



# NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND



## Helping Families By Supporting and Expanding School Choice

"Parents know what is best for their children. Expanding educational options for parents is one of the hallmarks of the No Child Left Behind Act and it remains one of the President's highest priorities."

*-Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings*

### *NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND* INCREASES PARENTS' CHOICES

#### **Empowering Parents With Information:**

Under *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), states and school districts must provide "report cards" for parents—that is, information tailored for parents telling them about the quality of education at their child's school. Written in an easy-to-read format, these report cards ensure that parents and taxpayers know which schools are achieving and how. Included in the report cards are student achievement data broken out by race, ethnicity, gender, English language proficiency, as well as breakouts by whether the students are immigrants or have disabilities, and whether they are disadvantaged. States and school districts must also provide parents and children in struggling schools timely notification of the public school choice and supplemental services options that may be available for their children.

#### **Expanding Public School Choice:**

- Under *No Child Left Behind*, children in schools in need of improvement must be given the opportunity to transfer to other public schools in their district, including public charter schools, and school districts are required to tell parents about this option, as well as pay for transportation to the other schools. During the 2003-04 school year at least 32,000 students took advantage of this option.

#### **Supplemental Educational Services:**

- Under *No Child Left Behind*, children from low-income families who attend schools in need of improvement for two or more consecutive years are given the opportunity to receive free supplemental services—such as tutoring and other academic services provided outside the regular school day—from a variety of State-approved providers. Parents have the opportunity to choose the provider that best meets the needs of their children.
- Many types of organizations are eligible to be supplemental service providers, including faith-based organizations, for-profit companies, school districts, private schools, charter schools and other community groups. As of August 2005, more than 2,796 providers have been approved to offer supplemental services.
- Districts must set aside an amount equal to 20 percent of their Title I allocation for supplemental services and transportation for public school choice.
- During the 2003-04 school year at least 226,000 students took advantage of the supplemental services option.



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## Expanding Options for Parents and Children

*No Child Left Behind* significantly expands educational choice for parents and children. In many school districts, however, there are too few alternatives for parents seeking quality educational options. Since President Bush took office in 2001, the Federal Government has provided over \$1.8 billion for programs and initiatives designed to help ensure that parents have more meaningful choices when it comes to their children's education. The President's 2006 budget request reflects his commitment to expanding options for parents by including \$455 million for programs such as:

### Charter Schools:

- The President's 2006 budget provides \$218.7 million to continue the Charter School Program, including \$200 million to help create new charter schools and an additional \$18.7 million in matching funds to States that offer per-pupil financial assistance to charter schools to obtain facilities. Since 2001, over \$1 billion has been appropriated for the Charter Schools Program. In 2005, 40 states, the District of Columbia, and more than half a million students are benefiting from this program.
- *NCLB* specifically includes public charter schools as an option for families when districts are required to permit students to transfer from a school identified for improvement to another public school.

### Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program:

- This program supports competitive grants to public and nonprofit entities to help charter schools finance their facilities through such means as providing loan guarantees, insuring debt and other activities to encourage private lending. The President's 2006 budget provides \$37 million for this program, building on the \$124 million that has been appropriated since 2001. In 2005, more than 48,000 students are benefitting from this program.

### Magnet Schools:

- Magnet schools provide a distinctive educational programs that attract diverse student populations. The President has requested \$107.8 million for this program in his 2006 budget. Since 2001, close to \$550 million has been appropriated to support magnet school programs across the country. In 2005, 52 school districts, 218 schools, and approximately 150,000 students are benefiting from this program.

### Voluntary Public School Choice Program:

- The President's 2006 budget provides \$26.5 million for this program, which provides grants to states and school districts to establish or expand innovative public school choice programs. This program was created in 2002, and since that time, over \$104 million in grants have been awarded. In 2005, nearly 850,000 students are benefitting from this program.

### D.C. School Choice Initiative:

- Started in 2004, this program provides low-income parents in our nation's capital more options for obtaining a quality education by providing scholarships for their children, especially those who are enrolled in schools in need of improvement. Over 1,000 students attended private schools on Opportunity Scholarships for the 2004-05 school year, the program's first year in implementation, and 1,086 new students were recently awarded scholarships for the 2005-06 school year. Since 2004, over \$27 million has been appropriated for D.C. Choice, and the President has requested an additional \$15 million for the program in his 2006 budget.

### Choice Incentive Fund:

- In his 2006 budget request, the President has proposed a new initiative to support projects that develop, implement and evaluate innovative approaches to providing parents with expanded school choice options, including both private and public school choice. The \$50 million the President has requested for this program would support projects that demonstrate the greatest potential for measuring the effects of providing parents with expanded choice options for the education of their children.

For more information about No Child Left Behind visit [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) or call 1-800-USA-LEARN.