

Goal 4: Transform Education Into an Evidence-Based Field

Key Measures

The *No Child Left Behind Act* serves as a foundation for education improvement in the application of scientifically based research that is rigorous, systematic, and objective. By identifying what works, what doesn't and why, we can improve educational outcomes for all students, especially those at risk of failure. Our goal is the transformation of education into an evidence-based field in which decision-makers routinely seek out the best available research and data in order to adopt programs or practices that will improve academic achievement for students. In FY 2007, the Department administered six programs supporting the objectives of Goal 4. Each program established measures and targets to assess its performance. From these measures, the Department identified four key measures that focus on the quality and relevance of its educational research.

Quality of Education Research

The Department has elevated the standards and methodologies for Department-sponsored education research. Funding of research proposals is based on clear criteria for research excellence. As in other scientifically based fields, rigorous research methods in education contribute to reliable and valid conclusions. The Department demonstrated a thorough commitment to research quality by expanding the use of scientifically based procedures for the evaluation of Department programs, training a new generation of education based researchers in rigorous methodologies, and improving the quality of data collections. Additionally, the Department requires all research proposals to be reviewed by an independent panel of qualified scientists.

4.1.A Research, Development, and Dissemination. The percentage of new research proposals funded by the Department's National Center for Education Research that receive an average score of excellent or higher from an independent review panel of qualified scientists. [1022]	Fiscal Year	Actual
	2007	88
	2006	94
	2005	100
	2004	97
	2003	88
2007 target of 90 not met.		

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Research, independent external review panels.

Analysis of Progress. Data on this measure were first collected in FY 2003. Although there was initially an increase in the percentage of proposals for newly funded education research that receive an average score of excellent or higher, the score decreased because the Department elected to fund several proposals that scored slightly below excellent. These proposals addressed gaps in the research portfolio, and the deficiencies in the proposals noted by the review panel were problems that could be remedied prior to implementation.

Data Quality. The Department established a system of peer review that is similar in many ways to the peer review process used by the National Institutes of Health. Independent review panels of leading researchers evaluate the scientific and technical merit of research proposals.

Target Context. The measure is calculated as the average review panel score for newly funded research proposals.

4.1.B Research in Special Education. The percentage of new research proposals funded by the Department's National Center for Special Education Research that receive an average score of excellent or higher from an independent review panel of qualified scientists. [1940]	Fiscal Year	Actual
	2007	100
	2006	89
2007 target of 90 exceeded.		

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Research, independent external review panels.

Analysis of Progress. Data on this measure have been collected since 2006. The percentage of newly funded proposals for special education research that received a score of excellent or higher has increased and, in FY 2007, exceeded the target of 90 percent.

Data Quality. The Department has established a system of peer review that is similar in many ways to the peer review process used by the

National Institutes of Health. Independent review panels of leading researchers evaluate the scientific and technical merit of research proposals.



Relevance of Education Research

In addition to a focus on sound methodology, education researchers need to address practical problems in powerful ways. The Department aligns its priorities with the needs of education practitioners and policymakers to ensure that it is providing information that is relevant to the improvement of education. Too few high-quality evidence-based studies have been done to provide education policymakers and practitioners with the level and type of information they need for educational decision-making. The Department supports research that contributes to improved academic achievement for all students, particularly those whose educational prospects are hindered by conditions associated with poverty, minority status, family circumstance, and inadequate educational services. The Department supports research that identifies, develops, and validates effective educational programs and practices.

The Department ensures the production of relevant education research by having a sample of all newly funded research reviewed by an independent panel of qualified practitioners. For FY 2007, research grants were awarded on such topics as high school reform, cognition and student learning, reading and writing education, mathematics and science education, teacher quality, education leadership and policy, postsecondary education, special education secondary and transition services, early intervention and early childhood special education, serious behavior disorders, autism spectrum disorders, and assessment for accountability.

4.2.A Research, Development, and Dissemination. The percentage of new research projects funded by the Department's National Center for Education Research that are deemed to be of high relevance to education practices as determined by an independent review panel of qualified practitioners. [000000000000028]	Fiscal Year	Actual
	2007	Target is 75
	2007 data expected Dec. 2007.	

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Research, independent external review panels.

Analysis of Progress. This is a new measure for FY 2007. The measure published in the FY 2006 *Performance and Accountability Report* was discontinued in FY 2007 because it included data from evaluation projects that were funded from program appropriations other than the appropriation for Research, Development, and Dissemination (RDD). It was replaced with a similar measure that includes only data from evaluation projects funded under the appropriation for RDD.

Data Quality. To evaluate the relevance of newly funded research projects, a panel of experienced education practitioners and administrators reviews descriptions of a randomly selected sample of newly funded projects, and rates the degree to which the projects are relevant to education practice. These panels are convened after the close of the fiscal year to review the proposals of the prior year.

Target Context. The target of 75 percent recognizes that some important research may not seem immediately relevant, but will make important contributions over the long term.



4.2.B Research in Special Education. The percentage of new research projects funded by the Department's National Center for Special Education Research that are deemed to be of high relevance by an independent review panel of qualified practitioners. [1942]	Fiscal Year	Actual
	2007	Target is 55
	2006	50
2006 target to set baseline met; 2007 data expected Dec. 2007.		

Analysis of Progress. This measure was established in 2006. Data for 2006 set the baseline and our target for 2007 is 55.

Data Quality. To evaluate the relevance of newly funded research projects, a panel of experienced education practitioners and administrators reviews descriptions of a randomly selected sample of

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Research, independent external review panels.

newly funded projects and rates the degree to which the projects are relevant to education practice. These panels are convened after the close of the fiscal year to review the proposals of the prior year.



Discontinued Strategic Measure

This measure was discontinued in FY 2007, but data were reported as pending in the *FY 2006 Performance and Accountability Report*.

Measure	Fiscal Year	Target	Actual	Status
The percentage of new research projects funded by the Department's National Center for Education Research and National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance that are deemed to be of high relevance to education practice as determined by an independent review panel of qualified practitioners. [1082]	2007	75	Not Collected	Not Collected
	2006	75	74	Made Progress
	2005	65	33	Target not met

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Research, independent external review panels.

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Goal 4 is most directly supported by six of our programs. These programs are listed below. In the table, an overview is provided for the results of each program on its program performance measures. (See p. 35 for the methodology of calculating the percentage of targets met, not met, and without data.) Individual program performance reports are available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/2007report/program.html>. Appropriation and expenditure data for FY 2007 are included for each of these programs.

Program Name	PART Rating	Appropriations†	Expenditures‡	Program Performance Results Percent of Targets Met, Not Met, Without Data											
				FY 2007			FY 2006			FY 2005			FY 2004		
				FY 2007 \$ in millions	FY 2007 \$ in millions	% Met	% Not Met	% No Data	% Met	% Not Met	% No Data	% Met	% Not Met	% No Data	% Met
ESEA: Indian Education National Activities	NA	4	7	0	0	100	0	0	100						
ESEA: Title I Evaluation	NA	9	13												
ESRA: Research, Development and Dissemination	E	163	127	0	43	57	60	40	0	80	20	0	100	0	0
ESRA: Research in Special Education	RND	72	44	25	25	50	100	0	0				/// (not funded)		
ESRA: Statistics	E	90	71	63	37	0	33	67	0	0	0	0	0	100	0
RA: National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research	A	107	97	22	0	78	22	33	44	33	67	0	0	100	0
Administrative and Support Funding for Goal 4#		10	6	#			#			#			#		
TOTAL		455	*365												

† Budget for each program represents program budget authority.

‡ Expenditures occur when recipients draw down funds to cover actual outlays. FY 2007 expenditures may include funds from prior years' appropriations.

■ A shaded cell denotes that the program did not have targets for the specified year.

/// Programs not yet implemented. (Programs are often implemented near the end of the year they are first funded.)

The Department does not plan to develop performance measures for programs, activities, or budgetary line items that are administrative in nature or that serve to support other programs and their performance measures.

* Expenditures by program do not include outlays in the amount of \$2 million for prior years' obligations for Goal 4 programs that were not funded in FY 2007.

ESEA: *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*

ESRA: *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002*

RA: *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*

PART Rating

E = Effective

A = Adequate

RND = Results not demonstrated

NA = Program has not been assessed