

# THE FACTS ABOUT...

**The Challenge:** For too long, America's education system has not been accountable for results and too many children have been locked in failing schools and left behind.

**The Solution:** Information is power and testing and independent data are the ways to get information into the hands of parents, educators and taxpayers.

## WHY TESTING WILL WORK

**Testing provides information.** Until teachers and parents recognize what their students know and can do, they can't help them improve. Testing will raise expectations for *all* students and ensure that no child slips through the cracks.

- Under *No Child Left Behind*, every state must set clear and high standards for what students in each grade should know and be able to do in the core academic subjects of reading, math and science.
- States will measure each student's progress toward those standards with tests aligned with those higher standards.
- Testing is not new to education. Good teachers and excellent schools and districts have always used tests to provide objective and up-to-date information on how their students are performing.

**Testing allows teachers, parents and principals to follow each child's progress.**

- Every student should make substantial academic progress every year in every class. Good instruction will ensure that they do.
- Annual testing tells parents and teachers how much progress students have made toward meeting the academic standards.
- Annual tests show principals exactly how much progress students at each grade level have made so that principals and teachers can make good decisions about teacher training and curriculum.
- Accountability systems gather specific, objective data through tests aligned to standards and use that data to identify strengths and weaknesses in the system.

***No Child Left Behind* will test every child in grades three through eight and give parents report cards for every school—highlighting success and shining a light on failure.**

- Test scores will be broken out by economic background, race and ethnicity, English proficiency and disability. That way parents and teachers will know the academic achievement of each group of students and can work to ensure that no child will be left behind.
- The law requires that all schools be held accountable for making sure that every student learns.
- Testing tells parents, communities, educators and school boards which schools are doing well. If a school takes a challenging population and achieves great results, testing will show that. If a school is allowing certain groups to fall behind year after year, testing will expose that, too. Cheryl Krehbiel, a fourth-grade teacher at Broad Acres Elementary School in Silver Spring, Md., said, "Clearly students can't learn what I don't teach them. Having the courage to learn about my own professional needs from the [testing] data is a lesson that I can't afford to miss."

**The Resources:**

The president and Congress provide the resources to pay for testing: \$387 million in 2002 to help states develop and administer reading and math tests. The president's 2003 budget requests another \$387 million.

MEASURING PROGRESS