

# Archived Information

## STAR SCHOOLS PROGRAM

<b>Goal:</b> To improve student learning and teaching through the use of distance learning technologies.	<b>Funding History</b> (\$ in millions)			
	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>
<b>Legislation:</b> The Star Schools Program, Title III, Part B, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6891-6900).	1985	\$0	2000	\$51
	1990	\$15	2001	\$59
	1995	\$25	2002 (Requested)	\$0

### Program Description

The purposes of the Star Schools Program are: (1) to encourage better instruction in mathematics, science, foreign languages, and other subjects such as literacy skills and vocational education and (2) to serve previously underserved populations, including persons who are disadvantaged, illiterate or have limited English proficiency, and individuals with disabilities through the use of distance learning technologies. Grants allow telecommunications partnerships to acquire telecommunications facilities and equipment, produce and distribute educational programming, and obtain technical assistance. The program was first funded in FY 1988.

Funds provide support for the use of distance learning including funding for equipment, staff development, and instructional programming. In addition, dissemination projects provide technical assistance and training, or disseminate information about distance education opportunities to states and school districts not using distance education.

Applicants are required to form statewide or multi-state telecommunications partnerships to apply. The eligible applicants are either public agencies or corporations established to develop and operate telecommunications networks to enhance educational opportunities, or partnerships that are comprised of at least three partners, one of which is a State or local educational agency. At least 50 percent of the funds must be used to serve local educational agencies eligible to receive Title I funds, and 25 percent of the funds must be used for instructional programming. Awards are made for 5 years. Recipients must provide a 25 percent match for the first 2 years of the award, 40 percent for the second 2 years, and 50 percent in the final year.

In addition to awards under the general program, three other types of awards are authorized. Funds can be used to support a special *statewide network* that provides full motion two-way video and audio communications and links public colleges and universities and secondary schools; to support a special *local network* to demonstrate a high-technology program that includes two-way full motion audio, video, and text communications and links elementary and secondary schools with colleges and universities; and to support *continuing education* programs that provide online access to educational services, for programming that leads to a secondary school diploma. Up to 5 percent of the funds may be reserved for national leadership, evaluation, and peer review activities.

## Program Performance

OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH INCREASED ACCESS TO DISTANCE EDUCATION.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
<i>Number of students in nontraditional settings served by Star Schools</i>			<p><b>Status:</b> Service to students in non-traditional settings including correctional facilities, community centers, and homes increased.</p>	<p><b>Source:</b> Annual performance and evaluation reports, 2000; online database system, 2000  <i>Frequency:</i> Annually.  <i>Next collection update:</i> 2001.  <i>Date to be reported:</i> Fall 2001.</p>
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
1998:	278,744		<p><b>Explanation:</b> Five grants were funded in FY 1999 increasing the number of projects that targeted non-traditional settings. The substantial increase in the number of learners this year is the result of the RIFNET project reaching 619,547 new pre-k-12 learners. The majority of these learners received reading and literacy services in 2700 Headstart, community center, library, and other settings. FY 2000 figures include 718,442 pre-k-12 learners in non- traditional settings, plus 72,730 adult learners.</p>	<p><b>Validation Procedure:</b> Program officers review data provided by projects. Program officers' examine the procedures grantees use to count or estimate the number of sites and learners. Program officers check for inconsistencies in the data, contact the projects to clarify the input or request that changes be made, after which the data are adjusted in the system accordingly. Site visits and examinations of other project reports further confirm the data.</p>
1999:	291,287	No target set		
<b>2000:</b>	<b>791,172</b>	<b>Continuing increase</b>		
2001:		Continuing increase		
2002:				
			<p><b>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements:</b> Data are reported by the projects. Planned improvements include additional technical assistance to the grantees on entering data, as well as more explicit guidance to program officers about reviewing and validating the data.</p>	

OBJECTIVE 2: PROMOTE THE DELIVERY OF CHALLENGING CONTENT IN CORE SUBJECTS.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
<i>Number of full credit courses offered through Star Schools</i>			<p><b>Status:</b> Grantees report that of the 921 courses, 912 are aligned with standards. In addition, grantees report that of 862 modules, 711 are aligned with standards.</p> <p><b>Explanation:</b> Data includes 813 courses reported by the Iowa project, which accounts for the substantial increase this year. Funds for the project in the past were devoted primarily to building the statewide telecommunications infrastructure. Recently, the project has targeted programming for teaching and learning.</p> <p>Counts of courses and modules represent the number of sites in which the various courses and modules are provided, not necessarily distinct curricular offerings. Services range from one-time viewing of a single video (followed up in classroom activity) to coursework provided daily for a full semester.</p>	<p><b>Source:</b> Annual performance and evaluation reports, 2000; online database system, 2000  <i>Frequency:</i> Annually.  <i>Next collection update:</i> 2001.  <i>Date to be reported:</i> Fall 2001.</p> <p><b>Validation Procedure:</b> Projects must provide information about the content and number of credit courses or modules provided, the source of standards, the strategy used to assess alignment, and the evidence of alignment. Program officers examine the extent to which information on each of these elements is reported by the project. Program officers check for inconsistencies and missing information in the data, contact the projects to clarify the input and request that changes be made. The data are adjusted in the system accordingly. Site visits and examinations of other project reports further confirm the data.</p> <p><b>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements:</b> Data are reported by the projects. Evidence of alignment with standards has been particularly difficult to assess. Planned improvements include providing technical assistance on reporting about alignment, and gathering evidence of content alignment with standards.</p>
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
1994:	More than 30			
1997:	81			
1998:	105			
1999:	126	Continuing increase		
<b>2000:</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>Continuing increase</b>		
2001:		Continuing increase		
2002:				