

**Testimony
Of
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***Information Policy, Census and National Archives Subcommittee
Oversight and Government Reform Committee
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2154 Rayburn HOB
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***“2010 Census: Using the Communications Campaign to Effectively
Reduce the Undercount”***

Chairman Clay, Ranking Member Turner, and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is David Lange and I am the General Manager of Scholastic In School Solutions at Scholastic Inc. I was also the Project Director for the prototype of Census in Schools for what is known as the 1998 Census Dress Rehearsal and for the roll out of Census in Schools for Census 2000.

Scholastic was founded in 1920 with the goal of bringing “today’s” world into the classroom. Today, Scholastic is a global children’s publishing, education and media company, dedicated to its mission of helping children around the world to read and learn. Recognizing that literacy is the cornerstone of a child’s intellectual, personal and cultural growth, Scholastic has created quality products and services that educate, entertain and motivate children, teachers and families as well as expand their understanding of the world around them. Scholastic reading materials are in 97% of schools across the nation. Scholastic is especially committed to helping teachers in their very important mission by producing quality instructional materials. Over 90% of teachers connect with Scholastic on a regular basis. Each month, our Web site hosts 2 million unique teacher visits.

On behalf of Scholastic, I thank the Subcommittee for inviting me to testify today on the Decennial Census’ Census in Schools Program. We greatly appreciate the Subcommittee’s ongoing interest in this program.

Background of the Census in Schools Program

For the 1998 Census Dress Rehearsal, the Census Bureau and Young & Rubicam (Y&R), the communications firm charged with promoting Census 2000, engaged Scholastic to help develop and implement a prototype program that would both enlist our nation’s schools in promoting participation in the Census and provide quality educational materials to teachers.

This program became known as Census in Schools: Making Sense of the Census (CIS). The prototype was piloted in three test sites: 1) nine rural counties surrounding Columbia, South Carolina, 2) the City of Sacramento, California and 3) the Menominee Indian Reservation in Wisconsin. The Census Bureau had three main objectives for CIS:

- Assist the Census Bureau in accomplishing its Constitutional mandate;

- Contribute to a more efficient Census by increasing response to the mailed Census form; and
- Decrease the differential undercount and contribute to a more accurate Census by:
 - reducing children as a significant area of undercount. Children represented approximately half of the 4,000,000 under count in the 1990 Decennial Census; and
 - reaching hard-to-count (HTC) populations through schools.

Based upon the company's experience as the provider for the Census in Schools Program for Census 2000 and expertise in addressing classroom needs, Scholastic believes that CIS provides several important advantages:

- First, CIS creates opportunities to teach students about the Census, using educational tools that align with national curriculum standards in subjects such as math, geography, civics, history, economics and language arts. CIS provides these supplemental educational materials to schools at no cost.
- Second, CIS empowers youth to inspire higher levels of civic participation among the adults in their lives. In the next Decennial Census, these young people will be expected respondents.
- Third, CIS builds a cadre of Census advocates among teachers, who, after realizing that funding formulas and school aid are driven by population data, become advocates for encouraging parents to respond to the Census.

Distribution Strategies

The Census in Schools Program was initially conceived as a strategy for supplementing Census 2000's proposed promotional outreach toward both communities with traditionally low mail response rates and HTC populations. Scholastic identified these communities by examining recipients of Title I funding, direct marketing area profiles, and consultations with Y&R and the Census Bureau. Approximately 30% of our nation's elementary school teachers and secondary school math and social studies teachers in HTC areas were selected to be part of the initial target population, and were provided the opportunity to receive CIS materials.

As CIS evolved and obtained supplemental funding in 1999, its objectives and scope expanded. CIS materials were eventually offered and mailed to nearly every school in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Island Territories. Tribal and Bureau of Indian Affairs schools were also included. In addition, what was initially envisioned as a program for K-12 schools expanded to include Head Start/Pre-Kindergarten programs and other specialized educational venues such as adult education programs for English Language Learners (ELL).

In addition to our development and creative services, Scholastic provided telecom and digital customer service via a toll free CIS number and e-mail, database services, as well as a custom Web site where teachers could respond to direct mail and other outreach and order free CIS materials.

Types of Materials Produced

Over 110 unique components were produced for CIS, beginning with direct mail outreach to teachers and principals, encouraging them to order Census teaching materials. As the scope of

CIS expanded, principals and Parent Teacher Associations/Organizations in nearly every school across the country received materials that included student take-home information reproducibles in six languages.

The nucleus of the program consisted of three sets of leveled Teaching Kits spanning K–12, each of which included a giant map and a 24-page teaching guide with lesson plans reflecting national curriculum standards. Originally, the plan was to distribute 200,000 kits. Ultimately, however, approximately 1,600,000 kits were distributed through Scholastic-managed distribution channels, as well as through the Census Bureau and their clearinghouse.

All materials were grade level appropriate, and focused on skills-building across three themes: map literacy, community involvement and managing data. By way of example: for younger students, the instructional materials included a mock census that required student-parent participation. For older students, CIS focused on forecasting future trends through civics, community involvement and statistics by understanding and using questions and data from the census form.

Each Teaching Kit was paired with a student-family communications kit, which contained an additional Census lesson for teachers and 31 identical students take home flyers that conveyed to parents the importance of completing the Census form.

Similar materials were created for Puerto Rico and Island Areas, Pre-Kindergarten, Tribal and BIA Schools, and adult education ELL.

Additional promotional materials included newsletters, a twelve-region bus tour, and a Census in Schools “week.” CIS materials were made available in school year 1999–2000.

Effectiveness of Census in Schools 2000

Trend projections originally indicated a 55 percent response rate for Census 2000. The planned improvements increased this projection to 61 percent. The actual response rate to the 2000 Decennial Census form was 67 percent. This was the first ever increase in the response to the Census yielding financial savings by reducing the need to send human enumerators to non-responding households. CIS demonstrated its ability to reach HTC populations through teachers and increased the number of children counted in Census 2000 (as reported by the Census Bureau in press releases). The Census Bureau attributed the increased response rate in part to marketing and partnerships that included CIS. I would like to draw the Subcommittee’s attention to three evaluations of CIS for Census 2000 in particular, which highlight the many advantages of this program. Key findings from the survey reports are provided in my written testimony, and the full reports have been provided to the Subcommittee as an addendum.

First, **The Census 2000 Dress Rehearsal Effectiveness of Paid Advertising Evaluation** report by Roper Starch Worldwide, Inc. (1998), conducted in nine rural counties surrounding Columbia, South Carolina, the City of Sacramento and the Menominee Indian Reservation in Wisconsin, found that in South Carolina, 51% of parents learned about the Census from either talking with their school-age child or from information their child brought home from school. In Sacramento that number was 32%.

Second, the **Evaluation of the Census in Schools Program: Materials and Distribution**, a study by Macro International, Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division, commissioned by the

U.S. Census Bureau (July 10, 2002) found that 56% of teachers nationally had heard of CIS, that 61% of teachers in HTC areas who had heard of CIS received CIS materials, and that 65% would use additional Census teaching materials if they were made available. Excerpted findings include:

Select findings regarding the national teacher population as a whole:

- Approximately 56% of all teachers had heard of the Census in Schools Program.
- The single most important conduit for information about the program was the invitational packet.
- Overall, 63% of all teachers who heard about CIS received at least one component of the CIS materials.

Select findings regarding teachers that taught in HTE (hard-to-enumerate) areas of the country:

- About 39% of all teachers in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico taught in hard-to-enumerate areas.
- Of those in HTE areas who heard of the CIS Program materials, almost 61% received at least one teaching component of the CIS Program materials.
- 64% of teachers in HTE areas who heard about the CIS Program through the invitational packet received at least one component of the CIS materials.
- Teachers in HTE areas were more likely to have ordered the materials themselves (34%) than teachers in other areas (16%).

Select findings regarding teachers satisfied with Census in Schools Program materials:

- 88% agreed Teaching Guide was in an easy-to-use format.
- 75% agreed Teaching Guide was subject matter appropriate.
- 87% agreed that Take-Home materials (to reach parents/families) were in an easy-to-use format.
- 72% agreed Take-Home materials were subject matter appropriate.
- 63% agreed or strongly agreed that Take-Home materials were an effective communication tool.
- 65% of all teachers would use other Census teaching materials if they were made available.

Finally, the American Statistical Association's **Census 2000 Survey of Partners Evaluation** published in August 2001 included a stratified random sample of 15,803 of over 100,000 Census 2000 partners. Out of twelve choices, these partners ranked the Census in Schools Program materials as the second most helpful informational tool to reach targeted populations; the first most helpful being the Census form itself. Groups targeted by the Census 2000 Community Partners included African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Native Hawaiians, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Pacific Islanders, Arabs and recent immigrants from Africa, Haiti, and other Caribbean islands.

Challenges to CIS 2000

There were three primary challenges to the implementation of the Census in Schools Program in 2000. The first was the delay in funding that to our understanding was due to the Congressional appropriations process regarding nose count vs. statistical sampling.

The second challenge was the unplanned increase in scope/scale of the program from highly targeted outreach to outreach requiring much broader scope/scale. The outreach to additional population segments was made possible by the availability of additional funding. The original plan was not easily scalable to accommodate specific, newly identified criteria for additional population segments and thus had to be significantly revised.

The final challenges involved Y2K technical challenges. The CIS specific Web and IT systems required a complete overhaul to handle changes and immediate increase to scope/scale of deliverables in the two months prior to Y2K.

The challenges were successfully met through the dedication and efforts of staff from the Census Bureau, Y&R and Scholastic's CIS team.

Preparing for the 2010 Census in Schools Program

To date, Scholastic has been in discussion with DraftFCB, the agency responsible for promoting the 2010 Census, and has offered both core and expanded proposals for the 2010 Census in Schools Program. A well thought out plan for the 2010 CIS Program has been presented in our proposal. To the Subcommittee, the Census Bureau and to DraftFCB, in addition to our proposal that we understand is now in the competitive process, we offer the following points intended to produce a 2010 CIS program that includes effective outreach and is cost efficient.

Scholastic recommends that the 2010 CIS Program harness advancements in technology and draw upon Scholastic's experiences from and challenges posed by the 2000 CIS in order to implement an even more efficient, cost effective and far-reaching program. Based on our experience from the 2000 CIS Program, Scholastic believes that any successful bidder for the 2010 CIS Program would wish to take into account the following:

1. **Program Development:** The program should revolve around a scalable, end-to-end plan that combines Census 2000 CIS experience with 2010 technologies and teaching environments.
2. **Program Outreach:** Combined use of print and digital mediums for promotion, education tools and outreach to the home.
3. **Education Strategy:** The educational elements of the program should align with the priorities and goals of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act and allow more teachers to access, identify, select and use census-based teaching materials that match to their specific professional needs.

In closing, the 2000 Census in Schools Program succeeded both in promoting the importance of participating in the Census and in providing quality educational materials to schools at no cost.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I thank you for this opportunity to testify and submit the research reports referenced herein. I would be pleased to answer your questions.