

Report
of the Measuring Success Task Force
to the National Education Goals Panel
Gov. John McKernan, Chair
February 24, 2001

In 1998 Governors John Engler and James Hunt chaired a Goals Panel Task Force on the Future of the Goals, which concluded that education goals for America should continue but that data to measure their attainment need to be improved. The contributions the Panel has made over the last decade have depended directly on its access to high-quality data. None of these accomplishments would have been possible without sound and objective data to characterize educational progress.

Yet from its beginning, the Panel has found the data available to it for this purpose insufficient to the job. In 1991, the Panel hoped the “gaps” in its first report would serve as a clarion call to provide better data on outcomes. Unfortunately, nearly a decade later, many of the data gaps remain. The Measuring Success Task Force was convened to address this situation.

To sustain education reform efforts and judge their effectiveness in the future, it is time to exercise bold leadership. It is time to define the nature of the information that is needed and develop a plan for getting it. Attached is the set of recommendations that the Measuring Success Task Force believes would fill our most vexing data gaps, and provide information that states and the nation will need in the decade ahead.

Together these recommendations provide data that Governors and other Panel members need and want. They would significantly enhance data available regarding:

- **Student achievement:** annual state NAEP data on student achievement, and a regular schedule of international assessments.
- **Teacher quality and parent participation:** key data on teacher quality and parent participation every two years, instead of the current 6-year gap or projected 4-year schedule.
- **Early childhood:** regular collection of national and state data on the status of children when they begin Kindergarten, and more current information on the quality of their preschool experiences.
- **Adult literacy:** improved knowledge about adult literacy in the states, the nation, and internationally.

Data recommendations of the Measuring Success Task Force (MSTF) and their costs, as estimated by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

[Annualized extra costs in millions, above current NCES plans] **FY02 and thereafter**
***unless noted otherwise**

Part 1: Student Achievement

GOALS 3 and 5 (Student Achievement and First in World in Math and Science)

Recommendation #1 Collect and report state NAEP assessments annually, with regular testing in reading, writing, mathematics and science, scheduled to provide new state NAEP data in some subject areas each year, beginning in FY03. *\$30 M
(Attached please find the existing NAEP schedule set by NAGB in 1997 and 2 alternatives for implementing this recommendation. Alternative #1 suggests testing in 3 subjects each year -- reading and mathematics every year, and science alternating with writing as the third subject. Alternative #2 suggests testing in 2 subjects every year, alternating reading and writing one year, and science and mathematics the next.)

Recommendation #2 Provide federal subsidy to participating states for the costs of administering state NAEP. \$5 M

Recommendation #3 Provide federal funds to create incentives for participating schools to compensate and/or provide additional inducements and organizational relationships to facilitate state and school participation in NAEP and other NCES data collections (Estimate from MSTF, not NCES) \$55 M

Recommendation #4 Develop and administer a predictable schedule of stable, recurring international data collections on student achievement.

- a) Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS, 4-year cycle) \$4 M
- b) Program of International Student Assessment (PISA, 3-year cycle) \$4 M
- c) Program of International Reading and Literacy Study (PIRLS, 4-year cycle) \$3 M

Subtotal for Goals 3/5 items # 2, 3&4 in FY02 \$71 million
with item #1 added in FY03 \$101 million]

Part 2: Other Goals GOAL 1 (Early Childhood – Ready to Learn)

Recommendation #5 Repeat – as a recurring direct measure of Goal 1 – the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) fall kindergarten battery at 4-year intervals as a national cross-sectional data collection. \$2 M

Recommendation #6 Continue to develop and refine instruments to assess the language use and social/emotional development of kindergarten students, building upon the past experience of ECLS. *(one time, 3-year process)* \$1 M

Recommendation #7 Administer the refined ECLS-K at the state level on a 4-year cycle starting after 2004. *\$6 M

Recommendation #8 Conduct a special study of a subset of ECLS students taking the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment when they are in fourth grade. (4 year cycle) \$3 M

Recommendation #9 Conduct NCES' Early Care and Education Survey to provide more current information on the quality of children's preschool experience (5-year cycle) \$1 M

Recommendation #10 Conduct a Fast Response Survey to collect information on the extent to which schools offering kindergarten have the attributes that make them "ready schools," as defined in the NEGP publication of that name. (5-year cycle) \$ 0.075 M

**[Subtotal for Goal 1 in FY02 \$7.08 million]
adding item #7 in FY04 \$13.08 million]**

GOALS 4 and 8 (Teacher Education and Parental Participation)

Recommendation #11 Conduct special studies of a subset of items from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) about teacher qualifications (Goal 4) and parental participation (Goal 8) every 4 years, ie, 2 years following the administration of the full SASS, also on a 4-year schedule. \$2.5 M

Recommendation #12 Collect data from state departments of education, standards Boards, or other state agencies with this authority about which states have explicit policy links between their academic standards and their policies for:

- 1) certifying colleges' and universities' teacher education programs;
- 2) certifying new teachers; and
- 3) defining teachers' professional development requirements. \$0.12 M

[Subtotal for Goals 4/8 in FY02 and thereafter \$2.6 million]

GOAL 6 (Adult Literacy)

Recommendation # 13 Enlarge the sample size of the 2002 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) to the size it was in 1992 (to facilitate calculating results for some and important US subgroups.) \$5.9 M

Recommendation #14 Subsidize the cost of state participation in the NAAL. \$9 M

Recommendation #15 Conduct a one-time study linking 12th grade student performance on the prose, document, and quantitative literacy skills on the National Adult Literacy Survey with students' reading performance NAEP. \$1.75 M

[Subtotal for Goal 6 \$16.65 million]

Additional NCES Cost Consideration

NCES estimates it would require 10 additional staff positions or else additional contractor services to conduct all of the work indicated above. These costs are not reflected in the estimates above.

Recommended Incentives for Schools Participating in NCES Data Collections

To secure the willingness of local schools and states to participate in NAEP and other NCES data collections, both technical expert advisors and the Measuring Success Task Force (MSTF) believe new incentives need to be offered, including some currently under consideration by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), which sets policy for NAEP.

The overriding intent of the MSTF was to provide a set of incentives that would be effective in securing participation in NAEP and other data collections. The MSTF therefore recommends using a combination of monetary and non-monetary incentives.

Non-monetary incentives

The task force recommends the use of the following non-monetary incentives or inducements to schools to participate in NAEP that have been identified by NAGB, including:

- Redesigning the written communications sent schools, districts and states when they are approached to participate in NAEP.
- Allowing entire classes of 4th- and 8th-graders to take NAEP, instead of a random group of 4th- and 8th-graders drawn from across the school.
- Clarifying how released NAEP test items relate to state and local academic standards.
- Providing schools that participate in NAEP the option of receiving feedback on their students' performance on NAEP.
- Preparing a teacher toolkit of NAEP-related material to support instruction.

The MSTF recognizes that NAGB has also considered changes in the timing of NAEP test administration to accommodate states' own testing schedule. The Task Force urges caution so any such changes do not compromise the integrity of the test results by spreading the allowable testing dates over too wide a period of time. Likewise, MSTF recognizes NAGB has also considered changing law to permit a federal contractor, rather than local and state staff, to administer NAEP. The Task Force encourages the use of whatever incentives are effective, but suggests that the cash incentive indicated above may make this a federal contractor unnecessary.

Monetary incentives

MSTF recommended that if NAEP is collected more often, funds should be provided to the schools participating in NAEP. Task Force members recommend that approximately

\$1 million per state or jurisdiction be budgeted for schools participating in NAEP and other NCEs data collections. These funds could be awarded in memoranda of understanding to schools selected by NCEs to meet requirements for sound sampling. Schools that meet these NCEs selection criteria would agree to participate in NAEP as well as SASS, ECLS, and other collections. These are MSTF, not NCEs, recommendations and cost estimates.

Other policy recommendations

In addition to collecting (and budgeting for) additional data to measure state and national progress in education, the MSTF makes the following policy recommendations:

- 1) That legislation permit interested local school districts, as well as states, to participate in NAEP.
- 2) That the Panel not impose interim goals or targets for performance upon the states.
- 3) That when feasible and desirable, the Panel supplement its annual data report(s) with additional data that become available at other points during the year.
- 4) That states be encouraged to collaborate in the improvement of the timeliness, quality and comparability of state outcome data. Specifically, that encouragement be given current state efforts to create an electronic method of collecting and reporting data through the proposed Integrated Performance Benchmarking System (IPBS) -- which would permit timely acquisition of comparable state data by the Goals Panel and others in the future.
- 5) That regular meetings be scheduled between the Panel and the National Center for Education Statistics to keep the Panel apprised of plans to collect the data that the Panel needs.