



Highlights of [GAO-06-1121T](#), a report to Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives

## Why GAO Did This Study

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) requires districts with schools receiving Title I funds that have not met state performance goals for 3 consecutive years to offer low-income students enrolled in these schools supplemental educational services (SES), such as tutoring. This testimony discusses early implementation of SES, including (1) how SES participation changed in recent years; (2) how providers work with districts to deliver services; (3) how states monitor and evaluate SES; and (4) how the Department of Education (Education) monitors and supports SES implementation.

This testimony is based on an August 2006 report (GAO-06-758). For this report, GAO used the best available data on participation and obtained more recent information on other SES implementation issues through a state survey and a district survey, as well as visits to four school districts and interviews with providers.

## What GAO Recommends

The GAO report recommended that Education clarify guidance and disseminate information on promising practices, consider expanding flexibility and clarifying state authority over program design, and collect information on district SES expenditures and provide evaluation assistance. Education generally supported GAO's recommendations and has taken action to expand SES flexibility.

[www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-1121T](http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-1121T).

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Cornelia Ashby at (202) 512-7215 or [ashbyc@gao.gov](mailto:ashbyc@gao.gov).

# NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

## Education Actions Needed to Improve Implementation and Evaluation of Supplemental Educational Services

### What GAO Found

SES participation increased from 12 to 19 percent between school years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. Most students receiving services were among the lower-achieving students in school. District actions to increase participation have included greater efforts to notify parents and offering services on school campuses and at various times. However, timely and effective notification of parents remains a challenge, as well as attracting providers to serve certain areas and students, such as rural districts or students with disabilities.

SES providers took steps to align their curriculum with district instruction and communicate with teachers and parents, though the extent of their efforts varied. For example, providers reported their efforts to communicate with the teachers of participating students, but some providers did not have any contact with teachers in about 40 percent of districts. Both providers and district officials experienced challenges related to contracting and coordination of service delivery. In part because SES is often delivered in school facilities, providers and officials in the districts and schools GAO visited reported that involvement of school administrators and teachers can improve SES delivery.

State monitoring of district and provider efforts to implement SES had been limited in past years; however, more states reported conducting on-site reviews and other monitoring activities during 2005-2006. Districts have also increased their oversight role. While oversight has increased, many states struggle with how to evaluate whether SES providers are improving student achievement. While a few states have completed evaluations, none provides a conclusive assessment of SES providers' effect on student academic achievement.

Education conducts SES monitoring in part through policy oversight and compliance reviews of states and districts, and provides SES support through written guidance, grants, and technical assistance. Education monitoring found uneven implementation and compliance with SES provisions, and states and districts reported needing SES policy clarification and assistance in certain areas. For example, 85 percent of states reported needing assistance with methods for evaluating SES. Many states also voiced interest in Education's pilot programs that increase SES flexibility, including the recently expanded pilot allowing certain districts identified as in need of improvement to act as providers.