

Methodology

For reports in the series

From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 5 of the No Child Left Behind Act

Background on CEP's Study of NCLB and Year 5 Reports

Since 2002, the Center on Education Policy has conducted a comprehensive study of the implementation and effects of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) at the state and school district levels. Since 2003, we have produced a yearly report describing our findings from this study. For the 2006-07 school year, we have published our findings in a series of reports—all issued under the title, *From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 5 of the No Child Left Behind Act*—rather than in a single volume. Topics examined in year 5 of our study include schools in the restructuring phase of NCLB; state capacity to implement NCLB; changes in curriculum and instruction; assistance to schools in improvement; NCLB teacher quality requirements; and Reading First (the federal program aimed at improving reading in grades K-3).¹

The *Year 5* series include the following reports, all of which are or will be available on the CEP Web site, www.cep-dc.org.

- *Beyond the Mountains: An Early Look at Restructuring Results in California* (March 2007)
- *What Now? Lessons from Michigan About Restructuring Schools and Next Steps Under NCLB* (March 2007)
- *Educational Architects: Do State Education Agencies Have the Tools Necessary to Implement NCLB?* (May 2007)

¹ CEP also conducted a comprehensive study in 2006-07 of student achievement trends before and after NCLB was enacted. That study used different methods than the methodology used for the general study of NCLB implementation described here. The results of the achievement study were released in June 2007 in the report, *Answering the Question That Matters Most: Has Student Achievement Increased Since the No Child Left Behind Act*.

- *Moving Beyond Identification: Assisting Schools in Improvement* (July 2007)
- *Choices, Changes, and Challenges: Curriculum and Instruction in the NCLB Era* (July 2007)
- *Implementing the No Child Left Behind Teacher Requirements* (August 2007)
- *Reading First: Locally Appreciated, Nationally Troubled* (October 2007)
- *Instructional Time in Elementary Schools: A Closer Look at Changes for Specific Subjects* (February 2008)

The goal of the *Year 5* series is the same as that of CEP's previous annual reports on NCLB: to provide a comprehensive description of how the federal law is being implemented in states and districts and of how NCLB affects states and districts.

To provide complete information for the NCLB study, CEP used a mixed methods design. Quantitative data were collected through a survey of state education officials and a survey of school district officials; these data provided generalizable information about the nation as a whole. Qualitative data were collected from interviews with officials at the district and school levels in 43 districts; these data offered in-depth information about how NCLB affects particular districts. Both types of data were collected and analyzed during roughly the same time period, from fall 2006 through summer 2007. The *Year 5* reports listed above are based on portions of the state and district surveys, as well as on interview data from different subsets of the 43 case study districts.

This Web document on methodology describes the design, data collection, and data analysis methods used for the state survey, district survey, and interviews. Any variations from this methodology are described in detail in each individual report.

State Survey

Since 2002, CEP has conducted annual surveys of all 50 states about a variety of issues related to NCLB implementation. To initiate the most recent survey, CEP staff contacted the chief state education official in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia in August 2006, requesting the state's participation in a survey to be administered in fall 2006. The District of Columbia did not respond to our request to participate. We also asked each chief to designate an individual within the state education agency as the primary contact for the survey. In addition, we asked the Georgia Department of Education to pilot the survey instrument, which it did in September 2006.

In October 2006, CEP staff sent the revised survey instrument, containing 64 questions, to state contacts by e-mail. States returned the surveys to CEP from October 2006 through January 2007. All 50 states returned a completed survey, although some did not complete every question or section. Thus our response rate varies by question. In an attempt to limit any possible repercussions state officials might face in answering our survey questions candidly, we guaranteed respondents that their responses would remain anonymous. For example, a state official who responded that his or her state was unable to implement a particular requirement could be negatively affected by this response, so although we report state totals and include state comments, we do not identify which specific state is the source of the information.

Survey contacts for each state are shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. State Survey Contacts

State	Primary Survey Contact
Alabama	Catherine Moore
Alaska	Margaret MacKinnon
Arizona	Nancy Konitzer
Arkansas	Janinne Riggs
California	Cathy McBride
Colorado	Patrick Chapman
Connecticut	Frances Rabinowitz

State	Primary Survey Contact
Delaware	Robin Taylor
Florida	Hanna Skandera
Georgia	Jeff Gagne
Hawaii	Owen Yamasaki
Idaho	Jennifer Oxley
Illinois	Ginger M. Reynolds
Indiana	Dwayne S. James
Iowa	Pamela Pfitzenmaier
Kansas	Tom Foster
Kentucky	Diane Robertson
Louisiana	Patrick Dobard
Maine	Jacqueline Soychak
Maryland	Ronald Peiffer
Massachusetts	Carole Thomson
Michigan	Maryalice Galloway
Minnesota	Jessie Montano
Mississippi	Beth H. Sewell
Missouri	Michael Alexander
Montana	Nancy Coopersmith
Nebraska	Marilyn Peterson
Nevada	Gloria Dopf
New Hampshire	Merry Fortier
New Jersey	Diane Schonyers
New Mexico	Catherine Cross Maple
New York	Raymond Kesper
North Carolina	Belinda Black
North Dakota	Greg Gallagher
Ohio	Mitchell Chester
Oklahoma	Cindy Koss and Sandy Garrett
Oregon	Patrick Burk
Pennsylvania	Renee Palakovic and Jim Sheffer
Rhode Island	Elliot Krieger
South Carolina	Nancy W. Busbee
South Dakota	Melody Schopp
Tennessee	Julie McCargar
Texas	Cory Green
Utah	Myron Cottam
Vermont	Gail Taylor
Virginia	Michelle M. Vucci
Washington	Jo Lynn Berge
West Virginia	Jorea Marple
Wisconsin	Michael J. Thompson
Wyoming	Jim Woodward

District Survey

School year 2006-07 was the fourth year in which CEP commissioned a major survey of school districts' implementation of NCLB. As was done in the previous three years, CEP contracted with Policy Studies Associates (PSA) to conduct the 2006-07 district survey. The survey was administered to Title I directors and other local administrators of federal programs in a nationally representative sample of 491 school districts that receive federal Title I funds. The 2006-07 survey was intended to follow up on information collected in the summer and fall of 2005 and reported in March 2006 as part of the Center's report, *From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 4 of the No Child Left Behind Act*. Administration of the 2006-07 survey took place between November 2006 and February 2007.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The universe for the district survey sample was drawn from district-level data available through the U.S. Department of Education's Common Core of Data (CCD) for 2001-02, the most recent year of CCD data that was available when the survey was first designed.

The universe comprises "operating" local educational agencies (referred to as "districts"), including those listed in the CCD as a local school district that is not part of a supervisory union (type 1), and those listed as a component of a supervisory union sharing a superintendent and administrative services with another district (type 2). Excluded from the survey were the other types of districts in the CCD: supervisory union administrative centers, or county superintendents serving the same purpose (type 3); regional educational services agencies, or county superintendents serving the same purpose (type 4); state-operated institutions charged, at least in part, with providing elementary and/or secondary instruction or services to a special needs population (type 5); federally-operated institutions charged, at least in part, with providing elementary and/or secondary instruction or services to a special needs population (type 6); and other education agencies that do not fit into the first six types (type 7).

The exception to this rule is Vermont, where the supervisory unions (type 3) serve the role of districts for the Title I program. In Vermont, only type 3 supervisory unions were included in the universe. (Throughout the survey and accompanying reports, these Vermont supervisory unions are referred to as “districts” to keep terminology simple.)

In addition, the following districts were excluded from the sample universe:

- Districts from Puerto Rico, Guam, and other territories, and districts administered by the Department of Defense Education Agency, to reduce the complexity of data collection
- Districts with fewer than 200 students, which as a group represent approximately 0.4% of the students who attend schools in the universe as defined above. Excluding these extremely small districts increases the efficiency of the remaining sample. That is, although these very small districts make up an appreciable percentage of all districts (approximately 14%), they serve very small numbers of students. Eliminating these districts from the sampling frame allowed us to sample a few more districts with enrollments over 200, thus increasing the efficiency of the sample.

Districts in the sampling frame were divided into three strata for sampling purposes, and were categorized as urban, suburban, or rural, based on the CCD Metropolitan Statistical Code variable (MSC01). In the CCD, districts that primarily serve the central city of a metropolitan statistical area (MSA) are classified as urban, those that primarily serve areas other than the central city of an MSA are classified as suburban, and those that do not primarily serve an MSA are classified as rural.

When the survey was first designed, CEP asked PSA to develop a sampling plan that would yield responses from 300 districts, including 100 urban districts, 100 suburban, and 100 rural. In spring 2003, the first year the district survey was administered, PSA drew a random sample of approximately 400 school districts, stratified by urban, suburban, and rural location.

In addition, CEP wanted to ensure that as many as possible of the “huge urban” and “huge suburban” districts were represented in the sample in order to ensure its face plausibility. In 2005, PSA separated the 27 largest districts into two additional strata (13 in urban areas, labeled as “huge urban” and 14 in suburban areas, labeled as “huge suburban”) in order to include them in the sample with certainty. Therefore, the 2005 sample was divided into five strata for sampling purposes: (1) the 13 largest urban districts; (2) other urban districts; (3) the 14 largest suburban districts; (4) other suburban districts; and (5) rural districts.

In 2006, at the request of CEP, PSA added another variable to the sample design to facilitate reporting for districts with at least one school identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under NCLB. The addition of this variable—whether or not districts had at least one school identified for any of these stages of improvement—doubled the number of strata in the survey sample from five to ten. The ten sampling strata for 2006-07 included the following: (1) the 13 largest urban districts with at least one school identified for improvement; (2) other urban districts with at least one school identified for improvement; (3) the 14 largest suburban districts with at least one school identified for improvement; (4) other suburban districts with at least one school identified for improvement; (5) rural districts with at least one school identified for improvement; (6) the 13 largest urban districts with no schools identified for improvement; (7) other urban districts with no schools identified for improvement; (8) the 14 largest suburban districts with no schools identified for improvement; (9) other suburban districts with no schools identified for improvement; and (10) rural districts with no schools identified for improvement.

SAMPLE SELECTION

PSA used the 2005 sample as the basis for the 2006 sample. For the 2006 survey, a random sample of 75 districts with at least one school identified for improvement in 2005-06 was added, resulting in a total sample size of 491 districts. The supplemental sample of districts with at least one school identified for improvement was selected using a database from Quality Education Data (QED). In the QED database, the variable “nclb_total” represents the number of schools identified for improvement. Districts were classified as having at least one identified school if the value of nclb_total was greater than or equal to one.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The district survey focused on the following research questions:

1. How are districts implementing the specific legislative provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act, including those governing assistance to schools in improvement and teacher quality?
2. How have curriculum and instruction changed since NCLB was enacted?

Beginning in November 2006, the most recent version of the survey was administered by telephone to all prospective respondents. Respondents were contacted by a member of PSA staff and invited to participate in the study. Typically, a time was scheduled to complete the survey on the phone. In addition, respondents were told that they could have an electronic copy of the survey e-mailed to them for their review before completing the survey with a telephone interviewer. District administrators new to the study were sent a copy of the 2005 report and a letter that reviewed the study purposes, estimated the time it would take to complete the survey by phone, and stressed the importance of completing the survey and the confidentiality of the responses. In addition, the letter offered respondents a \$50 gift card to a national bookstore chain for completing the survey.

Follow-up procedures entailed contacting, by phone or e-mail, all survey respondents who had not scheduled a time to complete the telephone survey. Non-respondents were contacted by phone and e-mail in an effort to schedule a time to complete the survey over the phone. Non-respondents were also offered the option of completing a hard copy of the survey and faxing or mailing it to PSA. All non-respondents received a minimum of three follow-up contacts.

Of the 491 districts sampled, 349 completed the survey, for a response rate of 71%. Of the 142 districts that did not complete the survey, 53 districts actively refused to participate in the study. **Table 2** shows the distribution of participating districts by location, size, and whether they had

schools identified for improvement. As the table indicates, the response rates vary across these three characteristics. In particular, huge urban and huge suburban districts have significantly lower response rates than other districts. In addition, very large districts and districts with schools identified for improvement have significantly lower response rates than districts that are not as large or districts without identified schools.

Table 2. District Survey Response Rates, 2006

Characteristics	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Location		
Huge urban	7	54%
Other urban	100	71%
Huge suburban	6	43%
Other suburban	120	72%
Rural	116	74%
Size		
Very large	23	54%
Large	54	74%
Medium	80	69%
Small	192	74%
Identification status		
Districts with identified schools	151	64%
Districts without identified schools	198	77%
Total	349	71%

DATA ANALYSIS FOR DISTRICT SURVEY

Districts were sampled at different rates from each of the ten sampling strata. For the largest urban districts with at least one school identified for improvement, all 13 districts were sampled. For the largest suburban districts with at least one school identified for improvement, all 14 were sampled. All of the largest urban and suburban districts had at least one school identified for

improvement. For other urban districts, PSA sampled at an approximate rate of 1 of every 4 such districts with a school identified for improvement, and 1 of every 6 such districts without a school identified for improvement. (The precise numbers are 4.277778 for other urban districts with a school identified for improvement and 5.820000 for other urban districts without a school identified for improvement.) For other suburban districts, PSA sampled at an approximate rate of 1 of every 21 such districts with a school identified for improvement (the precise number was 21.111111) and 1 of every 41 such districts without a school identified for improvement (41.147368). For rural districts, PSA sampled at an approximate rate of 1 of every 16 such districts with a school identified for improvement (16.413043) and 1 of every 46 such districts without a school identified for improvement (45.504505).

Stated another way, if all districts had responded to the survey, each huge urban and each huge suburban district would represent one district—*itself*—in the sample. Every other urban district with a school identified for improvement in the sample would represent about 4 districts, while every other urban district without a school identified for improvement would represent about 6 districts. Every other suburban district with a school identified for improvement in the sample would represent about 21 districts, while every other suburban district without a school identified for improvement would represent about 41 districts. In addition, each rural district with a school identified for improvement in the sample would represent about 16 districts, while each rural district with a school identified for improvement would represent about 46 districts.

Urban districts and districts with identified schools are significantly overrepresented in the sample and as a result had a much higher probability of being selected for the sample than other districts. This overrepresentation provided enough districts to allow separate analysis by metropolitan category and identification status. To avoid overrepresenting urban districts and districts with identified schools in overall national calculations, however, the data had to be weighted during analysis.

The weights were created by calculating, separately for each stratum, how many national districts each responding district in the sample represented. This was done by dividing the

number of responding districts by the number of districts in the population, separately for each stratum. The resulting weights are shown in **table 3**.

Table 3. District Survey Weights, 2006

Characteristics	Number of Districts	Number of Responses	Weight
Districts with Identified Schools			
Huge urban	13	7	1.857143
Other urban	385	62	6.209677
Huge suburban	14	6	2.333333
Other suburban	1,520	48	31.666667
Rural	755	28	26.964286
Districts without Identified Schools			
Huge urban	0	0	NA
Other urban	291	38	7.657895
Huge suburban	0	0	NA
Other suburban	3,909	72	54.291667
Rural	5,051	88	57.397727
Total	11,938	349	34.206304

All tabulations of survey results apply the appropriate weight to each response and, when these weighted responses are aggregated, properly reflect national estimates. For reporting purposes, huge urban districts were combined with other urban districts to create the category “urban,” and huge suburban districts were combined with other suburban districts to create the category “suburban.”

There is considerable variability in district size—measured by the number of students enrolled—within and between the metropolitan classifications. Therefore, in addition to the urban, suburban, and rural classification, a district size variable was created. This allows for analyses that show variations in districts’ responses by size, in parallel with variations by metropolitan status.

The size variable was constructed so that approximately one-fourth of the students in the universe are served by districts in each of the four size categories. To achieve this, the small category included districts that serve between 200 and 3,503 students; medium districts ranged from 3,504 to 10,448 students; large districts ranged from 10,449 to 37,740 students; and very large districts ranged from 37,741 to 1,049,831 students.

Using these weights and variables, PSA compiled and analyzed the responses from the districts that returned their surveys. PSA also developed data tables and reported these data, as well as district responses to open-ended questions, to CEP. The CEP staff and consultants further analyzed the data for publication in this report.

**A NOTE ON VARIABLES COMPUTED FOR CEP'S FOLLOW-UP REPORT,
*INSTRUCTIONAL TIME IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS***

Tables 2 and 3 in the follow-up report on instructional time include two sets of computed variables: (1) total instructional time allotted, before NCLB was enacted, to English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and other subjects included on the district survey; and (2) the percentage increase (or decrease) in instructional time compared with pre-NCLB levels.

To calculate total instructional time before NCLB, PSA started with the total amount of instructional time reported by districts in 2005-06, reported for each subject in survey item 18 (see **figure 1**). Where the district had reported an increase in instructional time in that subject in item 19, column A, PSA subtracted that increase (reported in column B) from the number in item 18 to get a pre-NCLB total. Where the district had reported a decrease in instructional time in a subject in item 19, column A, PSA added that decrease (reported in column B) to the number reported for that subject in item 18 to get a pre-NCLB total.

To calculate a percentage increase (or decrease) over pre-NCLB levels, PSA then divided the increase (or decrease) reported in item 19, column B, by the pre-NCLB total. Only districts that responded to item 18 and both columns of item 19 (i.e., that had no missing data for any of these three variables) for any given subject were included in the percentage calculations.

Figure 1. District Survey Items 18 and 19, 2007

18. On average, approximately how many minutes per week do *elementary schools* typically devote to each of the following subjects, as well as to lunch and recess? (Write the number of minutes for each subject area. If you don't know, circle "1")

	Number of Minutes per WEEK, on average, Devoted to Subject	Don't Know
a. Reading/Language Arts	_____	1
b. Math	_____	1
c. Social studies (history, geography, civics)	_____	1
d. Science	_____	1
e. Art and music	_____	1
f. Physical education	_____	1
g. Lunch	_____	1
h. Recess	_____	1
i. Other (SPECIFY) _____	_____	1

19. Considering the number of instructional minutes that are devoted to each subject, as reported in Question 18, would you say that the amount of instructional time that *elementary schools* devote to each of those subjects in your district has increased, decreased, or stayed the same *since 2001-02 or since NCLB was enacted*? And, to the extent that instructional time has *increased or decreased*, please indicate by approximately how many minutes in the space provided. (CIRCLE ONE RESPONSE FOR COLUMN A, and in COLUMN B, provide the estimated number of minutes that instructional time has increased or decreased in a particular subject area.)

	COLUMN A				COLUMN B
	Amount of Instructional Time Devoted to This has <i>Increased</i>	Amount of Instructional Time Devoted to This has <i>Decreased</i>	Amount of Instructional Time Devoted to This has <i>Stayed the Same</i>	NA/ Don't Know	Number of Minutes per Week that Instructional Time has <i>Increased or Decreased</i>
a. Reading/ language arts	1	2	3	4	_____
b. Math	1	2	3	4	_____
c. Social studies (history, geography, civics)	1	2	3	4	_____
d. Science	1	2	3	4	_____
e. Art and music	1	2	3	4	_____
f. Physical education	1	2	3	4	_____
g. Recess	1	2	3	4	_____
h. Lunch	1	2	3	4	_____
i. Other (SPECIFY)	1	2	3	4	_____

PSA staff calculated pre-NCLB totals, percentage increases, and percentage decreases separately for each of the districts in the sample. Then they calculated a weighted average of each of those variables, and reported those averages in tables 2 and 3 in the follow-up report. For example, PSA calculated a pre-NCLB total for ELA (current time minus increase) for each of the 177 districts reporting an increase in ELA, and then calculated a weighted average of those individual differences. This weighted average, 378 minutes, is reported in the first column of table 2. PSA then divided the increase in instructional time devoted to ELA in each of these 177 districts by the pre-NCLB total, to produce a percentage increase for each district. The weighted average of percentages across these 177 districts, 47%, is reported in the column at the far right of table 2.

In tables 2 and 3, a reader could do some of these calculations another way by taking the post-NCLB average, subtracting the average increase (or adding the average decrease), and arriving at a pre-NCLB average. With one exception, the differences (or sums) that a reader might calculate with the averages reported in the table all work out to within one point of the average pre-NCLB totals actually reported in the table. Differences of a point or two are due to rounding error in the method of calculation adopted by the study team (a result of applying weights that are not whole numbers). In the case of time for recess in table 3, the difference of 10 minutes between the pre-NCLB average reported in the table and the number the reader might calculate from the averages shown in the first and third columns is due to the difference in samples (*n*'s) across columns.

It is not possible, however, for a reader to replicate the calculations that produced the percentages reported in the final column of tables 2 and 3, using the averages provided in the first and third columns. This is because the average of a series of ratios (calculated by the study team from the individual percentages computed for each district, and weighted up) is not the same as a ratio of averages (such as a reader might compute from the information provided in the table). For example, calculating the percentage increase in instructional time in reading for each of the 177 districts represented under ELA in table 2, and then computing a (weighted) average of all of those 177 percentages, will not produce the same result as calculating a percentage by dividing the average increase in instructional time in ELA (141 minutes) by the average pre-NCLB total (378 minutes).

Both methods of calculation (average of ratios and ratio of averages) are meaningful and can be useful to report. The method chosen for the percentages in tables 2 and 3 describes the percentage increase in the average district, where each district (weighted) contributes equally to the final estimate. The method available to the reader (calculating a percentage from the averages reported in the table) would describe the percentage increase for the average instructional minute. In this second type of calculation, districts with larger amounts of time devoted to ELA in the first place contribute more to the final estimate of the percentage increase. PSA believes that the first method, which describes the experience of a typical district, produces results that are more useful to the audience for CEP's report.

District and School Interviews

Two CEP consultants and three CEP research associates conducted interviews in 43 school districts examining the local implementation of NCLB. In our reports, we refer to these districts as our "case study districts." Each report in the *Year 5* series drew from a subset of these 43 districts. The rationale for deciding which case study districts to include in particular reports is described in each report. For example, the CEP report *Moving Beyond Identification: Assisting Schools in Improvement* included 12 case study districts with schools in NCLB improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or with schools that had not met adequate yearly progress targets.

PARTICIPANTS

The case study districts were selected to be geographically diverse and include a mix of urban, suburban, and rural districts. Initial selection occurred in 2003, based on CEP staff knowledge of school districts. Since then, one district, Collier County Public Schools in Florida, chose to stop participating, and nine districts have been added. These additional districts were selected to provide more in-depth information for particular reports. For example, Detroit Public Schools was added in 2006 to increase the amount of information about schools in restructuring in

Michigan, as reported in *What Now? Lessons from Michigan about Restructuring Schools and Next Steps under NCLB*.

In 2005, two case study districts, St. John the Baptist Parish Public School in Louisiana and Pascagoula School District in Mississippi, sustained considerable damage from Hurricane Katrina. CEP intends to include these two districts in a special report to be released later this year.

District superintendents, or officials functioning in a similar leadership role, consented to their district's participation in the study. All agreed to either serve as the primary contact person for the study or assign other officials to this role. In many districts the primary contact person was the district's federal and state programs administrator or Title I director, but primary contact people also included assistant superintendents, assessment personnel, pupil services personnel, directors of curriculum and instruction, and others. Characteristics of participating districts and contact people are shown in **table 4**.

Table 4. Characteristics and Contacts, Case Study Districts, 2006-07

School District Name & State <i>School Name Where Applicable</i>	Primary Contact(s)	District Type
Avon Public School District, Massachusetts	Paul Zinni, director of pupil services	Suburban, K-12
Anne Arundel County Public Schools*	Dr. Kevin Maxwell, superintendent	Urban, suburban, & rural, K-12
Baltimore City Public Schools*	Linda Chinnia, chief academic officer	Urban, K-12
Baltimore County Public Schools*	Dr. Manuel Rodriguez, area assistant superintendent	Suburban, preK- 12
Bayonne City School District, New Jersey <i>Lincoln Community School</i>	Dr. Ellen O'Connor, assistant superintendent of schools for curriculum and instruction <i>Susan Kukucka, acting principal</i>	Urban, preK-12
Berkeley County School District, South Carolina	Dr. Sheldon Etheridge, executive director of federal programs	Rural & suburban, K-12

School District Name & State <i>School Name Where Applicable</i>	Primary Contact(s)	District Type
Bloomfield School District, New Mexico	Linelle Sharrard, director of curriculum and instruction	Rural, K-12
Boston Public Schools, Massachusetts	Sidney Smith, director of curriculum and instruction	Urban, K-12
Calhoun County School District, Alabama	Bobby J. Burns, deputy superintendent	Rural & suburban, K-12
Chicago Public Schools, Illinois* <i>Carson Elementary*</i> <i>Pope Elementary*</i>	Peter Ballard, research evaluation and accountability <i>Kathleen Mayer, principal</i> <i>Jacqueline Baker, principal</i>	Urban, K-12
Clark County School District, Nevada	Mary Ann Gibbs, coordinator in human resources	Urban, preK-12
Cleveland Municipal School District, Ohio	Craig Cotner, academic officer	Urban, preK-12
Cloquet Independent School District #94, Minnesota	Randy Thudin, principal, Washington School & coordinator of federal programs	Rural, K-12
Colorado Springs School District 11, Colorado	Holly Brilliant, Title I facilitator	Urban, K-12
Cuero Independent School District, Texas	Debra Baros, assistant superintendent	Rural, preK-12
Detroit Public Schools, Michigan <i>Cerveney Middle School</i> <i>Cleveland Middle School</i> <i>William Beckham Academy</i>	Juanita Chambers, associate superintendent for curriculum and instruction <i>Gladys Stoner, principal</i> <i>Donna Thorton, principal</i> <i>William Batchelor, principal</i>	Urban, K-12
Escondido Union School District, California	Pat Peterson, coordinator, GATE/Title I	Suburban, K-8
Fayetteville Public Schools, Arkansas	Kristen Scanlon, director of federal programs	Small city, K-12
Flint Community Schools, Michigan* <i>Brownell Elementary*</i>	David Solis, director of state, federal, and local programs <i>Valeria Shepard, principal</i>	Urban, K-12
Fort Lupton Weld Re-8 School District, Colorado	Carrie Duits, executive director of student achievement	Rural, K-12
Fremont County School District #1, Wyoming	Karen Bierhaus, federal programs director	Rural, K-12

School District Name & State <i>School Name Where Applicable</i>	Primary Contact(s)	District Type
Grant Joint Union District, California* <i>Grant Union High School*</i> <i>Martin Luther King Junior High*</i>	Rick Carder, director of categorical programs <i>Craig Murray, principal</i> <i>Anna Trunnell, curriculum coordinator</i> <i>Samuel Harris, principal</i>	Suburban, K-12
Harrison Community Schools, Michigan <i>Hillside Elementary</i> <i>Larson Elementary</i>	Michele Sandro, principal <i>Michel Sandro, principal</i> <i>Julie Rosekrans, principal</i>	Rural K-12
Heartland Community Schools, Nebraska	Dr. Norm Yoder, superintendent	Rural, K-12
Hermitage R-IV School District, Missouri	Shelly Aubuchon, superintendent	Rural, K-12
Joint School District No. 2-Meridian, Idaho <i>Linder Elementary</i> <i>Meridian Elementary</i>	Dr. Linda Clark, superintendent <i>Wes Ramaley, principal</i> <i>Byron Yankey, principal</i>	Suburban, K-12
Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools, Kansas	Dr. Jill Shackelford, superintendent of schools John Rios, assistant superintendent for human & community resources	Urban, K-12
Kodiak Island Borough School District, Alaska	Stewart McDonald, director of educational support programs	Rural, K-12
Marlboro Elementary School, Vermont	Francie Marbury, principal	Rural, K-8
Napoleon School District, North Dakota	Jon Starkey, superintendent	Rural, K-12
Oakland Unified School District, California* <i>Cox Elementary*</i> <i>New Highland Elementary*</i> <i>Sobrante Park Elementary*</i> <i>Whittier Elementary*</i>	Brad Stam, executive director of instructional services <i>Michael Scott, principal</i> <i>Liz Ozol, principal</i> <i>Marco Franco, principal</i> <i>Laura Smith, assistant principal</i>	Urban, K-12
Orleans Central Supervisory Union, Vermont	Dr. Ronald D. Paquette, superintendent	Rural, preK-12
Palmdale Elementary School District* <i>Yucca Elementary*</i>	Betty Stiers, assistant superintendent of educational services <i>Hector Algeria, Principal</i>	Suburban & rural, K-8
Prince Georges County Public Schools	Dr. Donna Muncey, acting chief of accountability	Suburban, K-12

School District Name & State <i>School Name Where Applicable</i>	Primary Contact(s)	District Type
Romulus Central Schools, New York	Mike Midey, superintendent	Rural, K-12
Sheboygan Area Schools, Wisconsin	Dr. Joseph Sheehan, superintendent John Pfaff, coordinator of EFEA	Suburban, K-12
Tahoe Truckee Unified School District* <i>North Tahoe Middle School*</i>	Jessamy Lasher, director of curriculum and categorical programs <i>Dave Curry, principal</i>	K-12
Tigard-Tualatin School District, Oregon* <i>Fowler Middle School*</i> <i>Metzger Elementary School*</i> <i>Tualatin High School*</i>	Susan Stark Haydon, director of community relations <i>Ted Fowler, principal</i> <i>Karen Twain, principal</i> <i>Jeff Smith, principal</i>	Suburban, K-12
Wake County Public School System, North Carolina	Maurice Boswell, assistant superintendent of the human resources department	Urban & suburban, K-12
Waynesboro Public Schools, Virginia*	Betsy Mierzwa, coordinator of federal programs	Small city and rural, K-12
Willow Run Community Schools, Michigan* <i>Willow Run Middle School*</i>	Regina Williams, director of secondary education <i>Mel Anglin, principal</i>	Suburban, K-12

*On-site interviews were conducted in these districts or schools.

INTERVIEW DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Participants provided information through semi-structured interviews conducted in person or by telephone during fall 2006 and spring 2007. The CEP consultants and staff developed interview protocols based on the major questions to be explored in each report and conducted the interviews. The protocols were also designed to correspond to the district and state survey questions, so that the majority of topics in each study could be addressed using both qualitative and quantitative data.

Interviews were not confidential. Instead, participants were named, which allowed for more precision in the information provided in each study. For example, in the study *Moving Beyond Identification: Assisting Schools in Improvement*, attributing quotations directly to participants

allows the reader to view the quotations in the context of state policies, the type of district represented by the interviewee, and the percentage of schools in improvement in that district.

We informed participants that interviews were not anonymous or confidential. In order to protect participants and ensure the accuracy of the qualitative data, participants were given two opportunities to review the inquiry. All participants were given transcripts of their interviews and were encouraged to review them for factual accuracy and expand on the information contained in the transcripts. In addition, before each study was finalized, all participants had the opportunity to review and correct the information about their districts and any direct quotations used in the study.

DATA ANALYSIS FOR INTERVIEWS

Interviews with district and school officials were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by CEP using the qualitative data analysis software NVIVO⁷. In this analysis, CEP consultants identified themes across districts' responses to the interview questions.

For example, in our interviews about the Reading First program, we asked district-level participants, "How has Reading First been evaluated in the district?" Data were analyzed initially based on whether or not Reading First had been evaluated in the district. Next, data from districts where Reading First had been evaluated were further analyzed based on the types of evaluations participants described, and then based on whether the participant said these evaluations were effective in helping the district refine its Reading First program.

Limitations of the Study

For the district survey, it is important to note that the primary respondents to the survey were either Title I directors or district administrators of federal programs who are primarily responsible for ensuring the implementation of NCLB requirements. Some respondents may have come across specific questions that were outside of their areas of expertise. In these cases,

we encouraged respondents to consult their colleagues or to select the “don’t know” response option. However, it is possible that certain respondents responded without consultation.

Although the overall response rate for the 2006-07 district survey is adequate, the response rates for the huge urban districts (the 13 largest urban districts) and huge suburban districts (the 14 largest suburban districts) were significantly lower, allowing for the threat of nonresponse bias. Therefore, we carefully compared the responders and non-responders on available measures such as minority enrollment, poverty, and the percentage of schools identified for improvement. We found both groups to be fairly similar.

For the interviews, it should be noted that these qualitative data do not provide, and do not aim to provide, generalizable information about NCLB. Instead, the qualitative data give in-depth information about NCLB within particular contexts and shed light on the findings from our surveys.

In addition, the initial selection of districts to be the subject of interviews was based in part on CEP staff’s and consultants’ knowledge of and contacts in particular districts. An effort was made, however, to ensure that these districts represented a variety of regions and types of districts. Therefore, this sample still has the value of providing a wide range of district perspectives.

Peer Review

Before being published, each report in the *Year 5* series was sent to several experts for peer review. A list of the specific reviewers appears in the Credits and Acknowledgments section of each report.