



## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



# HELPING READERS ACHIEVE AND SUCCEED

March 2006

*"Reading is the foundation of all learning. The Striving Readers grants help more students get the skills they need to succeed in college, the workforce and in life."*

--Secretary Margaret Spellings

The *No Child Left Behind Act* is helping schools improve reading instruction and achievement in grades 3-8. Its emphasis on accountability, high standards and proven, science-based instruction has helped to raise test scores and narrow the achievement gap in states across the country.

- Among 9-year-olds, more reading progress was made in the last five years than in the previous 28 years combined, according to the Nation's Report Card.
- Reading scores for African American and Hispanic American 9-year-olds have reached all-time highs.

But some middle and high school students still struggle with reading. They need focused time and attention and research-based instruction to get back on track so they can read at grade level or better. This is critical to graduating from high school with the skills to succeed in college and the competitive workforce.

President Bush's Striving Readers Program answers this challenge. Its purpose is to help schools improve the literacy skills of adolescent students struggling with reading. President Bush has proposed a major expansion of this demonstration program to reach more secondary students in grades 6-12 who are reading below grade level and at risk of dropping out of school.

- The President requested a **\$70.3 million** increase in the program for a total of **\$100 million** in FY 2007.
- This follows previous one-year funding totals of **\$24.8 million** (in FY 2005) and **\$29.7 million** (in FY 2006).

Eight grants totaling **\$30 million** will be awarded for the 2006-07 school year, reaching middle and high school students in Title I-eligible schools that serve large numbers of struggling readers. They will fund a wide array of research-based literacy strategies in diverse educational settings. The awardees include:

- Chicago Public Schools / District #299, *Chicago Public Schools Striving Readers* -- **\$24.5 million** over 5 years
- Danville [Ken.] School District, *Kentucky Content Literacy Consortium (KCLC)* -- **\$16.2 million** over 5 years
- Multnomah County [Portland, Ore.] School District #1, *Striving Readers Project* -- **\$23.5 million** over 5 years
- Newark Public Schools, *Newark Public Schools Striving Readers* -- **\$13.9 million** over 5 years
- Ohio Department of Youth Services, *Striving to Achieve in Reading and Re-Entry (StARR)* -- **\$14 million** over 5 years
- San Diego Unified School District, *Strategies for Literacy Independence Across the Curriculum* -- **\$17.5 million** over 5 years
- Springfield [Mass.] Public Schools, *Springfield-Chicopee Striving Readers Program* -- **\$16.6 million** over 5 years
- Memphis City Schools, *Memphis Striving Readers* -- **\$16 million** over 5 years

For more information, visit [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) or call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

### The benefits go beyond individual students:

- **Educators benefit** from professional development and training designed to improve the overall quality of literacy instruction across subject areas and throughout the entire middle and high school curriculum.
- **Communities benefit** as business leaders, charitable organizations, and parent and community groups form partnerships with local school districts and states to improve the literacy of young people.
- **Taxpayers benefit** from an independent and scientifically rigorous evaluation of every Striving Readers project. The goal is to build a strong research base to determine program effectiveness and identify what works in improving literacy and reading achievement among students in grades 6-12.

### The need to improve reading achievement among older students is real and serious.

- Half of high school graduates are not ready for college-level reading, according to ACT.
- Half of African American and Hispanic 9th-graders do not graduate from high school on time.
- Older students who struggle with reading are more likely to drop out of school.

Striving Readers complements the successful Reading First Program. One of the signature achievements of *No Child Left Behind*, Reading First builds on the influential findings of the National Reading Panel and more than two decades of research which tracked tens of thousands of students to determine how best children learn to read. Reading First translates these findings into practical instructional tools for educators.

- Reading First grants are benefiting more than **100,000 teachers** and **1.5 million students** across America.
- The President's FY 2007 budget proposes **more than \$1.1 billion** for Reading First and Early Reading First.

The President's FY 2007 Education Agenda includes much more to help middle and high schools improve instruction, so all students can reach grade level in the subjects most critical to their future, and America's.

- **High School Reform Initiative (\$1.475 billion)** – Formula grants would be provided to states to support targeted interventions and expanded high school assessments. This would improve accountability and meet the academic needs of more students at risk of falling behind or dropping out.
- **Math Now for Middle School Students (\$125 million) and Math Now for Elementary School Students (\$125 million)** – Similar to *Striving Readers*, Math Now would diagnose students' deficiencies in mathematics and provide intensive and systematic instruction to enable them to take and pass more rigorous coursework, such as algebra.
- **National Mathematics Panel (\$10 million)** – Modeled after the National Reading Panel, the National Math Panel would convene experts to empirically evaluate the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching math, creating a research base to improve instructional methods for teachers.
- **Advanced Placement-International Baccalaureate (AP-IB) Incentive Program (\$122 million)** – It would train 70,000 additional teachers to lead AP-IB math, science and critical foreign language courses over the next five years. It would also increase the number of students taking AP-IB tests to 1.5 million by 2012, tripling the number of passing test-takers while giving them the opportunity to earn college credit.

For more information about the President's Striving Readers Program, please visit the U.S. Department of Education's web site at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders/index.html>.