is a natural way of moving to inferential teaching and learning, to the higher cognitive levels of reading skills..

Mr. KILDEE. Last week my 11-year-old was reading "The Prince" by Machiavelli in a social studies class.

It was interesting, because his social studies teacher was very knowledgeable, about the reading skills, and I can tell you that there is some emphasis on reading skills in all my son's classes.

Dr. FARMER. There has been a tendency to keep the text material written at a supposed lower level, which lost readers' interest, and did not attract them to the higher intellectual uses of language.

Mr. KILDEE. My son is beginning to find some daily newspapers boring.

Dr. FARMER. He is ready.

Mr. KILDEE. I won't dwell on that.

Does anyone else at the table want to comment on any of the questions?

Dr. FARR. Very briefly, on the last question, if you take a look at some of the test items for the 9-year-olds, it is literally amazing how high those scores are. There are test items where 95 and 97 percent of the students answered correctly. It is almost impossible to get large samples with 100 percent correct responses.

What we need to do is to take a look at how kids are using their reading skills.

There are things to learn about reading comprehension, and I can pleased that the Federal Government is funding a large research effort at the University of Illinois to study reading comprehension.

The SAT scores, the college board tests, do not measure basic reading skills; but they measure high level reading skills. The emphasis on improving reading comprehension needs to begin at a lower level. We don't start teaching higher level reading skills when a kid gets to be a high school senior. We have got to start with teaching comprehension skills at the lower grade levels.

Mr. KILDEE. Mrs. Schlafly, you taught your own children phonics. That was the method by which I learned to read many years ago.

I am wondering whether it was the method that was used, the family concern and involvement, or a combination of both that gave the advantage?

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. I am completely of the belief that it was the method, and that was why I was so excited with the experience of my black housekeeper and her child.

Of course, I had a lot of people who thought it was just my children who were special. I don't think that is the case. I think it is the method that is it, and I find it a little difficult to relate to this conversation about the teaching of reading at ages 13 through 17. I think the teaching of reading is a first grade problem, and if

you teach them to read in the first grade you have got them taught and that is it.

Dr. FARMER. I need to respond to that as a manager of a reading program I think we all agree, and Dr. Farr has said for both of us, that we believe that the teaching of those basic skills is in place. All the data in the assessment, the data in my own school system's testing, and the testing of others, assures us that the youngsters do well on standardized tests as well as on this kind of performance on the phonics level.

The phonics approach is built quite heavily into systems in use in my own school district and others that I know of.

Where we have the problem is that our work has gone apart in upper grades, that youngsters have not been encouraged—because of our increasing specialization—to use these skills. Any talent or skill that is not used withers. That is the problem.

Mr. KILDEE. One more question on that. In my own family, when I was growing up there was a division, those who used the phonics method and those who used the sight method. Do you find much difference in the results when you compare students who are taught pure sight and phonic reading?

Dr. FARMER. Nowhere that I know of.

Dr. FORBES. We don't pick up that type of information.

Dr. FARMER. No system uses any program that could be called "pure sight." Many children learn to read outside the classroom by pure sight because they see words and names of things on television. But I don't know of a system that uses this approach as the basic reading program.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much.

Congressman Petri?

Mr. PETRI. Did you make any distinction between the performance of children in parochial and public schools in your survey?

Dr. FORBES. We sampled in such a way that we have representative data of all students, those attending both public and private schools.

The private school sample is such that we can describe performance of students that attend the private Catholic schools, but the sample size gets too small to talk about the private, non-Catholic schools.

When we compare the performance data for the public and private schools, we find that there is a significant difference in performance with the private students performing better with a few exceptions.

The students that attend schools that are in the central part of the United States tend to perform at the same level in both public and private, and those students that go to schools that serve the economically advantaged urban areas tend to perform at the same level.

We also picked up the fact that the private schools serve a different population from the public schools, so that led to a hypothetical question:

What if the public schools were serving the same population as the private schools, so we, in attempting to answer that hypothetical question, reevaluated our data and made the assumption that

the public schools with their performance levels had the same type of population that the private schools serve.

When we make that statistical adjustment, differences in performance wash out with very few exceptions. I believe the 9-year-olds in the Southwest and the 13-year-olds in the West and the 17-year-olds in the Northeast still tend to perform higher if they are going to private schools.

In the case of students at age 17 in the central part of the United States, it flips over the other way with the public school students having an advantage.

We also looked at our mathematics data and did the same type of adjustment, and it is the same pattern that we find with the reading data.

Mr. KILDEE. Would the gentleman yield on that point?

Could you give for us some additional information about what type of sample you have, how many students it contains and how are they distributed throughout the United States?

Dr. FORBES. I can be very brief and supply some additional information.

Each item is administered or given to a sample of about 2,500 students. Each student does not take every item of the assessment.

For example, the total size of the sample in 1979–1980 was a little over 18,000 students that participated in the assessment.

We draw our sample by first randomly selecting a county, a group of counties across the United States as our primary sampling unit that are representative of the different sizes of communities making sure we have a range from the rural areas to the metropolitan areas.

Once we have selected that primary sampling unit, we go into the group of counties and list all of the public and private schools. We randomly select from that group a second sample. Then we go into a school and we list all of the students that are the right age and randomly select from that group.

By the time we get through we have one of the best samples in the United States. The data are highly representative.

Mr. KILDEE. I thank you for yielding, Mr. Petri. You may continue.

Mr. PETRI. Is it fair to say then, when you tried to adjust for variables to create a comparable situation so you are comparing oranges and oranges, there was no difference between parochial and private school, between the public and private?

Dr. FORBES. Between public and private with very few exceptions. Minority students that attend private schools tend to perform better even after the adjustment than the minority students that attend public schools. We need to look at our data in more depth.

Mr. PETRI. That would be the only area?

Dr. FORBES. The other three that I have mentioned, the 9-year-olds in the Southeast and the 13-year-olds in the West and the 17-year-olds in the Northeast.

The difference in the performance of the raw data before we do any type of adjustment at all is very wide for the 9-year-olds in the southern part of the United States.

Mr. PETRI. Much better in private schools?

Dr. FORBES. Yes; if you remove the southeastern 9-year-old out of the raw data, the raw data won't give you anything other than that.

Mr. PETRI. Do you have any idea why that might be?

Dr. FORBES. No guesses at all.

Mr. PETRI. Are there areas in the United States that currently have tests every so often of all the students in the State of whatever, like a European system, and at age 13 or 10 or something or another, and if there are, did you do a cut in your sample to determine whether that sort of thing, or the students in those types of systems did any better or worse than students where there was no external effort to measure the performance?

Dr. FORBES. There are States that have statewide testing programs. Some States are requiring the passage of a test in order to be promoted to the next grade or to graduate from high school.

We have not analyzed our data by grouping those States which have that type of testing program and comparing it with those that do not. That would be an interesting analysis of the data to do. We have not done that.

Mr. PETRI. You could do that; you could run that now?

Dr. FORBES. We could do that, yes.

Mr. PETRI. I guess one other area of question. I have the impression, and I am probably not that well informed because I am certainly not current with what the developments are in your area, that not only in percentage but in absolute numbers, people are doing poorer on college boards, that there is a downward trend rather than an upward trend, and that there is a general feeling certainly among the t .paying parenting public that we may be spending more on education but we are getting less in terms of basic skills.

What would be your answer to those two observations?

Dr. FORBES. If we look at the reading data, we have pointed out the decline for the 17-year-old on inferential comprehension.

In the area of writing, we find the application of basic writing skills declined at age 17. If we look at mathemetics, the application of computational skills, being able to solve word problems, has declined at age 17, so for those applications of the more basic skills, the skills that require thinking, analysis, problem solving, that type of thing, we do have data that show there is a decline. and we should be concerned about it. It goes hand in hand with the SAT decline which has been very widely reported.

I think that decline probably has been misinterpreted by some as saying, hey, we have got a problem with basic skills. I don't believe that for a moment.

The SAT is not designed to measure basic skills. The people from college boards, I have heard them many times, make that comment. It measures higher order analytical problem solving. Our data supports it. There is a decline going on at the higher level. We have two needs, to continue to do a good job in increasing the basic skills, and the data show we are making rather dramatic progress.

Also, we have a need for doing a lot better job in teaching the application of the more basic skills.

Maybe Mrs. Schlafly or Roger or Marjorie would like to comment.

Dr. FARMER. I would like to say something about the importance of writing. Many of us see a very strong relationship between the decline in young people's ability to achieve in their college work and the decline in the use of language for dealing with ideas, as they go through their education.

The basic reading skills are in place. It is writing that requires the person to take the ideas and take the language and use them, work with them, to produce his or her own understanding of those ideas, and develope effective ways of communicating those ideas to other people This is part of the reason that we are urging that emphasis be given to all three of these basic language skill areas which undergird and support one another.

The separation of reading both from the other skills of language and from the uses of language in learning, we think, has been instrumental too in the decline in the high order intellectual skills. We think that mathematics needs to be taught all the way through the grades. Many secondary schools offer mathematics in only one or two grades. We think those skills—language and mathematics—are interlocking, each strengthening the other. That is the purpose of the work of the group of Organizations for the Essentials of Eduation—teachers of mathematics, science, art, and other disciplines—to bring these skills together throughout the curriculum, so they are not just mastered, but used and expanded.

Dr. FARR. You couched the question in terms of whether or not the public is getting what it has paid for. Yes, basic literacy in this Nation is at an all time high. We have put a lot of emphasis, with both Federal and State funds into improving basic reading skills at the lowest grade levels.

This effort has had a positive impact, but not at the cost of advantaged youngsters declining. They went up, just not as much. Where the problem exists now is that we need to consider that reading and writing shall be developed together and are a lot more than something that is taught just in first grade.

Mr. PETRI. You talk to merchants, as one example, people who buy cash registers and stuff, and they figure they have got to have machines that people can use that don't know how to add and subtract, whereas they didn't used to, people like that, to show we may be spending a lot more money but it does not seem to be producing a lot more use.

Dr. FARMER. This is a consequence of the narrow basic skills focus; we are urging that it be broadened.

Dr. FARR. I have studied the history of criticism of education. I have a memo from the head of the English Department at the University of Indiana that said kids today can't do anything, can't write a complete sentence. That memo was written in 1915.

I am an author of a nationally standardized reading test. That data also reveals significant increases at the lower grade levels. There is a test titled "The Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test." The authors of that test had to develop a more difficult test in recent years because first graders' reading skills had increased so markedly.

Merchants complain and so do many others. I hate to go to cocktail parties and say I am an educator, because every time those

at the party discover my profession, there is a discussion of the decline of basic skills, and it is always the fault of educators.

The basic data, when we really go out and dig into it, is giving us a factual perspective from which to understand education's strengths and weaknesses.

Mr. PETRI. One last question:

In doing this survey, did you take into account or determine the differing class sizes and, if so, did you do a cut on the data to indicate whether kids were doing better or worse depending on the teacher/student ratio?

Dr. FORBES. We do not pick up the class size information. We would not have that available.

Mr. PETRI. That is a significant area of expenditure and of concern.

Dr. FORBES. There is kind of a debate going on between people that have been looking at all of the research that had been done on that, trying to determine if it is significant or not. That type of study is done better and more cost-efficiently in a smaller study. It would not be economical for us to pick it up at the national level.

Mr. KILDEE. Mrs. Schlafly?

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. I would like to second what Dr. Farmer said of the vital importance of teaching children to write. That is the way they really learn the language and express their thoughts.

One of the skills in writing is being able to spell, and I don't think anybody can deny the atrocious inability of young people to spell.

I believe the use of the phonics system to teach reading is really the only way you turn out good spellers.

Mr. KILDEE. The Chair recognizes my fellow Michiganian, Congressman Ford.

Mr. FORD. I will yield at this time.

Mr. ERDAHL. Your colleague from Michigan is yielding to me.

Mr. KILDEE. Yes.

Mr. ERDAHL. I apologize for not being able to be here because of a couple of other meetings, but we are involved today in a very important and basic subject that is vital to education, and that is to have the reading and writing skills that some studies say kids don't have and other studies indicate we are not so much worse off than we were 60 or 70 years ago.

This early training is so important, and I have had the good fortune of having some well-known professors as teachers, men like Dr. Karl Kayson, Dr. Galbraith at Harvard, but the most important teacher I had was a lady named Miss Fossnes, because she taught me how to read. She was a very important person.

I think what Mrs. Schlafly said about teaching your kids in a home environment, and in my family we also have four sons and two daughters. I wonder if it is the class size, the teacher, or the method. It seems to me the most important thing really comes down to the teacher combined with a home support because, in addition to being, as I said, Mrs. Fossnes was my most important teacher.

She also had a rather small class of three. It was my twin brother and my cousin. It was kind of like a family environment in a sense, but it seems to me this is one of the things that we should

be continuing to try to involve the total family in the relationship, because if the children at a very early age have this support, this awareness, we have the old bugaboo that is in most homes today, the competition from the TV set.

I wonder sometimes if that is a culprit, but could I have some comment from the panel about this whole interaction and the importance of this early start, the importance, as I see it, of the most important component is not the method, the teacher, and how important is the family support that these young boys and girls get at the very early beginning age.

Dr. FARMER. The parent participation program is one of our major efforts in Philadelphia. The strongest force in the child's life is his out-of-school life, his family. We do find that in our early childhood programs that put a stress on family involvement, there is solid achievement.

We find in our title I programs, where there is a requirement that we develop a title I parents council, there is solid achievement.

We find that when we are able to bring supportive adults in as volunteers, our school volunteer program makes a tremendous contribution also to the lives of the volunteers, who are enormously enriched by their experience, and that that makes a difference for students' achievement, too.

We find that in peer tutoring programs, when a youngster who has mastered a skill has the opportunity to work with another youngster to help him, the tutor's mastery increases. In addition to the skills, the phonics, the comprehension skills, and all the rest, including spelling and writing, the key ingredient in successful learning is an interpersonal relationship that has to be nurtured.

Mr. ERDAHL. Maybe other members of the panel wish to respond as well.

My colleague from Wisconsin brought up the question of class size.

I have to believe that this type of an interaction, whether it is between the student and the teacher or among students, can function better in smaller classes.

Dr. FARMER. As a classroom teacher sometimes working with large classes, I found that it is possible to develop cooperation and achievement within the group as youngsters come to know and help one another. We are lucky, of course, if we can bring in other adults.

Dr. FARR. I would second the importance of parents. If you give me an opportunity and a challenge to say who could do the best job of teaching reading, I would pick the parents.

In terms of the class size, it is really that we have tried to collect all kinds of data about whether class size makes a difference. The topic is very controversial. What is important is not the class size but rather what happens in those classes. Unless you get to class sizes like 55 and 60, which we had at one time in this country in some large cities, class size doesn't make any difference. Student achievement depends on what the teacher does, how the class is organized, and the kind of interaction that takes place.

Dr. FORBES. Roger mentioned the upper level of 50, 55. The lower level is somewhere around 13 or 14 where you start picking up dramatic increases when it gets that small.

When I was in Louisville, Ky., I spent a year looking at three different reading approaches to determine which one was more cost-efficient. At the end of the year I was preparing the final report and talking to the associate superintendent who was in charge of maintenance for the school system, and I told him what I had been doing.

He said, before you give me the results, let me write down the schools that did well and poorly. I had 12 schools, and he listed the six in one column and six on another; and I looked at it and said, "Bob, how did you know that? It took me a year to study that."

He said, "I know the principal and the instructional leadership that they provide to the teachers." I think the instructional leadership provided in the school is also extremely important.

The National Assessment data shows time and time again that those students that come from parents where at least one parent that has possibly a high school education performs better than those students coming from families where neither parent has a high school education, so certainly the level of parental education is a very large predictor in how well a student is going to do in school at the present time.

I think what educators in schools are trying to do is to make sure that that predictor doesn't stay in place, and that the school can pick up some of the support.

My personal experience at the local school level and the experiences with national assessment also say the same thing other people have mentioned. Family support plays a tremendously large role in how well the student is going to do in school.

Mr. ERDAHL. Mrs. Schlafly, you seem to be interested in responding to this.

Another question directed to you, as you taught your youngsters at the first grade level in your home, do you think they missed out on something in the social interaction that goes with kids going to school?

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. No; I don't. They had many other years to acquire that, and I think I gave them a headstart in knowing that learning is a very exciting experience.

I also feel that it was exceedingly important that they learn the right way first; in other words, if you learn to play golf with the wrong swing, it becomes a very difficult task to teach you to unlearn the wrong swing and then learn the right swing, and I wanted them to learn to read by the phonics method, because I think that is the key.

When they went to school, I am sure that large classes are hard on the teachers, but all my children were in a modest parochial school where the classes did number 40, 50, 55, and I found that no handicap. I am sure it is hard on the teacher, but I don't think it was hard on the children.

I believe, of course, I concur completely with everything that you have said about the parental involvement, but I do think the system is the key, and I would urge that this committee address itself to Rudolph Flesch's book, "Why Johnny Still Can't Read",

because I think he has produced a couple of the most important books ever written in this area

Mr. ERDAHL. Thank you very much

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

Mr. KILDEE. Congressman Ford?

Mr. FORD. I find this whole subject very interesting and fascinating as everyone else does.

I was particularly interested in Dr. Farr's observation about his difficulty in going to cocktail parties and having people raise questions, like Mrs. Schlafly raises about "Why Johnny Can't Read"

As someone who has been peripherally involved in education for all of my adult life and listened to experts of all kinds at the local, State, and now at the Federal level, I have been fascinated by that same phenomenon.

As a lawyer, I find fewer people with firm opinions about what is right or wrong about legal concepts at a cocktail party than I do people with a concept with respect to what is right or wrong about education.

I have yet to find a person who does not have a firm opinion about what is wrong with education, depending on their own experience and view of the world as seen from their little piece of it.

I find it easier to talk about politics, religion or sex at a cocktail party than to talk about education.

Maybe one of the problems we have is that everybody has had some exposure to education, so everybody knows something about it. We suffer from the fact that a little bit of knowledge sometimes is dangerous. The one thing Americans are never hesitant about is telling experts on how to provide education.

As an attorney who represented local school boards, I was always fascinated to hear the lectures that the professionals received from newly-elected members of the boards of education coming fresh from an election which they won either by opposing busing or "Catcher-In-The-Rye," which some time ago was a controversy, and in fact still is in my district, and then promptly began to learn. And, as they progressed as board members, I noticed that they became less and less certain about how easy it was going to be to turn the system inside out.

One of the great temptations of everyone who has come before this committee for many years has been to have us at the Federal level attempt to find a simple answer to the complex questions of how and what people learn and how best to facilitate the proper learning, through some kind of generally applicable set of principles which will work. If you look out across the country at the traditions, and the attitudes not only socially between people with a relatively high level of formal education versus those with no education to speak of, economic differences, social differences, we find great regional differences.

Back in 1965, when we were debating the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, one of the discussions which dominated the consideration of the need for that kind of national legislation like that which has been taking place here this morning. We heard from numerous experts suggesting ways in which we might react.

There are some things which stuck in my mind.

Dr. Farme., I can recall having testimony from your city of Philadelphia from a teacher who was in a school where the turnover of students approached 150 percent in a year. I doubt that there are very many lawmakers, particularly at this level, who ever attended a school with 150-percent turnover during a school year, so it is very difficult for us to conceptualize what formal education is in that kind of a setting.

Starting that far back, I began to get some suspicions that outside factors were a lot more important than what happened in a few hours that children were exposed to whatever educational opportunities we were providing with public funds. Mrs. Schlafly's testimony is outstanding testimony to that consideration.

You might recall when Christopher Jencks a couple of years ago enraged people around the country when he released his work. One of the conclusions which the press jumped at was a generalization to the effect that a truly bad educational system couldn't depress a good student by more than 5 percent, and a truly good educational system couldn't improve a bad student by more than 50 percent.

The press seized upon that rather than on the other things which were in Jenck's observations as evidence of the fact that schools were really irrelevant and weren't performing any function.

I was intrigued by that, and found that taken in its totality, the Jenck's report did not say a lot of things the press attributed to it, or at least I believe they were taken out of context.

I am particularly fascinated by your personal experiences with six children, Mrs. Schlafly. Not very many children have the opportunity to be in a household like you describe in your testimony, of course. But I have a suspicion that reading skills, no matter how they are measured—whether by the mechanical ways which we use now to see how well you can take words and give them back as distinguished from what you get out of that experience. Whether you understand the theory which is involved in them or not, is almost as individual as the personalities of people. I have that strong feeling because of the experience with my own children who had basically the same kind of family background, but didn't have the same success in school.

I have one lawyer, one nurse, and a factory worker, and there is not in my recollection any perceptible difference in their reading ability. They were all reading the back of cereal boxes before they saw a school. They all did extremely well in being tested at the elementary level, but their level of progress through school was as different as their three personalities.

Did you find that experience with your own children? As I understand it, you provided the educational experience they had through what would be normally the pre-school kindergarten and first grade and they hit school someplace around the second grade level; did they all hit school running at about the same pace?

Mrs SCHLAFLY. Yes, sir; they did. They all hit the second grade running at the same pace.

Mr. FORD. Well, that is very interesting.

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. They all progressed differently as they moved along in school. They had different interests and different rates of achievement from there on out.

Mr. FORD. I take what you are saying as a reaffirmation of the discussions we had when we passed the Head Start program—that if you could start it early and provide some kind of support, that it pays off on a permanent basis; do you agree with that?

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. Absolutely. I think being able to read well is the key to everything that comes later. If you have that facility in being able to read, to unlock the words yourself, then you can move on to learning whatever you want to learn, and I also think it is important that the child realize that it is learning that is exciting, and not all the play that goes on in the preschools and the kindergarten and whatever.

The most exciting thing of all is learning, and the only way, the only thing to compare a child being able to read for the first time in unlocking the words, in being able to read words that you have never told the child what word that was, the child unlocked it, it can only be compared to a child walking across the room for the first time.

When the 1-year-old child walks for the first time it is an excitement, a thrill, and when the child looks at a book, reads a line that you ever told him what the words were, that is exciting.

Mr. FORD. I noticed your comment on the McGuffey Reader versus the Dick and Jane series, and I have to confess that I have some strong prejudices in that direction myself.

Again, from personal experience, I had read all of James Fennimore Cooper's books by the time I reached fifth grade. The kinds of things which he wrote about were fascinating for a boy of my era.

I also had access to all of Zane Grey's books, which are not considered to be very high quality, in a way. But they were really simple and probably would be pretty good material to teach slow people to read a little bit faster. There was not a television then, and the only way to get to ideas and to concepts and to trying new things that were outside of the little part of the world we lived in was to learn to read as fast and comprehend as well as possible.

Someone made mention of the fact that if you have a skill or a muscle that is not used it goes sour. I spent three years learning to speak French in college and could not order a decent meal at a fancy restaurant in Washington today because I have had no occasion to use it.

I don't think that is a comment on my intellect or the failure of the colleges which I attended during that period. But I have a stepson, whom we have spent some time getting special help for, because he continues to read behind what he is expected to be doing as tested by modern methods in the school system and in a private school he is now attending.

But I can sit down with him, and he knows more about what went into the Space Shuttle program than I do as a Member of Congress. He has more of an idea of the concepts which are involved in conquering space than I have. If he had not been forced to learn to read first, he would not only be a slow reader but he wouldn't know very much that I think 16-year-old boys are talking about these days.

I wonder—with the competition we have from all the exciting ways in which you can get the varieties of McGuffey readers and the excitement of the "Long Rifle" series, and so on today—they

can get more of a concept more rapidly today from other sources. It seems to me that we are competing in a losing competition for the ability to read.

It is hard to convince somebody to go out and wait for carrots to grow to have them when they can get them out of a package preprepared and frozen. It seems to me education is fighting a terrible battle in trying to use traditional teaching methods for people when their minds are being taken away from dry subject matters by all these exciting things going on.

Dr. FARMER. Mrs. Schlafly has said twice that one of the things she made very clear to her youngsters is that learning is a very exciting experience. That is one of the things that we are asking to see brought back into the schools by the kinds of renewal of the teaching of real literature and the use of language skills for learning science and the rest of the school program.

Dick and Jane have gone, Mrs. Schlafly. Some of us ran them out of the school as we worked cooperatively with textbook publishers to help them update their materials.

Mr. FORD. Excuse me, I thought we put Dick and Jane out with title IX. I'm sure Mrs. Schlafly and I might not agree on the wisdom of that policy.

Dr. FARMER. They were bad enough as far as title IX, but their worst sin was being dull, and it is just unreasonable to expect children to learn if we are going to bore them with trivial things.

We don't see television as competition, by the way, and this is one of the reasons that we think teachers need continuing education. With the communication explosion around us we need to learn how to use these resources. Many of us have used it successfully—for example, public television to get youngsters to understand and enjoy Dickens and Shakespeare and some of the other great writers. Our task really is to keep finding ways to give children connections between what is happening in the school and what is happening around them.

Mr. FORD. You are working with a former staff director of this committee, Bob Andringa. He went astray and became a Republican staff member. You also deal with our friend, Allen Odden.

You might be familiar with the migrant task force I have been chairing for 4 years By accident we have discovered some very interesting things in working with that very disadvantaged group from an educational point of view A very silent, hardly observed phenomenon has occurred. I hesitate to even mention it here, because I have been fearful for years that people would find out what we were doing and ruin it in some way.

We now have about 660,000 children on a computer in Little Rock, Ark. The computer tracks every one of those children in every subject matter to which they are exposed, literally classroom hour by classroom hour on what they are exposed to.

A migrant child conceivably could have started out 2 months ago in Florida and ended up in summer school in Michigan this year, after having attended as many as five different schools along the way as the family follows the crop Within a matter of a couple of hours after that child arrives at school a computer printout will come back over a computer terminal located in one of several spots in our State and tell the admitting teacher, among other things,

that the child has already had his vaccination. The kids truly appreciate this, because they used to get one at every school they went to. And they could be advised that the child had a hearing problem. It gets down to business then, and says when they last dealt with this child, he or she was reading at a particular level.

This is more information which becomes available in a matter of hours than is available when a child moves from one end of my congressional district to the other within the Michigan school system. There the teachers wait to find out what happens, because we won't allow our children in the normal system to be kept track of that accurately. It is very interesting when you ask them to take some samples for you and punch them out to see the variation in the correlation between reading skills and how they are doing in other things.

In an unscientific way, you see what we are doing when we have kids working with very highly committed people in those programs. That has resulted in fantastic gains which we can easily keep track of because those children, unlike any other sample I know of in the country, are tracked throughout their career.

Unfortunately, less than 10 percent of them are finishing high school today. That is the next effort which the Education Commission of the States task force is addressing itself to.

I hasten to say that virtually all of the change that has taken place and all of the work that has been done is related to State and local effort, not to Federal programs. But we do find that, left with the kind of flexibility that those people working with the children have had, they seem to be doing a terrific job. I don't know of any school district which I represent, and there are some 22 of them, which has a board that would allow teachers to exercise that kind of flexibility.

There would be a thunderous kind of a demonstration at the next board meeting if they announced that they were really going to identify and separate out the children in the fourth grade who really ought to be in another room reading with second graders.

We had an old-fashioned system called a one-room schoolhouse where, when the teachers passed out the readers, she passed them out as to her own individual knowledge of the reading ability of the children rather than the grades they were supposed to be in. It worked so well that some people remembering that tried to experiment with it.

Tradition comes down to be the good old days as viewed through our eyes. The parents now who are reading avidly "Why Johnny Can't Read" are at the same time writing to all of us, in a barely articulate manner, wonderful samples of lousy grammar and spelling saying, why don't they teach the kids in the good old way that they taught us?

It is an interesting commentary. It's too bad we don't write back and say, "When you learn to write well then you can complain about the schools."

Recently I saw some figures indicating that as recently as 1950 we were graduating 25 percent of our 18-year olds from high school in this country. In 1978 we graduated slightly more than 75 percent of our 18-year olds. When you compare that to the European systems, which some people think are in some way superior to us,

you find that the Germans last year graduated less than 9 percent of their 18-year olds, the Japanese approximately 20 percent, the British about 20 percent. They have a system which weeds out and separates out. We are retaining and running through the system three times as many students on a percentage basis people as we did as recently as 1950, which everybody will refer to as the good old days—that is, when we were doing everything which pleased folks around this country.

Isn't it possible that the testing of secondary students and the generalizations which are being made about their ability in such things as reading might be skewed by the fact that the sample has changed so much in those few years?

We let the kids drop out who couldn't read in the 1930's, 1940's and through much of the 1950's, but we don't do that anymore. We keep them and try to do something with them when they hit high school.

How much impact does that have on the validity of studies which show that SAT scores and other things are indicators which are falling behind?

Dr. FORBES. I believe the push-out rate leveled off in about 1965, so data that has been collected since that time would be collected on the same basis of the number of students that were being retained in schools.

The national assessment only goes back to the 1969 and 1970 school year, we have not experienced a dramatic shift in the number of students that leave school early.

But to insure that in 1999, if the dropout rate does increase, as some people are currently predicting, that the data will be comparable we collect data from a sample of individuals who are 17, yet who are no longer students. Those that have either graduated early or are no longer in school. We are able to track down enough of those students and add them in with the student sample to be able to talk about the performance of all 17 year olds, so for the national assessment data, it is and will be comparable data for any 10-year period of time.

That still has not stopped people from misusing some of the data. Some of the headlines that appeared after we released the reading data, I think, are good examples of that. They pointed out the negative, where most of the information that we have released was positive.

I did a little matrix where I lined up literal, comprehension, the reference or study skills and the total test scores in the three age groups, and of those 12 possible performance indicators, five of them had gone up and six of them had statistically remained unchanged and only one had gone down during the 10-year period, but some newspapers chose to play up very largely the one that went down. They reinforce perceptions that are commonly held that schools have declined over the last 10 years.

In functional literacy types of skills we have either improved or we have stayed static.

Mr. FORD. We were impressed in different ways by two educational eccentrics, I still call them, who came here in the 1960's.

One was Dr. Omar Khayyan Moore, who had a crazy thing called a talking typewriter that he tried to describe to us. Every kid knows what the generational descendent of that is.

As a matter of fact, the Federal Government's involvement with a few grants brought every large hardware dealer in the country into making it, and Dr. Moore's concept was taken and carried out to the point where I have seen now in Title I programs in my district some very extraordinary kinds of things going on that look like science fiction compared to my period in school.

There was another education eccentric by the name of Admiral Rickover, who sat where you are sitting and told us the whole system was upside down, because what was really important was ability of the teacher to communicate directly with the student, and I think one of the expressions he used, if we tore down all the school buildings and sent some good teachers as selected by his criteria out to teach the children under an oak tree, we would do better than we were with the system.

They were both attacking the structure of education as being in the way of the function of education.

Dr. Moore continued to talk against the idea that we should have this artificial system of grades to begin with, and even the system of grading people, that that got in the way of teaching people who needed to be taught and got in the way of taking advantage of the teaching abilities of people in the classrooms and other settings.

Obviously, today that kind of eccentric thinking has no greater following than before, even though millions of people believe that children are not learning to read or compute as well as they did at some other time.

You mentioned that you would verify at least the testing for a 10-year old but what we deal with are the attitudes of a generation who are now parents, and I suspect if you polled the American people you would find that well over 90 percent of them believed that children in school today cannot read as well as children in school when they went to school or when their parents went to school.

They have no basis of any study that I have seen for this, but it is clear to all of us who have to deal with the public that they really believe this and absent some other explanation for it, like the fact that we have literally thousands of latch-key mothers and children without mothers like Mrs. Schlafly who can spend the time to get them through the first grade, and we have fewer and fewer traditional family settings with even 15 minutes of families being together at any one time, that those are not factors that get identified.

It is just more fashionable to attack the system and to attack the symbols of the system, the public school system. The recent study, for example, that predictably said the children in private schools are better than children in public schools. If that had come out the other way, it would be like man biting dog. That would have been extraordinary. I thought that is why people put the extra effort and money into private schools, but we are fighting a losing battle with public opinion

Finally, I get back to what Mrs. Schlafly said: I was fascinated with the Bible of the administration about the mandate for leader-

ship, the Heritage Foundation, which is a compilation of the papers prepared for the administration last fall prior to the transition, and in reading the transition paper on education, I found that the very things, Mrs. Schlafly, that you indicated were the great value of using McGuffey readers under their new order of things wuld be prohibited because schools would have to guarantee that they would not teach human values as a part of any course content.

How we are going to police that sort of thing left me kind of cold. You talk about the old McGuffey readers teaching morals, faith, and family love, if those are values they would be prohibited in any school accepting Federal funds, so in the name of the new freedom from governmental interference with people, we are now going to go directly into the classroom.

They make the jump right from that, that what indeed is wrong with the classrooms is that teachers are imparting values and value judgments and subjecting children to value judgments as part of the teaching process, and it sounds to me like they want us to go back to Dick and Jane looking up, as you referred to it, rather than Dick or Jane feeling patriotism as they see the flag go by.

Are you familiar with that?

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. I think that results from many people's belief that when they took out the kind of values and ideals that were the McGuffey readers, the reading materials and the curricula were replaced with other values that a lot of parents find offensive, and many parents don't appreciate the schools trying to change the values of the students under the systems that is called values clarification.

I think the deduction that might be from your remarks here today is that if we just leave it up to the local areas we might be better off, because some of those are areas that the Federal Government, in its wisdom simply cannot solve.

Mr. FORD. You and I are in complete agreement.

That is why I am so concerned with the new proliferation of ways in which we are going to determine for people what the proper values are. I hope we come out of this with agreement between you and me. While I might disagree with you on the timeliness of the McGuffey reader, as an example, the concepts certainly could be very useful to a teacher in holding the interest of children, and their parents as well. Then in the process they can teach them to read, comprehend, and be able to construct sentences and do other things—convey thoughts and ideas. But as you probably noticed, the Hill is now beginning to proliferate with conservative initiatives to dictate what we will do and we will not do.

We are going to tell young ladies according to one bill that I read about yesterday, that chastity is to be desired above all other things. But we are not going to teach what it is that you don't do to be chaste. What they believe has been wrong is that we are teaching things like sex education in schools. We are going to teach you there is something you ought not to be doing, and we are not going to tell you what that something is.

I don't know how far that legislation is going to go, but it tells something about what some people read to be the public man-

date out there. They choose to react against a system we have had, and it is beginning to bother me as to whether or not we will leave the liberty for teachers to try to teach as they want to.

Just a few days ago a teacher here in Maryland came under fire because they thought that the books——

Dr. FARMER. He was teaching Aristotle, I think.

Mr. FORD. They thought that ought to be left to college. Intertwined with all of this criticism of modern traditional education, there is really an effort by a lot of people to use what they perceive to be our failures as an excuse for something other than change in teaching methodology.

All of that rambling does nothing but contribute to the value of our legislation except make one final observation—that this committee in the 16 years of dealing with the Elementary and Secondary Act and its numerous offshoots has avoided like the plague, attempting to direct through our policy the ways in which people would teach.

One of the great frustrations of many people throughout the country with the categorical approach to educational programs, is that we have never defined an educationally-deprived child in the Federal statute. Yet we distribute money to educationally-deprived children in a variety of ways.

Obviously, we hope somebody out there will know which children are the ones we are talking about. The very people who attack the existing program with the most frequency have said, well, here is what is wrong with it. You talk about educating an educationally-deprived child, and nowhere in the law can we find a definition. That is because heretofore we have been unwilling to define for educators and parents an educationally-deprived child.

Congressman Kildee and I have supported legislation for the parent who felt his child was being held behind. Apparently, that is no longer a concept which we can keep. My guess is that in our State of Michigan, which was really a State that started to experiment with this concept early, that once we get the block grants, those children will not be served.

I hope that you folks, from what is really the common perspective, will assist us in the months ahead as we are being urged here to define and dictate the structure of education. We hope you will try to resist that in the future so the people you are dealing with can get on with how you educate people in the decade of the 1980's.

As a representative to the White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services for a few years, I was fascinated by the number of speeches I heard which started out by reciting the tremendous growth of information which is in our libraries and the geometric way which it continues to explode. It leaves you wondering whether anybody is going to be around to comprehend all of this and make anything of it as we go down the road.

In 4 years, we produce as much new material available for people to read as we produced in the previous 50 years, and it keeps going at that rate. Yet we keep trying to measure things the way they were sometime in the dim, dark past.

Finally, one of the things which has not been touched on by studies is an informal kind of study which was made by one of my colleagues back in the sixties from the State of Indiana. He found

that in World War II when we were drafting young men around this country there were areas where very large percentages of the potential draftees were rejected because of illiteracy.

They did not have the functional literacy necessary to become a rifle-toting member of the infantry. He used to rail about the fact that the people of Indiana were at the degree of literacy which was high enough so that their kids couldn't be drafted for fighting a war for other parts of the country.

Now, those children are going to good Christian schools in those States, and presumably when we have the next draft they will be able to do their share.

I don't know whether you can compare that with the recent Vietnam era. And, I don't know whether the sample is large enough, but I would be interested to see if we gained anything from the late thirties and early forties to the middle sixties in terms of that measure of functional literacy.

If there were indeed a substantial pocket of functional illiteracy which was keeping people out of the Vietnam war, it was not brought to our attention during that period. There have been numerous studies done on what the draft showed us in terms of both physical and mental development in this country with our young people at the time of World War II.

We got the school lunch program as much from the malnutrition discovered in standard people who showed up at the draft board in World War II. We had the idea that the next time we fought a war, at least everybody would have been fed enough during their school years so that they could qualify for the draft.

There are some possibilities here for study. It would be very helpful to us if you could encourage researchers in your professional circle to take a look at those things

Thank you. You may want to comment on it.

Dr. FARR. I am from Indiana. The dropout rate between the 9th and 10th grade in Indiana was 25 percent in 1944-45, and in 1976 it was about 4 percent. Despite that fact the kids were reading one full year better. Despite the fact that obviously the race was being run in 1976 with about 94 percent of the kids and in 1944-45 with about 75 percent of the kids.

I would like to make one comment, because I have been working on something for 8 years. I have been a public school teacher and a researcher, and I run a reading clinic in the summer, and I am very interested in people's data about reading trends in this Nation.

I pride myself in thinking that I have more collected studies on reading trends from anyone in the world and when someone has some data, I want to look at the research and see how it was done and understand it. When someone tells me a story about someone who can't read very well and uses that as a prime example, I would like to know more about it.

I believe Admiral Rickover testified that a young sailor was unable to read a particular manual and therefore repaired part of a battleship improperly, and, as a result, great damage was done to the battleship. The last estimate for repairs was about a quarter of a million dollars.

I heard a Senator talk about that incident in a speech that he gave, and I heard two Congressmen mention it, and saw the incident recounted in about a dozen editorials across the Nation

I wrote to Admiral Rickover and said, "I would like to interview that young sailor" I wanted to find out what his reading skills were really like.

With all kinds of help, we wrote and visited the Navy Department, the public relations office of the Navy Department, and I never received a response. I got letters that say we just don't understand about the story, we are trying to track it down.

It turned out that this specific sailor didn't really exist. I suppose that testimony is in the Congressional Record and I would like to have it stated that that sailor does not exist.

Mr. FORD. We will put him with the black lady in the new Cadillac on welfare whom I have never been able to find nor have I ever been able to find the city that she is in.

The other one is the student with the student loan who buys a sports car and invests the rest of it in high yield private investments while paying for his college education that I read about all the time. We have a category of these people.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Ford.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Goodling.

Mr. GOODLING. Just a few observations.

I was not able to hear your testimony because, as my colleagues heard me say, I could schedule 1,700 students and teachers on the first day of September and never have a conflict. Here I guess the worst thing that happens, we even schedule subcommittee meetings and the full committee, which makes it very difficult.

I realize why we have problems in public education for I was a teacher and school administrator for 23 years and I have been observing it for seven years down here. We have not touched on automatic increases and, as you know, the only people who don't get automatic increases in this country are elected officials.

Everyone else, whether they have any improvement or not, get automatic increases, except those of us who serve as elected officials, and that has had some adverse effects in my estimation in the whole education system, because you really don't have an opportunity to reward the excellent teacher.

Years ago when I was a school superintendent we took the ESA money and began a program of reading readiness out in the homes, exactly where we knew all of the problems where they were coming from in the past, I saw the tremendous increase in that youngster's ability to participate successfully when he came to first grade but we had the finest teacher in the business doing that.

Latin helped me, because the finest English teachers were teaching Latin. We can't underestimate the role of the teacher.

I have two children. I have a wife who teaches in an affluent district and is considered a goddess by many parents because of her ability to teach reading.

Her theory is if she can get them off in first grade with the ability to read, the rest will be picked up down the line, but the influence of that first grade teacher is so tremendous.

However, too many first grade teachers got carried away with the business of word association, and dismissed the whole idea of

phonics completely. We of course encourage some of that research into new methods down here, and no problem with that method of teaching reading.

It is pretty difficult to take away the importance of that good teacher.

I often said, if we could somehow or other financially reward a school district who could reduce the class size of kindergarten, first, and second grades and have the very best teacher there, I think we would probably be doing a lot more public education.

We have to be careful, on the other hand, that we don't get too involved in determining the direction you should go, because we have mandated what has to be done in many programs, but have not sent the money to do it, nor has there been training to prepare teachers to do those kinds of things.

Last year the Secretary of Education told us she was going to tell you how to teach language education. So I guess basically what I am saying is if we could find a better way to reward that good teacher, and I frankly must admit I was a schoolteacher also and I am not quite sure how you do that, get away from the business of this automatic increase simply because you breathe another year longer.

I remind them that we had to hire a large number of teachers at the end of World War II and, unfortunately, were never able to weed those people out, so there are so many reasons why we have some problems today that perhaps we didn't have in years past, and one of those is we insist that all youngsters will be educated, and that is something different than when I went to school.

If you didn't get past the eighth grade, for example, you didn't go on, and many people weren't there to take the eighth grade exam, so we have a whole new ball game.

We have to be careful that we from the Federal level encourage the improvement of education in this country without doing things that may have just the opposite effect, although unintentionally, and I think I related a few of those so I guess what I would say to you is tell us what you think we on the Federal level can do.

I get very upset, we have had everybody coming in and telling us we cannot cut their funding lower and it really does not help us. We know we are going to have to cut budgets, and we have to know where you cut it.

We had so much testimony about what they positively cannot do and cannot accept, and we are supposed to sit down on this end and try to decide and say now, what do we do for them.

I have seen some of your testimony—and there are leadership ideas in there, and I hope you will communicate those ideas to us as to where we on the Federal level can best help you when we realize we are going to have some very difficult financial times.

Dr. FARMER. I am a school system administrator, so I look at things from that point of view.

Give us help and encouragement and support at the secondary level. We really feel the work of title I and early childhood education has taken us light years ahead in 10 years with our youngsters at the beginning level.

Up to grade three we are doing generally fine, thanks; but we do need support to help young people find career direction, and to

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help them understand that they can achieve; and to help teachers who need some retraining to deal with youngsters with handicapping conditions, and students from other language communities. Secondary school people feel beleaguered in many ways, and they feel a lack of support.

Even if there are not massive funds available for them, a sense that there is national attention to the problems of the need for secondary school renewal would take us a long way.

Mr. GOODLING. I think what we have been attacking is the earlier thing to do, but the desire is still there with that youngster, but when they get older, I have found we have spent millions of dollars in trying to teach remedial reading, et cetera.

Dr. FARMER. Remedial reading programs are not the answer.

Mr. GOODLING. We got to find some way to get them to want to. I thought the interesting thing was and some of my colleagues heard me mention this, Montgomery County came up with their statistics, because after they said how much they improved, then they listed them according to groups of people who improved the most.

The first wave of Vietnamese were so determined to be successful in this country that it wasn't very difficult to teach them. In our youth program, we were trying last year and again this year to develop a program which would show something at the end of that line for those youngsters that were trying to get back into the business of earning and becoming productive citizens.

When they get to that age, they have to be able to see why it is an advantage. You don't need that when you are talking about first or second graders, they still have that enthusiasm. You lose some of that, however, when children move on.

I thank you for your testimony, which I will read carefully, and Rich will fill me in on everything. Help us by giving us constructive ideas as to what our role should be and how we are interfering with your ability to do your job, if that is what we are doing, that was also true in many instances.

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. With all due respect to your desire to do something good and right for our children and your capability and wisdom and all of that, I just don't believe this Congress can solve all of the problems of the world and especially all the problems in the educational field.

I think this conversation here this morning shows more and more the need to send the money back to the States and allow a diversity and innovativeness to tackle some of these problems, because I simply don't think that this Congress can give career motivation, reading readiness, advice, I think we would be better off if those matters were handled at the State and local levels.

Mr. GOODLING. I have no problems with that, except I am going to have real difficulty with a block grant approach that does not indicate that we expect something to be done to help the youngsters whom we have ignored in the past.

Having been an educator, I realize they were ignored. I am not thoroughly convinced that we will pay much more attention to the budget crunch now than we did in the past. We need to eliminate a substantial amount of the bureaucracy and expense in Washington, and at the same time not permit local governments and States to supplant rather than increase their efforts with the money that is

coming from Washington into those areas, I have not yet decided how that can be done.

The approaches that I have seen I find just as unacceptable. I am having a real problem with that whole approach as proposed by the administration.

Dr. FARMER. If I may comment on that, remembering Mr. Ford's comment that someone from my own school district spoke of 150-percent change in student enrollment in a given school, I hope that what will come of the deliberations that are in process now will be a renewed or perhaps a new kind of partnership.

The children move through our schools, through our States. There are other cities and other States that have this kind of mobility, so that children really are not any State's children or any community's children in the sense that they were or that perhaps we perceived them as being in 1950.

I went to school in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. That kind of mobility has increased considerably in recent years. I hope what will happen will be that there will continue to be the kind of effective partnership of Federal, State, and local agencies that has been so helpful in recent years.

Mr. GOODLING. If there is anybody out there who is interested in tax credits for elementary and secondary schools, I may merely say if you have been dissatisfied with the Federal Government's approach to public education, I will guarantee you some 10 years from now you will be so dissatisfied with the Federal Government's involvement, and the same people who go writing now to get IRS off their back will have more than IRS on their back.

The people who are pushing tax credits better be very, very careful. You will educate all people the way the government says you should educate. Ten years down the pike, just say Bill Goodling told you so.

Dr. FARR. The data 5 years from now will show a lesser increase for the disadvantaged youth of this Nation and perhaps a declining picture.

The number of special programs that are being dropped around the country now is phenomenal. These programs are essential for disadvantaged youngsters. They don't have Mrs. Schlafly's home, but they come from homes where lots of extra instruction isn't available. I am really concerned that we are going to see a decline in 5 years.

I don't know a lot about the block grant program, but it sounds to me like money can get lost when it is not directed toward disadvantaged youngsters who it is to help.

Mr. KILDEE. Congressman Ford?

Mr. FORD. That is a question raised by Mrs. Schlafly and also by Bill Goodling. Maybe, Dr. Farr, with your studies, you could tell me offhand how many States are now allocating special resources to developing reading and writing achivement, as distinguished from the number of States that are trying to test kids at the 11th grade to find out whether they can read or write.

Dr. FARR. I can tell you there are a large number of States that do have funded programs that are going down the tubes, so to speak. Massachusetts and Indiana are two that I just visited, but

there are lots of others. I do think the minimum competency testing program is misspent money.

Mr. FORD. My State is one that was spending additional money on article III. It was started back when Congressman Kildee was making education policy in the Senate. That money is diminished considerably because Michigan is flat broke. Michigan is one of either 16 or 17 States to offer such a compensatory education program.

About 3 years ago the Carter administration had a scheme to reward States on a matching basis for their spending of additional resources to go to the disadvantaged student, disadvantaged in the sense of having any kind of learning disability.

There were 16 or 17 States. The amount of money being put into it by the States was so small that we finally really had to abandon the program, because you can't really develop support around here for a program which comes down to the point where just a few States are making a sufficiently large contribution to participate in the program.

Of course, the theory of the administration was that we would get a lot of people interested by inducing them to come toward those matching dollars. Bill Goodling and I, while we have many areas of disagreement, are concerned about a block grant approach going to the same policymakers who have not heretofore believed that special emphasis on reading and writing skills were worth expending their own resources for, are not likely given the option of using that money instead of their own resources for the broad support of the system, to spend it on that purpose either.

There is nothing which we have been able to see from this level which indicates that there is a very deep awareness. This is in spite of a clear public perception, that here is an area of great need at the State level in allocating resources.

Our State has been very successful. It uses testing as the method of distributing the money. It confirmed a suspicion that we had, that there is a very high correlation between the economic factors and what testing will tell you about where the children are that need the help. Within a State like Michigan, there were areas which were missed by the economic factors which very clearly had need.

Mr. Quie, now the Governor of Minnesota, who was formerly the ranking Republican on this committee, gave us two States as an example to show us how the correlation breaks down. He thought that, indeed, testing was a better way to find needy students. We ran a fire storm and discovered if you tried to use testing as a way to ration funds across the country, this room fills with educators who will tell you it just can't be done. It won't work. It is impossible and really heresy with most of my friends in education to even consider the possibility that you ought to test children to find out who should be in a program for disadvantaged learners.

There is a very definite possibility that this committee will have to act rather soon. Whether we are willing to take money now earmarked, although very crudely, to be spent on children with those special needs into the general fund of the several States in the anticipation that they will continue to recognize that kind of need as a high priority. Gaging their motivation—and it doesn't

matter whether they have Democratic or Republican governments out there—the pressures and the strains on State resources are so great that it is pretty hard to talk about the small percentage of the total population in the political structure.

We have been able to get away with it perhaps up until fairly recently because we are a little bit less subject to parochial pressures.

I hope you are able to dig out for us a description of the pattern of what the States are doing with their own resources to improve reading and writing skills. I'm afraid nobody is putting any money in this area.

Why is it that the big bucks directed toward improving reading and writing skills are coming from Washington? Indeed, the American public is demanding that we do a better job in our school systems with the reading and writing. Why isn't that demand being heard by the more sensitive politicians at the State and local levels?

I would like to see any study . . . you might be able to find for us that would give us some education of what their track record is.

Dr FARR. We will send you a report on reading programs throughout the United States.

[The information follows:]

INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION 800 Barksdale Road PO Box 8139 Newark Delaware 19711 USA
ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA LECTURE
ASOCIACION INTERNACIONAL DE LECTURA
Telephone 302 731 1600
Cable Reading Newark Delaware

May 21, 1981

Honorable Carl Perkins
Chairman
Education and Labor Committee
2181 Rayburn Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for conducting hearings on the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading and writing survey.

Congressman Ford raised a question about the relationship of statewide testing programs and state funding for remedial programs. Unfortunately, a complete answer to this question is unavailable, but Chris Pipho of the Education Commission of the States was able to provide the enclosed information.

As the International Reading Association collects this information, it will be shared with the committee.

Sincerely,

Richard Long
Washington Representative
1600 S. Eads Street, Suite 1015N
Arlington, Virginia 22202

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Russ Vlaanderen

EDUCATION FINANCE CENTER
EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

1978/79 STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND CURRENT FUNDING LEVELS FOR SIXTEEN STATES

November 1979

Prepared by C. Kent McGuire

STATE COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND CURRENT FUNDING LEVELS FOR SIXTEEN STATES (1978/79)

State	1978-79 Allocation (in millions)	1979-80 Allocation (in millions)	Allocation Mechanism	Eligibility Requirements for Student Participation	Restrictions on Expenditures	Knowledge of Federal Special Incentive Grant Provision Under P.L. 95-561 (1978)
California	$135.0	$189.0	Formula based funding which uses a statewide need index based on the number of children aged 5-17 from low income families as defined by the federal government.	Statewide standardized test. Early grades are given priority. The target population consist of those scoring below the second quartile.	Funds must be used to meet the special needs of low-income, low-achieving and limited and non-English speaking pupils.	Yes. State feels it is in compliance with the general requirements for the matching fund program.
Connecticut	$ 7.0	$ 7.0	Funded according to formula based on a district to state ratio of the number of families with annual incomes less than $4,000 and a district to state ratio of families receiving aid to dependent children.	Achievement scores on school district standardized test. Targeted population are those scoring between the 23rd and 35th percentiles.	School district entitlements must be used for supplementary educational programs. These entitlements cannot be used for fund programs for which other state and federal funds are available.. 75% of pupils for which state money is expended must be economically, as well as educational deprived.	Yes. State feels it is in compliance with general requirements. Does have some concern over section in the law requiring that a specified percentage of state funds be spent on Title I eligible pupils.

State	1978-79 Allocation (in millions)	1979-80 Allocation (in millions)	Allocation Mechanism	Eligibility Requirements for Student Participation	Restrictions on Expenditures	Knowledge of Federal Special Incentive Grant Provision Under P.L. 95-561 (1978)
Florida	$ 26.5	$ 28.5	Formula aid based on the number of students scoring below the lowest quartile on a statewide assessment test.	Standardized achievement test scores at the school district level.	Expenditures follow Title I guidelines. State funds may supplement federal funds. (Some districts use state dollars on students scoring in a specified range and apply Title I dollars to other specified ranges.)	Yes. State feels it is in compliance with requirements for the matching fund program.
Georgia	$ 12.7	$ 12.7	System allocations are based on number of children identified as needing remedial educational intervention.	Eligible students are those failing to achieve 10 or more of the objectives on the statewide criterion referenced test.	None, however, a major portion of the funds are spent in Title I eligible attendance areas.	Yes. State does not feel that it complies with the language of Section (3) of P.L. 95-561 (Matching Fund Provision).
Hawaii	$ 1.8	$ 2.0	Funds are distributed to each school through a formula grant based on a district's dropout count and the proportion of students to be served for each grade.	Target population consist of dropouts and potential dropouts aged 9-19. Potential dropouts are identified through use of a screening instrument developed by the SDE.	None, but the program is integrated with the federal program wherever allowable under federal and state law.	Yes. State program may not comply with all requirements under matching grant provisions.

State	1978-79 Allocation (in millions)	1979-80 Allocation (in millions)	Allocation Mechanism	Eligibility Requirements for Student Participation	Restrictions on Expenditures	Knowledge of Federal Special Incentive Grant Provision Under P.L. 95-561 (1978)
Illinois	$200.0	$200.0	Formula which accounts for Title I eligible children through the use of a weighting factor in the general state aid formula.	State identified Title I "like" students concentrated in poverty areas.	Districts must submit instructional plans for use of funds.	Yes. State feels that it may be in compliance with matching grant provisions. There would be questions as to specific expenditure requirements under Section 131 - P.L. 95-561.
Maryland	$ 9.22	$ 14.7	Identical to Title I. Each student identified for Title I purposes generates an additional $45 in state compensatory education aid.	Students selected for participation are determined on the basis of educational need. Elementary grade levels participate on the basis of education need identical to that of Title I. Secondary students qualify for participation if they are one year or more below grade level.	Funds must be used for programs and projects which are designed to meet special educational needs. Funds cannot supplant funds for existing programs.	Yes. The state program is designed to meet the requirements for matching funds under P.L. 95-561.
Michigan	$ 30.7	$ 32.9	The percentage of low achieving students as measured by the statewide assessment program is taken for each district. Districts with 15% or more of their K-7 pupils in the low achieving category are districts to be helped. The number of pupils is computed and an allocation of $250 per pupil is made to the district.	Identified at local school district level. Schools are requested to select pupils who are one or more years below grade level, except for pupils in K-2. For early primary grades, students are selected on the basis of readiness scores or teacher judgment.	Schools receiving Title I money are urged to combine the program resources to operate a single but expanded compensatory education program. 50% of funds must be spent in Title I schools. There is a supplement, not supplant program.	Yes. State complies with all requirements of the matching grant program.

State	1978-79 Allocation (in millions)	1979-80 Allocation (in millions)	Allocation Mechanism	Eligibility Requirements for Student Participation	Restrictions on Expenditures	Knowledge of Federal Special Incentive Grant Provision Under P.L. 95-561 (1978)
New Jersey	$ 60.0	$ 68.3	Formula funds based on number of students receiving remedial or preventive services. Flat grant of $200 per pupil.	Achievement scores and Title I criteria.	Staff training is required. No specific amount is required to be spent on Title I eligibles, yet some funds are spent there.	Yes. State program needs the general requirements of the matching fund provisions under P.L. 95-561.
New York	$140.5 (aid depends on actual expenditures).	$136.9	Identified pupils are weighted in general state aid formula.	Grades K-2: Scores on standardized tests and/or other formalized processes which predict serious reading, writing or mathematics deficiencies by entry into grade 3. Grades 3-12: Scores at or below the 23rd percentile on state mandated and/or equivalent standardized tests.	Once funds reach district, LEA's identify population to be served. There is considerable overlap between Title I and SCE populations. Educationally deprived students receive an equitable share of remedial services through local and state funds before Title I funds can supplement these services in eligible buildings. No supplanting or funds allowed.	Yes. New York state complies with all requirements under P.L. 95-561.

State	1978-79 Allocation (in millions)	1979-80 Allocation (in millions)	Allocation Mechanism	Eligibility Requirements for Student Participation	Restrictions on Expenditures	Knowledge of Federal Special Incentive Grant Provision Under P.L. 95-561 (1978)
Ohio	$ 33.0 ($66.0 for the 1977/79 biennium)	$ 57.0 ($114.0 for the 1980/82 biennium)	Formula based funding. Districts with fifty or more children from AFDC families qualify. Calculations based on number of children aged 5-17 residing in each district during the preceeding month of January.	Pupils are identified on the basis of need assessments constructed by each district. Student closely parallels the Title I population.	Students may be served by both SCE funds and Title I monies. State funds generally supplement federal dollars. Funds may serve both elementary and secondary pupils.	Yes. State feels it is in full compliance with the matching grant provisions under P.L. 95-561.
Rhode Island	$ 2.0	$ 2.0	State grant based on Title I criteria.	Title I criteria, achievement tests.	Schools are ranked by the district. First priority given to Title I schools operating programs. Title I eligible schools not operating programs may use state funds to implement new programs. In both eligible and operating schools, state funds may be used to augment existing projects. Funds may be used in non-eligible Title I schools once all eligible schools needs have been met. No supplanting.	Yes. State feels it is in full compliance with the matching grant provision.

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State	1978-79 Allocation (in millions)	1979-80 Allocation (in millions)	Allocation Mechanism	Eligibility Requirements for Student Participation	Restrictions on Expenditures	Knowledge of Federal Special Incentive Grant Provision Under P.L. 95-561 (1978)
Texas	$ 25.4	$ 42.9	For 1978-79, districts receive $40 per low-income child identified on the 1970 census, foster home children in institutions for the neglected and/or delinquent, compiled for each LEA in the formula for ESEA, Title I. (This is ratably reduced to fit state appropriation). For 1979-80, $44 times the average number of educationally disadvantaged pupils actually participating in the National School Lunch program for the 1978-79 school year. Best 6 month average figure is used.	For 1978-79 school year, eligibility selection was based on priority educational needs assessment by LEA. Beginning in 1979-80 school year, SEA will adopt and administer criterion-referenced tests to assess minimum student performance in basic skills area.	State funds must be utilized for program activities supplementary to the regular school program. State program funds are coordinated with federal Title I funds to achieve coherent delivery of services to educationally deprived children.	Yes. State is in full compliance with matching grant provisions under P.L. 95-561.

State	1978-79 Allocation (In millions)	1979-80 Allocation (In millions)	Allocation Mechanism	Eligibility Requirements for Student Participation	Restrictions on Expenditures	Knowledge of Federal Special Incentive Grant Provision Under P.L. 95-561 (1978)
Utah	$ .957	$ 1.02	Funds are distributed according to formula based or pupil weights.	Eligible students are those from low-income, or AFDC families, and those who reside in foster homes or homes for the neglected and delinquent. At the school level, the target population consist of those achieving significantly below grade level as measured by an LEA assessment test.	Funds may be used for both SCE and Title I services, and at both elementary and secondary levels. Yet federal and state programs may be completely separate, by local choice. Funds may not be spent for the general benefit of all students in a school. Funds must supplement not supplant existing program.	Yes. State feels it is in compliance with matching grant provisions under P.L. 95-561.
Washington	$ 5.0 ($9.98 for the 1977-79 biennium)	N/A	Funds allocated on the basis of competitive grants submitted by both public and private agencies. All proposals subject to SEA approval.	SEA uses achievement scores, family income levels and a bilingual/ bicultural assessment to identify target population.	50% of students must come from families earning at or below a specified income level determined by each district. 50% of all students must be below grade level.	Yes. State feels it is in compliance with matching grant provision under P.L. 95-561.

State	1978-79 Allocation (in millions)	1979-80 Allocation (in millions)	Allocation Mechanism	Eligibility Requirements for Student Participation	Restrictions on Expenditures	Knowledge of Federal Special Incentive Grant Provision Under P.L. 95-561 (1978)
Wisconsin	$ 1.25	$ .825	Competive grant basis, submitted by public and private institutions. All proposals subject to SEA approval...one-quarter f total project budget must be matched with local funds.	LEA's screen each child using a locally designed device. In addition to being Educationally disadvantaged, 75% of the participants must be identified by both economic and social factors. 25% may be identified by either economic or social factors. SEA's establish economic factors using AFDC and free lunch counts.	SEA permits but does not encourage joining funding of Title I and state programs. Supplanting is prohibited.	Yes. State feels it may be in compliance with matching grant provisions. It is in favor of them. Has questions concerning specific expenditure requirement under Section 131 - P.L. 95-561.

Mr. FORD. I assume you are very familiar with this in Illinois. Well, does Illinois put any money into this kind of special educational effort?

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. Illinois finances first grades, and first grade is where you are supposed to learn how to read, and the general assumption is that that is where reading is being taught.

Mr. FORD. Every State finances the first grade, but does Illinois spend any money on the special reading needs, for example, of children beyond the per capita distribution that they make to all children, without regard to their reading needs?

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. It is my belief if you teach them to read in the first grade you don't need all those other programs.

Mr. FORD. I take the answer to the question, it is really irrelevant whether they do or do not spend the extra money.

Mr. SCHLAFLY. As long as you are paying the salary of a first grade teacher in a school, she or he is the one who should be teaching the children to read.

Mr. FORD. If it isn't getting the job done, what should we do about it?

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. You replace the person who isn't teaching the reading in the first grade.

Dr. FARMER. We receive many youngsters from other districts and other countries, and we have 52 first languages spoken in our city. One of the things Philadelphia does with its very limited funds, is to provide in every one of our elementary schools a reading specialist, whom we call a teacher of language skills, who is there for the purpose of helping teachers in every classroom learn how to teach children with different needs; and helping teachers learn how to use and how to teach the language skills; and to encourage their use across the curriculum.

My own school system does assign a major funding level to that area of the curriculum. I would be pleased to supply, through the National Council of Teachers of English, information about school systems where there is attention to the full English curriculum, particularly writing.

Mr. FORD. Detroit has 61 languages now in its State-mandated bilingual program, some 61 are actually functioning.

They have responsibility for some 70 or 72 but have not yet been able to develop the capability to deal with the more exotic and less frequently found language requirements. Eight Arabic languages are being used in the Detroit public school system at the present time.

Dr. FARMER. For which teachers were, of course, not prepared.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Goodling?

Mr. GOODLING. Over a period of years, we have learned something different than we used to think. We used to think there were many youngsters that could not learn to read. Now it is strictly a readiness kind of thing. Our problem is we haven't done a very good job and this has to be done at the State and local level.

We have not done a very good job in determining what we do about the fact that there is a different reading readiness level for practically every youngster who comes into the classroom, and we have not done a very good job in educating parents that there is no particular reason why Johnny shouldn't continue in first grade.

The stigma is to the parent, if they move their child on when they are not ready, and we have not done a very good job in encouraging parents not to send the youngsters on because I have to keep in mind that a home situation like mine with a mother that my children have, probably constitutes 20 percent of the population, and so there we are, and there is not much we can do down here to change that home situation, I am sure of that, and so we have to find some answers to this whole reading readiness problem that we have, and do a better job than we have done in the past in making people understand that there is that kind of situation.

My wife who teaches first grade is so amazed when January comes along because, as she saw some of those youngsters in September, she didn't think there would ever be a chance of moving them as rapidly as she is able to move them.

The only problem is she had many youngsters in September who were ready to move that fast, which means they are twice as far along. It is a dilemma that we won't solve overnight and we have to improve the home somehow. We have lost that wonderful headstart we used to have.

Mr. FORD. Dr. Forbes and Dr. Farr: Until a few years ago, a majority of the States did not have universal free public kindergarten, and I believe that there is a slight majority now that does have it.

Could you find for us how many States are indeed even providing an opportunity for any kind of kindergarten at the expense of the public throughout the State? We know that some of the major cities in some States have programs but statewide, the last time I saw the figures it was only about 28 States.

Is that something that you think you could find for us?

Dr. FORBES. I believe ECS has that type of information compiled, and I will send it to you.

[The information follows:]

Education Commission of the States
Suite 300 • 1860 Lincoln Street
(303) 861-4917 • Denver, Colorado 80295

May 7, 1981

The Honorable William D. Ford
United States Representative
United States House of Representatives
Cannon House Office Building, Rm. 239
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ford.

At the May 7th hearing on reading and writing performance you asked Roy Forbes, director of the National Assessment of Educational Progress, for some information on state mandatory kindergarten programs. Enclosed is an assortment of factual data on state kindergarten programs. Please call or write if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Chris Pipho

Chris Pipho
Associate Director
Clearinghouse

DP/ct
cc: Roy Forbes

LIST OF STATES WITH MANDATED OR PERMISSIVE KINDERGARTEN

ALABAMA	P
ALASKA	P
ARIZONA	M
ARKANSAS	P
CALIFORNIA	M
COLORADO	P
CONNECTICUT	M
DELAWARE	P
FLORIDA	P
GEORGIA	M
HAWAII	P
IDAHO	P
ILLINOIS	M
INDIANA	P
IOWA	P
KANSAS	P
KENTUCKY	P
LOUISIANA	P
MAINE	M
MARYLAND	P
MASSACHUSETTS	M
MICHIGAN	P
MINNESOTA	M
MISSISSIPPI	NONE
MISSOURI	P
MONTANA	P
NEBRASKA	P
NEVADA	P
NEW HAMPSHIRE	P
NEW JERSEY	P
NEW MEXICO	P
NEW YORK	P
NORTH CAROLINA	P
NORTH DAKOTA	P
OHIO	M
OKLAHOMA	M
OREGON	P
PENNSYLVANIA	P
RHODE ISLAND	M
SOUTH CAROLINA	P
SOUTH DAKOTA	P
TENNESSEE	P
TEXAS	P
UTAH	P
VERMONT	P
VIRGINIA	M
WASHINGTON	P
WEST VIRGINIA	M
WISCONSIN	M
WYOMING	P

P = 35
M = 14
None (MS) 1

ATTITUDES OF ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS AND KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS TOWARD MANDATORY KINDERGARTEN AND OPTIONAL PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS IN IOWA

An Abstract of

A Thesis

Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Specialist in Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

by

Janice E. Woods

April, 1979

Table 6

Districts Per State Offering Kindergarten Programs

State	Number of Districts	Number Offering Kindergarten	Percentage Offering Kindergarten
Alabama	127	120	94.48
Alaska	---	---	-----
Arizona	232	144	62.06
Arkansas	386	352	91.19
California	1044	909	87.06
Colorado	181	---	-----
Connecticut	165	---	-----
Delaware	26	26	100.00
Georgia	187	187	100.00
Idaho	115	107	93.04
Illinois	1016	891	87.69
Iowa	449	449	100.00
Kansas	307	---	-----
Kentucky	181	---	-----
Louisiana	66	66	100.00
Maine	182	160	87.91
Maryland	24	24	100.00
Massachusetts	436	---	-----
Michigan	589	589	100.00
Minnesota	440	440	100.00
Mississippi	---	67	-----
Missouri	555	508	91.53
Montana	614	350	57.00
Nebraska	1135	1100	96.91
Nevada	17	15	88.23
New Hampshire	168	58	34.52
New Jersey	610	518	84.91
New Mexico	88	---	-----
New York	737	---	-----
North Carolina	145	---	-----
North Dakota	308	45	14.61
Ohio	616	---	-----
Oklahoma	622	622	100.00
Oregon	333	120	36.03
Pennsylvania	505	498	98.61
Rhode Island	40	---	-----
South Carolina	92	92	100.00
South Dakota	195	192	98.46
Texas	1113	---	-----
Utah	40	40	100.00
Vermont	246	111	45.12
Virginia	141	---	-----
Washington	301	264	87.70
West Virginia	55	---	-----
Wisconsin	436	---	-----
Wyoming	49	48	97.95

Table 7

States Offering Kindergarten Programs:
State Aid Received

State	Mandatory or Optional	Percentage Of Districts Offering Kindergarten	Receive State Aid
Alabama	Optional	94.48	Yes
Alaska	Optional	-----	Yes
Arizona	Mandatory	62.06	Yes
Arkansas	Optional	91.19	Yes
California	Optional*	87.06	Yes
Colorado	Mandatory	-----	Yes
Connecticut	Mandatory	-----	Yes
Delaware	Optional	100.00	Yes
Georgia	Optional	100.00	Yes
Idaho	Optional	93.04	Yes
Illinois	Optional	87.69	Yes
Iowa	Optional	100.00	Yes
Kansas	Optional	-----	Yes
Kentucky	Optional	-----	Yes
Louisiana	Optional	100.00	Yes
Maine	Mandatory	87.91	Yes
Maryland	Mandatory	100.00	Yes
Massachusetts	Mandatory	-- --	Yes
Michigan	Optional	100.00	Yes
Minnesota	Mandatory	100.00	Yes
Mississippi	Optional	-----	No
Missouri	Optional	91.53	Yes
Montana	Optional	57.00	Yes
Nebraska	Optional	96.91	Yes
Nevada	Optional	88.23	Yes
New Hampshire	Optional	34.52	No
New Jersey	Optional	84.91	Yes
New Mexico	Mandatory	-----	Yes
New York	Mandatory	-----	Yes
North Carolina	Mandatory	-----	Yes
North Dakota	Optional	14.61	No
Ohio	Mandatory	-----	Yes
Oklahoma	Mandatory	100.00	Yes
Oregon	Optional	36.03	Yes
Pennsylvania	Optional	98.61	Yes

*Must establish kindergarten if there are ten or more applicants

Table 7 (continued)

State	Mandatory or Optional	Percentage Of Districts Offering Kindergarten	Receive State Aid
Rhode Island	Mandatory	-----	Yes
South Carolina	Optional	100.00	Yes
South Dakota	Optional	98.46	Yes
Texas	Mandatory	-----	Yes
Utah	Optional	100.00	Yes
Vermont	Optional	45.12	Yes
Virginia	Mandatory	-----	Yes
Washington	Mandatory	87.70	Yes
West Virginia	Mandatory	-----	Yes
Wisconsin	Mandatory	-----	Yes
Wyoming	Optional	97.95	Yes

Table 8

Minimum Kindergarten Entrance Age by State

State	Entrance Age
Alabama	5 years
Alaska	5 years; November 2
Arizona	5 years; January 1 current year
Arkansas	5 years; October 1
California	4 years; nine months; September 1
Colorado	5 years; September 15
Connecticut	5 years; December 31
Delaware	5 years; December 31
Georgia	5 years; September 1
Idaho	5 years; October 15
Illinois	4 years
Iowa	5 years; September 15
Kansas	5 years; September 1
Kentucky	5 years; December 1
Louisiana	4 years; eight months; September 1
Maine	5 years; October 15
Maryland	5 years; December 30
Massachusetts	Set by district
Michigan	5 years; December 1
Minnesota	5 years; September 1
Mississippi	5 years; October 1
Missouri	5 years; October 1
Montana	5 years
Nebraska	5 years; October 15
Nevada	5 years; September 30
New Hampshire	5 years
New Jersey	4 years
New Mexico	5 years; September 1
New York	5 years; December 1
North Carolina	5 years; October 16
North Dakota	4 years
Ohio	5 years; September 30
Oklahoma	5 years
Oregon	5 years; November 15
Pennsylvania	4 years; seven months
Rhode Island	5 years
South Carolina	5 years; November 1
South Dakota	5 years; September 1
Texas	5 years; September 1
Utah	5 years
Vermont	None
Virginia	5 years; December 31
Washington	4 - 5 years
West Virginia	5 years; November 1
Wisconsin	5 years; December 1
Wyoming	5 years; September 15

Table 9

Entrance Age For Kindergarten
by State on September 15

State	Years	Months
Alabama	-----	------
Alaska	4	10-1/2
Arizona	5	9-1/2
Arkansas	5	1/2
California	4	9-1/2
Colorado	5	0
Connecticut	4	9-1/2
Delaware	4	9-1/2
Georgia	5	1/2
Idaho	4	11
Illinois	-----	------
Iowa	5	0
Kansas	5	1/2
Kentucky	4	10-1/2
Louisiana	4	8-1/2
Maine	4	11
Maryland	4	9-1/2
Massachusetts	-----	------
Michigan	4	10-1/2
Minnesota	5	1/2
Mississippi	4	11-1/2
Missouri	4	11-1/2
Montana	-----	------
Nebraska	4	11-1/2
Nevada	4	11-1/2
New Hampshire	-----	------
New Jersey	-----	------
New Mexico	5	1/2
New York	4	10-1/2
North Carolina	4	11
North Dakota	-----	------
Ohio	4	11-1/2
Oklahoma	-----	------
Oregon	4	10
Pennsylvania	-----	------
Rhode Island	-----	------
South Carolina	4	10-1/2
South Dakota	5	1/2
Texas	5	1/2
Utah	-----	------
Vermont	-----	------
Virginia	4	9-1/2
Washington	-----	------
West Virginia	4	10-1/2
Wisconsin	4	10-1/2
Wyoming	5	0

Table 10

Pre-kindergarten Programs Mandatory or Optional in Each State

State	Mandatory or Optional
Alabama	Optional
Alaska	Optional
Arizona	Optional
Arkansas	--------
California	Optional
Colorado	Optional
Connecticut	Optional
Delaware	Optional
Georgia	--------
Idaho	--------
Illinois	Optional
Iowa	Optional
Kansas	Optional
Kentucky	Optional
Louisiana	Optional
Maine	Optional
Maryland	Not Offered
Massachusetts	Optional
Michigan	Optional
Minnesota	Optional
Mississippi	Optional
Missouri	Optional
Montana	Optional
Nebraska	Optional
Nevada	No Law
New Hampshire	Optional
New Jersey	Optional
New Mexico	--------
New York	Optional
North Carolina	Optional
North Dakota	Optional
Ohio	Optional
Oklahoma	Optional
Oregon	Optional
Pennsylvania	Optional
Rhode Island	Optional
South Carolina	Optional
South Dakota	Optional
Texas	Optional
Utah	Optional
Vermont	Optional
Virginia	Optional
Washington	--------
West Virginia	Optional
Wisconsin	Optional
Wyoming	Optional

Table 11

Districts Per State Offering Pre-kindergarten Programs

State	Number of Districts	Number Offering Pre-kindergarten	Percentage Offering Pre-kindergarten
Alabama	127	0	0
Alaska	---	---	---
Arizona	232	---	---
Arkansas	386	---	---
California	1044	120	11.49
Colorado	181	20	11.04
Connecticut	165	2	1.12
Delaware	26	0	0
Georgia	187	187	100.00
Idaho	115	---	---
Illinois	1016	32	3.14
Iowa	449	9	2.00
Kansas	307	---	---
Kentucky	181	0	0
Louisiana	66	---	---
Maine	182	4	2.19
Maryland	24	---	---
Massachusetts	436	---	---
Michigan	589	225	38.20
Minnesota	440	---	---
Mississippi	---	0	0
Missouri	555	---	---
Montana	614	2	.32
Nebraska	1135	9	.79
Nevada	17	---	---
New Hampshire	168	---	---
New Jersey	610	54	8.85
New Mexico	88	---	---
New York	737	85	11.53
North Carolina	145	---	---
North Dakota	308	3	.97
Ohio	616	---	---
Oklahoma	622	5	.80
Oregon	333	---	---
Pennsylvania	505	4	.79
Rhode Island	40	---	---
South Carolina	92	14	15.21
South Dakota	195	1	.51
Texas	1113	---	---
Utah	40	---	---
Vermont	246	---	---
Virginia	141	---	---
Washington	301	---	---
West Virginia	55	10	18.18
Wisconsin	436	---	---
Wyoming	49	---	---

Table 12

States Offering Pre-kindergarten Programs:
State Aid Received

State	Mandatory or Optional	Percentage of Districts Offering Pre-kindergarten	Receive State Aid
Alabama	Optional	0	No
Alaska	Optional	---	EC
Arizona	Optional	---	No
Arkansas	--------	---	---
California	Optional*	11.49	Yes**
Colorado	Optional	11.04	No
Connecticut	Optional	1.12	No
Delaware	Optional	---	No
Georgia	--------	100.00	No
Idaho	--------	---	---
Illinois	Optional	3.14	EC
Iowa	Optional	2.00	No
Kansas	Optional	---	No
Kentucky	Optional	0	No
Louisiana	Optional	---	---
Maine	Optional	2.19	Yes
Maryland	Not Offered	---	No
Massachusetts	Optional	---	Yes
Michigan	Optional	38.20	No
Minnesota	Optional	---	No
Mississippi	Optional	0	No
Missouri	Optional	---	EC
Montana	Optional	.32	No
Nebraska	Optional	.79	No
Nevada	No Law	---	No
New Hampshire	Optional	---	---
New Jersey	Optional	8.85	No
New Mexico	--------	---	No
New York	Optional	11.53	No
North Carolina	Optional	---	No
North Dakota	Optional	.97	No

*Must establish kindergarten if there are ten or more applicants

**Limited to low income eligibility

EC - Exceptional Children

Table 12 (continued)

State	Mandatory or Optional	Percentage of Districts Offering Pre-kindergarten	Receive State Aid
Ohio	Optional	---	No
Oklahoma	Optional	.80	No
Oregon	Optional	---	No
Pennsylvania	Optional	.79	Yes
Rhode Island	Optional	---	No
South Carolina	Optional	15.21	Yes
South Dakota	Optional	.51	No
Texas	Optional	---	No
Utah	Optional	---	No
Vermont	Optional	---	EC
Virginia	Optional	---	No
Washington	--------	---	No
West Virginia	Optional	18.18	Yes
Wisconsin	Optional	---	EC
Wyoming	Optional	---	No

EC - Exceptional Children

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Table 13

Minimum Pre-kindergarten Entrance Age by State

State	Entrance Age
Alabama	None
Alaska	3 years
Arizona	-------
Arkansas	-------
California	3 years
Colorado	4 years; September 15
Connecticut	None
Delaware	-------
Georgia	None
Idaho	-------
Illinois	4 years
Iowa	None
Kansas	None
Kentucky	-------
Louisiana	-------
Maine	4 years; October 15
Maryland	4 years; December 30
Massachusetts	Set by district
Michigan	-------
Minnesota	-------
Mississippi	-------
Missouri	None
Montana	3 years
Nebraska	None
Nevada	4 - 5 years
New Hampshire	-------
New Jersey	None
New Mexico	-------
New York	-------
North Carolina	None
North Dakota	-------
Ohio	-------
Oklahoma	3 and 4 years
Oregon	4 years
Pennsylvania	-------
Rhode Island	None
South Carolina	3 and 4 years
South Dakota	2-1/2 years
Texas	None
Utah	3 years
Vermont	3 years
Virginia	None
Washington	-------
West Virginia	3 years
Wisconsin	3 years; December 1
Wyoming	-------

Table 14

Entrance Age For Pre-kindergarten
by State on September 15

State	Years	Months
Alabama	-----	------
Alaska	-----	------
Arizona	-----	------
Arkansas	-----	------
California	-----	------
Colorado	4	0
Connecticut	-----	------
Delaware	-----	------
Georgia	-----	------
Idaho	-----	------
Illinois	-----	------
Iowa	-----	------
Kansas	-----	------
Kentucky	-----	------
Louisiana	-----	------
Maine	3	11
Massachusetts	3	8-1/2
Michigan	-----	------
Minnesota	-----	------
Mississippi	-----	------
Missouri	-----	------
Montana	-----	------
Nebraska	-----	------
Nevada	-----	------
New Hampshire	-----	------
New Jersey	-----	------
New Mexico	-----	------
New York	-----	------
North Carolina	-----	------
North Dakota	-----	------
Ohio	-----	------
Oklahoma	-----	------
Oregon	-----	------
Pennsylvania	-----	------
Rhode Island	-----	------
South Carolina	-----	------
South Dakota	-----	------
Texas	-----	------
Utah	-----	------
Vermont	-----	------
Virginia	-----	------
Washington	-----	------
West Virginia	-----	------
Wisconsin	2	9-1/2
Wyoming	-----	------

Mr. FORD. That will help us when we start at the State level to try to get them to accept the idea that early preparation is a valuable tool. We are sitting just a few blocks from a State which prohibits the expenditure of funds to educate a child below the age of 6 They have a law that is probably someplace close to as old as t' ~ State but, nevertheless, is firmly imbedded in the State which has given us eight U.S. Presidents. It always amazes me that there is no discernible, or at least we don't see any discernible public concern, for the fact that that State says only people who can afford to seek any assistance in preparing their children for school.

Mrs. SCHLAFLY. I think it maybe isn't right to indicate that people lack concern with that situation, because there is a point of view that you are more concerned with the child if you don't put him in school until the age of 6, and I think there should be some studies and recognition that that is a perfectly valid position and people who do not believe in putting children in school before the age of 6 are just as concerned.

Mr. FORD I won't quarrel with that as a philosophical point of view, but our obligation here is to see that the very scarce and minimal resources which we expend out of the Federal Treasury for education go to where they are most needed.

I have been persuaded for a decade and a half at least, as Dr. Farmer has indicated, that we are not dealing with Michigan children and Virginia children. If Virginia chooses not to use its resources to make available preschool preparation for the first grade reading program, that we in Michigan should not be paying the ultimate social cost of having them turn out people who can't read.

I am trying to defend to my taxpayers in Michigan by seeing to it that when I spend their money, I am going to spend it in a way which is going to get the most. I am not interested in building gymnasiums and dormitories anymore. If we were back in the heyday of the sixties where we could concoct and pass and fund new programs, we could afford the luxury of dealing across the whole spectrum of education.

It is clear to me that we are going to be some time faced with a decision which will result in a reduction of $17 billion of the money under our jurisdiction in the third year of the reconciliation, which will be adopted on this floor today.

The total budget for the U.S. Department of Education is only $14 billion, so we have to reach out and take care of a lot of things like jobs, programs, and child nutrition and other things. We literally are going out of the business monetarily of supporting education in the next 3 years.

I want to know that what we have left in the bottom of the bucket is going to be spent in the best plac

Everybody here agreed that learning to read, write, and compute as early as possible was the best possible investment for that money. I am not satisfied that if we adopt a delivery system which leaves it to someone else, that they will spend it at this level.

I am not sure that we wouldn't have better basketball facilities at the high school level, instead of reading teachers in the first grade. That concerns me and that is a point at which the interest of my constituency is a national interest. They are entitled to know

whatever dollars I spend on their behalf I spend in the interest of the future of this country.

We are throwing kids out of college by the millions with what we are about to do and at the same time contemplating a trillion dollar defense budget with the most sophisticated machinery ever conceived in the mind of anybody. I think it will have to be operated by a bunch of illiterates.

You think about the story that Admiral Rickover told about a seaman who couldn't read a book. I have a suspicion that we don't have enough people to read books to put those battleships back in the ocean. We are up to our necks with people whose lifelong ambition it was to command a battleship They are prepared for that. They will have 2,000 ill-prepared people below them.

I sit here and vote for missiles which cost enough to build homes for 100 families in my district They go off every day down here with trained young men who we are recruiting into the service on the basis of whatever the public school system is doing for them. We turn that kind of expensive hardware over to them to use effectively, and I wonder whether we can do that if we withdraw the support for the programs which are going to make them capable of reading the manual.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Ford.

I have always agreed with the statement that education is a State responsibility and a local function, but I also believe that it is a very deep Federal concern

We live in a very mobile society. I think Mr. Ford and Dr. Farmer have touched upon that in their remarks. Despite our recognition of this State responsibility and local function the fact remains that certain education programs, would never have been started unless Federal dollars were available.

I don't think we can, as someone has said, put that Federal money out on a stump and expect that, when the pressure is on just to keep some general programs alive, some programs that have proven themselves will be funded on the local level.

I served for 12 years in the Michigan Legislature during some difficult times. I was there after the first oil embargo when the legislature had to go back and redo the Michigan education budget after we had passed it and given a promissory note to the local school boards The programs that suffer during economic recessions were those programs that were not part of the general fund but that are targeted for people who really need some special attention.

Both my wife and I are teachers, and for that reason we did a great deal with all three of my children before they entered school. Yet even within our family with that background one of my children in the second grade had some difficulty in reading. That child was taken into special reading services and right now, the child now is reading above grade I don't know what the difficulty was, but I know I was not able to discover it and I am a professional teacher, and I think a good one.

My wife was not able to discover it and she, I know, is a very good professional teacher. Somehow that reading support teacher was able to discover it and we were ecstatic with joy when we saw our one child break through, so there are programs that I think have proven themselves.

If you put that money out on the stump in a block grant, having served in the State legislature, I just know what will happen to special programs. I am deeply concerned.

The only problem I have with Dick and Jane is that I could never understand why Dick and Jane's father never got laid off. In our neighborhood layoffs were a constant thing, so it didn't reflect too well what was happening in our neighborhood.

I want to thank each and every one of you. You all have contributed to the knowledge that this committee will have as we approach our responsibilities to education in this country.

You have all helped a great deal and I appreciate your coming here. I know you have very busy schedules.

Mr. Ford has made some requests for additional data and some other members have also done that.

The record will remain open for 10 days for receiving that data for inclusion in the record at this hearing.

Thank you very much.

The subcommittee will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:10 p.m., the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education of the Committee on Education and Labor adjourned.]

[Material submitted for inclusion in the record follows:]

READING AND MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS:

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

A Special Analysis of the National Assessment Reading and Mathematics Data

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READING AND MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

For 11 years, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has been collecting data about educational achievement in American schools. Because NAEP data are drawn from a national sample of schools, it is possible to compare performance of students in public and private elementary and secondary schools.

This paper presents such a comparison using reading and mathematics performance data gathered during the 1977-78 and 1979-80 school year assessments of 9-year-olds, 13-year-olds and 17-year-olds. The data indicate that private school students, as a group, perform somewhat better than public school students. But the public/private differences in mean performance levels range from none at all to almost 12 points, depending upon what age or population group one examines; and the differences between public and private school performance are also largely a function of the fact that each presently serves a somewhat different population of students.

Reading Achievement

Table 1 presents mean reading performance percentages for students in public and private schools. Nationally, the difference is about 5 percentage points at age 9, 6 points at age 13 and 6.5 points at age 17 in favor of the private schools. This is not a large difference, but, considering that we are comparing averages, it is a substantial one.

The differences are greater or less in some parts of the country and among some populations. For instance, at age 9, there is an 11-point difference for students living in the Southeast and a 10-point difference for black children. However, there is no apparent difference between public and private schools in the Central and Northeastern states and no apparent difference for students attending schools in advantaged areas.

Looking at the data for all three ages, it appears that, given the students they currently serve:

- Private school students' reading performance is somewhat better than public school students', on the average.

TABLE 1. Mean Achievement for Public and Private Students for Three Ages and Selected Groups, 1979-80 Reading Change Assessment[1]

	Age 9			Age 13			Age 17		
	Public/ Private[2] Difference	Predicted[3] Standard Error	Adjusted[4] Difference	Public/ Private Difference	Predicted Standard Error	Adjusted Difference	Public/ Private Difference	Predicted Standard Error	Adjusted Difference
Nation	5.1%	1.5%	(1.4%)	5.7%	1.3%	(2.4%)	6.5%	1.5%	(2.8%)
Region									
Northeast	[illegible]	2.3	(0.8)	4.2	2.2	(2.9)	10.4	2.4	(6.7)
Southeast	[illegible]	2.8	(9.6)	5.4	3.2	(3.6)	*	*	
Central	-0.4	2.3	(1.0)	2.0	2.2	(-0.3)	1.6	2.1	(-4.9)
West	*	*		9.9	2.3	(6.7)	*	*	
Sex									
Male	6.6	1.9	(2.0)	6.7	1.8	(1.9)	8.8	1.9	(4.6)
Female	3.9	2.0	(1.2)	4.6	1.7	(2.8)	3.6	2.1	(0.5)
Community size[5]									
BC+F	4.0	2.0	(-0.3)	7.7	1.6	(3.2)	7.5	1.9	(1.2)
MC+SP	5.6	1.9	(2.5)	3.9	2.1	(1.7)	6.2	2.1	(4.7)
Type of community[6]									
Advantaged urban	1.0	3.2	(-1.2)	0.0	2.4	(2.5)	1.1	3.4	(-0.9)
Parental education[7]									
NHS+CHS	4.0	2.5	(1.3)	6.6	2.1	(4.1)	6.7	2.2	(2.5)
PHS	4.6	2.0	(1.1)	2.3	1.6	(0.9)	3.9	1.8	(3.1)
Race									
White	3.5	1.6	(0.6)	3.8	1.5	(2.0)	5.0	1.8	(2.4)
Black	9.7	4.2	(8.1)	11.5	3.0	(4.7)	6.2	4.4	(3.4)

*Sample sizes too low to permit reliable estimates.

[1] *Reading performance was assessed with 60 reading items at age 9, 71 items at ages 13 and 17. The items assessed literal comprehension, inferential comprehension and reference skills. The data are for reading only. Public/private differences may be smaller or larger in other subject areas.*

[2] *The private schools assessed included Catholic (70%) and non-Catholic (30%) schools. Although many of the non-Catholic schools were church-related or supported, very few were Christian-fundamentalist schools.*

[3] *The standard error of the difference is an estimate of the potential sampling variability. Generally, if the difference is at least twice its standard error, we are very confident that it is a real difference and not an artifact of sampling variation.*

[4] *The "adjusted" difference is the difference that would probably exist between public and private schools, if public schools were serving the same population of students as private schools. Table 2 shows that they are not.*

[5] *Community size: big cities (population 200,000+) and the fringes around them -- (BC+F); and medium cities (population 25,000-200,000) and small places (population below 25,000) combined -- (MC+SP).*

[6] *Type of community: advantaged-urban -- schools in or around cities having populations greater than 200,000 and serving communities in which a high proportion of the residents are in professional or managerial positions.*

[7] *Parental education: students neither of whose parents graduated from high school (NHS) are combined with students who had at least one parent graduating from high school (CHS) to create one category. A second category, post high school (PHS), includes students who had at least one parent educated beyond high school.*

- The private school advantage is greatest in the Southeast for elementary students, the West for junior high school students and the Northeast for high school students.
- There is no difference between public and private school students' reading performance in the Central states.
- There is no apparent difference between public and private school students attending schools in advantaged-urban areas, and there is only a slight difference for students whose parents have a post high school education.
- The private junior high and high school advantage is larger for schools in high population metropolitan areas than it is in smaller cities and towns.
- Black 9- and 13-year-olds in private schools perform better than those in public schools.

Mathematics Achievement

Table 2 displays differences between public and private schools on the 1977-78 mathematics assessment. Again, the private school students hold a general advantage of 5.2 to 7.5 points, and for some population groups, the advantage is greater than for others.

- At age 9, the private school advantage is greatest for students in big cities (10.2 points), children of parents who have no high school education (10.3), blacks (8.4) and students living in the Western states (8.5). There is no statistically significant difference for students from the Central states or from suburban areas.
- At ages 13 and 17, the private school advantage is greatest for blacks (14.7 and 12.2 points, respectively), Southeastern students (12.5 and 12.6) and big-city residents (12.9 and 9.2).
- The private school advantage in mathematics is greater for males than females, especially in high school.
- There is no appreciable private school advantage for students attending advantaged-urban schools.

Remember, these are statistical averages. Particular public or private schools in your area may or may not conform to this pattern.

TABLE 2. Mean Achievement for Public and Private Students for Three Ages and Selected Groups, 1977-78 Mathematics Assessment[1]

	Age 9			Age 13			Age 17		
	Public/ Private[2] Difference	Predicted[3] Standard Error	Adjusted[4] Difference	Public/ Private Difference	Predicted Standard Error	Adjusted Difference	Public/ Private Difference	Predicted Standard Error	Adjusted Difference
Nation	6.2%	1.1%	(1.5%)	7.5%	0.9%	(1.4%)	5.2%	1.0%	(0.8%)
Region									
Northeast	9.0	1.9	(3.1)	3.6	1.3	(0.3)	4.1	1.4	(-0.6)
Southeast	7.0	2.7	(-1.1)	12.5	2.1	(5.0)	12.6	2.2	(8.2)
Central	2.4	1.5	(0.6)	5.7	1.4	(1.4)	4.2	1.6	(1.5)
West	8.5	2.9	(2.5)	*	*	*	2.4	2.0	(-1.1)
Sex									
Male	6.4	1.5	(1.7)	8.6	1.2	(2.0)	8.5	1.2	(3.0)
Female	6.0	1.5	(1.2)	6.6	1.2	(0.9)	2.8	1.2	(-1.2)
Community size[5]									
Big cities	10.2	1.7	(3.0)	12.9	1.2	(3.3)	9.2	1.3	(3.0)
Fringes	3.8	2.1	(0.5)	1.6	1.6	(-0.6)	2.4	2.0	(-1.3)
Medium cities	*	*	*	-0.9	2.4	(-5.4)	*	*	*
Small places	4.3	1.7	(0.8)	*	*	*	*	*	*
Type of community[6]									
Advantaged urban	-0.9	2.0	(-0.9)	0.8	1.6	(0.9)	4.0	1.7	(3.9)
Parental education[7]									
Not graduated high school	10.1	4.1	(5.7)	11.8	2.9	(6.9)	7.1	2.5	(4.5)
Graduated high school	4.9	2.1	(-0.1)	6.1	1.4	(1.5)	3.4	1.5	(0.3)
Post high school	5.1	1.6	(0.8)	3.9	1.2	(0.1)	2.7	1.2	(0.5)
Race									
White	4.2	1.2	(1.4)	4.9	1.0	(1.0)	3.6	1.0	(0.3)
Black	8.4	3.4	(1.9)	14.7	3.4	(10.3)	12.2	3.2	(8.7)
Hispanic	*	*	*	7.2	3.8	(0.4)	6.2	3.0	(-1.6)
Other	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

*Sample size too low to permit reliable estimates.

[1]The mathematics assessment consisted of hundreds of items possessing mathematical knowledge, skills, understanding and application.

[2]The private schools assessed included Catholic (70%) and non-Catholic (30%) schools. Although many of the non-Catholic schools were church-related or supported, very few were Christian-fundamentalist schools.

[3]The standard error of the difference is an estimate of the potential sampling variability. Generally, if the difference is at least twice its standard error, we are very confident that it is a real difference and not an artifact of sampling variation.

[4]The "adjusted" difference is the difference that would probably exist between public and private schools, if public schools were serving the same population of students as private schools. Table 3 shows that they are not.

[5]Community size: big cities = population 100,000+, fringes = fringes around big cities, medium cities = population 25,000-100,000; small places = population below 25,000.

[6]Type of community: advantaged-urban -- schools in or around cities having populations greater than 100,000 and serving communities in which a high proportion of the residents are in professional or managerial positions.

[7]Parental education -- not graduated from high school = neither parent graduated; graduated from high school = at least one parent graduated; post high school = one parent has had some post high school education.

Adjusting Data to Reflect Differences in Public and Private School Students' Backgrounds

The differences cited above largely reflect the fact that public schools serve a somewhat different clientele than private schools. As Table 3 reveals, public, private-Catholic and private-non-Catholic school populations contain different proportions of students from various socioeconomic backgrounds. For instance, 11% of the 13-year-olds in the public schools come from homes in which neither parent finished high school; the proportion of such students in Catholic schools is only 4%, and in non-Catholic private schools, it is less than 1%. Conversely, 46% of the students in the public schools have parents with post-high-school education. But the proportion of such students in Catholic schools is 59% and in private non-Catholic schools, 71%. Similar proportions exist for other indicators of socioeconomic status such as the advantaged-urban and disadvantaged-urban categories. While a third to more than half of the students in private schools live in advantaged areas, only 7% of the public school students do. Clearly, the private schools contain a much higher proportion of students from backgrounds known to be associated with high academic performance and a much lower proportion of students from backgrounds known to be associated with low academic performance. What would happen if public schools dealt with the same proportions of high- and low-socioeconomic students found in the private schools?

To estimate what the results might be, the populations were equated so that both public and private populations shared equal proportions of students from various socioeconomic strata. The results appear in Tables 1 and 2 as "adjusted" differences.

When populations are equated for socioeconomic status, the mean differences between public and private schools diminish considerably or vanish. There is no statistically significant private school advantage nationally, at any age, in either reading or mathematics.

Some differences remain, however, for a few population groups, and they are not all in favor of private schools. In reading, for instance, private school students still outperform public school students in the Southeast at age 9 and in the Northeast at age 17. But 17-year-old public school students outperform private school students in the Central states. Seventeen-year-old boys in private schools still do somewhat better than those in public schools, and private high school students in medium-sized cities and smaller towns do somewhat better. But all the other differences in favor of private schools disappear.

TABLE 3. Estimated Percent of Public and Private Students by Selected Reporting Groups, Age 13, 1980

	Public	Private Catholic	Private Non-Catholic	All
Parental education				
Not graduated high school	10.9%	3.8%	0.3%	9.9%
Graduated high school	32.3	29.1	20.3	31.6
Post high school	46.3	59.1	71.1	48.2
Unknown	10.6	8.0	8.3	10.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Race				
White	79.3	79.1	91.4	79.7
Black	13.6	15.5	6.6	13.5
Hispanic	5.7	4.9	1.7	5.5
Other	1.5	0.5	0.3	1.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Sex				
Male	49.0	45.4	49.3	48.7
Female	51.0	54.6	50.7	51.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Size of community				
Big cities	14.4	46.3	38.5	17.9
Fringes	23.6	15.8	37.9	23.5
Medium cities	13.2	15.8	8.8	13.2
Small places	48.8	22.2	14.7	45.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region				
Northeast	23.0	42.8	15.2	24.3
Southeast	25.1	7.7	29.3	23.8
Central	23.4	41.0	23.1	26.6
West	26.6	8.5	32.3	25.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Type of community				
Rural	9.2	8.8	12.0	9.2
Disadvantaged urban	11.2	1.8	0.0	10.0
Advantaged urban	7.1	32.6	54.4	11.0
Other	72.5	56.8	33.6	69.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

In mathematics, a private school advantage remains for 13- and 17-year-old Southeastern students, big-city students and blacks. But public school 13-year-olds in medium-sized cities hold a slight advantage over their friends in the private schools.

This adjustment was only a statistical exercise, suggesting what might happen if public and private schools were attended by the same kinds of students. But they are not. And we do not <u>really</u> know what would happen if they were. All we can say is that, at the moment, private school students perform better on the reading and mathematics assessments than do public school students, and that difference appears to be largely accounted for by differences in the populations involved. Even after adjustment, however, black teenagers in private schools appear to perform better in mathematics than black students in public schools.