

Archived Information

Objective 1.1: States develop challenging standards and assessments for all students in the core academic subjects.

Our Role. Meeting the goal of helping all children reach high standards is a cross-cutting objective in which every Federal education program has a role to play. The 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), along with the creation of Goals 2000, supported the development of challenging state standards and assessments, and brought Federal program support and accountability in line with state and local reform efforts. Title I of the ESEA is focused on ensuring that all students meet high standards, especially students at-risk students from economically disadvantaged communities. In addition, the Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 required that states use their Federal vocational education funding to support the development of challenging academic standards, and required that students who participate in vocational education meet the same challenging academic standards as all students in the state. ESEA required states to have their final standards and assessment systems in place by the 2000-01 school year.

Our Performance

How We Measure. The performance indicators for this objective focus on state progress in developing state content standards, student performance standards, and aligned assessments. The indicators measure whether standards and assessments are in place, the rigor of standards and assessment systems, and the extent to which teachers in schools and classrooms are implementing the standards.

By the 1997-98 school year, each state was to have adopted challenging content standards in at least reading and math that specified what all children are expected to know, as well as challenging performance standards that describe students' mastery of the content standards. By 2001, the assessment systems were to include reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with diverse learning needs, including students with limited English proficiency (LEP). The assessments must allow for disaggregation and reporting at the state, district, and school levels of students' results by gender, major racial/ethnic group, English proficiency status, migrant status, disability, and economic status.

The initial challenge for states was to develop challenging content and student performance standards. The second challenge was to implement standards in the classroom. For this reason, this objective includes a measure of the extent to which standards are being implemented in classrooms. The indicator reflects a need to move to actual implementation of the standards—particularly for disadvantaged students in high-poverty schools where expectations for achievement are often low.

Indicator 1.1.a. By the end of the 1997-98 school year, all states will have challenging content and student performance standards in place for two or more core subjects.

Assessment of Progress. There are positive trends toward the goals for both content and performance standards. The goal for 2000 was not met. The goal for 2000 was for all states to have content standards in place and for 50 states to have performance standards in place. To date, the Department of Education has approved the development process for content standards in 49 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (see Figure 1.1.a.1). Twenty-seven states and Puerto Rico have demonstrated to the Education Department that they have completed the development of both content and student performance standards (see Figure 1.1.a.2).

Results on performance standards fall short of the goal because many states are developing student performance standards along with their final assessment systems, which are not required to be in place until the 2000-01 school year. Rather than developing student performance standards as a template for assessments to be designed later, many states are developing their assessment instruments and constructing performance standards from pilot tests of their new assessments. States will submit evidence that performance standards are in place as part of the peer review process for final state standards and assessment systems.

Figure 1.1.a.1

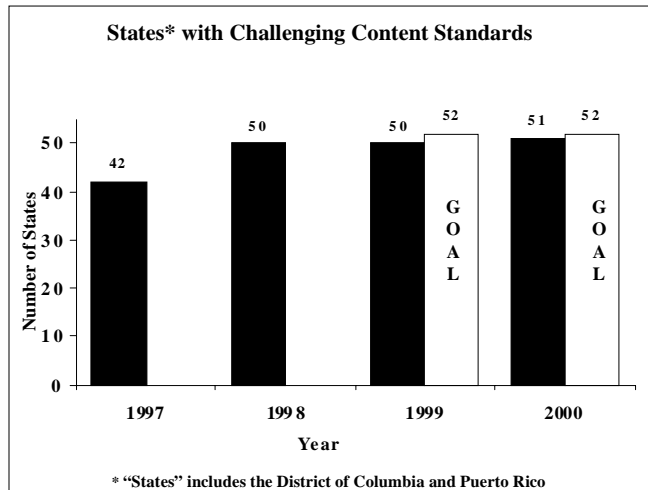
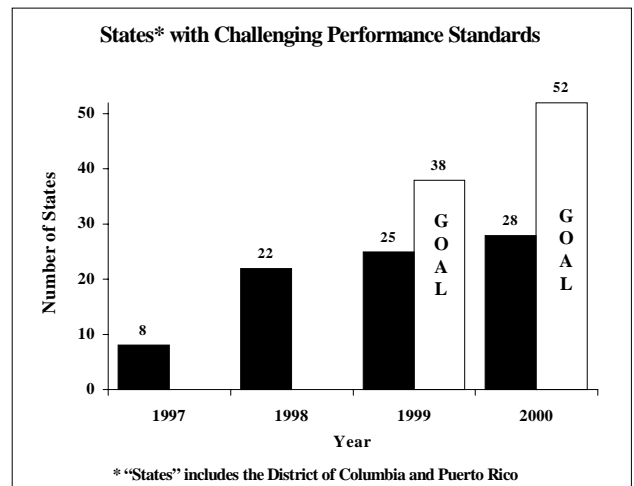


Figure 1.1.a.2



Source: Fig. 1.1.a.1 and 1.1.a.2. Consolidated State Plans, Department of Education review of evidence submitted by states to demonstrate their standards and assessment development process. *Frequency:* Annual. *Next Update:* 2001. **Validation procedure:** Data verified through the Education Department's peer review process. Although states are not required to submit their standards to the Department of Education for review, they must demonstrate that they have developed content and performance standards. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** States are expected to submit evidence that standards are in place; however, states are not required to submit their standards to the Education Department. Therefore, the Education Department can only evaluate whether states used a rigorous process in developing and adopting standards, not the quality of the standards themselves.

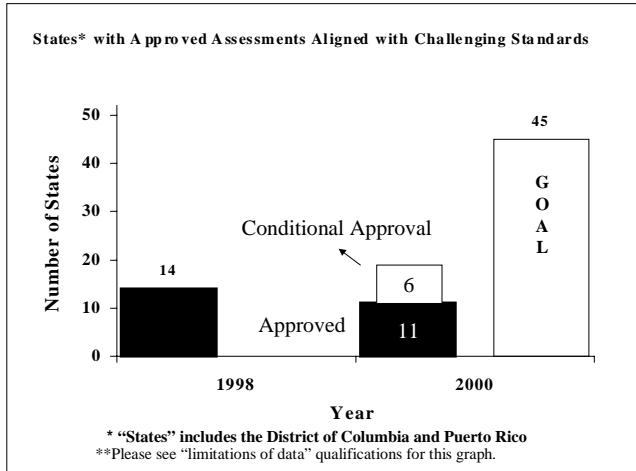
Indicator 1.1.b. By 2001, all states will have assessments aligned to challenging content and performance standards for two or more core subjects.

Assessment of Progress. Progress toward the goal is likely. The goal for 2000 was not met, although states are not required by Title I to have final state assessments aligned with challenging standards until the 2000-01 school year. Final assessments must include all students, and states must be able to disaggregate performance by student groups. The Education Department is currently reviewing states' final assessment systems using a peer review process involving experts in standards, assessments, and Title I. The peer review process does not directly examine the state's assessment instruments. Rather, peer reviewers examine evidence compiled and submitted by each state that is intended to show that its assessment system meets Title I requirements.

To date, the Education Department has reviewed assessment systems for all of the states and has made decisions for 34 states; 11 of these states received full approval (see Figure 1.1.b.1). Among the other states with decisions, six states received conditional approval, indicating that the state demonstrated it will meet the requirements of the law by the spring 2001 test administration; 14 states received a timeline waiver, indicating that the Education Department determined the state had made significant progress but

was unable to meet the requirements by the end of 2000-01; and three states entered into a compliance agreement that outlines how the state will make the changes necessary to comply with the law. The 1998 baseline of 14 states was based on an external review that was conducted prior to the Education Department’s peer review process.

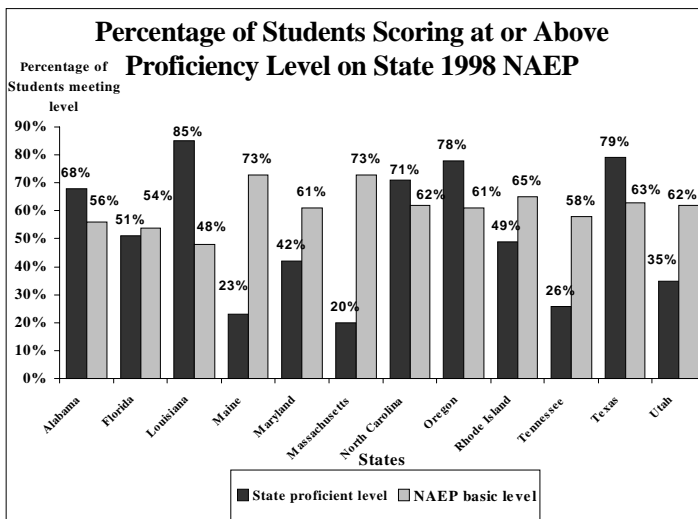
Figure 1.1.b.1



Source: Fig. 1.1.b.1. U.S. Department of Education (2000 data); Schenck and Carlson, draft report entitled “Standards-Based Assessment and Accountability in American Education: A Report on States’ Progress (1998 data); *Frequency:* Annual beginning in 2000. *Next Update:* 2001. **Validation procedure:** The 1998 figure represents an early estimate of states with aligned assessments aligned based on a review of consolidated state plans, and no formal verification procedure was applied. Data for 2000 are based on the Education Department’s peer reviews of final state assessments. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** The 1998 estimate for aligned assessments and standards was based on self-reported and incomplete data during the transitional assessment period. The criteria used to make this estimate are not the same as those required for the Education Department’s peer review process for state standards and assessment systems—which includes more rigorous evidence of alignment, inclusion policies, and technical quality. Beginning in 2000, the peer reviews of final standards and assessment systems yield a more accurate picture of states’ status.

As an indicator of the rigor of state standards and assessments, Figure 1.1.b.2 compares student performance on state assessments with student performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessment. The results indicate that states’ own performance measures may be more or less rigorous when compared with an independent assessment such as NAEP.

Figure 1.1.b.2

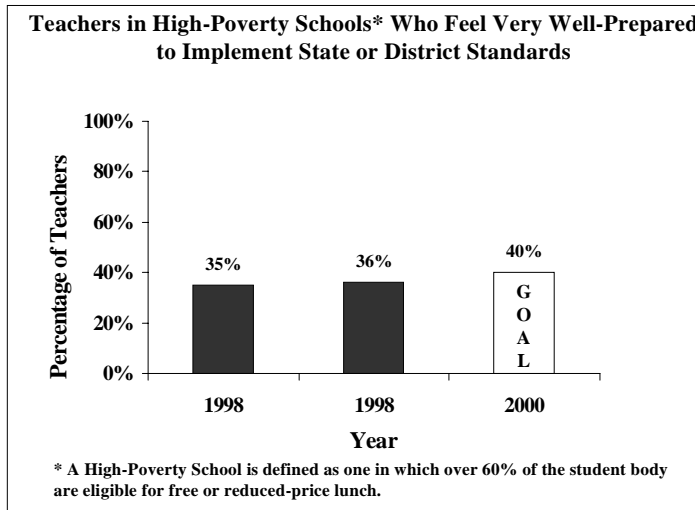


Source: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); Council of Chief State School Officers/U.S. Department of Education, State Education Indicators with a Focus on Title I 1999. *Frequency:* Biennial. *Next Update:* 2001 for math 2000 data, 2002 for reading. **Validation procedure:** Figure 1.1.b.2 compares student achievement in reading on the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) with achievement on various state assessments collected by the Department of Education in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The data were validated by NCES and CCSSO review procedures. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** N/A.

Indicator 1.1.c. Increasing percentages of teachers will feel very well prepared to implement new higher standards.

Assessment of Progress. Progress toward goal is unlikely. There was no significant change between 1996 and 1998. There will be no 2000 data available until late spring 2001.

Figure 1.1.c.1



Source: Teacher Quality Fast Response Survey (FRS).
Frequency: Every 2 years. **Next Update:** 2001 for 2000 data. **Validation procedure:** Data validated by NCES's review procedures and *NCES Statistical Standards*.

Limitations of data and planned improvements: Indicator is based on teacher self-reported data. In addition, the exact question differed across the two years of data collection: in 1996, teachers reported how well prepared they were to implement "new, higher standards"; in 1998, teachers reported how well prepared they were to implement "state/district standards." In 2000, teachers reported how well prepared they were to implement "state/district standards." This indicator is intended to be a measure of teachers' readiness to implement standards. However, in some cases, it may inadvertently only measure whether a teacher is aware of the standards.