

September 1999

# FEDERAL EDUCATION FUNDING

## Allocation to State and Local Agencies for 10 Programs



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**Health, Education, and  
Human Services Division**

B-278482

September 30, 1999

The Honorable William F. Goodling  
Chairman, Committee on Education  
and the Workforce  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Peter Hoekstra  
Chairman, Subcommittee on  
Oversight and Investigations  
Committee on Education and  
the Workforce  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Michael N. Castle  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Early  
Childhood, Youth and Families  
Committee on Education and  
the Workforce  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Joseph R. Pitts  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham  
House of Representatives

Since the early 1990s, the Congress has appropriated over \$30 billion a year for preschool, elementary, and secondary education. These funds are targeted primarily to specific groups of children—such as those who are poor or disabled or have limited English proficiency—to help ensure their access to public education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation. The Congress provides some of these funds to the Department of Education (Education), which then distributes the funds either directly to local agencies or to the states. States in turn distribute the funds to local agencies. Education and the states may spend some of the program funds for administration and other activities allowed under each program's statute.

Although the federal investment in elementary and secondary education is large, the Congress does not routinely receive information about how much federal funding actually reaches students in the classroom. There

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are concerns that too much federal funding may be spent on administration and that school personnel are incurring “hidden” administrative costs as they spend time fulfilling administrative requirements related to applying for, monitoring, and reporting on federal funds. But administrative activities are difficult to define across programs because what is considered administration varies from program to program. For example, under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), technical assistance is considered an administrative activity, but under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program (called the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program) it is considered nonadministrative.

In this context, as the Congress prepares to consider reauthorization of many of the elementary and secondary programs, you asked us to determine, for 10 major Education programs for fiscal year 1996, (1) the percentage of federal funding spent at the federal level and the uses of these funds and (2) the percentage of federal funding spent at the state level and the uses of these funds. In addition, you asked that we examine—in a small number of school districts—the amount of time school personnel spent fulfilling federal administrative requirements for those programs for which the districts received funds.

To determine the percentage of funds spent<sup>1</sup> by federal and state agencies from the 10 programs and how these funds were used, we surveyed 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, as well as Education officials. For this analysis, we examined funds from these programs that Education distributed directly to the states but not to local-level agencies (see table 1 for a description of the 10 programs and their authorizing legislation). To determine how much time school personnel spent fulfilling administrative requirements, we gathered illustrative information from 9 of the 16,000 school districts nationwide in three states—California, Maryland, and South Carolina—and surveyed district staff and staff from selected schools in each of the 9 school districts (see app. I for a more detailed discussion of our scope and methodology). We judgmentally selected these 9 school districts to ensure that the districts were of varying sizes, were located in different parts of the country, and represented a mix of urban, suburban, and rural districts. We conducted our work between

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<sup>1</sup>We asked the Department of Education and the states to report the amounts of program funds they initially retained to spend on federal-level or state-level activities, respectively. Although states may later reallocate some portion of the funds to local agencies and other entities to spend, throughout the report, the term “spent” refers to the funds that Education and the states reported they initially retained for their expenses.

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July 1997 and August 1999 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

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## Results in Brief

In fiscal year 1996, Education distributed over 99 percent of the appropriations for the 10 programs to the states; the states, in turn, collectively distributed 94 percent of the funds they received to local agencies such as school districts. Of the original appropriations, 92 percent was allocated primarily to local agencies. At both the federal and state levels, the funds that were not distributed supported such activities as research and evaluation related to the programs and information dissemination about them. At the state level, the funds, as authorized by law, may be spent on a wider range of activities, such as developing student performance standards and professional development training for teachers.

Education spent less than 1 percent of all appropriated program funds, distributing the rest primarily to the states in fiscal year 1996. Only for the School-to-Work program did Education spend more than 1 percent, spending 7 percent of the funds for this program. Education spent the funds on such services as research, evaluation, and information dissemination. For example, Education used \$26 million of the School-to-Work program funds for program research and to provide the states with technical assistance to help them plan and implement the program. Education paid for other costs of running the programs, such as the salaries and benefits of staff issuing grants and administering the programs, from an appropriation it receives for overall agency management, and not from funds appropriated for the agency's programs. In fiscal year 1996, Education received \$327 million to administer all of its programs. Education estimates that it spent about \$23 million to administer the 10 programs we reviewed.<sup>2</sup>

For 9 of the 10 programs, the states spent an average of from 1 to 17 percent of the funding. For the remaining program (Bilingual Education state grants), all the funds we reviewed were intended to be used at the state level. Collectively, states distributed 94 percent of the federal funds they received mainly to local agencies. Excluding the \$7.3 billion Title I program (one of the largest elementary and secondary education programs), the overall percentage of funds states allocated to local

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<sup>2</sup>\$4 million for Title I programs, \$5.8 million for IDEA programs, \$4.2 million for Perkins programs, \$1.3 million each for Eisenhower and Safe and Drug-Free Schools programs, \$900,000 for Goals 2000 programs, \$1 million for School-to-Work programs, \$1.1 million for Innovative Education programs, \$3.3 million for Bilingual Education programs, and \$300,000 for Even Start programs.

agencies by the remaining nine programs was 86 percent. The states, like Education, spent the funds for activities such as technical assistance and program evaluation. The states also are authorized to spend the funds for a wider range of activities, including designing curricula and demonstration projects. We visited 9 of the nation's 16,000 school districts and found that school-level staff spent very little time administering the programs and that district office staff also generally spent little time administering them. The time they spent varied by district and by program.

## Background

The federal investment in preschool, elementary, and secondary education of more than \$30 billion was about 7 percent of all education funding in academic year 1995-96; state and local contributions were 47 and 46 percent, respectively. As shown in table 1, the fiscal year 1996 appropriations for the 10 programs we reviewed varied widely, from \$7.3 billion for the Title I program to \$102 million for Even Start. These amounts reflect the total appropriation for each program, including funds that Education distributed directly to local education agencies as well as funds Education distributed to state education agencies or other eligible recipients.

**Table 1: Characteristics of the 10 Department of Education Programs During Fiscal Year 1996, Listed by Funding Amount**

Program	Authorizing legislation	Purpose	Target population	Funding (in millions)	Maximum percentage states may spend and specific limits on administration <sup>a</sup>	Maximum <sup>b</sup> amount states may spend on administration (in millions)
Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (Title I)	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), title I, part A	To help local education agencies and schools improve the teaching and learning of children failing, or most at-risk	Disadvantaged students	\$7,295	1.5% (including 1% for administration)	\$73
Assistance for Education of All Children With Disabilities (IDEA)	IDEA, part B	To assist states in providing free, appropriate public education to all children with disabilities	Children and youth with disabilities	2,684 <sup>c</sup>	25% <sup>d</sup> (including 5% for administration)	134
Vocational Education Assistance to the States (Perkins)	Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, as amended, title II (moved to title I in 1998)	To help states improve vocational education programs and provide special needs populations with equal access to such programs	Secondary students in prevocational courses	963	14.5% (including 5% for administration)	48

(continued)

Program	Authorizing legislation	Purpose	Target population	Funding (in millions)	Maximum percentage states may spend and specific limits on administration <sup>a</sup>	Maximum <sup>b</sup> amount states may spend on administration (in millions)
State Grants for Drug and Violence Prevention Programs (Safe and Drug-Free Schools)	ESEA, title IV, part A, subpart 1	To support programs to meet the National Education Goal that every school will be free of drugs and violence by the year 2000	Elementary and secondary schools, teachers, and students	441 (\$348 million for state grants and \$93 million for governor's programs and other uses)	For state grants, 9% (including 4% for administration)	14 <sup>e</sup>
State and Local Education Systemic Improvement (Goals 2000)	Goals 2000: Educate America Act, title III	To support comprehensive reform plans at the state, local, and school levels to improve the teaching and learning of all children	Elementary and secondary schools, teachers, and students	340	10% (including 4% for administration)	14
School-to-Work Opportunities System Development and Implementation Grants to States (School-to-Work) <sup>f</sup>	School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, title II	To establish a national framework within which all states can create statewide school-to-work opportunities systems	All students, including the disadvantaged, minorities, the disabled, those with limited English proficiency, migrants, and school dropouts	350	No specific limits for development grants; for implementation grants, 30% for 1 <sup>st</sup> year of grant, 20% for 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 10% for subsequent years (including 10% each year for administration)	35
Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development Program (Eisenhower)	ESEA, title II, part B	To provide high-quality professional development activities to teachers, staff, and administration	Teachers and other school staff	275	10% (including 5% for administration)	14
Innovative Education Program Strategies (Innovative Education)	ESEA, title VI	To assist state and local education agencies in the reform of elementary and secondary education	Elementary and secondary schools, teachers, and students	275	15% (including 3.75% for administration)	10

(continued)

Program	Authorizing legislation	Purpose	Target population	Funding (in millions)	Maximum percentage states may spend and specific limits on administration <sup>a</sup>	Maximum <sup>b</sup> amount states may spend on administration (in millions)
Bilingual Education <sup>g</sup>	ESEA, title VII, part A	To help ensure that students with limited English proficiency master English and develop high levels of academic attainment in content areas	Children with limited English proficiency	128 (\$7 million for state grants and \$121 million for localities)	For state grants, 100% (including 5% for administration)	.365 <sup>h</sup>
Even Start Family Literacy Program (Even Start)	ESEA, title I, part B	To help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by integrating early childhood education, adult literacy or adult basic education, and parenting into a unified family literacy program	Parents who lack basic education skills; have no high school diploma; or are unable to speak, read, or write the English language; and their children, aged 0-7	102	5% (including administration)	5

<sup>a</sup>Many also may spend more than the percentage listed in this column. Many programs also provide for a minimum dollar amount. In the case of small states, where their total grant is relatively small, the maximum percentage amount may be inadequate.

<sup>b</sup>The numbers in this column are based on total funding rather than the amounts remaining after Education has taken any funds for its use.

<sup>c</sup>Amount is actually for two separate grant programs under part B of IDEA, one providing special education and related services to school-aged children and one providing such services to preschoolers.

<sup>d</sup>The law was amended in 1998, changing this to 15 percent (including 5 percent for administration).

<sup>e</sup>Estimate is based only on the \$348 million allocated for state grants.

<sup>f</sup>The Departments of Education and Labor jointly administer the School-to-Work program. For fiscal 1996, \$180 million was included in Education's appropriation and \$170 million in Labor's.

<sup>g</sup>Under this program, funding for state-level activities is provided through a separate state grant program, and other funds are allocated directly to local agencies. We only examined the state grant portion of these funds.

<sup>h</sup>Estimate is based only on the \$7.3 million allocated for state grants.

**There is no common definition of “administration” across the 10 programs. For example, ESEA does not contain a general definition of administrative expenditures that states can use for covered programs.**



Further, some individual program statutes describe as nonadministrative activities what other programs consider administrative activities. For example, under the Title I program, developing standards and assessments is considered an administrative activity at the state level, but under the Eisenhower program it is considered a nonadministrative activity. Similarly, under the IDEA program, technical assistance is considered an administrative activity, but under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program it is considered a nonadministrative activity. Thus, the differences in which activities are considered administrative expenses and the lack of a distinction between administrative and nonadministrative expenses make categorization of expenses difficult.<sup>3</sup>

The Congress has been weighing how to balance accountability and flexibility in education programs.<sup>4</sup> In its effort to strike a balance between these sometimes competing goals, the Congress has attempted to reduce state and local reporting requirements while at the same time ensuring that sufficient information exists to hold states and local agencies accountable. Moreover, state and local reporting requirements have not historically been uniform across programs, state program accountability systems vary, and the definitions used to categorize expenses and activities differ across states and programs. All of these factors represent challenges to data collection.

## Education Distributed Almost All Federal Program Funds to States

Across all 10 programs we reviewed, Education typically spent a small portion of the federal funds, distributing over 99 percent of the funds to the states.<sup>5</sup> With the funds, Education supported a variety of federal activities, including program research and evaluation and information dissemination. However, Education paid for other costs of running the 10 programs, such as the salaries and benefits of the staff issuing the grants and administering the programs, from a separate appropriation it receives for overall agency management.

Table 2 shows the amount Education spent from each of the 10 programs' funds. Education spent nothing for the Innovative Education and Perkins

<sup>3</sup>See Department of Education, *The Use of Federal Education Funds for Administrative Costs* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Education, 1998), which addressed the various ways administration is defined.

<sup>4</sup>See *Balancing Flexibility and Accountability: Grant Program Design in Education and Other Areas* (GAO/T-GGD/HEHS-98-94, Feb. 11, 1998) and *Grant Programs: Design Features Shape Flexibility, Accountability, and Performance Information* (GAO/GGD-98-137, June 22, 1998).

<sup>5</sup>Education distributes funds to entities other than the states, but for the programs we reviewed, Education allocated most of the funds to the states.

programs. For the Title I program, one of the largest elementary and secondary programs that support education for disadvantaged students, Education spent \$3.5 million of the funds, which was less than 1 percent of the program's \$7.3 billion appropriation. For the School-to-Work program, which is one of the smaller programs, Education spent the largest percentage—7 percent of the program's funds (\$26 million)—for technical assistance and research.

**Table 2: Program Funding Spent at the Federal Level in Fiscal Year 1996**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Funds used by Education</b>	<b>Percentage of appropriation</b>
Title I	\$3,500,000	Less than 1
IDEA	50,000	Less than 1
Perkins	0	0
Safe and Drug-Free Schools	997,000	Less than 1
Goals 2000	226,951	Less than 1
School-to-Work	26,000,000	7
Eisenhower	735,000	Less than 1
Innovative Education	0	0
Bilingual Education	1,828,445	1 <sup>a</sup>
Even Start	1,369,350	1

<sup>a</sup>This percentage is based on the total fiscal year 1996 appropriation of \$128 million for the Bilingual Education program.

Source: Department of Education.

Education used program funds for a number of activities, such as research, program evaluation, information dissemination, and technical assistance. To illustrate, for three of the programs—Even Start, Bilingual Education, and School-to-Work—Education used funds for technical assistance to the states and information dissemination to states, school districts, and the general public. For Even Start, Eisenhower, Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Bilingual Education, and School-to-Work, Education also spent funds on program evaluation and research. For the Title I program, Education officials reported that the funds supported work by the Bureau of the Census to develop an updated model to estimate the number of children aged 5 to 17 living in poverty, as well as an evaluation of that estimate by the National Academy of Sciences. The poverty estimates are used to determine states' Title I formula allocations. For the Bilingual Education, IDEA, and Goals 2000 programs, Education used a small percentage of the funds for outside reviewers to assess grant proposals. For example, of the \$128 million appropriated for the Bilingual

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Education program, Education spent about \$300,000 for outside reviewers. Education also used \$200,000 of the \$340 million appropriated for the Goals 2000 program and \$50,000 of the \$2.6 billion appropriated for the IDEA program for outside reviewers. Other costs, such as salaries and benefits for Education's employees involved in issuing grants and administering the program, were funded from a separate appropriation it receives for agency management. In fiscal year 1996, Education received \$327 million through this appropriation to administer all the programs under its purview, and it estimates that it spent about \$23 million administering the 10 programs we reviewed.

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## The States Distributed Most of the Funds to Local Agencies

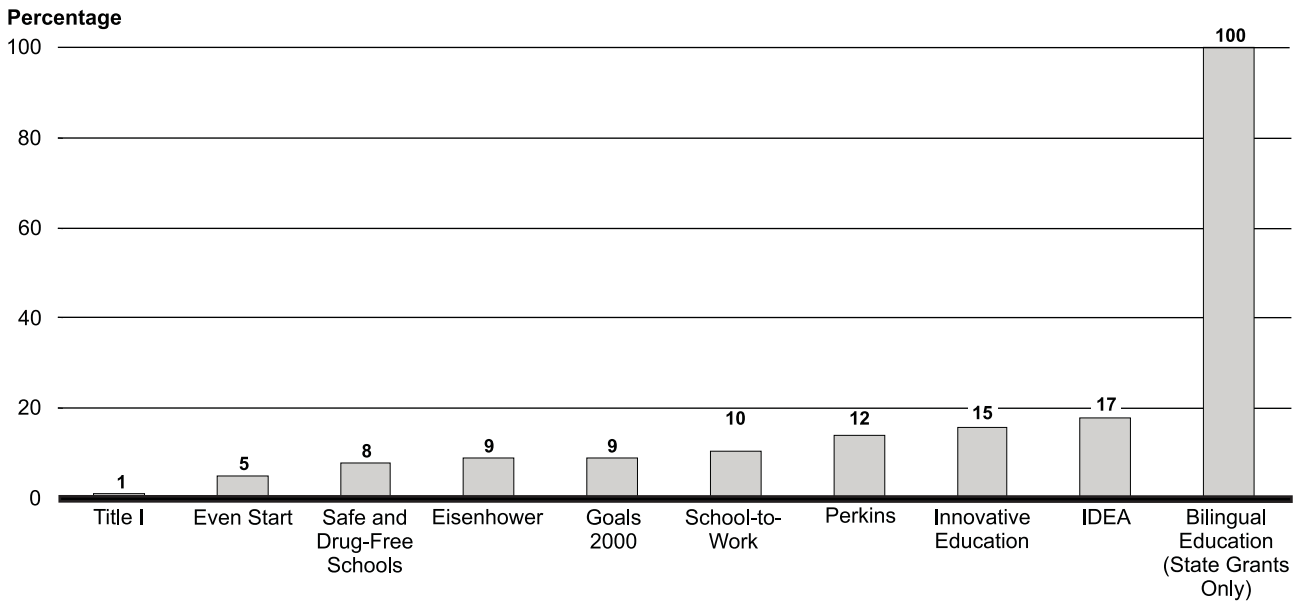
States generally passed on to school districts most of the program funds. The one exception, in which states spent most of the funds, was the Bilingual Education program, because Education only allocated to the states the funds that were intended for state use (the state grant program). Education allocated directly to the localities the Bilingual funds intended for local use. For the other nine programs, the states on average spent from 1 to 17 percent of the funds. States spent the funds on many of the same activities as Education, such as research and evaluation. States also were authorized to spend funds on a wider range of support activities, such as development of student performance standards, curricula design, professional development training, and development of demonstration projects.

States varied from program to program with respect to the percentage of funds they spent themselves and the percentage they distributed to local agencies. Figure 1 shows the average percentage of funds states spent for each of the 10 programs. There was considerable variation in the percentage of a given program's funds that states distributed to school districts. Overall, 94 percent<sup>6</sup> of the federal education funds received by the states for these 10 programs was distributed to local agencies such as school districts. If the \$7.3 billion appropriation for the Title I program is excluded, the overall percentage of funds states allocated to local agencies drops to 86 percent. Of the original appropriations for all 10 programs, 92 percent was distributed to local agencies.

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<sup>6</sup>This is the weighted average of funds distributed to the local level for these programs. This figure is based on funds that states' education agencies distributed to a range of entities. Thus, although funds were distributed primarily to local education agencies, state education agencies also distributed funds to other entities. These entities include local partnerships; regional and local organizations; nonprofit organizations; programs for single parents, displaced homemakers, and criminal offenders; and other state agencies.

Figure 1: Percentage of Funds Spent by State Education Agencies



In addition, states varied in the percentage of each program’s funds they spent (see table 3). For example, for the IDEA program, the percentage of funds that states spent ranged from less than 2 percent in 2 states to 21 percent or more in 16 states. For School-to-Work, the percentage of funds states spent ranged from about 2 percent in five states to over 25 percent in eight states. Most states spent close to the maximum allowed by law (see table 1). For example, the Innovative Education program permits states to spend up to 15 percent of program funds received. Thirty-eight states (88 percent) used between 11 and 15 percent of this program’s funds. See appendix II for the percentage of funds each state spent.

**Table 3: Range in Percentage of Funds Spent by State Education Agencies, by Program**

Program	Number of states reporting <sup>a</sup>							
	0-2 percent	3-5 percent	6-10 percent	11-15 percent	16-20 percent	21-24 percent	25 percent	Over 25 percent
Title I	38	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
IDEA	2	5	4	13	4	6	9	1 <sup>b</sup>
Perkins	1	2	6	26	6	1	0	1
Safe and Drug-Free Schools	1	2	42	0	0	0	0	0
Goals 2000	3	0	37	0	0	0	0	0
Eisenhower	0	7	37	0	0	0	0	1 <sup>c</sup>
Bilingual Education <sup>d</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
Innovative Education	0	0	1	38	3	0	0	1 <sup>e</sup>
School-to-Work	5	2	10	2	8	2	0	8 <sup>f</sup>
Even Start	8	35	2	0	0	0	0	0

Note: In addition to a maximum percentage that states may spend and/or use for administration, many programs provide for a minimum dollar amount as well. As a result, states that benefit from such a provision may end up spending more than the percentage listed in this table.

<sup>a</sup>Numbers are based only on those states that responded to our survey.

<sup>b</sup>Puerto Rico's state education agency is also the local education agency (there is only one school district in Puerto Rico). Therefore, it is allowed to keep and spend all of the funds.

<sup>c</sup>Hawaii's state education agency is also the local education agency. Therefore, it spent all of the funds.

<sup>d</sup>For this part of the analysis, we only examined the funds Education distributed to the states—about 5 percent of total program dollars—and all of those funds were intended to be spent at the state level.

<sup>e</sup>Hawaii, where the state's education agency is also the local education agency, spent 26 percent of the funds on state-related activities and 74 percent on local-level-related activities.

<sup>f</sup>For School-to-Work development grant funds, there are no restrictions on the amount of funds that states can spend at the state level.

**States spent the funds on many of the same activities as Education, such as research and evaluation and technical assistance. States also spent their funds on the salaries and benefits of personnel involved in such activities as compliance monitoring and data collection. Moreover, states are authorized to spend some of their funds on activities specific to each program. Following are some examples:**

- Under the Eisenhower program, states may spend funds reviewing and reforming state requirements for teacher and administrator licensure, developing performance assessments and peer review procedures for

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licensing teachers and administrators, and encouraging teacher professional development training.

- Under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, states may spend the funds to make cost-effective programs for youth violence and drug abuse prevention available to local education agencies, demonstration projects in drug and violence prevention, and financial assistance to enhance resources available for drug and violence prevention in areas serving large numbers of economically disadvantaged children.
- Under the Goals 2000 program, states may spend their funds supporting the development or adoption of state content standards and state student performance standards; supporting innovative and proven methods of enhancing a teacher's ability to identify student learning needs; and promoting public magnet schools, public charter schools, and other mechanisms for increasing choice among public schools.
- Under the School-to-Work program, states may spend funds identifying or establishing appropriate state structures to administer the statewide school-to-work system and designing challenging curricula in cooperation with representatives of local partnerships.

Schools and school districts used federal funds for classroom services and support services and to meet federal administrative requirements. Fulfilling the federal requirements necessitates some commitment of staff resources at both the school district and school levels. We reviewed the extent to which local staff spent time responding to federal program administrative requirements in 9 of the nation's 16,000 school districts (see app. III for detailed information about the time spent on these activities). We found that the amount of time district office staff spent administering these programs varied by district and by program. Of the 10 programs reviewed, school district staff reported more involvement in administrative activities related to the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program than for other programs. Most district staff had responsibility for only one program each. Staff told us that their administrative duties included requesting and reviewing grant applications, monitoring how programs are implemented, and reporting on programs. About 70 percent of personnel in the 15 schools we visited, primarily teachers, did not have administrative responsibilities for the 10 programs reviewed. When they did, however, the majority of them had administrative responsibilities for the Title I program. The amount of time school staff spent administering the Title I program was usually a day or less out of the school year for each administrative duty assigned them.

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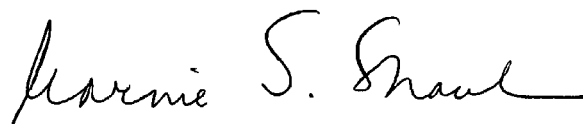
## Agency Comments

Education provided technical comments on a draft of this report, which we incorporated in the report as appropriate.

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Copies of this report are being sent to the Honorable Richard W. Riley, Secretary of Education; the Honorable Alexis M. Herman, Secretary of Labor; and interested congressional committees. We will also make copies available to others upon request.

If you have questions about this report, please call me on (202) 512-7215. Other contacts and staff acknowledgments are listed in appendix IV.



Marnie S. Shaul  
Associate Director, Education, Workforce,  
and Income Security Issues

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**Abbreviations**

ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
IDEA	Individuals With Disabilities Education Act

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# Scope and Methodology

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This appendix discusses in detail our scope and methodology for determining the percentage of federal funds spent at the federal and state levels and the uses of funds at each level, as well as the amount of time school and district staff spent fulfilling federal administrative requirements.

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## Scope

We collected financial information for fiscal year 1996 from 10 Department of Education programs. Six programs were authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA): title I, part A—Title I program; title 1, part B—Even Start; title II—Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development program; title IV—Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities; title VI—Innovative Education Program Strategies; and title VII—Bilingual Education. We also collected funding information for programs under four other acts: the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), part B—IDEA program; the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, as amended—Perkins; Goals 2000: Educate America Act, title III—Goals 2000; and School-to-Work. (See table I.1.) We focused on collecting financial information and did not evaluate program effectiveness or impact.

**Table I.1: Programs Reviewed**

<b>Act</b>	<b>Program</b>
ESEA	Title I, part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies
	Title I, part B: Even Start Family Literacy Programs
	Title II, part B: Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development Program
	Title IV (also known as the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994), part A, subpart 1: State Grants for Drug and Violence Prevention Programs
	Title VI: Innovative Education Program Strategies
Goals 2000: Educate America Act	Title VII, part A (also known as the Bilingual Education Act): Bilingual Education
Goals 2000: Educate America Act	Title III: State and Local Education Systemic Improvement
Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, as amended	Title II: Vocational Education Assistance to the States
IDEA	Part B: Assistance for Education of All Children With Disabilities
School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994	Title II: School-to-Work Opportunities System Development and Implementation Grants to States

## Methodology

To determine the percentage of funds spent at the federal level and distributed to the states, we asked officials at the Department of Education to provide us with the amount of funds it spent, how these funds were used, and the amount of funds distributed to the states for each program.

To obtain information on how much states received, spent, and distributed to local agencies, in November 1998 we surveyed state officials in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The surveys were mailed to officials at the state level—typically, officials in the state Department of Education. For each program, we asked respondents to provide us with the total federal funding their state received in fiscal year 1996, instructing them not to include funds that were carried over from previous years. For two states—Oregon and Pennsylvania—respondents were not able to remove carryover funds from the total. Therefore, we included all funds

reported by these states as funds received in fiscal year 1996. In addition, we asked respondents to tell us the total amount of federal funds their state education agency spent and how much they passed on to the localities. Response rates are shown in table I.2.

**Table I.2: Number of States Responding to Survey, by Program**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Number of states<sup>a</sup> receiving program funds</b>	<b>Number of states responding</b>	<b>Response rate (percent)</b>
Title I	52	46	88
IDEA	52	44	85
Perkins	52	43	83
Safe and Drug-Free Schools	52	45	87
Goals 2000	48 <sup>b</sup>	40	83
School-to-Work	52	37	71
Eisenhower	52	45	87
Innovative Education	52	43	83
Bilingual Education	48	40	83
Even Start	52	45	87

<sup>a</sup>Includes the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

<sup>b</sup>Montana, New Hampshire, and Oklahoma are not included in this total because funds were allocated directly to the local education agencies. California is also excluded because it reported that it did not receive funds until the end of fiscal year 1996 because no state plan was in place.

To obtain information about the time district- and school-level staff spent on activities associated with administering federal programs, we gathered illustrative information from 9 of the nation’s 16,000 school districts—3 districts each in California, Maryland, and South Carolina. We selected the states, districts, and schools to be a mix from different sized districts, parts of the country, types of districts (rural, urban, and suburban), and types of schools (elementary and secondary). We also ensured that in each district we gathered information from staff working on many of the 10 programs reviewed.

For each selected school district, we gathered information from officials at the school level and the district level. In total, we interviewed and/or surveyed officials in 15 schools within the nine districts to ascertain how much time they spent fulfilling administrative requirements related to the 10 programs (see table I.3).

**Appendix I  
Scope and Methodology**

**Table I.3: School Districts Reviewed**

Place	Type of district	No. of students	No. of teachers	Programs reviewed									
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>California</b>													
Ceres	Suburban	9,458	408	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
San Diego	Urban	133,687	6,024	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shandon	Rural	337	20	X	X		X	X	X				
<b>Maryland</b>													
Baltimore City	Urban	108,759	6,259	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Baltimore County	Suburban	104,073	6,442	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Kent	Rural	2,898	179	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
<b>South Carolina</b>													
Abbeville	Rural	3,821	262	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Charleston	Urban	43,457	2,798	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Dorchester	Suburban	15,367	878	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Legend  
 1 = Title I  
 2 = Eisenhower  
 3 = IDEA  
 4 = Perkins  
 5 = Safe and Drug-Free Schools  
 6 = Innovative Education  
 7 = Goals 2000  
 8 = Even Start  
 9 = Bilingual Education  
 10 = School-to-Work

We defined “administrative responsibilities” as engaging in activities related to applying for, monitoring, or reporting on the use of federal program funds. Specifically, these activities include the following:

- Application/planning process activities refer to those related to preparing an application or plan for submission to the state education agency and/or federal agencies for federal funds for one or more of the education programs of interest. Examples include completing an application or proposal entirely or in part, collaborating with others to complete an application or proposal, and reviewing school or district grant applications.
- Monitoring of federal funds or program activities refer to tracking program expenditures and activities. Examples include tracking participant enrollments and overseeing the program budget to ensure compliance with program requirements and approved plans.

- 
- Reporting of federal funds or program activities refer to reporting program expenditures and/or activities to state and/or federal authorities. Examples include gathering data for federal reports, completing a report on program expenditures and/or activities entirely or in part, and collaborating with others to complete a report on program expenditures and/or activities.

We surveyed or interviewed over 1,000 school- and district-level staff, but our school- and district-level information is not generalizable. For practical reasons, we could not interview or survey all school and district staff, but we were able to gather information from the majority of teachers and the principal in each school and the majority of district-level staff. Through interviews or questionnaires, we asked the staff to indicate whether they had administrative responsibilities and, if so, to estimate the amount of time spent on administrative activities.

At the school level, we interviewed and surveyed 697 staff. Of these, 78 percent were teachers; 10 percent were specialists; and 7 percent were school administrators, such as principals. At the district level, we spoke with 319 officials, including budget and finance officials as well as personnel responsible for program evaluation and compliance. The information from these 9 school districts is illustrative, and, as such, is not necessarily indicative of the nearly 16,000 school districts nationwide. Detailed data from the nine school districts on time spent on administrative activities are in appendix III.

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### Bilingual Education Program Funds Pose Reporting Challenges

The Bilingual Education program has two funding streams. A small percentage of the funds—approximately 5 percent—is allocated to the states and is intended to be used at the state level. Conversely, the remaining 95 percent generally bypasses the states and is allocated directly to localities. For the other nine programs we reviewed, funds generally flow through the states and then to the localities. Thus, our state survey only captured the 5 percent of the Bilingual Education funds that the Department of Education allocated to the states. Our local school district review examined the administrative responsibilities associated with the 95 percent of the Bilingual funds that flowed directly to the localities.

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### Nonsampling Errors and Data Imputations

All surveys are vulnerable to some nonsampling errors, including measurement errors caused by respondent misinterpretation of the questions or errors that resulted from a lack of response. These errors may

affect our survey to some unknown degree. We took several steps to minimize the effect of these problems. For example, we examined responses for extreme values and checked the data for errors in logic. When we could not resolve the questions, we called survey respondents for clarification. In some cases, respondents had reported numbers incorrectly; in these cases, we corrected the data. For each program, to develop our estimate of the percentage of federal funds that was distributed to the localities, we calculated the percentage distributed by the states that completed the survey and applied that percentage to the total amount of federal funds received by states that did not complete the survey.

We conducted our work between July 1997 and August 1999 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

# Percentage of Federal Education Program Funds Spent by State Education Agencies

The amount of program funds spent by the states for support services varied from state to state. The range and median for each program are shown in table II.1. Table II.2 shows the percentage spent from each program, by state.

**Table II.1: Range and Median Percentage of Education Program Funds Spent by State Education Agencies**

Program	Range		
	High	Low	Median
Title I (N=46)	4	0	1
IDEA (N=44)	25 <sup>a</sup>	0	13
Perkins (N=43)	31	0	13
Safe and Drug-Free Schools (N=45)	9	0	9
Goals 2000 (N=40)	10	0	10
Eisenhower (N=45)	10 <sup>b</sup>	4	10
Bilingual Education <sup>c</sup> (N=40)	100	90 <sup>d</sup>	100
Innovative Education (N=43)	17 <sup>e</sup>	10	15
School-to-Work (N=37)	100 <sup>f</sup>	0	13
Even Start (N=45)	7	0	5

<sup>a</sup>Puerto Rico spent all of its funds, but it is an anomaly because the state is also the local education agency.

<sup>b</sup>Hawaii spent all of its funds, but it is an anomaly because the state is also the local education agency.

<sup>c</sup>Almost all Bilingual Education program funds (\$121 million of \$128 million) are distributed to local education agencies directly by the Department of Education. About 5 percent of the funds go to the states. This table reflects only information on the state grants.

<sup>d</sup>Although all of the Bilingual Education funds we looked at are intended to be used at the state level, two states allocated a portion of their funds to local agencies.

<sup>e</sup>Hawaii, where the state education agency is also the local education agency, spent 26 percent of the funds on state-related activities and 74 percent on local-level-related activities.

<sup>f</sup>Several states spent all of their School-to-Work development grant funds for state-level activities, as permitted by law.



**Appendix II  
Percentage of Federal Education Program  
Funds Spent by State Education Agencies**

**Table II.2: Percentage of Education Program Funds Spent by State Education Agencies**

	Title I	Even Start	Eisenhower	Safe and Drug-Free Schools	Innovative Education	Bilingual Education	Goals 2000	IDEA	Perkins	School-to-Work
Alabama	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	23.1	a	a
Alaska	3.4	4.6	10.0	9.0	a	100.0	10.0	11.4	14.3	20.2
Arizona	1.4	3.0	5.0	9.0	15.0	a	10.0	a	14.5	10.0
Arkansas	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
California	1.2	5.0	5.0	9.0	13.6	100.0	b	5.0	8.1	a
Colorado	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Connecticut	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	22.7	13.3	19.4
Delaware	2.5	5.0	10.0	7.8	15.0	100.0	10.0	24.0	11.6	a
District of Columbia	0	0.0	4.2	0.0	15.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	16.2	9.4
Florida	1.5	5.0	8.4	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	24.4	31.0	3.5
Georgia	1.0	a	10.0	9.0	17.0	100.0	9.3	a	13.8	a
Hawaii	3.1	5.0	100.0	9.0	26.1	100.0	8.1	25.0	0.0	20.0
Idaho	2.3	5.0	a	9.0	a	100.0	10.0	a	13.3	a
Illinois	1.5	6.7	10.0	9.0	14.9	100.0	1.0	21.5	9.6	0.5
Indiana	1.5	5.0	9.8	9.0	15.0	100.0	5.6	13.3	a	a
Iowa	1.5	1.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	24.9	13.3	6.9
Kansas	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	18.4	21.4	23.8
Kentucky	1.5	5.0	9.8	9.0	15.0	b	10.0	16.3	16.9	7.1
Louisiana	1.5	1.8	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	13.0	13.7	16.5
Maine	2.1	5.0	10.0	2.8	a	100.0	a	21.5	13.7	6.0
Maryland	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	7.8	18.4	9.1
Massachusetts	1.4	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	a	12.7	9.3	18.4
Michigan	1.0	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	12.5	4.9	a
Minnesota	1.0	5.0	5.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	17.2	13.3	21.4
Mississippi	1.5	0.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	8.0	15.0	13.5	100.0
Missouri	1.6	0.0	10.0	9.0	16.5	100.0	10.0	3.6	17.4	19.5
Montana	2.3	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	b	10.8	8.4	39.8
Nebraska	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Nevada	2.9	5.0	7.5	9.0	13.7	100.0	10.0	5.0	13.7	28.1
New Hampshire	3.7	1.9	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	b	25.0	17.9	20.0
New Jersey	1.5	5.0	10.0	6.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	12.1	17.8	8.6
New Mexico	1.5	5.3	10.0	7.9	15.0	100.0	10.0	5.1	a	a
New York	0.9	4.4	5.0	4.8	15.0	100.0	10.0	25.0	13.4	1.4
North Carolina	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	10.0	100.0	10.0	3.6	4.9	0.0

(continued)

**Appendix II  
Percentage of Federal Education Program  
Funds Spent by State Education Agencies**

	<b>Title I</b>	<b>Even Start</b>	<b>Eisenhower</b>	<b>Safe and Drug-Free Schools</b>	<b>Innovative Education</b>	<b>Bilingual Education</b>	<b>Goals 2000</b>	<b>IDEA</b>	<b>Perkins</b>	<b>School-to-Work</b>
North Dakota	3.5	5.0	5.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	10.9	10.7	100.0
Ohio	1.5	4.6	8.3	<sup>a</sup>	15.0	<sup>a</sup>	10.0	11.5	13.5	12.8
Oklahoma	1.5	0.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	<sup>b</sup>	11.7	13.5	<sup>a</sup>
Oregon	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	25 <sup>c</sup>	13.5	10.0
Pennsylvania	1.5	5.0	6.4	9.0	15.0	<sup>b</sup>	9.0	25 <sup>c</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	2.0
Puerto Rico	1.0	5.0	7.6	8.8	16.4	100.0	10.0	100.0	6.0	100.0
Rhode Island	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>b</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>
South Carolina	1.5	5.9	9.2	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	5.7	13.3	31.5
South Dakota	3.1	5.0	5.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	7.6	13.7	14.1	<sup>a</sup>
Tennessee	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	20.0	13.5	30.0
Texas	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	25.0	13.4	<sup>a</sup>
Utah	1.8	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	91.9	8.1	0.0	13.5	8.0
Vermont	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	<sup>a</sup>	3.3
Virginia	1.0	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	<sup>b</sup>	0.0	9.2	11.5	11.1
Washington	1.5	3.6	10.0	9.0	12.6	100.0	10.0	12.5	11.6	2.1
West Virginia	1.3	5.0	9.6	9.0	15.0	<sup>b</sup>	10.0	25.0	13.5	20.0
Wisconsin	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	25.0	15.1	6.7
Wyoming	3.8	0.9	6.6	9.0	12.1	90.3	10.1	10.1	6.5	100.0
Percentage spent nationwide	1.4	4.5	8.8	8.5	14.8	99.7	8.7	16.8	12.4	10.4
Median	1.5	5.0	10.0	9.0	15.0	100.0	10.0	13.5	13.5	12.8

<sup>a</sup>State did not respond to our survey for this program.

<sup>b</sup>State received no funding for this program.

<sup>c</sup>In Oregon and Pennsylvania, officials were unable to separate carryover funds.

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# Illustrative Examples From Districts and Schools

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This appendix contains information from interviews with and surveys of 319 school district staff and 697 school-level staff in the nine districts we visited. We asked them to tell us about their involvement in administering the 10 programs reviewed in school year 1996-97. Specifically, we asked them whether they had application, monitoring, and/or reporting administrative duties. The tables in this appendix reflect only those staff who indicated that they had administrative duties—210 district-level staff and 201 school-level staff, 66 and 29 percent, respectively, of those we interviewed or surveyed.

By administration, we mean those activities related to applying for, monitoring, or reporting on federal funds (see app. I).

Tables III.1 through III.3 provide information on district-level staff involvement in the administration of the 10 programs reviewed in academic year 1996-97:

- the number of programs for which each district staff member was responsible (table III.1);
- the number of district staff members reporting responsibilities for application, monitoring, and/or reporting administrative activities (table III.2); and
- the amount of time district staff members reported they spent in fulfilling administrative requirements for each program (table III.3).

Tables III.4 through III.6 provide information on school-level staff involvement in the 10 programs reviewed in school year 1996-97:

- the number of programs for which each school-level staff member was responsible (table III.4);
- the number of school staff members reporting responsibilities for application, monitoring, and/or reporting administrative activities (table III.5); and
- the amount of time school staff members reported spending fulfilling administrative requirements for each program (table III.6).

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## District-Level Staff Administrative Responsibilities

Of the district staff who had administrative responsibilities, two-thirds reported administrative responsibilities for only 1 of the 10 programs reviewed; few staff had responsibility for more than 3 programs. (See table III.1.)

**Appendix III  
Illustrative Examples From Districts and  
Schools**

**Table III.1: Number of Programs for Which District Staff Members Had Administrative Responsibilities, School Year 1996-97**

Number of programs	Number of district staff members who reported having responsibility for program
1	137
2	44
3	10
4	4
5	2
6	7
7	3
8	0
9	1
10	2

The largest number of district staff reported having application, monitoring, or reporting responsibilities for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program, followed by the Title I program. (See table III.2.)

**Table III.2: Number of School District Staff Members Reporting Responsibilities for Application, Monitoring, and/or Reporting Activities, by Program, School Year 1996-97**

Program	Number of staff who reported having responsibility for activity <sup>a</sup>		
	Application	Monitoring	Reporting
Safe and Drug-Free Schools	63	63	61
Title I	40	44	33
Eisenhower	25	30	29
Perkins	28	26	26
IDEA	8	22	20
Goals 2000	20	23	19
Innovative Education	18	20	18
School-to-Work	11	12	11
Even Start	10	12	11
Bilingual Education	4	2	3

<sup>a</sup>District staff could report having responsibility for one or more types of administrative activities.

No patterns emerged with respect to the amount of time district staff reported spending on different types of administrative duties or the amount of time they reported spending in performing administrative activities for a given program. (See table III.3.)

**Appendix III  
Illustrative Examples From Districts and  
Schools**

**Table III.3: School District Staff Members Who Reported Spending Time on Administrative Activities and Amount of Time Spent, by Program, School Year 1996-97**

Hours per school year

Program	Application			Monitoring			Reporting		
	8 hours or less	9 to 40 hours	40 hours or more	8 hours or less	9 to 40 hours	40 hours or more	8 hours or less	9 to 40 hours	40 hours or more
Bilingual Education	3	1	0	0	2	0	2	1	0
Even Start	1	3	6	1	6	5	5	2	4
School-to-Work	4	6	1	1	5	6	6	4	1
IDEA	4	3	1	4	5	13	7	8	5
Innovative Education	9	8	1	7	10	3	11	6	1
Eisenhower	9	11	5	9	11	10	12	12	5
Perkins	10	16	2	9	8	9	11	12	3
Goals 2000	5	12	3	7	9	7	13	4	2
Safe and Drug-Free Schools	29	23	11	20	25	18	35	19	7
Title I	4	12	24	7	8	29	7	12	14

## School-Level Staff Administrative Responsibilities

Of the school-level staff who had administrative responsibilities, about 70 percent reported having administrative responsibilities for 1 of the 10 programs reviewed; few school-level staff had responsibility for more than 3 programs. (See table III.4.)

**Table III.4: Number of Programs for Which School-Level Staff Members Had Administrative Responsibilities, School Year 1996-97**

Number of programs	Number of school-level staff reporting administrative responsibility
1	144
2	33
3	14
4	7
5	0
6	1
7	1
8	0
9	0
10	0

The largest number of school-level staff reported having application, monitoring, and/or reporting responsibilities for the Title I program, followed by IDEA, for which monitoring responsibilities were more often cited. (See table III.5.)

**Table III.5: Number of School-Level Staff Members Reporting Responsibilities for Application, Monitoring, or Reporting Activities, by Program, School Year 1996-97**

Program	Number of staff involved in administrative activity <sup>a</sup>		
	Application	Monitoring	Reporting
Title I	87	74	53
IDEA	2	39	17
Safe and Drug-Free Schools	12	8	8
Perkins	2	2	1
Eisenhower	11	2	1
Innovative Education	7	1	1
School-to-Work	3	8	9
Even Start	1	0	0
Bilingual Education	0	1	0
Goals 2000	0	1	0

<sup>a</sup>School-level staff could report having responsibility for one or more types of administrative activities.

**Appendix III  
Illustrative Examples From Districts and  
Schools**

As table III.5 also showed, the largest number of school-level staff had responsibilities for the Title I program, followed by the IDEA program. Table III.6 shows that staff with administrative responsibilities for the Title I program tended to spend 8 hours or less per year on each of the administrative activities to which they were assigned. For the IDEA program, for which staff had more monitoring responsibilities, the amount of time school-level staff spent monitoring was split between staff who reported that they spent 9 to 40 hours and staff who spent 40 hours or more in a school year on monitoring activities.

**Table III.6: Number of School-Level Staff Who Reported Spending Time on Administrative Activities and Amount of Time Spent, School Year 1996-97**

	Application			Monitoring			Reporting		
	8 hours or less	9 to 40 hours	40 hours or more	8 hours or less	9 to 40 hours	40 hours or more	8 hours or less	9 to 40 hours	40 hours or more
Title I	69	15	3	51	17	6	36	15	2
IDEA	1	1	0	3	18	18	2	8	7
Safe and Drug-Free Schools	10	2	0	3	4	1	6	2	0
Eisenhower	9	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Innovative Education	7	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
School-to-Work	2	0	1	3	2	3	5	2	2
Perkins	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0
Goals 2000	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Bilingual Education	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Even Start	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

# GAO Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

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## Staff Acknowledgments

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