No Child Left Behind Act

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No Child Left Behind Act

PRESENTED BY
VALLERIE L. RUIZ
SYSTEMS ENGINEERING INTEGRATIVE PROJECT
SELP 695/696
Outline

1. Key Questions
2. Objective
3. Introduction/Background
4. Research Methodology
5. Requirements
6. Verification
7. Funding
8. Risks Analysis
9. Ethical Implications
10. Decomposition Analysis
11. Gap Analysis
12. Recommendations
13. Conclusion
Key Questions

- What are the requirements?
- What is their method of verification?
- What are the risks?
- What are the ethical implications if any?
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Objective

• Perform a Functional Decomposition of the Act
• Analyze the Research/Risk and Gap Analysis
• Recommendations
"These reforms express my deep belief in our public schools and their mission to build the mind and character of every child, from every background, in every part of America. Too many of our neediest children are being left behind,"

- President George W. Bush, January 2001
The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, "Nickelbee") was signed into law on January 8, 2002 by President Bush. It is based on the belief that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve individual outcomes in education. It takes particular aim at improving the educational lot of disadvantaged students. It affects curriculum, testing, teacher training, and the allocation of educational funding. It sets deadlines for states to expand the scope and frequency of student testing. It guarantees highly-qualified teachers in every subject. NCLB requires that states raise the percentage of students proficient in reading and math. These percentages must be measured referred to as a school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). It narrows the test-score gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. States that administer these tests and comply with NCLB regulations receive federal funding for schools. Standards are set by each individual state.
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Research Methodology

• Analyzed NCLB Act current infrastructure
• Interviewed School Administrators, Students and Parents
• Literature Review
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• NCLB requires states to test students in reading and mathematics annually in grades 3-8
• Once in grades 10-12
• States shall test students in science once in grades 3-5, 6-8, and 10-12
• Individual schools, school districts and states shall publicly report test results as a sum for
  ○ Low-income students
  ○ Students with disabilities
  ○ English language learners
  ○ Major racial and ethnic groups
• Requires that states, school districts, and schools ensure proficiency for all students in grade-level math and reading by 2014
Requirements

- States shall define grade-level performance
- Each state shall choose its own rate of increase
- Must demonstrate "adequate yearly progress" (AYP)
- AYP is demonstrated by meeting its' projected targets for students' reading and math
- Law requires that states and local school districts disseminate annual school report cards describing both student and school performance
• **Report card requirements**
  - Percentage of students scoring at each proficiency level on the state assessment
  - Comparison of student performance to state's annual goals for AYP and, for schools and districts, to statewide and local averages
  - Percentage of students not tested
  - Two-year trends in student achievement
  - Other indicators used by the state for AYP
  - High school graduation rates
  - Teacher qualifications, including the percentage of classes taught by teachers who are not highly qualified
  - Number and names of schools identified for school improvement
• Teachers shall be highly qualified
  ○ Teachers must be fully certified by the state
  ○ Pass the state teacher licensure exam
  ○ Have a license to teach in the state

• Demonstrate knowledge of the subject they teach
  ○ Through certain credentials or test scores

• School districts shall inform parents in writing if a teacher who is not highly qualified teaches their child for more than four weeks
Verification

- A school shall measure and be held accountable for its progress to ensure that they meet the standards and requirements of NCLB.
- Standardize test results are publicly reported as a sum.
- Law requires that states and local school districts disseminate annual school report cards describing both student and school performance.
- Teachers shall demonstrate knowledge of the subject they teach through certain credentials or test scores.
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• Congress has increased federal funding of education from $42.2 billion in 2001 to $54.4 billion in 2007
• No Child Left Behind has received a 40.4% increase from $17.4 billion in 2001 to $24.4 billion in 2007
• The funding for reading quadrupled from $286 million in 2001 to $1.2 billion in 2007
Funds are distributed to school districts according to a set of formulas based on the size and characteristics of a school district's student population.

School districts have some discretion in how they distribute Title I funds among schools.

The law requires that highest-poverty schools get priority.

The parent requirements for annual testing, accountability, school improvement, and highly qualified teachers are all part of Title I.
Teacher Quality State Grants Funding

- Teacher Quality State Grants provide general block revenue to states and school districts to help them improve teacher quality and to further ensure that all teachers are highly qualified.
- It was funded at $2.9 billion in 2009.
- Troops-to-Teachers Program
  - Trains and places retired military personnel as teachers.
- Transition to Teaching Program
  - Alternative teacher preparation programs, have also been set in place to improve teacher quality.
Education Technology State Grants Funding

- Provides funds to states and school districts to support technology in elementary and secondary schools
- The program was funded at $270 million in 2009
- Funds are distributed to states via formula
  - States distribute 47.5 percent of funding to school districts through a formula
  - Another 47.5 percent is allocated to school districts and other local groups through a competitive grant process
  - States may use five percent of the funding they receive for state technology activities
English Language Acquisition Grants

- Provides funds to improve education and English language acquisition of children who do not speak English
- It was funded at $730 million in 2009
- This program replaced several bilingual education demonstration and professional development programs that existed prior to the law
- This new grant program recognizes the growing number of English language learner students and their dispersion across a large number of school districts throughout the United States
21st Century Community Learning Centers Funding

- Provides funding to support after-school, extended learning time programs
- It was funded at $1.1 billion in 2009
- States distribute grants to local providers to administer after school extended learning programs
  - School districts
  - Community-based groups
  - Faith-based groups
Safe and Drug Free Schools Grants Funding

- Provides general block, "grant-like" aid to states and local school districts
- State and local school district grants were funded at $295 million in 2009
- They support programs that prevent
  - Violence
  - Illegal use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs by students
- It also supports national activities
  - Research, technical assistance, and information dissemination
    - Aimed at preventing violence and substance abuse
Impact Aid Funding

- Provides funds to school districts that serve "federally connected" children
  - Children whose parents are in the military
  - Children whose parents work on federal property
  - Those who live on Indian lands, federal property, or federally subsidized low-rent housing

- Funding helps to offset school districts’ loss of revenue because property tax is not collected on federal land
- Impact Aid was funded at $1.3 billion in 2009
- Funds are distributed directly to local school districts based on the number of federally connected children they serve
- It is the only Department of Education program that allows funds to be spent directly on school construction
Title I Grants

- In fiscal year 2009, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) programs were funded at $25.0 billion.
- Over $14 billion was dedicated to Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies, the largest NCLB program.
- Funds are distributed to school districts according to four separate formulas:
  - Basic Grant,
  - Concentration Grant
  - Targeted Assistance Grant
  - Education Finance Incentive Grant
Basic Grant Formula

- Allocates funding to school districts based on the number of poor children they serve.
- Any school district with at least 10 poor children and 2 percent of its students in poverty receives funding through the Basic Grant formula.
- In fiscal year 2010, $8.6 billion (52%) of all Title I funding, will be distributed through the Basic Grant formula.
Concentration Grant Formula

- Provides funding to schools based on the number of poor children they serve in addition to the Basic Grant Formula funds.
- School districts must have at least 15 percent of children in poverty or 6,500 poor children (whichever is less).
- Once school districts pass the threshold percentage of poor children required to receive funding,
  - They receive the same amount of money per poor child regardless of how many poor children they serve.
- Despite considerable evidence that it costs more to educate students in schools with high poverty rates.
- In fiscal year 2010, $1.4 billion, or about 8 percent of Title I funding, will be distributed through the Concentration formula.
Targeted Formula

• Provides funding per child as a district’s poverty rate increases
  ○ Higher-poverty school districts get more money per poor child
• Each additional child in poverty above 38 percent brings a district 4 times as much Title I funding as each poor child up to 16 percent of children in poverty
• Each additional child in poverty beyond 35,515 brings a district 3 times as much funding as the first 691 children in poverty
• The Targeted Assistance Grant formula is the second most targeted Title I formula to school districts nationwide
• In fiscal year 2010, $3.3 billion, or 20 percent of federal Title I funding, will be distributed through the Targeted Assistance Grant formula
The Education Finance Incentive Grant Formula

The formula takes into account states' fiscal effort:
- The percentage of per capita income devoted to education
  - As well as how equitably the state school finance system distributes state and local funding for education
  - In "bad school finance states" weights are doubled

In fiscal year 2010, $3.3 billion, or 20 percent of federal Title I funding, will be distributed through the Education Finance Incentive Grant formula.

The Education Finance Incentive Grant formula is the most targeted Title I formula to school districts nationwide.
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Schools that fail to make Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years are identified for school improvement
- These schools must incorporate improvement plans
- School district must offer children the option to transfer to a higher-performing school in the same district
- District must also offer children the option to receive supplemental educational services
  - Tutoring
  - Other outside-of-school services designed to improve academic achievement
  - 20 percent of their federal Title I funds will be spent on public school choice and supplemental services for students

Schools that fail to make AYP for a third year are identified for corrective action
- These schools must institute interventions designed to improve school performance
  - The interventions must be selected from a list specified in the legislation

Schools that fail to make AYP for a fourth year are identified for restructuring
- Requires more significant interventions

Schools that fail to make AYP for a fifth year
- Must implement a restructuring plan that includes reconstituting school staff and/or leadership
  - Changing the school's governance arrangement
  - Converting the school to a charter
  - Turning it over to a private management company
  - Or some other major change
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Ethical Implications

- The system of incentives and penalties sets up a strong motivation for schools, districts, and states to manipulate test results.
- For example, schools have been shown to employ "creative reclassification" for dropouts, thus alleviating any negative effect on success rates.
Ethics and Standardized Tests

- All students within a state are given the same standardized test in a controlled environment
- These tests are an assessment tool designed to gauge students’ performance
- Critics argue that the focus on standardized testing encourages teachers to teach a narrow subset of skills to increase test performance
- This is referred to as “teaching to the test”
- Not focusing on methods of solving a range of problems, they inadvertently eliminate the educational outcomes the tests are designed to measure
- In essence, students are spoon-fed targeted information but lose the benefits of a broad education
Ethics and Cultural Bias

- Cultural bias- giving all students the same test, under the same conditions
- Different cultures value different skills and therefore perform differently on the standardized tests
- All students who are learning English as a second language have a three-year window to take native-language, standardized tests
- At the end of that time frame they must demonstrate proficiency on an English-language assessment
- Only 10 states provide English language learners an opportunity to test in their native language (almost entirely Spanish speakers)
- The majority of English language learners are given English language assessments
Ethics and Disabilities Education Act

- Standardizes tests conflict with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
  - States that schools must accommodate disabled students
- NCLB requires all students, including disadvantaged and special education students, achieve the same state mandated standards in reading and mathematics by 2014
- It is normally acceptable for visually impaired students to be read test material aloud
- NCLB-mandated tests, the scores of a blind student were invalidated (reported as zeros) because the testing protocol did not specifically allow for test readers to speak
- Most students with mild disabilities or physical disabilities take the same test as non-disabled students
- States must report the assessment scores of 95% of students to calculate the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) scores
Ethics and Incentives

- Schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) are required to provide additional help for students
- NCLB mandates schools face punitive measures
- Ideally a school should strive to set higher expectations but many set lower expectations to avoid any negative repercussions
Many schools channel funding to core subjects (reading, writing, and arithmetic) and special education. They neglect gifted, talented, and other high-performing students. The NCLB puts pressure on schools to guarantee that nearly all students meet minimum skill levels (set by each state). But requires nothing beyond these minimums. As a result, many gifted students do not receive appropriate education, including grade advancement.
NCLB requires that secondary, public schools provide military recruiters with the same access to facilities as higher education institution recruiters.

If a school refuses to provide information and access to recruiters, that school can lose all of its federal funding until it becomes compliant.

A student may opt out of having his/her personal information distributed.

Most parents in high minority populations cannot read English and unintentionally ignore this clause.

As a result, military recruiters receive a higher profile of minority students.

Leads to a higher population of minorities in the armed forces.
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Decomposition Analysis

PROS

- Since NCLB took effect in 2002, student test scores have increased
- Especially those of minority students
- The overall achievement gap between minority students and the white majority has decreased between 1999 and 2004
- Highly qualified teachers instruct over 90% of all students
  - Improved instruction and classroom practices
- Approximately 450,000 eligible students have received
  - Free supplemental educational services (tutoring)
  - Or public school choice
- Standardized Tests have enabled schools to identify the individual students in need of additional aid to reach grade level proficiency
- Schools have seen academic improvement in all subject categories
- Data shows that tests scores have had the best nine-year-old scoring history since 1971
- Taxpayers have had more access to data on school performance
  - Gives parents a better picture of a school's performance on a national level
- Teachers have been given a clear objective
  - Allows for tailor lessons
  - Administrators have clearer means of monitoring progress in schools
Decomposition Analysis

Cons
- Regulations set forth by the law, neglect the essence of education
- Students have become bi-products of a set of rules, standards and note memorization
- Science, History, and Languages have been replaced by mechanical teaching and black and white answers
  - Many students lack the capacity to function in any environment where deductive reasoning is required
- NCLB faults schools and curriculum for student failures and low-test scores
  - What about fault in class size
  - Hunger and homelessness, and lack of health care
- Teachers are increasingly only teaching "to the test"
  - Fear that their students will perform badly resulting in their termination
- Fewer resources and time are devoted to subjects such as art, physical education, social studies and science
  - Each state defines and assesses proficiency differently
    - Impossible to compare data on a nation-wide scale
- Manipulated test records
- NCLB disregards the fact that each culture is gifted with certain skills within the "one size fits all" policy
- NCLB is significantly underfunded at the state level
- Led to many states forcing budget cuts in non-tested school subjects
  - Science, foreign languages, social studies, arts programs, and for books, field trips and school supplies
Decomposition Analysis

Cons

- High teacher qualifications
  - All new teachers must possess a college degree
  - Existing and new teachers must pass a battery of proficiency tests
- Requirements have made it difficult to obtain qualified teachers in specific subjects
  - Rural areas, inner cities, and other locations that already have teacher shortages, have had a difficult time recruiting new professionals
Current Administration Plans

"... I’ll tell you what’s wrong with No Child Left Behind, promising high-quality teachers in every classroom and then leaving the support and the pay for those teachers behind is wrong. Labeling a school and its students as failures one day and then throwing your hands up and walking away from them the next is wrong."

- President-elect Barack Obama, Manchester, New Hampshire 2007
Gap Analysis

Current Administration Plans
- Obama's administration believes that states should receive funds to implement a higher set of standards and disciplines
- Implement a means of testing students' abilities
  - To use technology, conduct research, engage in scientific investigation, solve problems, and present and defend their ideas
- Obama's administration would like to create incentives to keep students in school through graduation
- Need an accountability system that improves teaching methods as opposed to the current focus on punitive measures
- Schools should assess all children appropriately, including English language learners and special needs students
- The new accountability system would evaluate continuous progress for students
  - A variety of subjects, not just reading and math
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Recommendations

- The law must be replaced with a policy that honors local autonomy, employs better assessments, addresses the root causes of inequity and supports a rich curriculum.
- Need to update technology in the system with sophisticated data systems.
- States need to use some of this funding to create and implement alternate assessments for English language learners.
- States should be held accountable for developing standards and assessments that are aligned with English language learners' needs.
- Ensure High Schools Prepare Students for College and the Workplace.
  - Such accountability would implement 12th grade assessments designed to measure mastery of content needed to be college and workplace ready.
- Teachers need to be held accountable.
  - Without accountability, you end up with teachers who stay year after year, teachers who are not open to being evaluated.
Recommendations

- Teachers should demonstrate proficiency in the subject they are teaching
  - Experienced professionals who want to be in the classroom and who want to share their expertise
- Teachers should be required to produce learning gains
  - Measured by growth models
- Six hours of schooling with a good teacher can change a child’s life regardless of background or parental involvement
- Need a vehicle to weed out the bad teachers
  - Restructure tenure so that teachers must wait five years before their employment is safeguarded
    - Teachers are tenured after two years within the Long Beach Unified School District
  - Teachers should have to earn tenure based on reviews
  - A “three strikes you’re out policy” based on several reviews, from multiple administrators
- These same standards should be set in place for administrators
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Conclusion

- Funding to accomplish high standards
- A challenging diverse curriculum
  - That gives you the ability to think creatively and critically
- Equal opportunity learning environments
- Despite its best efforts, the No Child Left Behind Act has neglected to challenge gifted individuals and has outsourced those less fortunate
- I have been motivated by quality teachers, not standardized tests
- Children today are no different
- The majority of students want to learn and we should provide them with a conducive, challenging, encouraging atmosphere
Captured in Thesis paper
Questions
Thank you!