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ABSTRACT

This document reviews the range of findings contained in 10 recently commissioned reports on how Chapter 1 programs are implemented and how successful they are in increasing the achievement of disadvantaged students. Although the conclusions of the reports are not the same, there are some developing consensuses. Findings are discussed in the following areas: (1) how are recipients of Chapter 1 services selected? (2) do those who most need the services receive them? (3) among the program structures that have been used (pull-out, add-on, in-class, and replacement) are there reasons to choose one over another? (4) which instructional strategies are used (mastery learning, higher order thinking skills, and computer education), and are they effective? (5) how have parents participated in the programs and are there new ways for them to become involved? and (6) does compensatory education increase achievement? It is concluded that the success of the programs has been mixed in all of the areas listed above. It is clear that low-achieving students need some type of help, but there are some serious problems with Chapter 1 in the following areas: (1) it is not enrichment since it takes students away from other instruction; (2) there are inefficiencies in grouping and regrouping students during the day; and (3) the teaching of Chapter 1 students lags behind research findings on equity and pedagogy. A list of the 10 studies reviewed and 93 endnotes are included. (VM)

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Carol Ascher

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Chapter 1 Programs New Guides from the Research

Carol Ascher

What is Chapter 1, and why has it been controversial?

Over the last several years, both educators and the general public have differed in their judgments about the success of federally funded compensatory education. On the positive side, Chapter 1 has been called "an integral part of efforts to raise the education level of inner-city minority youth," and the need for Chapter 1 programs has been deemed "greater now than at any time in the last 20 years."¹ More critically, it has been said that Chapter 1 "hasn't made much difference;" that the cycle of poverty, in which President Johnson intended to intervene with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, has still not been broken; and that problems in Chapter 1's structure and curriculum make the program stand "more as a 'symbol' of the government's intention to help poor children than as a useful means of doing so."²

Federally funded compensatory education is now 22 years old. Continuously available since 1965, when Title I (Chapter 1's original version) was established as part of the "war on poverty" under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, funds for supplemental educational services have essentially been allocated in a two-tier formula: first to districts to dispense to those schools with especially large numbers of poor children compared to the district norm; and then to children in these schools with low achievement. The program has been as diverse, and often confusing, in its daily workings as it has been in its effects. Launor Carter, whose Sustaining Effects Study was issued in 1983, argued that "Title I was better defined as a funding program than as an educational treatment."³ Nor would this evaluation be inaccurate for Chapter 1 today. With all the programmatic uncertainties and variations, the only consistency is that Chapter 1 compensatory students receive services costing at least \$400 more than regular students receive⁴--a fact which by itself is not particularly reassuring, given that the role of spending and school resources on achievement is at best inconclusive.⁵ Another difference between Chapter 1 and other students is that the former appear to spend more hours doing reading and math than do regular students (and thus less time in the regular subjects they miss), and they are usually pulled out to another class, where they are taught in smaller, more focused groups by a specially-hired Chapter 1 teacher or aide.⁶

Since 1965, the legislation has been reauthorized and refined on several occasions, and in 1981, Title I was replaced by Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act

(ECIA). Chapter 1 modified some of the requirements for federal funding but left the program's varied functionings at the classroom level relatively untouched. As of 1987, Chapter 1 was a \$3.9 billion program, the Federal government's largest investment in elementary and secondary education, accounting for 20 percent of the U.S. Department of Education's total budget. Over 90 percent of the nation's schools participate in the program.⁷

Fortunately, one of the side-effects of both longevity and controversy has been funding for research on federally funded compensatory education. The last five years has seen the publication of a number of major research and conference reports, some of them drawing on data from the 1970s. A chronological list of these reports shows how their emphases cover the program's application to its targeted constituency and its diverse components, as well as its results:

Carter L. F. (1983). A Study of Compensatory and Elementary Education: The Sustaining Effects Study. Washington, D.C.: System Development Corporation.

Kennedy, M.M., Jung, R.K., Orland, M.E. (1986, January). Poverty, Achievement, and the Distribution of Compensatory Education. An Interim Report from the National Assessment of Chapter 1. Washington, D.C.: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

Kennedy, M.M., Birman, B.F., Demaline, R.E. (1986, July). The Effectiveness of Chapter 1 Services. Second Interim Report from the National Assessment of Chapter 1. Washington, D.C.: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

Knapp, M.S., Turnbull, B.J., Blakely, C.H., Jay, E.D., Marks, E.L., Shields, P. (1986, December). Local Program Design and Decision making under Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Farrar, E., Millsap, M.A. (1986, December). State and Local Administration of the Chapter 1 Program. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates Inc.

Wood, C.T., Gabriel, R., Marder, D., Gamel, N.N., Davis, A. (1986, December). A Study of Targeting Practices Used in the Chapter 1 Program. Palo Alto, CA: SRA Technologies.

Williams, B.I., Richmond, P.A., Mason, B.J. (1986, December). Designs for Compensatory Education.

Conference Proceedings and Papers. Washington, D.C.:
Research and Evaluation Associates.

Goetz, M.E. (1987, February). School Districts'
Allocation of Chapter 1 Resources. Princeton, NJ:
Educational Testing Service.

Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational
Education of the Committee on Education and Labor, U.S.
House of Representatives. (1987, April). Targeting
Students for Chapter 1 Services: Are the Students in
Greatest Need Being Served? Washington, D.C.: U.S.
Government Printing Office.

Birman, B.E., Orland, M.E., Jung, R.K., Anson, R.J., Garcia,
G.N. (1987). The Current Operation of the Chapter 1 Program.
Final Report from the National Assessment of Chapter 1
Office of Research. Washington, D.C.: Office of Educational
Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

In no area of research on either program or results do the reports come to exactly the same conclusions--although there are some developing consensuses. The following sections thus attempt to portray the range of findings of these reports, particularly as they apply to: the targeting of Chapter 1 to those students who need its services; the structure of Chapter 1 programs, and their integration into the schools; the curriculum and instruction used in Chapter 1 classrooms; and parent involvement by Chapter 1 families. Finally, this paper reviews the mixed findings regarding the short- and long-term effectiveness of Chapter 1.

Who should receive Chapter 1 services?

Though several evaluations of Title I and Chapter 1 have addressed the technical issue of whether or not school districts are following the legislated guidelines for the distribution of Chapter 1 funds, any serious attempt to evaluate the targeting of Chapter 1 services depends on an underlying agreement about which students most need federal compensatory education services. Should legal guidelines emphasize the poverty or the low-achievement of the recipients? Should special consideration be given when a poor and low-achieving child lives in a high poverty area? Should the length of time a child has lived in poverty be considered? Should minorities be given greater preference than whites? Given limited funds, at which grade levels should Chapter 1 services be focused? Finally, a highly controversial question has been whether, and under what conditions, private school students should receive federally funded compensatory education.

The January 1986 National Assessment of Chapter 1 shows the strong link between the poverty of the school and its students' achievement, and so provides clear support for Chapter 1 legislation that emphasizes first poverty and then achievement in the dispensation of Chapter 1 services. Although Kennedy and her colleagues find a weaker relationship between family poverty and achievement of individual students, they note that "students are increasingly likely to fall behind grade levels as their families experience longer spells of poverty, and that achievement scores of all students--not just poor students--decline as the proportion of poor students in a school rises."⁸ To make matters more serious, the 1987 National Assessment finds that, even when state aid is taken into account, poor school districts raise significantly less in local revenues than do districts with moderate or low poverty rates.⁹

Kennedy et al. also make clear that the low achievement scores so often attributed to minorities are highly correlated with their backgrounds of severe and long-term poverty. (This analysis can be seen in part as an answer to those who would criticize Chapter 1 for serving a much higher proportion of minorities than exist in the general school population.) According to Kennedy et al.,

The preponderance of Black children, and minority children in general, among those experiencing long-term family poverty and concentrations of poverty in their communities suggests that minorities may be experiencing a qualitatively different form of poverty than other poor children experience. Their families are likely to be poor for longer periods of time, and their communities are more likely to have a preponderance of poor people.¹⁰

Almost 90 percent of the children who are poor for ten or more years of their childhood are black.¹¹ Whereas among white children, the poverty rate is lower in junior and senior high schools than it is in elementary schools, black and Hispanic children's families are increasingly likely to be poor as their children move from elementary to junior high school. Although the rate of poverty drops slightly among minority senior high school students, this may reflect the fact that the very poor students have dropped out.¹²

Both parents' marital status and the number of siblings are also highly associated with poverty--and, in turn, with achievement (Kennedy and her colleagues assert the connection between family factors and achievement, but do not themselves provide the achievement data). Whereas half of all children living in female-headed households are poor, only about an eighth living in households with males present are poor. Moreover, the

poverty rates are higher still when the single mother is a minority--69 percent among blacks and 71 percent among Hispanics. The size of the family also affects the likelihood of being poor. While 14 percent of all families with 1-2 children are poor, 28 percent of all families with 3-4 children and 56 percent of all families with 5 or more children are poor.¹³ Although Chapter 1 has historically emphasized parent involvement, Kennedy et al. point out that "single women, struggling to maintain jobs, families, and tight budgets" may be pressed for time, and, if they themselves lack an adequate education to help their children, "may be in need of compensatory education themselves."¹⁴

The 1986 National Assessment of Chapter 1 makes the point that student mobility is also related to poverty--as well as to achievement. Poor children move during the year with about twice the frequency of nonpoor children. Thus those planning the dispensation of educational services may want to take into account the special needs of these children.

Does Chapter 1 go to those who most need it?

Since the mid 1970s, Chapter 1 has served about 11 percent of all school-age children.¹⁵ Perhaps the greatest area of controversy surrounding Chapter 1 has been over whether the students who receive its services are, in fact, those who most need them, and, conversely, whether there are needy students who do not receive Chapter 1 services.

Poverty and Achievement. In 1983, The Sustaining Effects Study came to the startling conclusion that, although poor and educationally needy children were the principal recipients of Title I and other compensatory education services, "The absolute number of children receiving CE [compensatory education] who are non-poor and achieving higher than one year below grade level is greater than the number of children receiving CE services who fall below these cutoffs."¹⁶ Since 1983, several other studies have arrived at less critical findings, although no one finds the program's net sufficiently wide to reach all those who need Chapter 1 services. Moreover, most researchers point out that, even with limited funding, legislative changes could help to make the targeting to both poor children and low achieving children more concentrated.

Using both the same mid 1970s data from Title I and more recent Chapter 1 data, the National Assessment concludes more optimistically that Chapter 1 provisions are concordant with those most in need, as defined by poverty and race, but that low achievers have been less well served. Relative to the population of school-age children, Title I/Chapter 1 students are more likely to be poor and to belong to minority groups. (42 percent

of all poor children were in Title I, compared to 21 percent of all children in the total population who are poor.¹⁷ And in 1984/85, 29 percent of all black children and 22 percent of all Hispanic children were in Chapter 1, compared to around 10 percent of each category in the general population.) More recent National Assessment data show the median rate of poverty to be 35 percent in Chapter 1 elementary schools, compared to 17 percent in non Chapter 1 public elementary schools.¹⁸ On the other hand, 13 percent of elementary schools with very high poverty rates do not receive Chapter 1 services.¹⁹ Moreover, the 1986 National Assessment data show that of students who are both poor and in the bottom 50 percent in reading achievement, over half were not receiving any compensatory education.²⁰ In fact, 60 percent of students scoring below the 25th percentile were not receiving the services.²¹ At the other end, 11 percent of Chapter 1 participants scored above the 50th percentile.²²

Nevertheless, the proportion of low-achieving students provided with compensatory education varies, depending on the number of low-achieving students in the school and on local decisions to serve many versus a few children.²³ "Schools with fewer lower-achieving students available are more likely to serve relatively higher-achieving students, and unless they have very high concentrations of poor students, schools with relatively large programs are also more likely to serve higher-achieving students."²⁴

By focusing on merely whether or not the dispensation of Chapter 1 services is following legal guidelines, a 1987 report prepared by Chairman Augustus Hawkins of the Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education insists on an even more positive evaluation of the program's targeting success. This report argues that Chapter 1 is "following the law carefully . . . and that if many needy children are unserved, it is because there are insufficient resources in Chapter 1 to serve more."²⁵ Hawkins also points out that both the Sustaining Effects and the National Assessment studies, at least in part, use old data. In addition, both exaggerate the degree to which Chapter 1 misses poor and low achieving students by including needy students of all ages, rather than merely students in those grade levels at which Chapter 1 is targeted in their school.

Hawkins provides Government Accounting Office data showing that 75 percent of the public schools serviced by Chapter 1 are elementary schools where 30 percent or more of the children are from low-income families; over half of Chapter 1 children are in schools with over 50 percent poor children. Moreover, "[m]ost students who fall below the 25th percentile do participate in Chapter 1, and there are valid reasons [insufficient funds,

service by other special programs] why some low-achieving students are not served by Chapter 1." 26*

Finally, based on recent data from 30 sample districts receiving Chapter 1 funds, an SRA Technologies report arrives at a cautious assessment of the program's targeting success: although Chapter 1 schools generally have both higher concentrations of poor students, and students with lower reading levels, than non-Chapter 1 schools, there are schools with very low poverty concentrations and high achieving students who receive program services, while other schools with very high poverty concentrations and low achieving students do not receive services. The SRA report's greatest contribution is in providing an analysis of those factors that contribute to inequities in targeting:

1. Low-poverty Chapter 1 schools are often in low-poverty districts, and their eligibility arises from having poverty levels above their district's low average.

2. High-poverty non-Chapter 1 schools are often in high poverty districts which serve only their neediest schools.

3. Low-achieving students may not participate in Chapter 1 because they receive other special services, such as special education, a bilingual/English as a Second Language program, a migrant program, or a state compensatory education program, or because they score just below their district's cutoff and so are judged less in need than others who participate.

4. Higher achieving students may participate because schools determine that these students have invalid scores and deserve to participate, or because these districts have more openings for Chapter 1 students than they have educationally deprived students in their Chapter 1 schools.²⁷

Policy Changes. Because of the relation between the amount of time a child lives in poverty and his or her achievement, several recent reports argue that, "the objective of serving the nation's most educationally needy students will be achieved only if program resources are targeted to those areas with very high concentrations of poverty."²⁸ With some variation, but the same general intent, several of these reports suggest a number of policy changes that might improve the targeting of Chapter 1 services so that they reach those children whose severe poverty and low achievement makes them most in need:²⁹

* This point is also made by Sally B Kilgore under cross-examination before the Congressional hearings on the Reauthorization of Chapter 1.³⁰

1. Congress could require that eligibility for Chapter 1 funds be defined by a lower percentile than is commonly used; or it could require that services be targeted to the most educationally-deprived in the school, regardless of grade level, rather than permitting districts to focus on low-achieving and moderately low-achieving students within a few grade levels. Congress could also reduce the number of moderate achievers by delimiting the schools that can participate to those with at least, say, 10 percent poor students.
2. Chapter 1 funds could be concentrated on schools in neighborhoods with high proportions of children living in poverty, and should not be cut off from these schools when an increase in achievement is demonstrated.
3. Within districts that have high concentrations of poverty (above 25 percent), more high poverty schools could be eligible, and districts encouraged to serve them if, either Concentration Grants--a rarely used Chapter 1 provision--were used by these districts, or if money were taken from districts with low poverty and redistributed to these high poverty districts.
4. The allocation of Chapter 1 funds in high poverty schools could be school-based and could be used to benefit all students within the targeted schools. Although increasing the use of this option might increase the number of high achievers participating, the average achievement level of Chapter 1 students in these schools would remain low.
5. Funds to districts with low average poverty and no high poverty schools should be reduced. Although the current law allows any district with at least 10 poor students to qualify, raising this number would free money to districts where poverty is more severe.
6. To ensure that an educationally deprived student has the same chance of being selected for Chapter 1 regardless of which Chapter 1 school he or she attends in a district,

districts could be required to enforce uniform standards and measures for selecting Chapter 1 students across all schools in the district.

7. Some districts have much clearer policies than others for deciding on where to place students who are eligible for several special programs. Districts should be encouraged through technical assistance to have comprehensive policies for assigning to the appropriate program students eligible for more than one program.
8. Exit criteria should be clarified in the legislative framework, and districts should be helped to use uniform standards for judging when students are no longer eligible.

Age/Grade Level. Given limited funding, most districts can serve only a small percentage of those students who might need Chapter 1, if only poverty and achievement are used as criteria. In six sample states that test at all grade levels, between 20 and 28 percent of the students scored below the 25th percentile; however, the states were able to serve only 7.1 to 13 percent of their total school populations.³¹

Thus most districts have solved the problem of scarce resources by focusing their efforts on elementary school students. As the authors of a survey of Chapter 1 in 2,200 school districts report, "Pedagogical beliefs in the value of early intervention (namely, ameliorating problems before they get worse,) ensure a continuing focus on younger students, even when budgets are cut and services must be reduced."³² The National Assessment found that 90 percent of all Chapter 1 students were in the elementary grades (only 70 percent of all public school students are in the elementary grades).

On the other hand, the preference for using Chapter 1 funds for elementary school students decreased 11 percent between 1979 and 1984.³³ Hawkins gets a slightly lower percentage from his sample of six states: 75-95 percent of the children served were in grades 1-6.³⁴ While nationally Chapter 1 students at the secondary level are lower achieving than those at the elementary level, this is because a much smaller proportion of secondary than elementary students is currently receiving Chapter 1 services.³⁵ Thus, expanding Chapter 1 services at the secondary-school level would not necessarily mean reaching more needy students. Although research on the differential effects of compensatory education at different ages is scarce, one study found that "no particular grade level can be identified as

particularly advantageous for intervention."³⁶ On the other hand, Carter notes that the preponderance of elementary programs is in line with research that shows the greater effectiveness of compensatory education in the early grades.³⁷

The one recent targeting recommendation concerning age/grade level (made by Wood et al. in the SRA Technologies report) is that, so long as funds are limited, districts "continue to chose the grade bands (or school levels) to target." ³⁸

Private Schools. About 23 percent of all school districts with Chapter 1 programs provided Chapter 1 instructional services to nonpublic school students in 1986-87. Most of these students were in large school districts and urban areas. (Two districts served about a fifth of all nonpublic school students, and 18 served two-fifths of these students. Most of these private school programs were small--half served 13 or fewer students, and 90 percent served 60 or fewer students.³⁹

Because most private schools serving low-income students are religious, there has been controversy over whether and how federal funds for compensatory education ought to be used by these schools. In 1985, the Supreme Court (Aguilar v. Felton) ruled that it was unconstitutional for teachers or aides paid with Chapter 1 funds to provide Chapter 1 instructional services in sectarian (religiously-affiliated) schools, but that Chapter 1 funds could be used either for such non-human aides as computers or for services to religious-school students delivered at another site.

Since the Supreme Court decision has taken effect, the percentage of districts serving nonpublic school students inside their own nonpublic school has decreased from 76 percent to 10 percent. Conversely, more districts now have nonpublic school Chapter 1 students travel to a public school for their services (23 percent increased to 55 percent), and far more districts offer nonpublic school Chapter 1 services at another site such as a community center, a business facility, a mobile van, or a private home (7 percent increased to 48 percent). The Supreme Court decision has also been followed by a small increase in the number of nonpublic school Chapter 1 students served by technological means. (Seven percent of the districts now use computer-assisted instruction, television or radio broadcast, or instruction by phone, in contrast to 3 percent prior to the 1985 decision).⁴⁰

Which program structures have been used in Chapter 1? Are there reasons to choose one over another?

Schools use one or more of a variety of designs to provide

Chapter 1 services to their students:

- o Pull-out programs that provide instruction in locations outside their regular classroom.
- o Add-on programs that provide instruction at times other than the regular school day or year (before or after school, before kindergarten or during summer school).
- o In-class programs that provide services to students within their regular classrooms.
- o Replacement programs that provide to Chapter 1 students all the instruction they are to receive in a given subject area, usually in a separate class including only compensatory education students.

Pull-out. Until now, pullout programs have overwhelmingly predominated in compensatory education, partly, as some educators suggest, because they leave a "clean audit trail" that meets the Chapter 1 requirement that the program supplement rather than supplant the funds from non-federal sources used to educate Chapter 1 students in the regular school program.⁴¹ However, there is evidence that, for educational and budgetary reasons, the preponderance of pull-out programs is declining somewhat.⁴²

Pullouts can be either "limited" pullouts, which consume less than 25 percent of the class time from which the Chapter 1 students are pulled (as little as 15 minutes), or "extended" pullouts, which comprise 25 percent or more of the class time (up to an hour). Often, particularly at the elementary level, pull-out arrangements are coupled with in-class arrangements; inside the classroom, Chapter 1 assistance is provided by an aide, while in the separate room a teacher is usually in charge. At the secondary level, pull-outs often last 45 minutes a day, or the equivalent of an elective period.⁴³

Pull-out teaching tends to be done by a reading or compensatory education specialist (although the person may be someone who teaches music the rest of the time, or simply an aide), and the classes are generally both smaller and more homogeneous than the regular classrooms. Writing about pull-out programs in Title I, Carter gave a generally positive evaluation:

The pullout setting seems to offer a positive learning environment; when compared to regular instructional settings, pullout was associated with smaller instructional groups, higher staff-to-student ratios, more student on task behavior, less teacher time in

behavioral management, a more harmonious classroom atmosphere, fewer negative comments by teachers, and a higher quality of cognitive monitoring, ontask monitoring, and organization of activities.⁴⁴

Despite this generally positive evaluation, research generally does not support either the cost-effectiveness or the educational benefits of pullout over other program structures. While the smaller classes make teaching easier, most teachers don't take advantage of the small group to teach differently from the way they would in a larger classrooms, and thus teacher-student interaction does not increase significantly. In line with the research pointing to the negative effects of isolated settings for low-ability students, several studies show that students in pull-out situations gain less than those remaining in the classroom. At the same time, pullout settings are generally more costly.⁴⁵

Even when pullout situations have the effective qualities mentioned by Carter, there are several unintended negative effects.

1. Decreased instructional time: because of time spent transferring to a different location and time devoted to special compensatory education services, students in Chapter 1 programs may actually receive less total instructional time in a particular subject than students outside the program.
2. Fragmentation: students may not see the relationship between a subject taught in the regular classroom and the same subject taught in the Chapter 1 setting.
3. Stigma: often attached to students who are pulled out of classrooms for special instruction, this stigma may encourage regular teachers to hold lower expectations for these students and to give them simpler tasks to complete.
4. Lack of communication: the educational effects of the lack of communication, cooperation, and coordination that commonly exist between the Chapter 1 instructor and the regular teacher, has not been researched; however, research does suggest that low-achieving students are particularly vulnerable to tension and other negative interactions.

5. Segregation: since minority students receive more compensatory education than white students, they are typically pulled out of less segregated classrooms and sent to more segregated classrooms to receive special instruction.

Given that substantial research outside Chapter 1 shows the negative effects of homogeneous groupings on low-achievers, there are good pedagogical reasons for moving away from pull-out programs and helping teachers to work with heterogeneous classes.⁴⁶ As one author writes, capturing the essence of the mixed reactions about pull-outs in Chapter 1: "No doubt there are schools in which the pullout practice is being done well, but there are certainly schools in which this may be doing more harm than good."⁴⁷

Add-on. Add-on instruction can take place at any grade level as well as any time of day or year. Because of their vary nature, the most obvious difficulties of add-on programs are in scheduling and in providing transportation.

Add-on programs are often used to fund pre-kindergarten programs or to extend a kindergarten program to a full day.⁴⁸ Knapp et al. found pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs to be the most common form of add-on in the Chapter 1 programs they studied. The concensus of local officials was that "concentrating resources on young students will produce the greatest gains."⁴⁹ Although there is some research supporting the effectiveness of early enrichment, thus far, there is no evidence for the effectiveness of adding to the number of hours a student spends in school each day, week, or year.

As for when they are placed, add-on programs can be before or after the regular school day, on weekends, or as extensions of the school year. Carter found the most common form of add-on instruction to be summer programs. Based on evidence that low-achieving students may have "summer losses" relative to other students, many administrators were attempting to help students with these summer school programs. Yet the evidence is mixed on both the loss without summer programs, and the possible gains (or decreased losses) that Chapter 1 summer programs can generate.⁵⁰

Although most general summer school programs take place at the secondary school level, most compensatory summer school programs have been elementary school programs. The Sustaining Effects Study found that elementary students who attended Title I summer schools did not differ in achievement from their peers who did not attend.⁵¹ The only evaluated secondary school summer remediation project took place at a number of sights, with very mixed results.⁵² In fact, summer school programs (both for

compensatory education and general students) can be diluted academically and inefficient. More time is spent assessing students than teaching them, and since "teachers are selected anew each year, [they] must get to know the needs of students before they can provide instruction."⁵³

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In-class. Although many pedagogical arguments in favor of in-class compensatory education could be garnered from literature outside of Chapter 1, because Chapter 1 in-class programs are rare, little Chapter 1 evidence directly supports the success of this structure. Instead, much of what has been written on Chapter 1 programs appears to be either anecdotal or conjectural --theories about what might happen if...

What these anecdotes and conjectures suggest is that in-class learning could lower the student/adult ratio by providing in-class aides.⁵⁵ It can also cut out a good deal of transportation time (one estimate is 15 minutes a day, or 40 hours a year), which can be used for learning.⁵⁶ In theory, because Chapter 1 instructional staff "work in the same classroom as do regular teachers, they are better able to track and reinforce the regular teacher's lesson."⁵⁷ However, when the Chapter 1 teacher is a specialist, in-class programs create territorial uneasinesses on the part of both the regular teacher and the specialist. Moreover, the press for time means that there is little planning and coordination, and some of the same fragmentation takes place in-class as in pull-out programs.⁵⁸ Particularly when aides are used, in-class arrangements are cheaper than pull-outs.⁵⁹

Replacement. A district can legally use a "replacement" if it contributes its own resources to the program. Most replacement programs in the Knapp et al. sample were reading or math programs that lasted the equivalent of a class period, but some districts have day-long replacement programs, particularly at the first grade level.⁶⁰ The research points to only one evaluated example of a replacement program, a school-wide program in Austin, Texas. According to an educator in the school district, this project was successful because it not only reduced class size but also eliminated the problem of "outside interferences in one teacher's responsibility for the learning of each student. There were no Title I teachers, there were no Title I aides, there was no Title I curriculum, there were no Title I supervisors."⁶¹

Which instructional strategies are used in Chapter 1, and are they effective?

Any review of Chapter 1 instruction yields the conclusion that Chapter 1's weaknesses are not that different from those of any other instructional programs serving poor, low-achieving students. Though Chapter 1 classrooms obviously vary enormously, and there are schools and teachers with innovative and courageous approaches, the research on Chapter 1 classes consistently shows a tendency toward programs that allow for uniformity among classrooms, that discourage teacher initiative, and that emphasize rote over other more creative and conceptual forms of learning by the compensatory education students. As Birman et al. note, although Chapter 1 requires needs assessments, consultation with parents and teachers, and local evaluations, there is a tendency in some districts "to attend to the letter but not the spirit of these requirements, often 'going through the motions' without using them to review and alter the design of Chapter 1 services."⁶² Most districts also allocate instructional resources in rough proportion to the number of Chapter 1 students; none incorporate the degree of individual student need into their Chapter 1 resource allocation policies.⁶³ As one report notes, "Chapter 1 [state] administrations assume a compliance strategy toward program improvement--preferring designs that are easy to monitor and having districts ensure the legality of new program designs. Program improvement activities rarely extend beyond the compliance focus."⁶⁴

Reading and Mathematics. In 1983, The Sustaining Effects Study came to the conclusion that, with age, there was greater effort to "individualize" the type and content of instruction in reading and mathematics for Title I students than there was for regular students. "There was considerably less use of an approved curriculum for Title I students than for regular students. In the case of Title I students there was more frequent use of a curriculum devised in terms of a test-based needs-assessment rather than use of a standard approved curriculum." Moreover, this reliance on a needs-assessment based curriculum increased as grade increased.⁶⁵ Teachers also tended to use more programmed materials and fewer texts with compensatory education students than they did with regular students, and they relied more on audiovisual and other equipment with the low-achievers.⁶⁶

More current research on Chapter 1 shows a similar reliance on programmed instruction, a teaching to tests (so that being able to give right answers does not necessarily mean understanding the subject), and at a deeper level a lack of clarity by teachers and administrators about what students need to know and thus the goals of the instruction.⁶⁷ In fact, even

increased scores on standardized tests do not necessarily mean that Chapter 1 students are learning more of what they really need to know. As a critique of compensatory education programs notes,

The conventional wisdom of instructional design for compensatory education is wrong [italics in the original]. Mastery-type plans with their emphasis on small steps through the content may well prepare students to do well on standardized achievement tests. But serious questions are being raised concerning the validity of this criterion for judging what students know and are able to do. Compensatory students are getting higher scores on standardized tests, but their ability to do school work independently is not improving.⁶⁸

Higher Order Thinking Skills. Recently, Chapter 1 programs have been put under additional pressure to teach "higher order thinking skills." Because the task of Chapter 1 has been remedial, many educators have been uncertain about how to accomplish this. A survey of 2,200 districts found that a quarter of the Chapter 1 programs say they address higher order thinking skills--although this was defined differently by different districts, and many districts were confused about what exactly is meant by the term. For the large proportion of districts that do not provide these higher order skills, the emphasis is still on "the basics" and the belief, rightly or wrongly, is that their compensatory education students cannot handle the higher order skills. There is also some disagreement over whether higher order skills can be taught as part of the lessons in, say, reading or mathematics, or whether a special subject should be created for the teaching of these skills.⁶⁹ For most, however, complex thinking can and ought to be part of every subject. As the authors of the survey conclude, good teachers "find ways to make their students think and problem solve, in addition to imparting the rudiments of reading or arithmetic."⁷⁰

Computers. The mushrooming of computers in Chapter 1 classrooms has been the result of several factors: the discovery by hardware and software manufacturers that these programs are a "viable marketplace"; state mandated testing that incorporates computer literacy; the influence of state education agencies (SEAs) through workshops and conferences; district efforts to standardize the instructional services provided; and innovation by individual district and school staff.⁷¹ Within religious schools, the Supreme Court decision limiting funds to nonpublic schools has been a particular impetus for the increased use of technological instruction.⁷²

The survey of 2,200 Chapter 1 districts found the use of computers to vary widely, from "nonexistence or a minor addition to the materials at a teacher's disposal to a central feature around which other aspects of the program are organized."⁷³ The same survey found that the percentage of computer instruction varied considerably by district, school, and classroom. Computers were used most often for add-on drill-and-practice exercises. (This conforms to other research showing that compensatory education students had little access to the computer as anything other than a drill and practice machine.⁷⁴) The survey found that computers were also used to reinforce instruction, or for Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) or Computer Managed Instruction (CMI) packages that consumed a good proportion of instructional time--all of these alternatives resulting in rote learning. In only a few districts were computers used for word processing, as a way to extend staff capacity, or as a means to introduce higher order thinking skills. Thus Chapter 1 programs follow the general social-class divisions in the way computers are used, with middle-class students learning programming and a variety of other creative uses, while low-income students receive computers predominantly for rote learning.⁷⁵

Policy Changes. Although there are no large national studies comparing the relationship between various Chapter 1 instructional styles and student achievement, numerous smaller studies both of Chapter 1 and regular classrooms do provide insight into how low-income, low-achieving students might be helped to learn in more profitable ways. One author, commenting on Chapter 1 curriculum research, suggests that it is "essentially telling us that the way reading and math is being handled in most Chapter 1 programs is ultimately dysfunctional for the children we are trying to help. . ." And another suggests "a radical revision of compensatory education. . . from fragmentation to coherence and from differentiation to integration" which, in turn, may require "a fundamental change in how Chapter 1 itself is designed and administered."⁷⁶

Expressing the conclusions of several experts on instruction in Chapter 1, Designs for Compensatory Education conferees suggest the following policy changes:

1. "Chapter 1 services should enrich students' understanding of school subjects, rather than providing only remediation of basic skills."⁷⁷
2. "A substantial portion of Chapter 1 funds should be set aside to encourage and support projects that evaluate extant strategies of

compensatory education, that develop and evaluate new strategies, that generate new knowledge about the phenomenon of educational disadvantage and how to address it, and that develop personnel to work with disadvantaged students."⁷⁸

Birman et al. also suggest creating new incentives to encourage state and local administrators to pay more attention to improving Chapter 1 instructional programs.⁷⁹

How have parents participated in federally funded compensatory education, and are there new ways for them to function?

As part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Title I emerged during a period of faith that the government could give poor people the power and self-determination to help themselves out of poverty. Thus, accountability to parents in low-income, minority neighborhoods was seen as a means of making the schools better serve children. While Title I largely ignored the power of parents in their "natural" teaching and socializing roles at home, it stressed the importance of parent participation and decision-making in the school. Created as an integral part of the War on Poverty, Title I initially required that parents be "involved" in a number of ways in developing local school projects. In 1971, changes in legislation placed parents in the role of Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) at the district level, and in 1974, the law was changed to require parent-selected councils at the school level as well. These parental oversight groups were supposed to ensure that compensatory education services reached their intended constituencies, as well as to approve the curriculum and budget, and evaluate the program. Often school budgets included monies to pay for parents' time and expenses in coming to meetings. A 1976 National Institute of Education study of Title I identified assistance to parent groups as the single largest support service expense, absorbing more resources than food, nutrition, health, or counseling; nevertheless, (according to other research) only 14 percent of the parents in Title I schools were PAC members.⁸⁰ In addition, the majority of Title I projects used parents as classroom aides. The NIE study found that 24 percent of the compensatory education instruction was provided by paraprofessionals.⁸¹

More recently, comprehensive studies of parent involvement activities under Title I have provided further evidence that, despite some parents having played a real role in decision-making, ambiguities in the law, administrative and teacher resistance, and parental reluctance have all contributed to rather limited parent participation. The majority of parent councils did not participate in any form of decision-making, and most parent participation consisted "of little more than

providing perfunctory input into detailed plans previously developed by administrators."82 Birman et al. report that "many forms of parent involvement are less likely to occur among Chapter 1 schools with high poverty rates." They also note that, where involvement occurs, particularly in low-income areas, it does so only in the presence of "a strong commitment to parent involvement on the part of the states and school districts and active outreach by educators."83

As part of the 1981 shift from ESEA Title I to ECIA Chapter 1, the requirement of formal advisory councils was eliminated. Although PACs and other school-based parent involvement strategies are still permissible, and some school districts have maintained their PACs, most evaluators would say that parent involvement has become less important in Chapter 1 programs. On the other hand, the new regulations stress parents' home-based roles. Instead of parents' influencing what goes on in the schools, the goal has become to inform and train parents to more effectively prepare their children socially and academically for schooling. Nevertheless, Knapp et al. maintain that "it is also easy to overlook a long-term effect of federal policy regarding parent involvement in the decision making process: the requirements under Title I and, to a lesser extent, Chapter 1, have reinforced local commitment to making Chapter 1 programs responsive to community needs in some way, with ramifications for the design of programs."84

Still, the current emphasis is on parents as "partners" rather than "advisors"--on using them as volunteer helpers in the classroom and, more important, encouraging them to take on certain instructional roles with their children at home. Knapp et al.'s study of local variations in program design found that most districts had no organized programs for involving parents in an in-school instructional role. Even in districts with highly active parental involvement, parents rarely were directly involved with in-class instruction. The major exception to this was a district in which both the preschool and kindergarten Chapter 1 classes required parent classroom participation. Another district used parents to help out in after-school homework sessions. However, most frequent among those districts that involved parents at all in instruction were educational/training programs geared to prepare them to help their children at home, or less formalized ways of fostering and assisting home tutoring.85

Recent research on the effectiveness of the new slant to parent participation indicates that home-based parental involvement yields "positive outcomes for all participants, students, parents and teachers."86 One large study of teachers' practices in involving parents of low-income third- and fifth-graders in home-learning activities showed that, "two types of parents influence positive growth in reading achievement--parents

who are expected to help their children (those with more education) and parents who are helped to help their children (those whose children's teachers involve them in learning activities and increase their knowledge about the school program."⁸⁷ In fact, teachers were able to help lesser and better educated parents more nearly resemble each other in the assistance they gave their children.

Despite the apparent clarity of the research on parent education, the phenomenon has evoked some controversy. This is because, in providing parents with the information and skills they need to be more effective in their parenting roles, as teachers of their own children, and as supporting resources for the school, there can be a tendency both to blame poor and minority parents retroactively for doing something wrong, and an assumption that homogenizing the behavior of these parents to a white middle-class standard will make their children more likely to succeed.⁸⁸ Authors who are concerned about the homogenizing tendencies of these programs would build in safeguards to protect the diversity of participating parents.⁸⁹

Whatever the caveats, parent participation in a variety of forms remains important to the image of compensatory education programs. For example, among the policy recommendations by the Designs for Compensatory Education conferees is that:

"Chapter 1 schools should involve families in activities that enhance the educational capacity of the home and reduce the dissonance between the home and the school."⁹⁰

Does compensatory education improve achievement?

Funded by Congress in 1975, the Sustaining Effects Study provided a mixed bag of results. (Recall that compensatory education recipients seemed to include both those whose poverty and low achievement made them eligible for compensatory education and those whose didn't, which means that any analysis of achievement becomes confused by the mixed population being discussed.) According to Carter, achievement as a result of Title I services appeared to improve, though the gap between Title I and regular students still widened with grade level; and schools seemed to vary greatly in why or when they exited a child from the program, so that some students remained as little as a year while others stayed in the program as long as three years.⁹¹

Kennedy et al.'s recently published National Assessment gives us new information on both Chapter 1's immediate results and its longer-term effects on those students who receive its services. However, given what has been said about the relationship between test-taking and real knowledge, these results should be read with some caution. According to the

National Assessment, disadvantaged students in general have improved in achievement since 1965 relative to the achievement of the general population, although there is still a significant gap.

As for the one-year effects of Chapter 1 programs:

1. Students receiving Chapter 1 services experience larger increases in their standardized achievement test scores than comparable students who do not. However, their gains do not move them substantially toward the achievement levels of more advantaged youngsters.
2. Students participating in Chapter 1 mathematics programs gain more than those participating in Chapter 1 reading programs.
3. Students in early elementary Chapter 1 programs gain more than students participating in later-grade programs.
4. Evidence regarding program effects on student attitudes toward school is inconclusive.

Beyond a single school year, the longer-term program effects of Chapter 1 are:

1. Students who discontinue compensatory education appear gradually to lose the gains they made when receiving services.
2. Chapter 1 students with very low achievement scores appear to maintain their relative academic positions but not to move ahead. However, the evidence suggests they would have lost ground relative to their peers if they had not received compensatory education services.
3. No nationally-representative studies have examined the long-term effect of Chapter 1 programs on graduation rates, future education, or adult literacy.⁹²

Conclusion

The success of federally funded education has been a mixed at every juncture, from its targetting to those students in need of extra academic help and its provision of classroom

instruction, to its results. Because it is clear that poor and low-achieving students need something, and because Chapter 1 is in place at the national, state, and local levels, it is difficult to posit radical change. Nevertheless, there are serious problems with the structure of Chapter 1 programs, as well as with the instruction that occurs in them. To the extent that time allocated to Chapter 1 is taken away from other instruction, Chapter 1 is not necessarily an enrichment. Moreover, there are great inefficiencies in grouping and regrouping students during the school day. Finally, the teaching of Chapter 1 children appears to lag behind research findings on both equity and pedagogy, often providing students with skills that are both divorced from other learning and too fragmented to be generally useful.

The National Assessment provides a summary of some of the ambiguities of the programs, arguing that:

Chapter 1 may facilitate learning by providing small classes, even though these smaller groupings occur for only a portion of the school day. On the other hand, research on the features of effective schools suggests that Chapter 1 may also hinder student achievement by restricting the school's ability to create the shared academic goals, high expectations, and strong achievement-oriented school culture that are recognized to be important to student achievement. These findings also suggest that disadvantaged students might learn even more if, for instance, the sizes of their regular classes were reduced substantially, or if Chapter 1 teachers were more fully incorporated in the school's overall instructional program.⁹³

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