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AUTHOR Passow, A. Harry
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ABSTRACT

It is more than a quarter century since Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, the first major Federal legislation authorizing funds for compensatory education for the disadvantaged, came into effect. In 1981, Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (ECIA) replaced Title I. Some Federal funding requirements were modified, but the program functions serving poor children remained essentially intact. Three quarters of all elementary schools, nearly half of middle and junior high schools, and one quarter of high schools are involved. The history and background of compensatory education are reviewed, emphasizing the diverse nature of Chapter 1 programs. In spite of this diversity, most emphasis has been on basic skills and small-group instruction, with the general approaches being pull-out, add-on, in-class, and replacement programs. A number of studies of Chapter 1 effectiveness and outcomes are reviewed. The most important new trends in compensatory education have been defined by the Hawkins Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, which spearheaded a shift from fiscal accountability to educational accountability. Its provisions incorporate much of what has been learned about closing educational gaps for the disadvantaged. (Contains 26 references.) (SLD)

Title I ESEA/Chapter 1 ECIA: A Quarter Century Effort to Provide Educational Equity and Equality

A. Harry Passow
Jacob H. Schiff Professor Emeritus of Education
Teachers College, Columbia University
New York, New York 10027

What happened in the United States since the April 1992 riots in Los Angeles, is a sharp reminder of how far America has to go yet to achieve meaningful educational equity, equality and excellence. A few days after the riots, President Bush's Press Secretary, Marlin Fitzwater, blamed the riots and violence on the Great Society programs of the 1960s. The focus of this paper is on one of the first, best funded, and longest lasting or most durable of those programs--Title I (ESEA)/Chapter 1 (ECIA).

It is now more than a quarter of a century since Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, the first major federal legislation authorizing funds for compensatory education. In Title I ESEA, Congress declared it to be "the policy of the United States to provide financial assistance...to local educational agencies serving areas with concentrations of children from low-income families...." In the 1981 Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (ECIA), Chapter 1 replaced Title I and some of the federal funding requirements were modified but the program functions serving poor children remained

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essentially intact.

Slightly more than five million students participate in Chapter 1--"three-quarters of all elementary schools, about half of middle and junior high schools, and one quarter of high schools" are involved (Millsap et al., 1992, p. i). For 1990-91, annual funding was $ 5.3 billion so that Chapter 1 dominates federal spending on elementary and secondary education. Twenty-seven years after Title I was initially funded, its successor, Chapter 1 ECIA, continues to be the cornerstone of America's compensatory education efforts--programs designed to close the educational gap between the poor/minorities and other students.

From the outset, Title I was controversial, and Chapter 1's effectiveness continues to be debated. For example, in his message to Congress on educational reform some five years after Title I had become law, President Richard Nixon commented on the "series of ambitious, idealistic, and costly programs for the disadvantaged based on the assumption that extra resources would equalize learning opportunity and eventually eliminate poverty." He observed that a few such programs had dramatically improved educational achievement, many had provided important auxiliary services such as better nutrition and medical care, and some programs may have helped prevent some children from falling even further behind. However, Nixon concluded, "the best available evidence indicates that most compensatory education programs have not measurably helped poor children catch up" (Menges, n.d., p.14). Nixon's message to Congress followed a controversial negative

evaluation of the Head Start program and was aimed at getting all compensatory education funds drastically reduced, or better still, eliminated.

A Brief Look at Compensatory Education

There are many programs aimed at the disadvantaged populations and compensatory education activities are not limited to Title I/ Chapter 1, but those programs constitute the largest single source of funding and the most focused. In 1978, the National Institute of Education observed in the Executive Summary of its "Compensatory Education Study" report that:

> [Compensatory education is] one of the Nation's most important efforts to equalize educational opportunity. The concept stems from the recognition that children from disadvantaged backgrounds frequently do not the same educational benefits as their peers. Many attend schools in districts that have low overall revenues or high concentrations of disadvantaged families...Compensatory education is intended to ease those problems by providing disadvantaged children with additional services to help them complete their education on more equal terms (National Institute of Education, 1978, p. 1).

There has never been a question that school districts with large concentrations of children from disadvantaged backgrounds have substantially lower academic achievement levels, higher dropout rates, lower college-going rates, higher representation in special education programs higher teen-age pregnancy rates, poorer school attendance rates, more discipline problems, greater teacher turnover rates, etc.. What is at issue are the causes or explanations for differentials in educational performance. There is no shortage of theories and hypotheses and some of these serve as the bases or rationales for compensatory education programs and

activities.

Even the notion of compensatory education has no single definition nor is it a single program or set of practices. As Carter (1984) observed in one of the 20 reports which comprised an evaluation of Title I (ESEA) called the Sustaining Effects Study: "There is no simple explanation or description of compensatory education (CE); it is an amalgam of many different programs, practices, and services" (p. 5).

The more than 30,000 Title I projects across the nation's school districts reflect diverse treatments which are not readily converted into overarching objectives nor successful program models. Programs differ in the nature of services or treatments, strategies employed, locus of activities, basic intent of interventions, focus of diagnosis or prescriptive activities and even sources of funding. Most compensatory programs are additive. Some deal with curriculum and instructional strategy changes; others with personnel or organizational changes and most, not all, are school-based. Title I/Chapter 1 programs are found at all levels--preschool, elementary and secondary--with the majority concentrated at the pre-school and elementary levels. As Natriello et al. (1987) observed, funds have "been used to develop special curricula for enhancing cognitive skills, especially the subjects of reading, writing and arithmetic...to provide classroom aides and for the recruitment and training of teachers who specialize in teaching disadvantaged students...[and on] health and nutritional services" (p. 52).

Despite the tremendous diversity in Title I/Chapter 1 programs, the emphasis in most has been on the basic skills of reading and mathematics and small group instruction in a pullout setting, with the nature and content of services determined by the individual school district or even individual schools. An analysis of the various instructional and supporting services provided almost five million pupils in Chapter 1 programs in 1983-84 showed the following distributions: instructional--reading (75%), mathematics (46%), language arts (22%), other instructional areas (9%), limited English (12%), and vocational (1%); and supporting--health and nutrition (15%), attendance and guidance (17%), other supporting (7%) and transportation (5%),

For example, the improvement of reading and language skills was sought through new curricula, teaching methods, instructional materials, personal deployment and "instructional systems." In the 1960s, new basal reader series and supplementary materials were produced, including self-instructional programmed materials, reading aids, mechanical devices and various technologies. Whole new "reading systems" were designed. New technologies included language laboratories, talking typewriters, teaching machines,and, more recently, a variety of computer based instructional programs. Professionals and paraprofessionals were used in a variety of teaching and tutoring situations. Various publishers and industrial groups produced new materials aimed at enhancing "curricular relevance" and stressing cultural pluralism. The same multifaceted approach can be found in compensatory programs focused on

mathematics.

From the outset, an evaluation component has been a requirement for funding of Title I/Chapter 1 programs. However, the diversity in programs and services, in the ways and means that programs and services are delivered, in the goals and objectives, in the populations involved and served, in the levels and sources of funding, and in other dimensions, make generalizations about the effectiveness of such programs difficult.

Approaches to Chapter 1 Delivery Services

Four distinct approaches have been used to provide Chapter 1 instruction and services:

1. Pullout Programs. Programs that provide instruction in locations outside the regular classroom constitute the most commonly used approach to compensatory education. Carter (1984) summarized the arguments for pullout programs as follows:

> 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 as higher quality of cognitive monitoring, on-task monitoring, and organization of activities (p. 5).

However, Carter noted that pullout programs can also have unintended negative consequences, including: (a) decreased instructional time due to moving to a different location and to time devoted to special compensatory education services; (b) fragmentation due to students' failure to make the connection between the subject taught in the regular classroom and in the Chapter 1 setting; (c) stigma attached to students who are pulled out of regular classes for special instruction, resulting lower expectations and simpler assignments from regular teachers; (d) lack of communication and coordination between the regular teacher and the Chapter 1 teacher; and (e) segregation as minority students are pulled out of less segregated classrooms to receive Chapter 1 services in more segregated pullout classrooms (p. 5).

2. Add-On Programs. Pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, after-s5chool and summer school programs constitute the most commonly used add-on programs. Pre-kindergarten programs are not of a single mold. They represent a wide range and variation in goals and objectives, conceptual design, curriculum, strategies and resources. All aim at increasing children's in-school academic achievement and many also have affective goals, such as developing more positive attitudes toward school and schooling on the part of the children and their families, and enhancing feelings of self-worth.

3. In-Class Programs. Until recently, in-class programs for delivering Chapter 1 services were relatively rare. Many of the arguments for in-class services and programs are essentially those which are raised against the pullout programs--they decrease travel time between classes, reduce stigma and lowered expectations, diminish fragmentation through articulation of regular and compensatory instruction, and avoid further segregation.

4. Replacement Programs. For the most part, replacement programs consist of reading and/or mathematics programs which last the equivalent of a class period although, especially in the early grades, some districts have long-day replacement programs (Ascher, 1987, p. 14).

From the outset, all of the delivery approaches for Chapter 1 have been seriously criticized. Levin (1988) has argued that the dominant pullout and remedial aspects of such programs and services actually impede students from becoming academically able:

> (1) it institutionalizes them as slow learners, thus reducing expectations for their success; (2) it slows down the pace of instruction so that they get farther and farther behind their peers; (3) it emphasizes the mechanics of basic skills without giving them the substance that will keep them interested and motivated; (4) it provides no way to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and advantaged students; and (5) it does not help teachers and parents formulate strategies to improve learning (p. 2).

Mixed at Best Title I/Chapter 1 Evaluation Results

Numerous studies have been done on the effectiveness of Title I and other compensatory program with the results equivocal at

best. For example, Mullins and Summers (1983) examined some 47 studies conducted between 1969-1980 on the overall effectiveness of compensatory education and concluded that "the evaluation literature is so vast and its results so varied that virtually any hypothesis can be supported by a number of studies" (p, 339). The major findings of Mullins and Summers were these:

--The programs have a positive, though small effect on the achievement of disadvantaged students.

--The results of most studies are overstated because of the upward biases inherent in several standard statistical procedures.

--The gains appear to be greater in earlier years, and the evidence is fairly strong that early gains are not sustained.

--No significant association exists between dollars spent and achievement gains.

--No approach or program characteristic was consistently found to be effective (p. 339).

Although Mullins and Summers decided that we seemed to know what doesn't work but were uncertain about what will work, they believed there were strong arguments for three policies--all of which have been considered over the years but never fully implemented:

--Spend compensatory education funds on greater number of low achievers, rather than spend more money on the same number of students.

--Rearrange specific inputs, rather than add new ones. Studies have found some practices effective; others are likely to be particularly ineffective. The appropriate policy is not just to add to the effective ones but also to subtract from the ineffective ones.

--Allow a range of compensatory education to exist. Since the evidence suggests no one program will work across the country and for all years of schooling, it is

likely that only programs developed for specific categories of children with specific socioeconomic backgrounds will be effective.

Another example of the complexities and ambiguities of evaluating Title I is found in the 20 separate reports which comprised the 1984 Sustaining Effects Study (SES), "the largest and most comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of Title I ever undertaken" (Carter, 1984, p. 6). The basic evaluation problem was that Title I was a massive funding program, not a unified or coherent treatment program, with students receiving a variety of services delivered in very diverse ways. One of the many conclusions reached was that "Title I was effective for students who were only moderately disadvantaged but did it did not improve the relative achievement of the most disadvantaged part of the school population" (p. 12).

One criterion for judging the effectiveness of Title I programs has been the extent to which the achievement gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged has been closed. In 1983 when the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reported that "Students with poor academic track records made some big gains in reading and held their own in mathematics and science over the course of the seventies," a panel attributed these gains to compensatory education such as Title I (NAEP, 1983, pp.1-2). Levin's (1987) observation about the effects of compensatory education was more moderate:

> Although there is some evidence that the gap between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged student achievement has narrowed slightly in the last two decades, the gap is still considerable. Typically, the disadvantaged are

performing at the 25th percentile or lower, and their probability of completing secondary school is only about fifty percent (pp. 6-7).

In 1983, shortly after Chapter 1 superseded Title I, Congress mandated a comprehensive assessment which was to deal with:

> services delivered; recipients of services; background and training of teachers and staff; allocation of funds (to school sites); coordination with other programs; effectiveness of program on students' basic and higher order academic skills, school attendance, and future education; and a national profile of the way in which local educational agencies implement activities (Kennedy, Birman and Demaline, 1986, p. iii).

As part of the mandated National Assessment Study, Kennedy (1986a) reviewed evidence concerning disadvantaged children and found that "the achievement of disadvantaged children [had] improved since 1965, especially in reading, relative to achievement of the general population" (p. vii). However, although the Chapter 1 students experienced larger increases in standardized achievement test scores than comparable students who did not receive such services, the gap between their achievement levels and those of more advantaged students had not closed substantially. Chapter 1 students who participated in mathematics programs gained more than those participating in reading programs. Those who participated in early Chapter 1 programs gained more than those in later-grade programs. The evidence on student attitudes toward schools was inconclusive. The researchers reported no adequate methods had been developed for ascertaining the relationship between standardized achievement scores and program costs (pp. vii-viii).

As for the longer-term effects, Kennedy (1986a) found that the achievement gap between the disadvantaged and advantaged students

widened during the summer months and that summer programs, most of which were not very academically rigorous, did little to narrow the gap. Those students who discontinued the program tend slowly to lose the gains they made when receiving services. Moreover, Chapter 1 students with very low achievement scores tend to maintain that relative academic position rather than move ahead, although the evidence suggests that they would have fallen even further behind had they not received services. Kennedy (1986a) reported that nationally-representative studies which examined the long-term effect of Chapter 1 programs on graduation rates, further education or adult literacy had not been done.

A related National Assessment Study which examined the issue of who should receive Chapter 1 services (Kennedy, 1986b) found that "the strong link between poverty of the school and its student achievement [provided] clear support for Chapter 1 legislation that emphasizes first poverty and then achievement in the dispensation of Chapter 1 services" (p. 4). Further, Kennedy et al. found that it is the intensity of the poverty experience--"the length of time the child spends in poverty and concentration of poor children attending the child's school"--which is strongly related to educational outcomes; that black children and minorities are "experiencing a qualitatively different form of poverty than other children experience"; and that poor children move twice as frequently as the non-poor (pp.6-7). Kennedy and her colleagues concluded that "students were increasingly likely to fall behind grade levels as their families experienced longer spells of

poverty, and that achievement scores of all students--not just poor students--declined as the proportion of poor students in a school increase" (p. 107). Although these findings regarding the correlation between the intensity and longevity of poverty and the higher proportion of the poverty population and low achievement scores clearly has implications for curriculum and school and classroom climates, they have received only inadequate attention by policy makers and educational planners.

As to the question of whether Chapter 1 services went to those who most need them and whether there are needy students who are not served, the National Assessment concluded "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 (Ascher, 1987, p. 5). Over half the students who were both poor and reading below the 50th percentile, and 60 percent of students who scored below the 25th percentile, were not receiving compensatory education services, while 11 percent of Chapter 1 participants scored above the 50th percentile (Ascher, p. 6). The study simply sharpened the issue of providing services to the socioeconomically disadvantaged students (i.e., the poor) vis-a-vis the educationally disadvantaged when the two do not overlap for decision-makers and practitioners alike.

Curriculum and Instruction in Chapter 1 Programs

The history of compensatory education has been essentially one of curriculum differentiation rather than pedagogical differentiation. Chapter 1 students have been exposed to different

different meaning "inferior" to many critics of compensatory education.

Levin (1987) has observed that disadvantaged students enter schools with a learning gap in those areas schools value and that they are unable to maintain a normal instructional pace until they acquire knowledge and learning schools. Thus, he argues,

> such youngsters are placed in less demanding instructional settings--either by being pulled out of their regular classrooms or by adapting the regular classroom to their "needs"--to provide remedial or compensatory educational services. This approach appears to be rational and compassionate, but it has the opposite consequences. (p. 8)

In Levin's view--one which is shared by other critics--this process lowers the learning expectations of both students and teachers, stigmatizes them with a label of inferiority, is not really designed to bring students up to grade level and close the achievement gap, slows the pace of instruction and places emphasis on "endless repetition of material through drill-and-practice" (p. 10).

Increasingly, there has been a growing recognition that curriculum and instruction for Chapter 1 students may actually be dysfunctional. As Doyle (1986) has contended:

> The conventional wisdom of instructional design for compensatory education is wrong. 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...the instructional designs typical of compensatory education fragment the curricular experiences of students and, thus, fail to provide them with the coherent mental representations necessary to do school work. Under such

> circumstances, the content and norms of behaviors in low-achieving groups [are] not geared to advancement into regular school programs (p.IV-269).

One goal of Chapter 1 programs has been to close the gap between the achievement of the disadvantaged and the advantaged so that the latter are able to join the educational mainstream and succeed. Only a few Chapter 1 programs have aimed at dealing with the broader cognitive needs of disadvantaged students--their thinking, feeling, and learning-how-to-learn skills, as well as their decoding and computational skills--and to make science, social studies, health, nutrition, the arts and other components of the general education curriculum more "relevant" and, therefore, more meaningful.

Most studies indicate that there are few efforts to coordinate various elements of Chapter 1 with the core or regular programs. Seldom are there procedures for cooperative/joint planning among the various content area and categorical program teachers at the building and, even more rare, are there district-or building-level policies which would foster cooperative planning among the various suppliers of programs and services. The consequence of this lack of coordination is that Chapter 1 students often end up with less instructional time than students not served by such programs. Regular classroom teachers often report that Chapter 1 reading resource teachers rarely offer instructional information, suggestions or materials. Formal or informal discussions between regular classroom and Chapter 1 teachers on their students' needs, progress or concerns to be rare. Chapter 1 teachers are often

unable to identify the reading instruction material their remedial students use in the regular classroom; thus, instruction in the two settings are generally independent of each other and unrelated. Too often, regular classroom and Chapter 1 reading resource teachers are confused about who is responsible for which aspects of instructional planning and delivery.

Reading is often taught as an "unrelated skill"--i.e., reading of reading texts, not as a skill needed for other learning and study areas. As Zumwalt (1986) put it:

> The negative impact of ability grouping, pullout programs and the use of paraprofessionals to remediate reading--all practices found in Chapter 1 programs--are compounded by remedial reading programs which take the learner through a piecemeal sequence of unconnected objectives with heavy reliance on workbooks, an emphasis on decoding to the neglect of comprehension, and an insistence on mastery before moving on (p. IV-210).

Increasingly, Chapter 1 has been criticized for its emphasis on remediation rather than development. Studies indicate that Chapter 1 students receive more instruction in factual and lower-level skills than in higher order skills. For example, in pullout mathematics programs, students are more likely to receive drill-and-practice in basic computational facts and skills than instruction in higher-order problem-solving skills. Cognitive science research underscores the importance of emphasis on meaning and understanding beginning in the early elementary grades. Chapter 1 students appear to be getting even less instruction in comprehension and meaning than their more advantaged counterparts, despite the fact that research indicates that they are capable of engaging in profiting from such instruction. The teachers of

Chapter 1 students tend to put far less emphasis on meaning and more on "accurate reading" than they do for higher achieving students despite the research findings that indicate that "from the very beginning children should be given all of the elements necessary for constructing meaning...children must be made aware that reading is always directed toward meaning" (p. 9).

Researchers such as Peterson (1986) have concluded that low-achieving students can successfully be taught a variety of cognitive strategies--such as memory, elaboration, self-questioning, rehearsal, planning and goal setting, comprehension, problem-solving, hypothesis generating and study skills. Peterson asserts that thinking skills intervention provides low-achieving students with the cognitive strategies and processes that they can use to learn more effectively. Critics argue that greater emphasis should be put on the development of student's cognitive strategies, the strategies needed for learning (i.e., learning how-to-learn skills) and less on drill-and-practice remediation. As Peterson (1986) points out:

> For lower-ability (or lower achieving) students, increasing their levels of engagement may be a necessary but insufficient condition for improving their higher level and conceptual thinking.... For these students, what might be needed is instruction that ensures not only that they are engaged, but also that they are engaged in effective cognitive processes and strategies that will lead to improving their achievement of higher-level skills... (p. 11-32).

In reading instruction, Calfee (1986a) believes that what is taught disadvantaged students are relatively low-level skills which are "not transferable over time to increasing demands, nor do they

transfer to the higher-level knowledge and skills that comprise literacy" (p. IV-73). Our focus ought to be to help students acquire "a metacognitive, strategic understanding of literacy [so that] they will be more able to relate previous experiences to new situations...[and] will be able to transfer prior literacy skills and knowledge, rather than approaching each situation as if it were unique" (Calfee, et al., 1986b, p. 15).

If remedial reading programs fail to provide opportunities for cognitive development, its mathematics counterpart narrows the students' focus even further. Romberg (1986) notes that compensatory programs in mathematics fall into three broad categories: enrichment programs, differential programs and developmentally based programs. Enrichment programs are based on the argument that "low-income children lacked a variety of experiences and needed these experiences and intellectual challenges in order to make them similar to the middle-class students" (p. IV-9). Differential programs are based on the assumption that disadvantaged children need to be treated differently because they are different from middle-class students. Two kinds of differential programs are provided. One consists of independet-paced programs which take into account only rate of learning, using hierarchical behavioral objectives, mastery and frequent assessment. The other, the highly-structured approach uses direct drill methods with an emphasis on right answers, not appropriate processes. Developmentally-based programs are geared to the child's conceptual level after his/her thought processes and

cognitive functioning have been determined. Romberg (1986) argues that none of these approaches "would give low-income students an opportunity to do any important mathematics" (p.IV-11). Romberg believes that all students--advantaged and disadvantaged alike--are capable of conceiving of "math as a language and a science which orders the universe, a tool for representing situations, defining relationships, solving problems and thinking" p. IV-17).

Reading and mathematics are the subject or skill areas that constitute the bulk of Chapter 1 instruction. But increasingly, triggered by cognitive science research, a curriculum dimension being explored as possibly enhancing the achievement of Chapter 1 students is that of teaching of thinking skills. Adams (1986) contends that: "For Chapter 1 students especially, the direct teaching of thinking promises to be the best institutionalizable means of developing the competencies and attitudes they need to make the most of their schooling and their lives" (p. IV-115).

There are many other issues regarding current practices which continue to be discussed and debated such as parent involvement, appropriate teaching strategies (e.g., "active teaching," direct instruction, etc.), affective education (i.e., feelings, emotions, values, relationships, etc.), cultural pluralism, bilingualism, classroom organization, ability grouping and tracking, and others.

Program and Curricular Challenges and Coherence

Passow (1989) has argued that a significant problem that impedes the overcoming of underachievement amongst disadvantaged students is that Chapter 1 programs and services--mainly pullout

programs for remedial reading and mathematics--are considered the whole, or at least the major component, of the curriculum for this population. The curriculum for disadvantaged students should be a rich and balanced one, as rich and balanced as that provided high-achieving students. It should not be limited to a narrow conception of compensatory as remedial education. A watered-down, diluted curriculum, limited to instruction aimed at success on tests of minimum skills, does not constitute an appropriate curriculum for the disadvantaged any more than it does for other students. This is not to say that student success on basic tests of reading and achievement is not important, but rather that minimal competencies are only a part of the total educational goals and objectives for all students, including the disadvantaged. While the gap in test scores may be closed somewhat by such efforts, the more significant total educational gap only widens.

Disadvantaged students need access to a sound core of general education curriculum--reading and language arts, writing, mathematics, social studies, science, fine arts, health, physical education, and even possibly a second language--in many cases their mother tongue. They need access to high-level vocational and technical curricula and certainly to as rich an array of electives as is available to more advantaged learners. The skills, knowledge, understandings, and insights which constitute a general and common education (especially at the elementary level) are as essential for the disadvantaged child as for middle-class youngsters. These constitute the "cultural imperatives" and access

to this general education curriculum should not be blocked by the limitations of compensatory education. Clearly to argue this point is not to accept the existing general education curriculum as not requiring major improvement.

The most telling criticism of many Chapter 1 programs is that the pullout activities contribute to curricular fragmentation and result in the students "missing out" on significant portions of the core curriculum simply by not being in the classroom when instruction is provided. In extreme cases, Chapter 1 students have been known to be out of the regular class to such an extent that they received no social studies or science instruction throughout their elementary careers. It is not clear how widespread such an extreme outcome of pulling students from the regular classroom is, but the generic problem is a real one.

The problems of articulation and coherence can only be dealt with if there is school-wide planning involving both Chapter 1 and other staff members, and if staff and curriculum development efforts are aimed at the total school staff. As long as Chapter 1 and other compensatory education services and activities are perceived as the responsibility of a separate, parallel staff of special personnel, regular classroom teachers will continue to leave the problems of educating the disadvantaged to those teachers.

Recent and Promising Developments in Chapter 1

After more than a quarter of a century of compensatory education efforts, a pessimist would see far too little

educational advancement and distributive justice in terms of outcomes. An optimist, however, might conclude that there does appear to be learning from the experiences of the past, some syntheses of research about more effective instruction and even a beginning to dealing with the problems of implementation.

For example, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation commissioned papers and literature reviews dealing with effective curricula and instruction in the areas of literacy, mathematics, instructional strategies and classroom management, and the school/community environment for a "Study of Academic Instruction for Disadvantaged Students" (Knapp and Shields, 1990).

Knapp and Turnbull (1990) reviewed the scholarship, theory and experimentation on effective teaching in schools serving populations of students from impoverished families in the commissioned papers and literature reviews and found many flaws in "conventional wisdom" about curriculum and teaching of the disadvantaged and considerable promise in alternatives to such wisdom. Among the alternatives to conventional wisdom that Knapp and Turnbull suggest are the following:

> An emphasis on the knowledge students <u>do</u> bring to school rather than an emphasis on learners' deficits--that is what the "disadvantaged" student lacks in knowledge, intellectual facility, or experience.
>
> Explicit teaching of how to function in the "culture" of the school.
>
> Early emphasis on appropriate "higher order" tasks instead of curriculum that teaches discrete skills in a fixed sequence from "basic" to "higher order" skills.

> Extensive opportunities to learn and apply skills in context.
>
> An emphasis on meaning and understanding in all academic instruction.
>
> A combination of teacher-directed and learner-directed instruction rather than exclusive or heavy reliance on teacher-directed instruction.
>
> Variation in classroom management approaches depending on the kind of academic work being done rather than classroom management principles uniformly applied across the school day so as to forestall disorder in the classroom.
>
> Some use of grouping arrangements that mix ability levels rather than long-term grouping of students by achievement or ability..
>
> More flexibility in grouping arrangements (p.i).

Noting that there is a fundamental underlying curriculum assumption that certain "basic" skills must be mastered before students can and should be taught more "advanced" skills--e.g., reading comprehension, written composition and mathematical reasoning--Means and Knapp (1991) contend that cognitive science research suggests a very different view about the nature of children's learning and appropriate instruction. They point out:

> By discarding assumptions about skill hierarchies and attempting to understand children's competencies as constructed and evolving both inside and outside school, researchers are developing intervention strategies that start with what children know and provide explicit models of proficient thinking in areas that have been term "advanced" or "higher order" (p. 1)

A number of classroom studies have documented the fact that for disadvantaged students the emphasis is on teaching individual lower-level skills and that they "receive less instruction in higher-order skills than do more advantaged students" (p.2). The result, Means and Knapp point out, is a more repetitive, less

challenging curriculum in which "disadvantaged students receive less exposure to problem-solving tasks in which there is more than one possible answer and they have to structure the problem for themselves" (p. 2). They see the emergence of new models which stress "the kind of content generally regarded as 'conceptual,' 'higher order' or advanced,'" emphases that "have long been accepted as appropriate for teaching gifted children, older children, or those from educationally advantaged backgrounds" (p. 19). Means and Knapp believe that there is emerging a new attitude toward the disadvantaged learner, one in which teachers appreciate the intellectual accomplishments all young learners bring to school, emphasize building on strengths rather than just remediating deficits, and learn about children's cultures to avoid mistaking differences for deficits. (p.7)

Means and Knapp perceive a reshaping of the curriculum in which teachers focus on complex, meaningful problems; embed instruction on basic skills in the context of more global tasks; and make connections with students' out-of-school experience and culture. (p. 7)

The new instructional strategies which Means and Knapp perceive emerging would have teachers model powerful thinking strategies, encourage multiple approaches, provide scaffolding to enable students to accomplish complex tasks. (p. 7)

The final report of the National Assessment of Chapter 1 Study (Birman, et. al., 1987) recommended school districts adopt "approaches that increase the total time Chapter 1 students receive

instruction in subjects such as reading, mathematics and language arts (Moore and Funkhouser, 1990, p. v). Five extended time strategies are proposed: extended day kindergarten, before/after school programs, home-based programs, Saturday programs and extended school year/summer school (pp.4-5). Moore and Funkhouser linked findings from existing research with data "from 12 Chapter 1 projects that have demonstrated some degree of success in enhancing student achievement through extended time approaches (p. 41). They concluded as follows:

> Increases in instructional time will consistently produce increases in student achievement when staff use this time effectively.
>
> The effective use of time involves instructional practices that research has associated with enhanced student learning. These include appropriately challenging curricula, individualized instruction, small instructional groups, direct and indirect teaching techniques as appropriate to the academic skills being taught, classroom management that conveys order and a seriousness if purpose, and parent involvement in the instructional process.
>
> Increases in instructional time may be especially beneficial for low achieving students who may require time to master specific skills or acquire thinking skills necessary to function effectively in the regular classroom (pp. v-vi).

Finally, there has been a major legislative development which has considerable promise. The Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (PL 100-297) represents the most important legislation affecting the disadvantaged since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) which it modified (Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1990).

The goal of the Hawkins-Stafford Amendments, representing a

significant shift from fiscal accountability to educational accountability, is "to improve educational opportunities of educationally deprived children by helping such children succeed in the regular program, attain grade-level proficiency, and improve achievement in basic and more advanced skills."

Perhaps most significantly, as Millsap et al. (1992) pointed out:

> For the first time, the federal government served notice that schools must show improved achievement among the lowest achieving students and that resources should be targeted for those schools that do not. Unlike any previous legislation, the amendments prescribed that districts and states must take corrective steps when student performance falls below preset standards (that is, shows no gain).
>
> The legislation also outlined steps to be taken when schools do not met performance standards, beginning with the implementation of a school program improvement plan. If schools do not make substantial progress after one full year of implementation, schools are then to implement a joint state/district improvement plan. States have a continuing oversight role until the school building's Chapter 1 program improves. To provide incentive grants to districts with schools in program improvement, each state administers a separate budget of program improvement funds, which is also specified in the federal amendments (p. i).

Based on research findings about effective educational programs and criticisms of Chapter 1 programs, the Hawkins-Stafford Amendments made three other statutory provisions. First, "school-wide projects, where high poverty schools may spend Chapter 1 funds in a way that benefits all students in the school, without regard to their achievement levels" were encouraged with the longstanding requirement of local matching funds withdrawn and accountability requirements introduced (p.ii). Second, Hawkins-Stafford added "new language on parent involvement activities (including

evaluating the effectiveness of parent involvement)," reinstated the emphasis on parental involvement eliminated in 1981 and provided for "training parents to help their children through home learning activities, as well as involving parents in schoolwide projects and schools in need of improvement" (p. ii). Third, "greater coordination with the regular school program [such as special education and programs for limited-English-proficient students] was urged, buttressed by the new regulatory requirement that performance in the regular school program was to be assessed in addition to the assessment of Chapter 1 performance" (p. ii).

A study of the implementation of the major new provisions of the Hawkins-Stafford Amendments by the Abt Associates (Millsap et al., 1992) suggests that there is beginning to be an impact. For example during the 1989-91 school years, some 4,000 districts had identified at least one school as in need of improvement. More than 10,000 schools were identified. Most schools implementing school improvement plans take the maximum time allowed--one full year for planning and another for implementation with district and state offices providing technical assistance.

To determine the need for improvement, the most widely used measure for assessing school quality is "the aggregate performance measure of a normal curve equivalent (NCE) gain greater than zero ...used for aggregate performance and as a desired outcome" (Millsap, p.iv). Moreover, very few districts have "established procedures for assessing the needs of Chapter 1 students who have not shown gains after two consecutive years in the programs"

(p. v).

Between 1989-1991, the number of schoolwide projects more than doubled from 621 to 1,362 with the most common components involving reduced class size, supplemental services and staff development.

As for parent involvement, almost three-fourths of the districts initiated some kind of home-based education activities designed to reinforce classroom instruction. Almost half were using liaison staff to work with parents. There had been an increase (from 11% to 22%) in the linking with other programs providing adult literacy. The Abt study noted that "the more effective parent involvement programs are characterized by strong leadership, usually dedicated staff, a welcoming and respectful attitude toward parents, and recognition of the special needs of disadvantaged parents" (pp.vi-vii).

Except for schoolwide projects which integrate Chapter 1 into the regular program, the effect of Hawkins-Stafford on program coordination seems to be a modest one.

After two years of implementation of the Hawkins-Stafford Chapter 1 Amendments, the Abt Study came to a number of conclusions:

--The Amendments endeavored "to provide leverage for school change by holding schools accountable for student growth and by providing financial assistance to poorly performing schools." Despite questions about the accuracy of the methods by which schools needing improvement are identified and a very "significant underestimate of the magnitude of needed program improvement effort," the Amendments were moving the program in

the right direction. Abt recommended multiple measures and composite scores to identify schools needing improvement, urged "that the magnitude of the effort be reinforced and that the improvement effort extend until improved student performance has been sustained for several years" (p.viii).

--Schoolwide projects seemed to have brought Chapter 1 to "the forefront of ideas about educational improvement" and to "have created a real sense of excitement in high [poverty schools with principals and teachers welcoming the resources and the freedom to make changes they believe will improve their schools" (p.viii).

--The more effective Chapter 1 parent involvement programs tend to take a comprehensive approach involving both parents and children, using the parents' native language, funding parent specialists or parent liaisons for better outreach and actively disseminating good practices.

--There has only been weak implementation of the procedures for identifying students who, after two consecutive years. have not made gains and too few districts are changing their programs to deal with these students' needs. "The message implicit in this new provision--that students should not spend their entire school career in Chapter 1--has not been heard" (p. ix). Nevertheless, the process is worth pursuing, especially when a case management approach is employed.

--There appear to be serious limitations to the capacity of State Education Agency Chapter 1 offices to exercise programmatic

leadership regarding local Chapter 1 programs. These SEA capacity limits will pose problem escalation since the Amendments call for the SEA offices to play an increasing role in local school improvement.

An example of one school district's response to the new possibilities and grater flexibility provided by the Hawkins-Stafford School Improvement Amendments is provided by Prince George's County in Maryland. Specifically, the opportunity to spend 5% of their funds on innovative projects has made it possible "to improve programs using teachers' and administrators' best judgment without being burdened by federal requirements." In addition, the Amendments removed "the matching requirement to use funds to improve the program in the entire school if at least 75% of the school's students are poor."

In 1991-92, for example, the County set aside $ 168,000 for seven different innovative projects, allocating between $ 10-50,000 for each. These projects fell into four categories:

--Two projects promoting incentive payments to schools that have demonstrated significant progress and success in attaining the goals of compensatory education.

--Two projects providing training for teachers and assistants paid with Chapter 1 funds.

--Three projects which encourage parent involvement.

--One project to provide assistance to schools which do not show substantial progress toward meeting Chapter 1 goals.

This year, with the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education, the Prince George's County Chapter 1 program undertook a staff development project to provided intensive training to

classroom teachers, Chapter 1 staff and administrators focused on the development and integration of thinking skills in reading and mathematics. 250 participants from 41 schools attend either five workshop days in reading/writing or six days in mathematics. A two-tier approach is used. Tier One uses the "trainer of trainers" model and involves seven instructional specialists "who will be trained to assist in the delivery of services, provide follow-up activities at the school-level and monitor the participants' utilization of skills acquired during the workshop. Tier Two provides training to the classroom teachers, Chapter 1 staff and principals who have committed themselves to full participation in the five or six day workshop sequences. The initial evaluation focus is on gathering evidence that, based on their involvement, participating staff members have changed their instructional practices with respect to developing and integrating thinking skills into math and reading instruction.

In addition, a two-day conference of participants in the Prince George's County Chapter 1/NUA focused on the theme of "Developing Thoughtful Chapter 1 Students: A Multi-Institutional Responsibility" and dealt with such topic as the changing use of time, instructional tasks, instructional interactions, assessment and technology and thinking.

In Conclusion

If attempts to improve the educational opportunities of racial and ethnic minorities and children who live in poverty constitute an effort to provide educational equity and equality, then surely

Title I ESEA/Chapter 1 ECIA qualifies. Funded at $ 5.3 billion for 1990-91, Chapter 1 served 5.2 million students in 52,000 public schools plus about 168,000 private school students. These are impressive figures but no one would claim that all or even most educationally deprived children are succeeding in the regular program, attaining grade-level proficiency and improving their achievement in basic and more advanced skills that all children are expected to master. But surely more of them are succeeding now than in the past. And even President Nixon grudgingly admitted 20 years ago that some services may have helped prevent some children from falling even further behind.

Unless one is completely deaf and blind or on another planet, he/she would be continuously bombarded with information concerning the inadequacies of American education for all children and the need for school reform, school restructuring and a restoration of excellence which would reverse the "rising tide of mediocrity," enable the American schools to attain "world class standards" and for America to once again become economically competitive.

The disadvantaged population constitutes, of course, a significant portion of "all American children and youth" and reform and restructuring aimed at attaining equity and excellence in education must consider their special educational needs as an integral, not a separate part of the efforts.

What we have learned about the possibilities of "closing the educational gap" is that education and schooling take place in a broader economic, social, political, psychological context; that

poverty is not simply "living below a particular dollar level;" that long-term poverty generates multiple problems within individuals, families and communities; and that until we grapple with these work, economic, health, housing, communal, political problems, what the schools will be able to achieve will always be limited.

Nevertheless, even a cursory review of the Title I/Chapter 1 program over the past 27 years suggests that we do learn--too slowly, of course--from the past about how the schools might do better. The Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments, in my view, incorporates a number of these learnings and, if properly implemented and evaluated, will enable these programs to contribute to the educational advancement of disadvantaged populations. It is equity, equality and excellence we must strive to achieve and there is no question that Chapter 1 will help although it is only part of the larger context in which distributive justice must be nurtured.

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