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Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-06-758](#), a report to congressional requesters

Why GAO Did This Study

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLBA) requires districts with schools that have not met state performance goals for 3 consecutive years to offer their low-income students supplemental educational services (SES), such as tutoring, if these schools receive Title I funds. SES are provided outside of the regular school day by a state-approved provider, with responsibility for implementation shared by states and districts. GAO examined (1) how SES participation changed between school years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005; (2) how SES providers are working with districts to deliver SES; (3) how states are monitoring and evaluating SES; and (4) how the Department of Education (Education) monitors and supports state implementation of SES. To collect data on SES, GAO surveyed all states and a nationally representative sample of districts with schools required to offer SES. We also visited 4 school districts, interviewed 22 SES providers, reviewed SES-related research, and interviewed Education staff.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that Education disseminate information on promising practices used to improve SES implementation, provide states with technical assistance to improve evaluation of SES's effect on student achievement, and expand program flexibility where appropriate. Education generally supported GAO's recommendations.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-758.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Marnie Shaul at (202) 512-7215 or shaulm@gao.gov.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

Education Actions Needed to Improve Local Implementation and State Evaluation of Supplemental Educational Services

What GAO Found

SES participation among eligible students increased from 12 to 19 percent between school years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, and the number of recipients also increased, due in part to a rise in the number of schools required to offer services. Districts have used some promising practices to inform parents and encourage participation, such as offering services on school campuses and at various times. However, challenges remain, including timely and effective notification of parents and attracting providers to serve certain areas and students, such as rural districts or students with disabilities.

To promote improved student academic achievement, SES providers took steps to align their curriculum with district instruction and communicate with teachers and parents, though the extent of their efforts varied. A majority of the 22 providers we interviewed worked to align SES and district curriculum by hiring teachers familiar with the district curriculum as tutors. However, at least some providers did not have any contact with teachers in about 40 percent of districts. Both providers and district officials experienced challenges related to contracting and coordination of service delivery. Providers, districts, and schools reported that greater involvement of schools would improve SES delivery and coordination, as it has in some places where this is occurring.

While state monitoring of district and provider efforts to implement SES has been limited in past years, more states reported conducting on-site reviews and other monitoring activities during 2005-2006. In addition, districts have taken a direct role in monitoring providers, and their monitoring efforts have similarly increased. Although states are required to withdraw approval from providers that fail to increase student academic achievement for 2 years, many states struggle to develop meaningful SES evaluations. While a few states have completed evaluations, none provides a conclusive assessment of SES providers' effect on student academic achievement.

Several Education offices monitor SES activity across the country and provide SES support to states and districts through written guidance, grants, and technical assistance. However, states and districts reported needing additional SES evaluation support and technical assistance. For example, 85 percent of states reported needing assistance with methods for evaluating SES. Many also voiced interest in Education's pilot programs that increase SES flexibility, including the one that allowed certain districts identified as in need of improvement to act as providers.

SES Is Often Delivered after School and on School Campuses



Source: GAO.