



COMMISSION ON  
NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2007**

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## **NCLB Commission Statement on U.S. House Hearing on Supplemental Educational Services**

Washington, DC—Today the Commission on No Child Left Behind made the following statement in response to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education hearing on supplemental educational services (SES).

The Commission applauds the Committee for holding a hearing focused on SES. In 2005, only 233,000 of the 1.4 million students – less than 17% - eligible for SES participated in that option. There have been many reasons for this lack of participation including ineffective communication with parents and students about available services, lack of access to school facilities for providers, narrow windows for enrolling students for services and others. The Commission believes that it is extremely important to assure that struggling students get the help they need to improve their academic performance. Low levels of participation in both SES and the public school choice provisions of the law demonstrate that students are not getting the support to which they are entitled in the numbers envisioned by NCLB's authors. We believe both of these options can enhance and support student achievement and overall school performance if faithfully implemented. However, both options have to result in genuine improvements in achievement for the children using them.

Our report, *Beyond NCLB: Fulfilling the Promise to Our Nation's Children*, lays out specific, actionable steps that can be taken by Congress to make sure that states provide students with the support to which they are entitled under the law. We recommend that districts provide multiple enrollment periods during the year to ensure that all eligible children have the opportunity to participate in SES. We also recommend that districts improve students' access to SES services by offering space in school facilities for private providers to serve students. To improve communication with parents about student options under the law, the Commission recommends that districts identify and publicize an individual or office that would operate as a point of contact for parents seeking to learn about NCLB options for their children. To aid in this we recommend that districts be allowed to reserve a small percentage of the funds actually expended for SES on administration of the program.

The Commission strongly believes that we must also assure that options, such as tutoring, are effective at helping students improve performance. In most cases states have not adequately focused on determining whether the providers they approve are actually helping children learn. Parents need good information about provider performance to guide their decisions on what works best for their children.

To better measure the effectiveness of these programs in improving student achievement, we are recommending both a national evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the supplemental educational services program as well as requiring states to more effectively evaluate whether providers are actually producing learning gains for the students they serve. If a provider - whether private or district - is not producing sufficient learning gains, then they should no longer provide supplemental services. To access the chapter in the Commission's report titled,

“Moving Beyond the Status Quo to Effective School Improvement and Student Options,” please visit [http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/NCLB\\_Section3.pdf](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/NCLB_Section3.pdf) .

We urge the adoption of the Commission’s recommendations for improving SES programs as well as our comprehensive set of recommendations to ensure that all students will succeed. These recommendations by the Commission form a blueprint for improving NCLB and accelerating the progress in meeting its goal of proficiency for all students. You can access the Commission’s full report by visiting [www.nclbcommission.org](http://www.nclbcommission.org).

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The Commission on No Child Left Behind is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the Spencer Foundation. This document is published to communicate the results of the Commission’s work. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in the Commission’s documents are entirely those of the author(s) and should not be attributed in any manner to the donors.