

Archived Information

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS (NCES) STATISTICS AND ASSESSMENT

Goal: To collect, analyze, and disseminate information on the condition of education in the United States and to provide comparative international statistics. Legislation: Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. 9002, beginning with Sec. 403).	Funding History (\$ in millions)			
	Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Fiscal Year	Appropriation
	1985*	\$60	2000	\$108
	1990**	\$95	2001	\$120
	1995	\$81	2002 (Requested)	\$194

*In FY 1985, funds for Statistics and Assessment were part of the \$60 million appropriated for the Education Research and Statistics program. Estimated funding for Statistics and Assessment is \$13 million.

**In FY 1990, funds for Statistics and Assessment were part of the \$95 million appropriated for the Education Research and Statistics program. Estimated funding for the Statistics and Assessment is \$40 million.

Program Description

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the chief Federal entity engaged in collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to education in the United States and other nations in order to promote and accelerate the improvement of American education. Its responsibilities are to collect, acquire, compile, and disseminate full and complete statistics on the condition and progress of education in the United States; conduct and publish reports and analyses on the meaning and significance of such statistics; conduct longitudinal studies, as well as regular and special data collection necessary to report on the progress and condition of education; assist public and private educational agencies and organizations to improve their statistical systems; and acquire and disseminate data on education activities and student achievement in the United States compared with foreign nations.

Six programs, each with a set of specific activities, make up the statistics budget: Institutional Census Surveys; Special Purpose Cross-Sectional Surveys; Longitudinal Surveys; International Studies; Statistical Standards and Reporting; and Training, Technical Assistance, and Dissemination. In addition, the budget supports the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a nationally representative assessment of student achievement in core subjects. State-representative assessments are also conducted.

The Assessment portion of the funding includes \$4 million for the National Assessment Governing Board' (NAGB), an independent, bipartisan group whose members include governors, state legislators, local and state school officials, educators, business representatives, and members of the general public. Congress created the 26-member Governing Board in 1988 to set policy for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)—commonly known as the "The Nation's Report Card."

Program Performance

OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDES TIMELY, USEFUL, AND COMPREHENSIVE DATA THAT ARE RELEVANT TO POLICY AND EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT.

Indicator 1.1 Customer satisfaction: At least 85 percent of surveyed customers in 1999 and 90 percent in 2001 will agree that National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data are timely, relevant, and comprehensive.						
Targets and Performance Data				Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Percentage of customer respondents satisfied or very satisfied with NCES publications</i>				<p>Status: The overall NCES customer satisfaction rating is 90 percent, which exceeds the performance target. NCES exceeded its target for NCES Services for both Timeliness and Utility.</p> <p>Explanation: NCES showed improvement in all areas of its performance data between 1997 and 1999. During the period, NCES focused on improving the timeliness of its publications and data files. Significant progress was made in the Common Core of Data (CCD) Reports and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).</p> <p>The CCD <u>School and Agency Report</u> has shown an improvement from 25 months to 15 months from data collection to publication and a 3-month improvement in State Nonfiscal.</p> <p>NAEP has shown dramatic improvements in timeliness for many of its major reports. Science has improved from 23 to 12 months; long-term trends from 29 to 14 months; reading from 17 to 10 months; and math from 12 to 10 months.</p> <p>Also, all of NCES has begun the practice of releasing simultaneous Web data files and reports.</p>	<p>Source: NCES 1997 and 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey (next survey: FY 2002). Frequency: Hence forth, triennially. Next collection update: Fall FY 2001. Date to be reported: January 2002.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Data was validated by using NCES review procedures and by applying NCES statistical standards.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: There are no data limitations.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance					Performance Targets
	Comprehensive-ness	Timeliness	Utility			
1997:	88%	72%	86%			
1998:	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available			
1999:	91%	77%	89%			85%
2000:	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available			Continuing Increase
2001:						Continuing Increase
2002:						90%
<i>Percentage of customer respondents satisfied or very satisfied with NCES data files</i>						
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets		
	Comprehensiveness	Timeliness				
1997:	82%	52%				
1998:	No Data Available	No Data Available				
1999:	87%	67%		85%		
2000:	No Data Available	No Data Available		Continuing Increase		
2001:				Continuing Increase		
2002:				90%		
<i>Percentage of customer respondents satisfied or very satisfied with NCES services</i>						
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets		
	Comprehensive-ness	Timeliness	Utility			
1997:	No Data Available	89%	No Data Available			
1998:	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available			
1999:	No Data Available	93%	93%	85%		
2000:	No Data Available	No Data Available	No Data Available	Continuing Increase		
2001:				Continuing Increase		
2002:				90%		

OBJECTIVE 2: COLLECT HIGH-QUALITY DATA.

Indicator 2.1 Customer rating of quality: At least 85 percent of surveyed customers in 1999 and 90 percent in 2001 will agree that NCES data are of high quality in terms of accuracy, reliability, validity, and comprehensiveness.					
Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Percentage of customer respondents satisfied or very satisfied with NCES publications</i>			<p>Status: NCES exceeded its 1999 performance goals with an overall quality ranking of 93 percent for publications and 87 percent for data files. NCES did not meet its 1999 performance goal for accuracy, but was very close with 84 percent in publications and 82 percent in data files.</p> <p>Explanation: NCES achieved a 90 percent overall customer satisfaction rating in 1997 and that percentage is the performance target for future years.</p>	<p>Source: NCES 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey. <i>Frequency:</i> Henceforth, triennially. <i>Next collection update:</i> Fall 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> January 2002.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Data validated by NCES review procedures and NCES statistical standards.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: No data limitations.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance				Performance Targets
	Accuracy	Overall quality			
1997:	No Data Available	90%			
1998:	No Data Available	No Data Available			
1999:	84%	93%			90%
2000:	No Data Available	No Data Available			Continuing Increase
2001:					Continuing Increase
2002:					90%
<i>Percentage of customer respondents satisfied or very satisfied with NCES data files</i>					
1997:	74%	No data available			
1998:	No Data Available	No data available			
1999:	82%	87%	85%		
2000:	No Data Available	No Data Available	Continuing Increase		
2001:			Continuing Increase		
2002:			90%		

OBJECTIVE 3: DEVELOP PUBLICATIONS THAT ARE EASY TO READ, USEFUL, AND OF HIGH OVERALL QUALITY.

Indicator 3.1 Ease of reading: At least 85 percent of surveyed customers in FY 1999 and 90 percent in FY 2002 will agree that NCES publications are easy to read.					
Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Percentage of customer respondents satisfied or very satisfied</i>			<p>Status: Target exceeded in 1999.</p> <p>Explanation: NCES improved in performance from 1997 in all areas of this objective and in 1999 it surpassed its goal of establishing a 90 percent overall quality ranking.</p> <p>NCES achieved a 90 percent overall customer satisfaction level in 1997 and has made that percentage the performance target for future years.</p> <p>Baseline performance data for all NCES objectives represent results from the NCES 1997 Customer Satisfaction Survey.</p> <p>NCES hopes to continue with its satisfactory performance levels when its next survey data is available in January 2002.</p>	<p>Source: 3.1-3.3 NCES 1997 & 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey (next survey: 20012). <i>Frequency:</i> Henceforth, triennially. <i>Next collection update:</i> Fall 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> January 2002.</p> <p>In 1999 NCES measured customer satisfaction with a follow-up to the 1997 survey that established NCES baseline performance data. Also, in 1999 NCES conducted focus group discussions with targeted customers, including policymakers, researchers, and practitioners. Additional focus groups will be held in 2001. Other sources of feedback: Biannual input from NCES Advisory Council; NCES customer surveys in 1997, 1999, and 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: By NCES review procedures and NCES statistical standards.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: No data limitations.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance				Performance Targets
	Clarity of Writing	Useful to Work			Overall Quality
1997:	87%	86%			90%
1998:	No Data Available	No Data Available			No Data Available
1999:	90%	89%			93%
2000:	No Data Available	No Data Available			No Data Available
2001:					Continuing Increase
2002:					90%

Indicator 3.2 Utility: At least 85 percent of surveyed customers in FY 1999 and 90 percent in FY 2002 will rate NCES publications as useful to their work.				
Targets and Performance Data		Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>NCES customers who responded as satisfied or very satisfied with the usefulness of NCES publications</i>		<p>Status: NCES exceeded its 1999 performance target for Utility of Publications.</p> <p>Explanation: NCES achieved an 89 percent rating in 1999 and has established a performance target of 90 percent for future years.</p>	<p>Source: NCES Customer Satisfaction Survey <i>Frequency:</i> Triennially. <i>Next collection update:</i> Fall 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> January 2002.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Data validated by NCES review procedures and NCES statistical standards.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: No data limitations.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets
1997:	86%			
1998:	No Data Available			
1999:	89%			85%
2000:	No Data Available			Continuing Increase
2001:				Continuing Increase
2002:		90%		
Indicator 3.3 Publication Quality: At least 85 percent of surveyed customers in FY 1999 and 90 percent in FY 2002 will express satisfaction with the overall quality of NCES publications.				
Targets and Performance Data		Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Percentage of NCES customers who indicated their overall satisfaction rate with the overall quality of publications</i>		<p>Status: Target exceeded for Publications Quality with 93 percent.</p> <p>Explanation: NCES has achieved a 90 percent rating in 1997 and will use that percentage for a future performance target level.</p> <p>In 1999, NCES surpassed its previous rating by 3 percent with a new high rating of 93 percent.</p>	<p>Source: NCES Customer Satisfaction Survey <i>Frequency:</i> Triennially. <i>Next collection update:</i> Fall 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> January 2002.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Data validated by NCES review procedures and NCES statistical standards.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: No data limitations.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets
1997:	90%			
1998:	No Data Available			
1999:	93%			85%
2000:	No Data Available			Continuing Increase
2001:				Continuing Increase
2002:		90%		