

Commissioner's Statement

INTRODUCTION

Reliable data are critical in guiding efforts to improve education in America. To provide such data, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) each year submits to Congress the mandated report of *The Condition of Education*. This year's report presents indicators of important developments and trends in American education. Recurrent themes underscored by the indicators include participation and persistence in education, student performance and other outcomes, the environment for learning, and societal support for education. In addition, this year's volume contains a special analysis that describes the teacher workforce and the movement of teachers into and out of this workforce.

This statement summarizes the main findings of the special analysis and the 40 indicators that appear in the six following sections. Each indicator is referenced by its number (e.g., *indicator 10*) in the volume.

SPECIAL ANALYSIS ON MOBILITY IN THE TEACHER WORKFORCE

Each year teachers enter, leave, and move within the K–12 teacher workforce in the United States. Such movement affects not only the composition of teachers and institutional stability of individual schools but also the demographics and qualifications of the teacher workforce as a whole. Understanding the dynamics of such change in the teacher workforce is important for objectively considering such policy issues as teacher shortages, teacher attrition, and teacher quality.

This special analysis uses national data on public and private school teachers from the 1999–2000 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and the related 2000–01 Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) to describe the nature of the teacher workforce, look at who joined

and who left the workforce in 1999–2000, and compare these transitions with those in 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94. The major findings are as follows:

- At the start of the 1999–2000 school year, 17 percent of the teacher workforce were new hires at their schools, with the majority of new hires being experienced teachers. Only a relatively small percentage of the workforce—about 4 percent—were first-time teachers that school year. The average age of first-time teachers was 29, and private schools were more likely to have first-time teachers than public schools.
- At the end of 1999–2000, about 16 percent of the teacher workforce “turned over” or did not continue teaching in the same school during the 2000–01 school year. The turnover rate was larger at the end of 1999–2000 than at the end of 1987–88, 1990–91, or 1993–94.
- About half of teacher turnover can be attributed to teachers transferring from one school to another, and the rest is due to teachers leaving teaching either temporarily or indefinitely.
- Most public school teachers who transfer move to another public school; only 2 percent transferred to a private school at the end of 1999–2000. In contrast, 53 percent of private school teachers who transferred moved to a public school.
- Public school teachers in high-poverty schools are twice as likely as their counterparts in low-poverty schools to transfer to another school.
- Relative to rates of total turnover, the percentage of teachers who retired at the end of the 1999–2000 school year was small: only 2 out of 16 percent.

Commissioner's Statement

Continued

- The percentage of teachers who left teaching and took a job other than elementary or secondary teaching at the end of 1999–2000 was twice as large as that of teachers who retired. Teachers who took a job other than teaching were disproportionately male compared with those who stayed in teaching.
 - The percentage of teachers who left teaching for family reasons, to return to school, or for other reasons at the end of 1999–2000 was less than 2 percent. Virtually all teachers who left for family reasons were female. Teachers who left to return to school tended to be younger than those who stayed in teaching.
 - Not all teachers who leave the teacher workforce do so permanently: 4 of the 17 percent of teachers who were newly hired in 1999–2000 were former teachers who returned to teach after a break from teaching.
 - Private school teachers are more likely to leave teaching than public school teachers.
 - Both teachers who left teaching and teachers who transferred at the end of 1999–2000 reported a lack of planning time, too heavy a workload, too low a salary, and problematic student behavior among their top five sources of dissatisfaction with the school they left.
- growth and increasing enrollment rates help explain rising enrollments. Adult education is also increasing due to demographic shifts in the age of the U.S. population, increasing rates of enrollment, and changing employer requirements for skills. As enrollments have increased, the cohorts of learners have become more diverse than ever before, with students who are members of racial/ethnic minorities or speak a language other than English at home making up an increasing share of the school-age population.
- Rising immigration and a 25 percent increase in the number of annual births that began in the mid-1970s and peaked in 1990 have boosted school enrollment. Public elementary and secondary enrollment reached an estimated 48.3 million in 2004 and is projected to increase to an all-time high of 50.0 million in 2014. The West is projected to experience the largest increase in enrollments of all regions in the country (*indicator 1*).
 - The number of private school students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 increased from 1989–90 to 2001–02, though at a slower rate than enrollments in public schools. Thus the percentage of private school students as a percentage of total elementary and secondary enrollment decreased slightly over this period. Catholic schools retained the largest enrollment share of private school students, but there was a shift in the distribution of students from Catholic to other religious and nonsectarian private schools at both the elementary and secondary levels during this period (*indicator 2*).
 - About 1.1 million, or 2.2 percent of all students, were homeschooled in the United States in the spring of 2003, an increase from 850,000, or 1.7 percent of all

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

As the U.S. population increases, so does its enrollment at all levels of public and private education. At the elementary and secondary levels, growth is due largely to the increase in the size of the school-age population. At the postsecondary level, both population

Commissioner's Statement

Continued

students, in 1999. The majority of home-schooled students received all of their education at home, but some attended school up to 25 hours per week (*indicator 3*).

- The percentage of public school students who are racial/ethnic minorities increased from 22 percent in 1972 to 42 percent in 2003, primarily due to growth in Hispanic enrollments. In 2003, minority public school enrollment (54 percent) exceeded White enrollment (46 percent) in the West (*indicator 4*).
- The number of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home more than doubled between 1979 and 2003. Among these children, the number who spoke English with difficulty (i.e., did not speak English “very well”) also grew markedly during this period. For both of these groups of children, Spanish was the language most frequently spoken at home (*indicator 5*).
- In 2000, some 3.9 million children, or 8 percent of those enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools, were classified as having mental retardation, an emotional disturbance, or a specific learning disability and received services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Males were twice as likely as females to be served under IDEA, and Black and American Indian children were both overrepresented in the population of children classified as having one of these categories of disability (*indicator 6*).
- In the next 10 years, undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase. Women's undergraduate enrollment is expected to increase at a faster rate than men's, and full-time enrollment is projected to increase at a faster rate than part-time enrollment.

During this period, the growth in enrollment at 4-year institutions is expected to be greater than at 2-year institutions (*indicator 7*).

LEARNER OUTCOMES

How well does the American educational system—and its students—perform? Data from national and international assessments of students' academic achievement can help answer this question, as can data on adults' educational and work experiences, literacy levels, and earnings later in life. In some areas, such as reading, mathematics, and science, the performance of elementary and secondary students has shown some improvement over the past decade, but not in all grades assessed and not equally for all students. The association between education and the earnings and employment of adults helps underscore the importance of education for individuals and society and the outcomes of different levels of educational attainment.

- According to data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998 (ECLS–K), smaller percentages of children from homes with more family risk factors, such as poverty and a primary home language other than English, mastered more complex reading and mathematics skills by the spring of 3rd grade compared with their peers with fewer or no risk factors. For example, in reading, the percentage of children who had two or more risk factors and were proficient at deriving meaning from text increased from 0 to 24 percent from the spring of kindergarten to the spring of grade 3 versus an increase of 0 to 54 percent for those with no risk factors (*indicator 8*).
- The reading performance of 8th-graders assessed by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Commissioner's Statement

Continued

- improved between 1992 and 2003, but no measurable difference was found in the performance of 4th-graders. Females outperformed males in both grades, and White and Asian/Pacific Islander students outperformed American Indian, Hispanic, and Black students (*indicator 9*).
- The mathematics performance of 4th- and 8th-graders assessed by NAEP improved steadily from 1990 to 2003. For both grades, the average scores in 2003 were higher than in all previous assessments, and the percentages of students performing at or above the *Basic* and *Proficient* levels and at the *Advanced* level, defined as “superior performance,” were higher in 2003 than in 1990. In both grades, males outperformed females, and White and Asian/Pacific Islander students outperformed Black, Hispanic, and American Indian students (*indicator 10*).
 - According to findings from NAEP in 2003, students in large central city public schools had lower average scores in reading and mathematics than students in rural, urban fringe, and all central city schools. In both subjects, the percentages of 4th- and 8th-graders in large central city public schools who performed at or above the *Proficient* level were lower than the national percentages (*indicator 14*).
 - The 2003 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) assessed students’ mathematics performance at grade 4 in 25 countries and at grade 8 in 45 countries. Findings from TIMSS showed that U.S. students at grades 4 and 8 scored above the international average in mathematics in 2003. U.S. 4th-graders showed no measurable change in mathematics from 1995 to 2003, while 8th-graders showed improvement over this period (*indicator 11*).
 - According to findings from TIMSS on science performance, U.S. students at grades 4 and 8 scored above the international average in 2003. U.S. 4th-graders showed no measurable change in science from 1995 to 2003, while 8th-graders showed improvement over this period (*indicator 12*).
 - The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)—which reports on the mathematics literacy and problem-solving ability of 15-year-olds in 29 participating Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) industrialized countries—showed that U.S. 15-year-olds, on average, scored below the international average for participating OECD countries in combined mathematics literacy, specific mathematics skill areas, and problem solving in 2003 (*indicator 13*).
 - The percentage of adults age 25 or older who reported having read a novel, short story, play, or poem in the past 12 months decreased between 1982 and 2002. A strong positive relationship existed between reading literature and educational attainment in 2002: the more education a person had, the more likely that person was to report having read literature in the past 12 months (*indicator 15*).
 - White, Black, and Hispanic young adults (ages 25–34) who have at least a bachelor’s degree have higher median earnings than their peers with less education, and these differences increased between 1977 and 2003. Gaps in the median earnings of young adults by race/ethnicity existed at all levels of educational attainment during this period, with Whites earning more than Blacks or Hispanics at each level. Between 1977 and 2003, the earnings gap between Blacks and Whites decreased among those who did not complete or go beyond high

Commissioner's Statement

Continued

school, while no change was detected at higher levels of educational attainment. There was no measurable change in the earnings gap between Whites and Hispanics at any of the levels of educational attainment (*indicator 16*).

- In 2004, 5 percent of young adults (individuals between the ages of 25 and 34) were unemployed. Although this percentage has fluctuated since 1971, one constant has been a relationship between unemployment and educational attainment. Generally speaking, the more education a young adult has attained, the less likely that person is to be unemployed. For example, over this 33-year period, young adults with at least a bachelor's degree were less likely to be unemployed than their peers with less education, a pattern that held for White, Black, and Hispanic young adults (*indicator 17*).

STUDENT EFFORT AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

Many factors are associated with school success, persistence, and progress toward high school graduation or a college degree. These include students' early school experiences, motivation and effort, and courses taken and other learning experiences, as well as various student characteristics, such as sex, race/ethnicity, parents' educational attainment, and family income. Monitoring these factors in relation to the progress of different groups of students through the educational system and tracking students' attainment are important for knowing how well we are doing as a nation in education.

- Among children enrolled in kindergarten in fall 1998, about 1 out of 10 was either repeating kindergarten or had a delayed entry (had not enrolled the year he or she became age eligible). Both groups were more likely

than their on-time classmates to be male and less likely to have attended preschool. Compared with those who entered on time, delayed entrants were more likely to be White and to have parents with a bachelor's degree or higher. However, kindergarten repeaters were more likely than on-time entrants to have parents with less than a high school education (*indicator 18*).

- The status dropout rate represents the percentage of an age group that is not enrolled in school and has not earned a high school diploma or its equivalent. Since 1972, status dropout rates for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics ages 16–24 have declined; nonetheless, rates for Hispanics have remained higher than those for other racial/ethnic groups. Although the status dropout rate declined over the whole 30-year period from 1972 through 2002, it remained fairly stable over the last decade (1992 through 2002) (*indicator 19*).
- Between 1972 and 2003, the rate at which high school completers enrolled in college in the fall immediately after high school increased from 49 to 64 percent, but it has remained at about 64 percent since 1998. Between the mid-1980s and the late 1990s, the difference between the rates of immediate enrollment of Blacks and Whites declined, but the difference between the rates of immediate enrollment of Hispanics and Whites increased (*indicator 20*).
- Among the cohort of 1992 high school seniors who had enrolled in any postsecondary education by 2000, 66 percent enrolled first in a postsecondary institution in their home state and also lived in their home state in 2000. Students whose highest degree was a bachelor's degree were more likely than those whose highest degree was an associate's degree to have either enrolled

Commissioner's Statement

Continued

in a postsecondary institution outside of their home state or lived outside their home state after high school (*indicator 22*).

- Twelfth-graders in 1992 were more likely than their counterparts in 1972 and 1982 to enroll in postsecondary education within 8.5 years of high school graduation. Among those who earned more than 10 postsecondary credits, the proportion earning a bachelor's degree by their mid-twenties increased (50 percent of the class of 1992 did so vs. 43 and 46 percent, respectively, of the classes of 1982 and 1972) (*indicator 21*).
- The percentage of 25- to 29-year-olds who have completed high school has increased since 1971. By 2003, some 87 percent of these young adults had received a high school diploma or its equivalent, and many had received additional education. However, racial/ethnic differences in levels of educational attainment remain (*indicator 23*).

CONTEXTS OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The school environment is shaped by many factors, including curricular offerings, methods of instruction and assessment, scheduling, the configuration of classrooms and schools, and the climate for learning. Monitoring these and other factors provides a better understanding of the conditions in schools that can influence education.

- Students in 20 states, accounting for more than half of all public school students in the United States, were required to pass exit examinations (such as minimum competency, standards-based, or end-of-course examinations) in order to graduate from high school in 2004. Five additional states

will be phasing in exit examinations between 2004 and 2008. By 2009, of the 25 states with exit examinations in place, all but 6 will use these examinations to meet the accountability requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (*indicator 24*).

- Students attending school in a central city or urban fringe/large town and in schools with a 12th-grade enrollment of 450 or more were more likely than their peers to have the opportunity to take four or more advanced courses each in mathematics, English, science, and a foreign language in 2000. Students attending schools in the Northeast and Southeast were also more likely than their peers in schools in Central states to have such an opportunity (*indicator 25*).
- The average number of hours per year that U.S. public school students spent in school increased between 1987–88 and 1999–2000. On average, middle school students spent more time in school than elementary or high school students. In both years, students who attended rural schools spent more time in school than students in urban fringe/large town schools, as did those in the Midwest than those in the Northeast, South, and West (*indicator 26*).
- Approximately 50 percent of all disabled students in 2003–04 spent 80 percent or more of their day in a regular classroom, up from 45 percent in 1994–95. Black students with disabilities spend less time in a regular classroom on average than their peers of other race/ethnicities with disabilities (*indicator 27*).
- Charter schools—public schools of choice that have been exempted from some local and state regulations to provide greater flexibility than regular public schools—

Commissioner's Statement

Continued

differ from one another and from regular public schools in their origins, the authority under which they are chartered, and the students they serve. Among students enrolled in charter schools in 2003, 51 percent attended schools chartered by a school district, 28 percent attended schools chartered by a state board of education, 16 percent attended schools chartered by a postsecondary institution, and 6 percent attended schools chartered by a state chartering agency (*indicator 28*).

- There was a general decline in the rate at which students ages 12–18 were victims of nonfatal crime—including theft, violent crime, and serious violent crime—at school from 1992 through 2002. The rates of these crimes when students were away from school also decreased. In each year observed, the rates for serious violent crime—rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault—were lower when students were at school than away from school (*indicator 30*).

CONTEXTS OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

The postsecondary education system encompasses various types of institutions, both public and private. Although issues of student access, persistence, and attainment have been predominant concerns in postsecondary education, the contexts in which postsecondary education takes place matter as well. Important aspects of this context include the diversity of the undergraduate and graduate populations; differences in the educational missions, policies, and services of colleges and universities; the types of courses that students take; and the ways in which colleges and universities attract and employ faculty and other resources.

- In 2002, some 29 percent of all students enrolled in degree-granting institutions were

racial/ethnic minorities (American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, or Hispanic). That year, 12 percent of Black students attended an institution where they made up at least 80 percent of the total enrollment. This was more than twice the percentage of Hispanic students who attended an institution where they made up at least 80 percent of the total enrollment. About one-fifth of Black and Hispanic students attended an institution where they were the majority (*indicator 31*).

- Inflation-adjusted average salaries for full-time faculty increased 8 percent between 1987–88 and 2002–03. Combining salary with benefits, full-time faculty received a total compensation package averaging \$78,300 in 2002–03, about \$8,300 more than they received in 1987–88 after adjusting for inflation. Faculty at private 4-year doctoral/research universities earned more and received more in benefits than faculty at other types of institutions (*indicator 32*).
- Academic libraries are not only providing a broad array of electronic services to their primary clientele but are also increasingly providing these services to off-campus users other than their primary clientele. Although academic libraries at institutions with graduate programs are generally taking the lead in providing electronic services, gaps between types of institutions are narrowing (*indicator 33*).
- Many states have implemented laws and policies to promote successful transfers of students from community colleges to 4-year institutions. In fall 2000, most community college students attended institutions in states with legislation on transfer and articulation, cooperative agreements, and requirements for report-

Commissioner's Statement

Continued

ing transfer data (78, 89, and 90 percent of community college students, respectively), and more than half attended institutions in states with common core courses and statewide articulation guides (66 and 57 percent, respectively) (*indicator 34*).

SOCIETAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

Society and its members—families, individuals, employers, and governmental and private organizations—provide support for education in various ways. This support includes learning activities that take place outside schools and colleges as well as financial support for learning inside schools and colleges. Parents contribute to the education of their children in the home through reading, playing, and engaging in other activities with young children and helping them with their homework. Communities impart learning and values through various modes, both formal and informal. Financial investments in education are made both by individuals through income spent on their own education (or the education of their children) and by the public through public appropriations for education. These investments in education are made at all levels of the education system. Other collective entities, such as employers and other kinds of organizations, also invest in various forms of education for their members.

- According to data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), children about 9 months of age with family risk factors—living in a household below the poverty level, having a primary home language other than English, having a mother whose highest education was less than a high school diploma, and living in a single-parent household—were less likely to have family members who read to them, told them stories, and sang to them daily in 2001–02 (*indicator 35*).
- In 1999–2000, expenditures per student in public elementary/secondary schools were highest in the most affluent school districts and next highest in school districts with the most low-income families. Between 1989–90 and 1999–2000, total expenditures per student in constant dollars increased the least for the most affluent districts. Current expenditures per student, which include instructional, administrative, and operation and maintenance expenditures, followed the same pattern (*indicator 36*).
- The proportion of total revenue for public elementary and secondary education from local sources in constant dollars declined nationally from 1989–90 to 2001–02, reflecting decreases in the proportion of local revenue from property tax revenue and other local revenue. In both the Midwest and Northeast, the proportion of total public school revenue from local sources declined during this period, while the proportion changed little in the South and West (*indicator 37*).
- Between 1989–90 and 2001–02, total expenditures per student in public elementary/secondary schools, which include all expenditures allocable to per student costs divided by fall enrollment, increased by 24 percent, from \$7,365 to \$9,139 in constant dollars. Among the five major categories of public elementary and secondary school expenditure (instruction, administration, operation and maintenance, capital expenditures, and other), capital expenditures increased the most in percentage terms (70 percent) between 1989–90 and 2001–02. In comparison, instructional expenditures increased by 21 percent. Despite these increases, more than half of the total amount spent went toward instructional expenditures in 2001–02 (*indicator 38*).

Commissioner's Statement

Continued

- Public revenue per student at the elementary and secondary levels increased 109 percent in constant dollars between 1969–70 and 2001–02. After first declining and then increasing since the mid-1980s, total public revenue comprised a similar percentage of GDP in 2001–02 as in 1969–70 (4.08 and 3.98 percent, respectively) (*indicator 39*).
- The education and general revenues per student of public 2- and 4-year degree-granting institutions increased by 33 percent in constant dollars from 1969–70 to 2000–01. During this period, government appropriations per student to institutions increased by 3 percent, from \$5,227 to \$5,409, while the revenues per student to institutions from sources other than government appropriations increased at a faster rate. Tuition and fees per student increased from \$1,364 to \$2,716 (by 99 percent), and other sources of education and general revenues increased from \$2,204 to \$3,571 (by 62 percent) (*indicator 40*).

CONCLUSION

Trends in the condition of American education continue to show promise and challenge, as well as underscore the importance of schooling. Progress in reading achievement is uneven, while performance has risen in mathematics. International assessments also present a mixed picture. Certain family risk factors present a challenge to students' educational progress and achievement.

In elementary and secondary education, enrollments have followed population shifts and are projected to increase each year through 2014 to an all-time high of 50 million, with the West expected to experience the largest increase in enrollments. Over the past three decades, rates of enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary education have increased and are projected to continue to do so throughout the next 10 years.

NCES produces an array of reports each month that present findings about the U.S. education system. *The Condition of Education 2005* is the culmination of a yearlong project. It includes data that were available by early April 2005. In the coming months, a number of other reports and surveys informing us about education will be released, including the first follow-up to the Birth Cohort of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study; 2005 National Report Cards in reading, mathematics, and science; the National Assessment of Adult Literacy; and the 10-year follow-up to the Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study of 1992/93. As is true of the indicators in this volume, these surveys and reports will continue to inform Americans about the condition of education.



Grover J. Whitehurst
Acting Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics