

**U.S. Department of Education
Policy and Program Studies Service
Report Highlights**

**Case Studies of Supplemental Services
Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*: Findings from 2003-04**

Background

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires school districts to provide supplemental educational services to children from low-income families who are enrolled in Title I schools that have not made adequate yearly progress (AYP) for three years or more. The purpose of this study was to gain insights about state and district implementation of supplemental services that could assist others in implementing supplemental services. This report examines implementation of supplemental services during the 2003-04 school year, the second year the requirements were in effect, through case studies of nine districts in six states. Building on findings reported in the Year One Report for the case studies, this new report details how supplemental services were implemented at all levels, considers challenges to implementation, and provides some examples of promising approaches. In both years of the study, the districts visited were selected because they appeared to be relatively advanced in their implementation of supplemental services. However, because of this small, purposively selected sample, the findings provide a snapshot of issues arising among early implementers rather than a nationally representative picture of implementation. Overall, findings indicate that, although significant challenges to implementation remain, states, districts, and providers are building on their experiences with supplemental services and increasing the efficiency of multiple aspects of implementation.

Key Findings

Services Provided for Students. Participation rates varied across the districts. Three districts provided supplemental services to 86 percent or more of the students they could provide services to with the maximum amount they were required to spend on supplemental services. In the six other districts, participation rates were between 13 percent and 62 percent of the number of students the districts could serve with the maximum required amount of funding.

Supplemental services in the study sample were typically offered immediately after school, two to three times a week, for sessions lasting one to two hours. The total number of hours each student received ranged widely, from a low of 18 to a high of 120, and students tended to “cycle out” of supplemental services after 10-20 weeks.

Tutors generally worked with students in small groups with 5 to 10 students per tutor. One-on-one tutoring for an entire session was rare among the providers in this study.

Supplemental service providers worked in schools whenever possible, with students typically attending tutoring programs in the same buildings where they attended school.

Student attendance at supplemental services continued to be a challenge among the case study districts in 2003-04. This was especially a problem with middle and high school students.

The extent to which providers in the study sample aligned their curriculum with state standards or local curricula was unclear. Providers reported that their curricula were aligned. Some providers explained they ensured alignment by using results from state assessments or diagnostic tests based on state assessments to identify skills for students to work on in tutoring sessions. Other providers interviewed were unable to describe evidence of alignment.

Provider communication with parents and teachers about student progress was sporadic or informal and was seldom very effective. The providers interviewed said they sent regular progress reports on students to districts, but most of the teachers and parents interviewed said they had not received any information about students' progress.

***State Activities.* Overall, the six case study states had improved, refined, or expedited procedures for implementing supplemental services compared with 2002-03.**

The number of supplemental service providers approved for the 2003-04 school year increased by approximately 200 across the six case study states. The total number of approved providers ranged from about 30 in two states to nearly 200 in two other states, representing increases of 11% to 282% in the number of providers across the six states. The number of providers in the case study sites ranged from 5 to 27. State supplemental services coordinators across the sampled states reported that small districts and rural districts continued to be underserved by providers compared with urban areas.

The task of monitoring supplemental service providers and of evaluating their performance continued to be a challenge for the case study states. In most cases, states had not yet put full-blown monitoring systems in place, although they had put some work into planning them. Several states relied heavily on districts for information about the performance of supplemental service providers.

***District Activities.* As with states, the district administrators in the nine case study sites continued to face challenges to the implementation of supplemental services; many also had streamlined procedures to simplify and expedite providing services.**

The average district per-pupil expenditure for supplemental services among the nine case study districts was \$1,408 in 2003-04. Among the five districts included in both years of the study, the average per-pupil expenditure increased by \$300 between 2002-03 and 2003-04.

District efforts to inform parents of the availability of supplemental services appeared organized and focused on helping parents understand supplemental services. Most of the nine case study districts mailed letters home to parents along with materials such as descriptions of provider services, a selection form for choosing providers, and provider-generated brochures. Other efforts to reach parents included provider fairs, home visits and announcements in local media (i.e., newspapers, television and radio ads).

Sampled districts were adept at developing contracts with service providers. Many districts had begun using boilerplate contracts for providers that had been created in 2002-03. However, the time it took for sampled districts to finalize provider contracts, even when working with templates, had not decreased by much.

Several sampled districts expressed concern about the administrative costs associated with implementing supplemental services. These costs included those related to mailing letters to parents about the availability of supplemental services and working with the providers.

Districts in the study sample increasingly relied upon principals and teachers to help coordinate supplemental services. Principals in several districts said they often helped with outreach to parents and held parent meetings about supplemental services at their schools. Districts also increasingly relied on schools to help coordinate aspects of supplemental services, such as by making space available in their schools for providers.

***Supplemental Service Providers.* Supplemental service providers followed some common patterns in their operations, even though those interviewed represented a variety of provider types.**

School districts made up a small proportion of all providers in the case study sample, although they enrolled the lion's share of students in two of the three districts where they were providers (49 and 76 percent of all participating students in those districts). Nationwide, intermediate educational agencies, school districts and public schools made up 25 percent of all providers.

Private providers generally required a minimum number of students to enroll at each site in order to make their program viable, with the minimum number ranging from 10 to 80. In nearly all districts studied, some providers opted not to offer services because demand was too low.

Of the 24 providers interviewed for this study, 15 hired only certified teachers to staff their programs. Many providers went out of their way to recruit teachers from Title I schools identified for improvement as tutors.

In general, school and district staff at the sampled sites reported that providers were able to accommodate the needs of students. In three sampled districts with significant proportions of English language learners, district and school staff reported that those students had been able to find tutoring. Staff in the sampled districts did not report problems with special education students' access to services.

***Parents.* Most parents of children receiving supplemental services indicated in interviews that they were pleased that supplemental services were available to their children though some parents also indicated they had difficulty sorting out the options available to them.**

Many parents interviewed for the study reported that they had received enough information to choose good providers for their children. Nearly as many, however, reported that they knew little or were confused about the services available to them.

Parents interviewed also continued to report paying careful attention to teacher and principal recommendations in deciding to enroll their children in supplemental services and in choosing providers. Parents also considered location, hours of operation, and availability of transportation in choosing providers.

Many of the parents interviewed for the study reported that they were satisfied with the services their children had received and believed that after-school tutoring had helped their children. Other parents reported that they observed little benefit from the services.

Parents who elected not to enroll their children in supplemental services did so because they found other after-school options more accessible, more convenient, or more appropriate for their child. However, in some cases, parents simply did not know enough about supplemental services to follow through with the enrollment process.

Copies of this report and the Year One Report are available on the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oepd/ppss/reports.html#title.