Center on Education Policy, 2007

State implementation of supplemental educational services under NCLB

Focus

Examines efforts states have undertaken to carry out the supplemental educational services (tutoring) requirements of NCLB, focusing on school year 2006-07. Describes the procedures used to review and approve potential SES providers and the extent to which states were able to monitor the quality and effectiveness of SES providers.

Methodology

Draws data from a fall 2006 survey of state education agency officials in 50 states.

Major Findings

- **State capacity to monitor.** Thirty-eight states reported being unable to monitor the quality and effectiveness of SES providers “to a great extent.” Only 10 states reported being able to do so “to a great extent.” States attributed their inability to monitor to insufficient staff and funds.

- **Use of criteria in law.** Between 47 and 49 states reported using the criteria required by federal law and guidance to review and approve applications from potential SES providers. These criteria are intended to ensure that providers are financially sound, have a record of effectiveness, use research-based strategies, provide services consistent with district instruction, and adhere to health, safety, and civil rights laws.

- **Frequent updating.** Twenty states said they reviewed new SES provider applications more than once a year (the minimum required by the NCLB law); 22 states reported updating their provider lists more than once a year.

- **Different reapplication policies.** Each state has a different reapplication process for providers. Thirteen never require a formal reapplication, while 12 states require providers to reapply every year.

Where to Obtain

http://www.cep-dc.org
Center on Education Policy, 2006

From the capital to the classroom: Year 4 of the No Child Left Behind Act

Focus

Comprehensive study that describes the implementation and impact of various NCLB provisions during school years 2004-05 and 2005-06. Summarized below are the study’s findings about public school choice and supplemental educational services.

Methodology

Collected data through a survey of all 50 states, a nationally representative survey of 299 school districts, case studies of 38 geographically diverse districts and 42 schools, three national forums, and six special analyses of critical issues in implementing NCLB.

Major Findings

- **Percentage eligible for SES.** In 2005-06, 12% of districts were required to offer SES, and 15% of students in those districts were eligible for these services. These percentages were similar to those in the preceding three years. A larger proportion of urban districts (40%) had schools required to offer supplemental services than did suburban districts (12%) or rural districts (9%).

- **Participation in choice and SES.** More eligible students used supplemental educational services than used the NCLB choice option. The percentage of eligible students who participated in SES in 2005-06 was 20%, about the same as in the preceding year. The percentage of eligible students who changed public schools under the NCLB choice option was less than 2%.

- **Providers.** The average number of supplemental service providers per district grew dramatically between 2002-03 and 2004-05, from 4 providers to 20. States reported that as of August 2005 more than half of their providers (54%) were for-profit entities, while 21% were nonprofit entities, and 9% were school districts. The percentage of urban districts that were approved providers declined significantly from 43% in 2003-04 to 13% in 2005-06. A similar drop occurred among suburban districts. This decline may have occurred because some urban and suburban districts were identified for improvement and were no longer allowed to directly provide SES except in special cases.

- **Challenges.** The greatest challenges to implementing supplemental services related to monitoring the quality and effectiveness of SES providers. Forty-one states and about half (51%) of school districts called this a moderate or serious challenge.

Where to Obtain

http://www.cep-dc.org
Center on Education Policy, 2005

From the capital to the classroom: Year 3 of the No Child Left Behind Act

Focus

Comprehensives study that describes the implementation and impact of various NCLB provisions during school years 2003-04 and 2004-05. Summarized below are the study's findings about public school choice and supplemental educational services.

Methodology

Collected data through a survey of 49 states, a nationally representative survey of 314 school districts, case studies of 36 geographically diverse districts and 37 schools, three national forums, and four special analyses of critical issues in implementing NCLB.

Major Findings

- **Implementation of choice.** Although about 15% of districts had schools that were required by NCLB to offer public school choice in 2004-05, very few students—a miniscule 1% of those eligible—took advantage of this option. The choice requirement disproportionately affected large districts and urban districts. In 2004-05, about 48% of urban districts had schools that were required to offer choice. About a third of all Title I school districts reported having moderate to serious problems finding physical space for students who wanted to transfer schools and sticking to class size limits in receiving schools.

- **Impact on achievement.** Only 3% of the school districts required to offer choice said they believed the choice option was improving student achievement; 28% of these districts said choice was having a minimal effect or no effect on achievement; and 69% did not know what impact choice was having on achievement.

- **SES participation.** In 2004-05, about 10% of Title I districts had schools that were required to offer supplemental educational services. Only 18% of students eligible for these services were actually participating in them. Although 42% of school districts said they did not know what effect supplemental services were having on student achievement, 20% said they believed these services were raising student achievement at least somewhat.

- **SES providers.** Private, for-profit companies constituted about half the approved SES providers in 2004-05. School districts comprised 26% of approved providers, down from 37% the previous year, probably because federal regulations prohibited districts identified for improvement from directly providing SES. States and school districts voiced concerns about the lack of sufficient oversight of outside tutoring providers. Roughly three-fourths of the states reported that monitoring the effectiveness and quality of SES providers was a serious or moderate challenge.

Where to Obtain

http://www.cep-dc.org
Focus

Examined trends in implementation of supplemental educational services, student participation in SES, and benefits of SES from 2002-03 to 2006-07.

Methodology

Collected data from six states’ Web sites (Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, New York, and Virginia). Also collected data directly from officials in 11 districts in these states with large minority and low-income enrollments, including the nation’s three largest districts.

Major Findings

- **SES eligibility.** The number of students eligible for SES and the absolute number of students receiving services increased over five years. These increases were related to a rise in the number of schools identified for improvement and required to offer SES. Among the districts studied, the percentage of students eligible for SES in 2006-07 varied, ranging from over 5% in Richmond to more than 50% in Chicago and Fresno.

- **SES participation.** The percentage of eligible students actually receiving services declined or leveled off after five years. The low demand for SES continued even though the Administration exerted strong pressure on districts to expand the program.

- **Providers.** Over five years, the number of SES providers expanded greatly in four of the six states studied, stayed about the same in one state, and declined in one state. The number of providers grew substantially in all 11 districts.

- **Minority enrollments in SES schools.** Schools that were identified for improvement, and therefore potentially subject to the SES requirement, enrolled higher proportions of African American and Latino students than schools that made adequate yearly progress.

- **Lack of evidence of impact.** Five years after NCLB mandated SES, there was very little evidence documenting the effectiveness of SES in improving student performance.

Where to Obtain

http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/esea/SES_Policy_Brief.pdf
Council of the Great City Schools, 2006

No Child Left Behind in America’s Great City Schools: Five years and counting

Focus

Comprehensive study that examines the status and implementation of NCLB in the large urban districts that comprise the Council of the Great City Schools. Summarized below are the study’s findings about the public school choice and supplemental services requirements.

Methodology

Based on data from 36 large urban districts, enrolling more than 5.1 million students, that responded to a survey by the Council of Great City Schools of its 66 member districts. The survey focused on NCLB implementation from school years 2002-03 through 2005-06.

Major Findings

- **Choice participation.** In the 36 responding districts, a relatively small number of students—about 1.7% of those eligible—transferred under the NCLB school choice provisions in 2005-06. Even so, this represented an increase in the number of compared with 2002-03. Districts appeared to be giving parents more options for receiving schools than they initially had; the norm was to give parents four or more choices of transfer schools at the elementary level, up from two or three in 2002-03. The reasons for low participation appeared to be related to capacity, information, and demand.

- **SES participation.** The 34 districts in the survey with schools required to offer SES reported that 180,730 students, or almost 16% of those eligible, participated in SES in 2005-06. This was about the same rate of eligible students served as in 2003-04.

- **SES providers.** About 95% of the SES participants in the responding districts were served by a private provider. Most of these urban districts could not be direct providers of SES because they had been identified for improvement. The urban districts that were allowed to offer their own services had higher SES participation rates. The number of external providers remained high, but areas with a shortage of providers included services for ELLs, students with disabilities, and middle and high school students.

- **Parent communication.** The urban districts participating in the study provided parents with somewhat longer windows in which to make decisions about NCLB choice and SES than in previous years. The districts also attempted to communicate with parents through a wider variety of methods than was initially the case. In addition, districts appeared to notify parents of their options somewhat earlier and in multiple languages. However, letters to parents could have been clearer.

- **Challenges to choice.** Urban districts indicated that their biggest challenge in boosting participation in choice was rooted in the timing of the various choices, including timelines for receiving data from the state on the improvement status of schools. Other challenges to implementing choice included parent communication, limited numbers of higher-performing schools to receive transfer students, and available space in schools.

- **SES challenges.** The timing of notification about the improvement status of schools continued to be a problem in organizing SES in school year 2005-06. Other problems reported by districts included getting students to show up for services, aligning
providers’ curriculum and instruction with that of the district, evaluating SES offered by private providers, and negotiating contracts.

- **Cost.** Overall, the 36 districts studied budgeted the equivalent of 17.2% of their Title I allocations for choice and SES in 2005-06. The cost of SES offered by external providers ran two to three times as much as the cost for district or school providers.

**Where to Obtain**

http://www.cgcs.org/images/Publications/NCLB_Fiveyears.pdf
Education and the Public Interest Center (University of Colorado-Boulder) & Education Policy Research Unit (Arizona State University), 2007

Supplemental educational services under NCLB: Emerging evidence and policy issues

Focus

Analyzed student eligibility and participation in supplemental educational services, state and district implementation of SES, and the impact of SES on student achievement.

Methodology

Synthesis of evaluation studies of at least 17 providers, studies of Minneapolis and Chicago Public Schools, survey data on up to 49 states, and other academic and scholarly research.

Major Findings

- **Participation.** SES eligibility rates were much higher than enrollment rates. Most estimates suggested that 15% to 20% or fewer of all eligible students receive SES. Limited services are available for English language learners and students with disabilities. Little is known about which eligible students are not participating.

- **District implementation.** Evidence is mixed about how well districts are performing their responsibilities for administering and implementing SES. Some studies suggested that districts are making a good faith effort to implement SES—for example, by hiring extra staff to administer the program and making aggressive efforts to notify and enroll students, track attendance, and monitor providers. Other research contended that districts fell short on parent outreach and notification.

- **Capacity to monitor.** Districts and states had limited capacity to carry out their SES responsibilities and monitor program quality due to underfunding, funding “set aside” limitations, and their dependence on SES providers to make information available.

- **Impact on achievement.** While studies on the impact of SES on student achievement were virtually non-existent, the Minneapolis Public Schools found that the average growth for SES students was only 66% of the national norm. The Chicago Public Schools found that students who received at least 40 total hours of tutoring had higher math and reading gains than those who received fewer than 40 hours, and that students who received SES from seven providers (including the district itself) had higher reading scores than the district average.

- **Conditions for positive outcomes.** Existing research offers little information about the specific conditions that support positive student outcomes.

Where to Obtain

Government Accountability Office, 2006

No Child Left Behind Act: Education actions needed to improve local implementation and state evaluation of supplemental educational services

Focus

Examines early implementation of supplemental educational services, including changes in participation, relationships of providers and districts, and state and federal monitoring, evaluation, and support.

Methodology

Drew from survey of all states; a nationally representative sample of 21 districts from the 1,000 districts with schools required to offer SES; visits to 4 districts; and interviews with 22 SES providers.

Major Findings

- **SES participation.** Participation in SES increased from 12% to 19% between school years 2003-04 and 2004-05, partly due to a rise in the number of schools required to offer SES.

- **Notifying parents and improving delivery.** Districts used some promising practices to inform parents and encourage participation, such as offering services at school sites and at various times. Challenges remained, including notifying parents effectively and promptly, finding SES providers to serve rural areas and students with disabilities, and contracting and coordinating service delivery. Greater involvement of schools could improve SES delivery.

- **Coordinating SES with school curricula.** SES providers took steps to communicate with teachers and parents and to align curriculum with district instruction, through such means as hiring teachers familiar with district curriculum as tutors. The degree of these efforts varied; some providers did not have any contact with teachers in about 40% of districts or with parents in 30% of districts.

- **Monitoring.** During 2005-06, states reported conducting more on-site reviews and other monitoring of SES providers than in past years. Districts also increased their monitoring. U. S. Department of Education monitoring found uneven implementation and compliance with SES provisions. States and districts reported needing additional evaluation support and technical assistance.*

- **Evaluating effects.** States struggled with how to evaluate providers’ impact on achievement; 85% of states desired more assistance from ED about evaluation methods. No state evaluation provided a conclusive assessment of providers’ effect on student achievement.

Where to Obtain


*According to GAO testimony before Congress on April 18, 2007 (http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d07738t.pdf), ED has since taken actions to improve SES implementation and monitoring, such as disseminating promising practices and guidance, and meeting with states, districts, and providers.
University of Wisconsin–Madison, 2007

Supplemental educational services and NCLB: Policy assumptions, market practices, emerging issues, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*

Focus

Examined market dynamics in relationship to NCLB’s goals of expanding access to and improving the quality of after-school programming.

Methodology

Analyzed operational and financial data from seven SES providers, case study data on SES provider activity (from 2004 to 2006) in an urban district, and survey data from 30 state administrators.

Major Findings

- **Effect of market forces.** In the early years of implementation, the SES market exhibited anticompetitive forces. There may have been low barriers for private providers to enter the market, as reflected in the exponential increase in the number of approved providers nationally. However, a small percentage of providers were positioned to capture most of the market, as reflected in the size of their revenue increases, merger and acquisition activity, and interstate marketing strategies.

- **Firms with market share.** The SES firms that gained market share in a large urban school district from 2004 to 2006 charged higher hourly rates on average and had larger class sizes. Although these firms garnered significant revenues from providing SES, they did not offer services accessible to students with English language learners and students with disabilities.

- **Limited monitoring capacity.** A survey of 30 state Title I administrators revealed the limited capacity of state agencies to monitor industry leaders in ways that hold them accountable for meeting students’ needs.

- **Mismatch of implementation and federal priorities.** A mismatch existed between the implementation dynamics of SES and the concerns for quality, access, and equity that are the stated priorities of NCLB law.

Where to Obtain

[http://www.education.wisc.edu/eps/Faculty%20papers/EEPA302035_Rev1.pdf](http://www.education.wisc.edu/eps/Faculty%20papers/EEPA302035_Rev1.pdf)

State and local implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act. Volume IV—Title I school choice and supplemental educational services: Interim report

Focus

Examines implementation of Title I school choice and supplemental educational services provisions during school years 2003-04 and 2004-05, as part of ED’s National Longitudinal Study of NCLB.

Methodology

State-level interviews and surveys of nationally representative samples of district officials, principals, and teachers. Surveys of parents in 8 districts, SES providers in 16 districts, and student-level demographic and achievement data in 9 districts.

Major Findings

- **District and school implementation.** Most districts and schools that were required to provide Title I school choice and SES did so. Elementary schools were more likely than middle or high schools to offer these options. Most districts (63%) offered parents at least three options for SES, and 38% of districts offered parents five or more options.

- **Participation.** Only a small proportion of eligible students participated in Title I school choice and SES in 2003-04—about 17% of those eligible for SES, and about 1% of those eligible for choice. Reasons for this lack of participation include an absence of available options, timing of parent notification, and problems communicating with parents.

- **Characteristics of participants.** On average, students who participated in Title I choice and SES had lower prior achievement than other students in their district or than students who were eligible but chose not to participate. Eligible students were more likely to be minorities than those who did not qualify. In the nine districts surveyed, African American students were the most likely racial-ethnic group to participate.

Where to Obtain

Focus

Comprehensive study that evaluated implementation of key Title I provisions related to participants’ characteristics, targeting and use of funds, state assessments, accountability and school improvement, school choice and supplemental educational services, and teacher quality; also examined trends in student achievement. Summarized below are findings about choice and supplemental educational services.

Methodology

Draws on data from the National Longitudinal Study of NCLB, which included surveys of districts, principals, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and Title I paraprofessionals in a nationally representative sample of 300 districts and 1,483 schools in school years 2004-05 and 2006-07. The study also surveyed parents in eight districts and supplemental service providers in 16 districts in the same two years, and analyzed achievement outcomes for students participating in choice and SES options in nine districts. Additional information was drawn from case studies in nine districts that looked at early experiences with implementing SES in 2002-03 and 2003-04.

Major Findings

- **Eligibility and participation in choice and SES.** Although twice as many students were eligible for Title I school choice as were eligible for SES (5.2 million versus 2.4 million), nearly ten times as many students actually participated in SES (446,000 in SES versus 48,000 in choice). Student participation in the choice option doubled from 2002-03 to 2004-05, while participation in SES increased more than tenfold. Choice participation rates varied widely across states and districts; of the districts required to offer choice in 2004-05, 63% reported that no students participated that year, while other reported higher participation rates.

- **Characteristics of participants.** In the nine urban case study districts, students participating in choice and SES were more likely than other students in their districts to be minority students and have below-average achievement. School choice participants typically transferred from a school with below-average achievement to a school with above-average achievement and chose schools with lower concentrations of minority students than they schools they left.

- **Costs.** In 2003-04, districts spent an estimated $24 million on transportation for Title I choice participation and an estimated $192 million for SES. Districts reported spending an average of $875 per participating student for SES in 2003-04, about 30% less than the maximum per child that they had allocated that year.

- **Schools offering SES and choice.** The number of schools offering SES tripled from 800 in 2002-03 to 2,500 in 2003-04. The number offering Title I choice increased from 5,100 in 2002-03 to 6,200 in 2004-05.

- **Parent notification.** Although nearly all districts required to offer choice and SES reported that they notified parents about these options, a parent survey in eight urban districts found that only 27% of parents whose children were eligible for choice and 53% of parents whose children were eligible for SES said they had been notified. The quality of district notification letters varied considerably; some were easy to read
and presented the options in a positive light, while others were confusing, discouraged the use of the options, or were biased in favor of district-provided services. Often parents were notified too late to choose a new school before the start of school year 2004-05.

- **Providers and services.** Private firms accounted for 86% of providers in May 2007, while school districts and public schools accounted for only 11%. However, data from 2003-04 indicted that the public providers served more students per provider. In the 16 districts involved in a special survey, supplemental services were most commonly provided at the student’s school. Services were provided for an average of 57 hours per year, and students attended about 78% of the sessions, on average.

- **Monitoring.** As of early 2005, most states were still working to develop and implement systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of SES providers. At that time, 15 states had not established any monitoring process, 25 states had not yet established any standards for evaluating provider effectiveness, and none had finalized their evaluation standards.

**Where to Obtain**

Focus
Examine the characteristics of students participating in the Title I public school choice and SES options and the related impact on student achievement. Part of the National Longitudinal Study of NCLB.

Methodology
Student-level data was collected for 2004-05 from nine large urban school districts.

Major Findings

• **Participation.** Participation in both choice and SES was highest at the elementary level. In grades 2 to 5, 24% to 28% of eligible students participated in SES, compared with less than 5% in high school. For school choice, the average participation rates were between 0.6% and 1.0% of eligible students in grades 2-5, and between 0.2% and 0.4% in high school.

• **Student characteristics.** African American students had the highest participation rate among racial-ethnic groups in SES and higher than average participation in school choice. Latino students had higher participation than white students in SES but lower participation in school choice. English language learners and students with disabilities had relatively high participation rates in SES and relatively low participation in school choice.

• **Prior achievement of participants.** Among students eligible for SES, those who enrolled to receive these services had lower prior achievement levels than those who did not enroll. Among students eligible for Title I school choice, those who actually transferred schools had prior achievement levels similar to those who did not transfer. For both options, participating students had lower prior achievement levels than those of ineligible students. Overall, students who took advantage of school choice and SES generally came from disadvantaged populations.

• **Effect of SES on achievement.** On average, across the seven study districts with a sufficient sample of students, SES participation had a statistically significant, positive effect on students’ achievement in reading and math. Students participating for multiple years experienced larger gains.

• **Choice and achievement.** Students who used Title I choice moved from schools with below-average achievement levels to schools with above-average levels, and tended to move to more racially balanced schools. In the six districts with a sufficient sample of students, no statistically significant effect on achievement was found for students who changed schools. However, the sample sizes for choice were small, so results should be interpreted with caution.

Where to Obtain