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Michael DiMaggio
Editor

October's issue of *Gaining Ground* looks at efforts to support students in high poverty schools in areas of special education classification, racial equity programs, extended learning programs, state accountability systems and school health.

Gitanjali Pande and Elaine Bonner-Tompkins continue their work on overrepresentation in special education in *Disproportionate Representation*, the second article in a two-part series. Again, they examine disproportional state level data of ethnic/racial classification among students with disabilities, this month focusing on mental retardation and emotional disturbance. They conclude by providing policy recommendations for addressing disproportionate representation particularly for those attending high poverty schools.

Michael DiMaggio reviews a publication released by the Aspen Institute which compares 10 racial equity programs and their overall effectiveness.

Ayeola Fortune's, *Extended Learning Programs*, documents the range of extended learning opportunities available to students in high poverty schools and their impact on positive student outcomes. Based on survey data collected from high poverty, high performing schools, she identifies the general characteristics and strategies used by these schools for enhancing the success of their school-based extended learning programs.

Rolf Blank writes about on-going efforts in improving state accountability systems in *ASR-SCASS Project: Focus on Common Concerns and Goals*. He highlights a 14 state collaborative whose objective involves working together to improve designs for accountability and reporting methods across the states

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while raising systemic effectiveness. Proposed activities to meet this goal include developing a study group paper, a report summarizing state models, and a guide for effective accountability reporting.

Finally, recognizing the link between education and health particularly for minority children, Nora Howley, in *Healthy Children, Healthy Futures*, brings attention to a project that addresses health issues using quality after-school programs. This featured project seeks to motivate communities by having children in after-school programs serve as content providers and creators of proper nutrition and healthy eating. Using the media, these messages will be disseminated to children and schools across the country.

The findings discussed below are based on 2000-2001 disaggregated state-level data on students eligible for IDEA, Part B. This data was cross tabulated with U.S. Census data on the racial and ethnic composition of the age 6-21 population to compare expected rates of disability based on population distribution with actual rates of disability reported by the federal Office of Special Education Programs.

Disproportionate representation results among mental retardation and emotional disturbance classifications are sorted by racial and ethnic group. In interpreting the disproportionate representation tables, the level of "proportionate representation" among racial and ethnic groups is between 2.5 and -2.5 percentage points.

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Disproportionate Representation in Special Education: An Analysis of State Data (Part II)

**Gitanjali Pande, Project Assistant,
Special Education and
Elaine Bonner-Tompkins, Co-Director**

This second of two articles examines state-level data on disproportionate representation among students with disabilities, focusing specifically on two disability classifications: mental retardation and emotional disturbance. After identifying levels of disproportionate representation among racial and ethnic groups, this article concludes by summarizing some state strategies for addressing disproportionate representation in special education. The August/September 2002 article focused on disproportionate representation overall, and the learning disabilities and speech or language impairments classifications.

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White, Non-Hispanics/Anglos:

In stark contrast with the other racial/ethnic groups, Whites were not overrepresented in any state in the mental retardation category. That is, for this classification, Whites were either underrepresented (in eight states) or proportionally represented (in all other states).

Emotional disturbance is the only disability classification where more than two states show levels of White overrepresentation exceeding 10 percentage points. These states were Arizona (15.3 percent), California (13.5 percent), and Nevada (11.7 percent). Five states with low levels of overrepresentation in this category ranging from 2.5 to 5.5 percentage points were Arkansas, Idaho, Mississippi, New Mexico, and Texas. Whites were underrepresented in 27 states, and proportionally represented in 13 states.

Blacks/African Americans:

In the category of mental retardation Blacks were overrepresented in 16 states by 20 percentage points or more, and in 7 states by 15 to 19 percentage points. Altogether, 23 states, or, almost half of all states, demonstrated Black overrepresentation. The highest levels occurred in South Carolina (34.6 percent), Alabama (33.5 percent), North Carolina (32.5 percent), and Mississippi (31.3 percent), with Florida (28.2 percent), and Tennessee (28.2 percent), followed by Washington D.C. (28.5 percent), Delaware (27.7 percent), and Louisiana (29.7 percent). The lowest levels of Black overrepresentation, ranging from 2.5 to 5.0 percentage points, occurred in Arizona, California, Iowa, Massachusetts, and Oregon. Five states where Blacks were proportionately represented included Alaska, Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, and New Mexico.

For the emotional disturbance category, Washington D.C., Delaware and Louisiana had the highest levels of Black overrepresentation at 28.7, 20.9, and 28.2 percentage points, respec-

tively. Black overrepresentation was also found in the states of New York (28.5 percent), North Carolina (25.5 percent) and South Carolina (19.8 percent). Whereas five states (Arizona, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Oregon, and Utah) depicted low levels of Black overrepresentation (ranging from 2.5 to 5.0 percentage points), Blacks were underrepresented only in the state of Mississippi at -3.6 percentage points. Examples of states with proportionate Black representation included Arkansas, Idaho, Maine, Michigan and Montana.

Latinos/Hispanics:

For the mental retardation category, a large number of states showed Latino/Hispanic overrepresentation, though not to the same extent as for Blacks. The highest levels of overrepresentation occurred in New Mexico (8.3 percent), Connecticut (8.1 percent), Rhode Island (7.5 percent), and Colorado (7.2 percent). Low levels of overrepresentation ranged from 2.5 to 6.0 percentage points in Arizona, California, Idaho, New Jersey and New York. Latino/Hispanic underrepresentation in this category (ranging from -2.6 to -6.0 percentage points) occurred in Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Maryland and Nevada.

The highest levels of overrepresentation among Latinos in the emotional disturbance category occurred in Connecticut (5.1 percent) and New York (4.8 percent). Latino underrepresentation in this classification occurred in 24 states, with proportionate representation in 25 states (including Washington, D.C.).

Asians/Pacific Islanders:

High levels of overrepresentation among Asians/Pacific Islanders in the mental retardation category occurred only in the state of Hawaii at 12.7 percentage points. Underrepresentation occurred in California, Massachusetts and New Jersey, with proportionate representation in all but 4 states.

For the emotional disturbance category, Asians/Pacific Islanders were overrepresented only in the state of Alaska at 12.7 percentage points. This racial/ethnic group was underrepresented in 11 states and proportionally represented in the other 39 states.

Native Americans/Alaskans:

Similar to learning disability and speech impairment classifications, overrepresentation in the mental retardation categories was highest in the state of Alaska at 17.2 percentage points. States with low levels of overrepresentation of Native Americans in the mental retardation category (ranging from 2.6 to 7.0 percentage points) were Montana, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Washington. The rest of the states had a proportionate representation of Native Americans in the mental retardation category.

Alaska and South Dakota were the only two states with relatively high levels of overrepresentation of Native Americans in the emotional disturbance category at 12.1 and 10.3 percentage points, respectively. The only states that experienced low levels of overrepresentation among Native Americans in the emotional disturbance category were Minnesota and Montana at 4.3 and 3.4 percentage points, respectively. All the other states had proportionate levels of representation of Native Americans in the emotional disturbance category.

Strategies/Policies

Much has been written regarding strategies and policy recommendations for addressing disproportionate representation. Some of these include:

- Training teachers and other school personnel adequately to educate students from different cultural backgrounds;
- Aligning instruction of separate special education classes to the general education curriculum to increase expectations of success for all students and diminish the consequences of misclassification;
- Increasing the accuracy of referral and evaluation, which involves: (a) staff having knowledge of the requirements and criteria for referral, (b) families being involved in the referral process, and (c) using tests and procedures that are technically acceptable and culturally appropriate;
- Supporting the specific educational and emotional needs of minority students, especially in high poverty schools; and
- Filling the significant gaps in knowledge about effective educational programs

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and policies that address the academic, cognitive, and/or emotional needs of minority students and English language learners who are struggling in schools (Burnette, 1998).

Solving problems of overrepresentation and inadequate services for minority students, especially in high poverty schools will require a comprehensive and systemic approach. Reducing overrepresentation involves creating a successful school environment for *all* students and more accurately distinguishing disabilities from cultural differences. Thus, general and special educators must embrace all students, including those with disabilities, and work together to provide a successful learning environment. In addition, greater attention must be devoted to addressing underrepresentation so that all students with disabilities have access to the free and appropriate services that they are entitled to receive.

One state seeking to address overrepresentation in a systemic way is Louisiana. Over the years, the Louisiana Department of Education has funded a number of projects aimed at identifying best practices for reducing over-representation, particularly among minority students. Through the support of the Policymaker Partnership at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Louisiana is planning a statewide summit to apply this research to practice. The summit will engage policymakers, administrators, service providers, and families/advocates in a dialogue regarding overrepresentation – what it is and what to do about it? The summit will also provide key stakeholders an opportunity to collaboratively develop a template that better enables local districts to address overrepresentation. The creation of the template, however, will only serve as an intermediate step. The ultimate goal of the Louisiana's forthcoming summit is long-term change in how local districts and schools respond to needs of children at academic risk.

The state-level data discussed in this article is available in table format on the CCSSO website at: <http://www.ccsso.org/pdfs/DisproportionateRepresentation.pdf>. For more information on this topic, please con-

tact Elaine Bonner-Tompkins, 202-336-7035, elainebt@ccsso.org or Gitanjali Pande, 202-326-8695, gitanjalip@ccsso.org. For information about Louisiana's upcoming summit, contact Mamy Hall of the Louisiana Department of Education at 225-342-1508.

Articles/Data referenced in this study:

1. For data on "Overrepresentation: Mental Retardation" by Race/Ethnicity see Table 4 at: <http://www.ccsso.org/pdfs/DisproportionateRepresentation.pdf>.
2. For data on "Overrepresentation: Emotional Disturbance" by Race/Ethnicity see Table 5 at: <http://www.ccsso.org/pdfs/DisproportionateRepresentation.pdf>.
3. For a more detailed definition of disproportionate representation and a more detailed discussion of how disproportionate representation was calculated using U.S. Department of Education data, please refer to the August/September 2002 issue of *Gaining Ground* <http://www.ccsso.org/pdfs/ggaug02.pdf>.
4. U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Tables AA16 and AF8, School Years: 2000-2001, (www.ideadata.org).
5. The Civil Rights Project, *Minority Issues in Special Education*, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, [<http://www.law.harvard.edu/civilrights/conferences/SpecEd/moreinfo.html>].
6. Jane Burnette, 1998. *Reducing the Disproportionate Representation of Minority Students in Special Education*, ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education.

Aspen Institute Releases Guide on Racial Equity Programs

Michael DiMaggio, Senior Project Associate

With the increase in diversity of American communities, innovative training programs were developed over the past decade to address racism and the changing shape of race relations. Even though these programs varied in scope, they often raised public discourse to transform behavior, attitudes, relationships and policies toward race. Despite the abundance of programs available, a gap ex-

isted between the programs available and public awareness of their effectiveness. During the 1990s little effort was made to acknowledge and compare the various programs' philosophies and methods

Until now.

In April, the Aspen Institute released *Training for Racial Equity: A Guide to Selected Programs*. This *Guide*, written by Dr. Ilana Shapiro of the Alliance for Conflict Transformation, attempts to bridge that gap by providing an in-depth comparison of 10 training programs. In focusing on programs that addressed institutional and structural dimensions of racism, the *Guide* describes why programs do what they do (theory of practice) and how they believe their approaches will produce positive results (theory of change). Specifically, it examines how programs understand the sources and dynamics of racial and ethnic oppression and what principles and methods they use to address the problems. In addition, it assesses organizational capacities and the connection between programs' activities and intended outcomes.

The *Guide* intends to assist individual stakeholders and community leaders to select programs that best meet *their* needs and goals. Recognizing that "one-size does not fit all", it highlights multiple training methods and techniques in encouraging users to take an eclectic approach to experience more than one program, and to view their participation as the first step in an enduring commitment to racial equity and inclusion.

For a complete list of the programs reviewed and for a copy of *Training for Racial Equity: A Guide to Selected Programs* please see www.aspenroundtable.org, go to new publications, and click-on the display for the *Guide*.

Extended Learning Programs in High-Poverty Schools: A Summary of CCSSO Survey Data

Ayeola Fortune, Senior Project Associate, Extended Learning Development Opportunities

The steady growth of extended learning programs across the country reflects the public's interest in leveraging out-of-school time to promote student learning and to reduce risk-taking behaviors that occur in the hours immediately following the school day. State investments in afterschool activities have increased as numerous state education agencies have established extended learning programs for the purpose of creating additional time-on-task for students identified as at-risk of academic failure. In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLBA), re-authorized at 1.5 billion the U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program (21st CCLC). The 21st CCLC program allocates formula grants to state education agencies to support afterschool programs, with priority given to programs serving students in high-poverty, low-performing schools.

The increase in public support and funding of extended learning opportunities has been buttressed by significant research efforts that document the positive impact of programs on student academic achievement, behavior in school, and attendance and retention rates. In this context, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, developed and issued a survey to forty-seven high-poverty schools that were either high-performing or had shown significant improvement in student academic achievement as a result of their extended learning programs. The schools were selected based on data gleaned from the Education Trust Report, [Dispelling the Myth: High Poverty Schools Exceeding Expectations](#), and individual school reports.

The survey elicited from schools a range of extended learning program information including: goals and content, structure and administration, funding and

sustainability, the role of school staff and administration, and impact on student outcomes (e.g., attendance, retention rates, and grades). Twenty-nine of the forty-seven schools responded. The information was eventually aggregated and analyzed for the purpose of selecting six schools for in-depth site visits of their extended learning programs. However, the collected data proved extremely useful in identifying the general characteristics of school-based extended learning programs and common challenges. A summary of these characteristics and challenges follows.

Characteristics of School-based Extended Learning Programs

The desire to raise academic achievement spurs the creation of most programs.

Twenty-three of the twenty-nine schools established extended learning programs to improve overall academic achievement. These schools focused on developing critical skills in reading, writing and computation and cultivating strong study habits. A majority of the schools offered academic remediation and individual tutoring to students that desired additional help and those at-risk of academic failure. In addition, a majority of the schools offered academic enrichment activities and homework assistance during the extended day program (21 and 20 respectively). These patterns suggest a consensus among extended learning staff that additional time-on-tasks will improve academic outcomes among students at-risk of school failure. These patterns further indicate that program content should reflect the needs of the students who participate. Homework assistance and individualized/small group instruction are particularly important for students who may lack access to these types of supports outside of school. As states revise content and learning standards, align state tests to these standards, and implement exit exams, extended learning programs will continue to be critical if schools are to be successful in improving overall student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap.

The school staff plays a vital role in establishing and maintaining programs.

Every school that responded to the ques-

tionnaire listed the principal as instrumental in implementing the extended learning program. In addition to initiating and participating in the planning process, principals were also involved in staffing the programs, securing initial funds, collaborating with outside organizations and/or agencies, and making sure that the programs were sufficiently staffed. Moreover, our survey data and site-based interviews suggest that principals play a critical role in securing long-term financial support, ensuring the continued involvement of school day staff, and championing the merits of the programs to key stakeholders (e.g., parents, local education agency staff, potential partners). Once programs are established, assistant principals frequently serve as program coordinators and oversee the daily aspects of program operations. In all schools surveyed, teachers, along with other paid and volunteer staff, serve as program staff. Faculty and administration involvement in extended learning activities indicate a deep commitment to and sense of ownership of school-based programs. This support, at all stages of program development, is critical in building viable and sustainable school-based programs.

The context and timeframe when learning occurs is shifting. With schools increasingly opening their doors beyond traditional school hours, what constitutes a school day and notions of when learning occurs are undergoing a significant shift across the nation. Eighteen of the schools that responded indicated that they offer programming before the start of the school day, on the weekends and during the summer months. Program content, particularly during the summer months, varies across schools. Whereas some operate mandatory programs for students retained a grade level, others use this time to orient incoming students to the school's curriculum. In addition, some schools offer opportunities for academic enrichment, service learning and peer/adult mentoring. A few schools in the survey extended programming to parents, who had the option of enrolling in ESL, GED and computer literacy courses. Although there exists significant diversity in program content and structure, a consistent trend across schools is the increased utilization of out-of-school time to involve students in academic and enrichment activities that positively impact intellectual growth. The growth of ex-

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tended learning opportunities that take place on the weekends and in the summer months especially benefits traditionally disadvantaged students. Research indicates that children actively engaged in “well-rounded, balanced activities” outside of school experience greater academic success. Schools, therefore, can play a crucial role in ensuring that *all* students have access to programs that offer a variety of academically stimulating and enjoyable activities. Yet, despite increases in school-based extended learning opportunities, significant challenges remain.

Challenges to School-based Extended Learning Programs

Creative content builds program quality. Although academic remediation and individualized instruction are *critical and necessary* elements of any program designed to assist students at risk of academic failure, schools must continue to think creatively so that remediation does not focus too narrowly on improving test-taking skills. Quality programs should engage students in enriching and rewarding activities that allow them to practice reading, writing, problem-solving and computational skills.

Diversified program staff and planning time help best meet individual student needs. All schools that responded utilize school day faculty to staff their extended learning programs. Although a number of schools also employ volunteers and other professional staff, teachers typically comprise the majority of the program staff, particularly for programs with a strong academic emphasis. Teacher involvement is essential for programs that target low-performing students, as they are perhaps best suited to address individual student needs. Teachers also serve as an immediate link to the school day curriculum and instruction. In addition, the individual attention that students receive, often in a less formal atmosphere, can foster the development of positive connections to adults outside of the classroom. Yet faculty involvement in extended learning programs also places an increased demand

on their time outside of the classroom, time that is also devoted to preparing lessons and grading student work. Moreover, few schools actually allocate time to professional development activities and/or planning periods *specifically* devoted to the extended day program. To sustain programs over time, schools need to diversify their program staff (e.g., utilizing parent volunteers, recruiting community members, and forging partnerships with outside agencies who can provide staff) *and* provide professional development opportunities devoted to issues of program quality.

Multiple sources of funding over the long-term insures sustainability. Just over half of the schools that responded to our survey rely on state funds to provide programming, the majority of which are allocated to schools for the purpose of improving student academic achievement. Four schools access federal Title I monies while two schools receive 21st CCLC grants. Other schools rely on local funding streams and/or in-kind contributions to fund their programs. Although the type of funding varies across schools, a majority of the schools (n=17) depend on short-term grants from a single source. Given the reliance of many schools on state funding for extended learning programming, recent state budget shortfalls serve as a cautionary reminder that programs must continually broaden their base of support to ensure sustainability. Ideally, as state education agencies increasingly view out-of-school time as an integral part of their approach to improving student outcomes, funding for school-based extended learning programs will become part of core education funding. Schools that draw on multiple funding streams (e.g., local, foundations, businesses, federal, in-kind), *in addition to* core state funding, would be well-positioned to both sustain and expand their programs.

As investments in extended learning opportunities expand and as NCLBA places a renewed emphasis on helping *all* students achieve to high standards, additional data is needed to document effective practices in extended learning programs that serve students in high-poverty communities. Extended learn-

ing encompassing before/afterschool time, weekend, and summer programs must be part of the framework to provide support to students in low-performing schools. Documenting successful efforts, like the schools profiled by the Council, remains critical.

This summary will be followed by a more detailed issue brief on effective practices and challenges of establishing programs in high-poverty, high-performing schools that is currently in development. In addition, individual, in-depth school profiles will be available on the Council website in Fall 2002. To view the summary survey data and individual school information, please see the Council’s Extended Learning Opportunities web page at <http://www.ccsso.org/elo/elo.html> and click on “What’s New”. For additional information on the survey data, contact Ayeola Fortune at (202) 326-8680 or ayeolaf@ccsso.org.

Articles referenced in this study:

1. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved a 9 percent increase in FY '03 to \$1.09 billion, which is less than the 1.5 billion authorized for the program as part of NCLBA. The House Appropriations Committee was expected to vote on the bill in early September.
2. The Harvard Family Research Project has compiled a database of out-of-school time evaluation profiles that is updated quarterly. Each profile contains a program overview and a detailed summary about each evaluation produced about that program. Evaluations of programs that seek to positively impact youth development and/or promote academic achievement are given priority consideration for inclusion in the database. To view the evaluation profiles, please see <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html>.
3. The six schools selected were; Forest Heights Elementary School (Oxon Hill, Maryland), Hostos Lincoln Academy of Science (Bronx, New York), Meyzeek Middle School (Louisville, Kentucky), Pass Christian Elementary School (Pass Christian, Mississippi), Public School 150 (Queens, New York), and Union High School (Union, North Carolina). Detailed school profiles will be published on the Council’s website in Fall 2002.
4. Reginald Clark’s paper, “Why Disadvantaged Students Succeed: What Happens Outside School Is Critical.” Public Welfare, 1990, synthesizes extensive research on student learning and school processes. In his paper he asserts that there are different contexts in which learning takes place and that successful students, “regardless of race, gender or social class background”, spend 25-35 hours per week engaged in high-yield leisure and deliberate learning activities outside of the classroom.

ASR-SCASS Project: Focus on Common Concerns and Goals for Improving State Accountability Systems

**Rolf Blank, Director
Education Indicators**

The CCSSO managed Accountability Systems and Reporting (ASR) collaborative project is just completing its second year of activity. Currently, ASR contains 14 participating member-states.* The collaborative includes states with well-developed statewide accountability systems as well as states moving into statewide systems and states that are integrating Title I accountability and reporting with a statewide strategy.

Participants in the ASR collaborative have found a number of common issues being met by their collaboration through State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS). Increasingly, state departments of education are responding to differing needs for data and reports that serve bottom-line accountability requirements and that also provide information useful to educators, policymakers, and publics. The ASR member state departments of education are working together to improve their knowledge about designs for accountability and reporting methods across the states, and the effectiveness of the systems based on differing designs. This brief article provides an update on ASR's work to date including publications to be released this fall.

Joint Study Group Paper Aims to Assist States with AYP Planning. ASR and CAS-SCASS (Comprehensive Assessment Systems for Title I) have formed a joint study group to research, discuss, and recommend strategies for states to address critical technical issues related to Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations for schools and districts under the new ESEA reauthorization or the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA). NCLBA legislation calls on states to submit accountability system plans by January 31, 2003. These plans will need to describe how the requirements for AYP

determination of schools and districts will be met. The work of the study group focuses on several decision points that affect validity and reliability of an AYP plan that are in the control of states. These include setting baseline starting points for measuring AYP, cell size for including disaggregated groups in accountability, and use of uniform averaging. The group also discusses examples and suggestions for use of safe harbor provisions and additional indicators to the state plan such as a growth measure, high school graduation rates, and assessments in other subjects. A draft paper, *Implementing the NCLB Accountability Model: Validity and Reliability of the Accountability System for Identifying the Schools Most in Need of Improvement*, is scheduled to be circulated to states for review by Fall 2002. The Council received support for development and dissemination of the paper from the U.S. Department of Education (USED).

Accountability Design Framework: Paper Summarizing State Models.

Earlier this year, CCSSO released its first product from work of the ASR collaboration, [Designing School Accountability: Towards a Framework and Process](#) (Gong, CCSSO, 2002). The publication addressed the needs and interests of states in improving statewide systems of education accountability. The document presented three different "views" of accountability design to address states' needs. The first view proposed an elaborate framework, with questions, criteria, and comments, intended to provide a structure for helping states move through the process of designing a school accountability system. The second view presented a concise checklist of characteristics to help states evaluate the consistency and coherence of existing programs. The third view provided examples of actual state experience with design features that might be considered and why. This publication may be purchased on the CCSSO website at http://publications.ccsso.org/ccsso/publication_detail.cfm?PID=351

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Healthy Children, Healthy Futures: Helping Children in Cities Become Advocates for Their Health and Well-being.

**Nora Howley, Project Director
School Health**

Healthy children make better students. This simple statement sums up the link between education and health. Children who are healthy, who eat nutritious food, who get physical activity and who have access to health services are better prepared to meet the educational challenges of high standards for all. However, obesity and its related diseases—heart disease, diabetes and certain cancers—are increasing at epidemic proportions in the United States. The children most affected are minority children. Not surprisingly, the health disparities that impact children of color mirror the achievement gaps that many of them face. Neither set of disparities is inevitable and eliminating them takes hard work and concerted effort.

One new venture helps address health issues through quality after-school programs. **Healthy Children, Healthy Futures**, a project of the Strang Cancer Prevention Center in New York, and the MetLife Foundation, is working with after-school programs in three cities (Atlanta, Los Angeles, and New York) to engage children as advocates for improved physical activity and nutrition in their schools and communities. The initiative provides children in after-school settings the opportunity to learn more about healthy eating and physical activity while creating compelling messages to encourage their peers to do the same. The messages, in the forms of billboards, radio, TV, and/or internet spots will be reviewed by other children and then disseminated to children around the country through schools and community based organizations.

The partner organizations are:

- **Atlanta:** Atlanta Inner-City Games (<http://www.atlantaicg.org/>)
- **Los Angeles:** Arnold's All Stars (<http://www.innercitygames.org>) and LA's Best (<http://www.lasbest.org/>)
- **New York:** The After School Corporation (<http://www.tascorp.org/>), the Jacob Riis

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SSTA Division STAFF NEWS

Ayeola Fortune was recently promoted to Senior Project Associate of the Extended Learning and Development Opportunities Project within the SSTA Division. Ayeola joined the Council in March 2001 as a Project Associate on the Extended Learning Project. In her new capacity, she will continue to work on extended learning and will assume leadership of the division's work on supplemental services and public school choice.

Jinhee Lee was promoted to Senior Project Associate in July 2002. She has been at the Council working on the ARD Project since August 2000. Currently, she is working on the Education Systems Handbook. The Education Systems Handbook will be an NCES publication that provides data elements and definitions for including topics such as school, program, and governance. She is also working on the handbook database project which will house all of the NCES data handbooks, including the Staff Data Handbook and Student Data Handbook on a web-based database.

Devona Perrineau has joined CCSSO as the Senior Administrative Assistant for the Division of State Services and Technical Assistance. In addition to providing day-to-day support to the Deputy Executive Director, she will also provide assistance to the High Poverty Schools Initiative. Originally from New York, Devona has held a number of administrative positions in both the New York City and Washington, D.C. area. These include stints at the American Lung Association as a human resources assistant and conference planner and with the Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) as an office manager. Devona has studied at the Katherine Gibbs School and is currently working on her Bachelor's degree in Communications with a minor in health and nutrition.

After several years of service, Senior Consultant **Burton Taylor** has left the Council to go on sabbatical leave. Michael DiMaggio and Elaine Bonner-Tompkins will continue working on the State Support Team Network project (SSTN). CCSSO will miss Burton and anticipates working with him again in the future.

ASR-SCASS Project: Focus on Common Concerns and Goals for Improving State Accountability Systems

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State Accountability Reporting and Data Use. The ASR collaborative also focuses on identifying and describing criteria for improving quality of state reports. A key step relates the varying purposes of state accountability and indicator reports to methods and forms of reporting. The ASR group is consulting with experts on data systems as well as sharing model strategies with the aim of improving both accountability reporting and using a range of data for decision-making in districts and schools. The collaborative is working on a Guide for Effective Accountability Reporting, with the American Institutes for Research serving as a consultant on the development of the Guide. The Guide, supported by the USED, is scheduled for availability by the end of 2002.

Currently, the ASR collaborative is comprised of state education specialists (primarily working in accountability reporting, assessment, Title I, and special education) plus representatives of federal agencies, expert consultants, and CCSSO staff. The collaborative meets regularly three times per year—generally in Fall, Winter, and late Spring. All states are invited to join the collaborative or to request further information about the current activities and plans. For further information about the ASR collaborative or the Education Indicators project, please contact, Rolf Blank at 202-336-7044 or rolfb@ccsso.org.

* Participating States in ASR (September 2002): Alaska, California, Delaware, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Utah, and West Virginia.

Reference:

Designing School Accountability: Towards a Framework and Process was written and produced by ASR in collaboration with Brian Gong, Associate Director of the Center for Assessment, Portsmouth, NH.

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Healthy Children, Healthy Futures: Helping Children in Cities Become Advocates for Their Health and Well-being.

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Neighborhood Settlement House (<http://www.riissettlement.org/>) and New York City Inner-City Games (nycicg.org)

What separates this program from others efforts to improve the nutrition and physical activity among children is the emphasis on engaging children as the creators of the messages. By working with children, project organizers hope to create messages that will resonate with children and motivate them, and their communities to change. For more information on the project, contact BJ Carter at the Preventive Medicine Institute (Strang Cancer Prevention Center), bcarter803@aol.com, 212.794.4900, ext. 194.

For more information on CCSSO's School Health Project please contact Nora Howley at (202) 336-7033, norah@ccsso.org or see <http://www.ccsso.org/hlth.html>