DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 406 022 PS 025 243

AUTHOR DeAngelis, Karen; Rossi, Robert
TITLE Schools Serving Family Needs: Extended-Day Programs in Public and Private Schools. Issue Brief.
INSTITUTION American Institutes for Research, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY National Center for Education Statistics (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO IB-1-97; NCES-97-590
PUB DATE Feb 97
NOTE 3p.
AVAILABLE FROM Phone: 800-424-1616; Internet: http://www.ed.gov/NCES
PUB TYPE Statistical Data (110) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *After School Programs; Catholic Schools; Day Care; Elementary Education; Enrichment Activities; Enrollment; *Extended School Day; Low Income; Private Schools; Public Schools; Rural Schools; Social Change; Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS *Access to Services; School Based Services

ABSTRACT

Noting the increase in school-based extended-day programs, this Issue Brief updates and expands upon previous findings by presenting data on extended-day programs drawn from the 1987-88, 1990-91, and 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Surveys, conducted by the National center for Education Statistics. Findings include the following: (1) availability of extended-day programs increased in all types of elementary schools, but were more often found in private schools than in public schools; (2) extended-day programs were least available in rural schools; (3) extended-day programs were consistently more available in high-minority schools than in low-minority schools; (4) in 1993-94, participation in extended-day programs was higher in high-poverty schools than in low- or medium-poverty schools, although availability of programs in these schools was similar; (5) the availability of extended-day programs increased more in Catholic schools than in other private schools--by 1993-94, similar percentages of Catholic and nonsectarian private schools offered extended-day programs. The data suggest that schools are responding to the need for non-parental care of children, and that the higher participation rate in high-poverty areas may signify the success of efforts to provide poor children with opportunities to extend their learning. Findings raise additional research questions such as: do differences in program availability reflect differences in demand, is availability adequate to meet the needs of single-parent and dual-working-parent families, and what percentage of students participating in extended-day programs do so because of parental interest in academic enrichment versus child care? (HTH)

ISSUE BRIEF

FEBRUARY 1997
IB–1–97

# Schools Serving Family Needs: Extended-Day Programs in Public and Private Schools

School-based extended-day programs were first introduced in the 1940s to provide care for the school-aged children of mothers who worked during the Second World War (Tuttle 1995). Today, schools are responding similarly to the need for nonparental care of children created by recent demographic trends, such as the increased labor force participation of mothers with young children (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1994) and the increased numbers of single-parent families (Center for the Study of Social Policy 1994). Schools are also responding to the growing interest in supplemental educational enrichment programs (Seppanen et al. 1993), particularly for children in high-poverty schools who often lack opportunities outside of school to extend their learning. In a previous Issue Brief, the availability of extended-day programs in public and private elementary and combined schools was found to have increased between 1987–88 and 1990–91 (Rossi et al. 1996). This brief updates and expands upon those findings by presenting data on extended-day programs drawn from the 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94 Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS), conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

**From 1987–88 to 1993–94, both public and private schools increasingly offered extended-day programs; in each survey year, a greater percentage of private schools offered these programs than did public schools.**

From 1987–88 to 1993–94, the availability of extended-day programs among public elementary and combined schools nearly doubled—from about 16 percent in 1987–88 to about 30 percent in 1993–94 (table 1). In the private sector, although about one-third of elementary and combined schools offered extended-day programs in 1987–88, nearly one-half of private schools offered extended-day programs in 1993–94. (A combined school includes grades higher than the eighth and lower than the seventh.)

Although private schools enroll fewer than one-tenth of the students enrolled in public schools, extended-day programs were more often found in private schools than in public schools in each survey year. Moreover, private schools had higher participation rates than public schools in 1993–94; about 18 percent of private school students, compared to about 11 percent of public school students, participated in their schools' extended-day programs.

**Extended-day programs were least available in rural schools.**

In all three survey years, the percentages of rural schools reporting available extended-day programs were much smaller than the percentages of central city and urban fringe schools in both the public and private sectors. Among public schools in 1993–94, about 18 percent of elementary and combined rural schools had these programs, compared to almost 37 percent of urban fringe schools and approximately 42 percent of central city schools. In schools that offered extended-day programs, the percentages of students participating were greater in central city than rural schools.

**Table 1. Percentage of public and private elementary and combined schools offering extended-day programs, and percentages of students participating in these programs: 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94**

| | Percent of schools with programs available | | | Percent of students participating* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1987–88 | 1990–91 | 1993–94 | 1993–94 |
| **Public** | 15.5 | 25.2 | 29.7 | 10.5 |
| Locale | | | | |
| Central city | 25.2 | 36.0 | 42.2 | 12.6 |
| Urban fringe | 21.4 | 34.4 | 36.9 | 10.0 |
| Rural | 6.7 | 14.7 | 18.3 | 8.1 |
| Minority enrollment | | | | |
| (<20%) | 12.6 | 22.3 | 25.2 | 8.4 |
| (20–49%) | 17.0 | 25.7 | 34.4 | 9.7 |
| (>50%) | 22.6 | 32.2 | 35.3 | 14.1 |
| Free/reduced-price lunch recipients | | | | |
| <20% | 18.7 | 28.8 | 32.0 | 9.4 |
| 20–49% | 11.6 | 23.3 | 27.5 | 9.2 |
| >50% | 16.8 | 23.7 | 29.8 | 13.0 |
| Private | 33.2 | 42.5 | 48.4 | 17.8 |
| Locale | | | | |
| Central city | 44.5 | 58.5 | 64.2 | 19.6 |
| Urban fringe | 37.2 | 47.4 | 54.0 | 17.0 |
| Rural | 17.4 | 23.1 | 23.8 | 12.6 |
| Minority enrollment | | | | |
| (<20%) | 28.1 | 35.7 | 40.6 | 14.6 |
| (20–49%) | 47.3 | 59.0 | 61.9 | 24.9 |
| (>50%) | 48.3 | 56.5 | 71.2 | 22.5 |
| Orientation | | | | |
| Catholic | 26.1 | 44.8 | 55.7 | 14.0 |
| Other religious | 29.8 | 33.9 | 39.8 | 20.9 |
| Nonsectarian** | 54.2 | 62.0 | 58.4 | 21.8 |

* Calculated including only those schools reporting extended-day program enrollments greater than zero (excluding prekindergarten students).

** Nonsectarian schools are nonreligious-oriented private schools.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94 Schools and Staffing Surveys (Public and Private School Questionnaires).

**From 1987–88 to 1993–94, extended-day programs were consistently more available in high-minority schools than in low-minority schools.**

In both sectors and across all three survey years, a higher proportion of high-minority schools (i.e., schools with 50 percent or more minority students) had extended-day programs than did low-minority schools (i.e., schools with fewer than 20 percent minority students). In 1993–94, approximately 71 percent of high-minority private schools compared to about 41 percent of low-minority private schools offered such programs. In addition, among both public and private schools in 1993–94, the percentages of students participating in extended-day programs were higher in high-minority schools than in low-minority schools.

**In 1993–94, the participation rate in extended-day programs was higher in high-poverty schools than in low- or medium-poverty schools, although the availability of programs in these schools was similar.**

In 1993–94, about 30 percent of high-poverty schools (i.e., schools in which 50 percent or more of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch) offered extended-day programs; 32 percent of low-poverty and about 28 percent of medium-poverty schools (i.e., schools in which less than 20 percent or 20–49 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch) offered these programs. However, students in high-poverty schools were more likely than students in low- and medium-poverty schools to participate in the extended-day programs. In 1993–94, 13 percent of students in schools with 50 percent or more free or reduced-price lunch recipients participated, compared to about 9 percent of students in schools in the other two free-lunch categories.

**The availability of extended-day programs increased more in Catholic schools than in other private schools; by 1993–94, similar percentages of Catholic and nonsectarian private schools offered extended-day programs.**

In 1987–88, nonsectarian private schools were much more likely to offer extended-day programs than Catholic schools. By 1993–94, the percentages of nonsectarian and Catholic schools offering such programs were similar due to the fact that the proportion of Catholic schools offering extended-day programs more than doubled between 1987–88 and 1993–94—from about 26 percent in 1987–88 to almost 56 percent in 1993–94. In comparison, the availability of extended-day programs in nonsectarian and other religious private schools increased by about 4 percentage points and 10 percentage points, respectively, between 1987–88 and 1993–94. By 1993–94, the percentage of private school students participating in these programs was 14 percent in Catholic schools, compared to about 21 percent in both other religious and nonsectarian schools.

## Discussion

These data suggest that schools are responding to the need for nonparental care of children. Between 1987–88 and 1993–94, increasing percentages of public and private elementary and combined schools offered extended-day programs. The availability of these programs, however, continued to be greater in private than public schools, in central city and urban fringe than rural schools, and in high-minority than low-minority schools. The percentage of students participating in extended-day programs in 1993–94 was lower in Catholic schools than in other religious or nonsectarian schools. In addition, although the percentages of high-, medium-, and low-poverty schools offering programs were similar, the student participation rate was higher in high-poverty than in low- or medium-poverty schools. The higher participation rate in high-poverty schools may signify the success of efforts to provide poor children with opportunities to extend their learning time beyond the regular school day.

These findings raise additional research questions that reach beyond the SASS data. For example, do the differences in program availability reflect differences in demand for extended-day services? Is the availability of extended-day programs adequate to meet the needs of single-parent and dual-working-parent families? What percentage of the students participating in extended-day programs do so because of parental interest in academic enrichment versus child care? How do these programs vary in focus, activities provided, and student populations served? How do school systems pay for and staff their extended-day programs?

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This **Issue Brief** was prepared by Karen DeAngelis and Robert Rossi, American Institutes for Research. To obtain standard errors or definitions of terms for this **Issue Brief**, or to obtain additional information about the Schools and Staffing Survey, contact Charles H. Hammer (202) 219–1330. To order additional copies of this **Issue Brief** or other NCES publications, call 1–800–424–1616. NCES publications are available on the Internet at http://www.ed.gov/NCES.

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