

**Director's Final Proposed Priorities for the Institute Of Education
Sciences, November 1, 2010**

The overall mission of the Institute is to expand fundamental knowledge and understanding of education and to provide education leaders and practitioners, parents and students, researchers, and the general public with unbiased, reliable, and useful information about the condition and progress of education in the United States; about education policies, programs, and practices that support learning and improve academic achievement and access to educational opportunities for all students; and about the effectiveness of Federal and other education programs. The Institute seeks to understand causal linkages to the greatest extent possible by conducting or sponsoring rigorous studies that support such inferences.

The work of the Institute is also grounded in the principle that effective education research must address the interests and needs of education practitioners and policymakers, as well as students, parents and community members. To this end, the Institute will encourage researchers to develop partnerships with stakeholder groups to advance the relevance of the Institute's work, the accessibility of its reports, and the usability of its findings for the day-to-day work of education practitioners and policymakers. Further, the Institute will seek to increase the capacity of education policymakers and practitioners to use the knowledge generated from high quality data analysis, research, and

evaluation through a wide variety of communication and outreach strategies.

The Institute's priorities address a broad range of education-related outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities. These outcomes include: developmental outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities; school readiness; learning, achievement and higher order thinking in reading and writing, mathematics, and the sciences from preschool through postsecondary schooling; behaviors, skills, and dispositions that support learning in school and later success in the workforce; and educational attainment in postsecondary, vocational, and adult education.

Within these areas, the work of the Institute is to compile statistics, support research, conduct evaluations, and promote and facilitate the use of scientific evidence. The Institute will sponsor work to: examine the state of education in the United States; develop and evaluate innovative approaches to improving education outcomes; understand the characteristics of high-quality teaching and how better to train current and prospective teachers and to recruit, support, and retain effective teachers; understand the processes of schooling through which education policies, programs, and practices affect student outcomes; and understand classroom, school, and other social contextual factors that moderate the effects of education practices and contribute to their successful implementation and sustainability. In doing so, the Institute

will seek to identify education policies, programs, and practices that improve education outcomes, and to determine how, why, for whom, and under what conditions they are effective. The Institute will promote research to improve education outcomes for all students, and particularly for those students whose prospects have historically been hindered because of their socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, gender, disability, limited English proficiency, and/or residential or school mobility. Such research will generate knowledge to assist educators and policymakers in assessing and improving the equity of the education system. In addition to supporting new research, the Institute will promote the synthesis and dissemination of existing and ongoing research to construct coherent bodies of scientific knowledge about education.

The Institute will maintain rigorous scientific standards for the technical quality of its statistics, research, and evaluation activities, ensuring that the methods applied are appropriate to the questions asked and the results are valid and reliable. The work of the Institute will include a variety of research and statistical methods. The Institute will support the development and use of improved research methods to address a wide range of questions relevant to education; improved measures of a broad range of education processes, systems, and outcomes; and improved analytical approaches for designing and conducting education research particularly regarding classroom

processes, and the enactment and implementation of programs. Where needed, the Institute will develop and publish rigorous technical standards for these methods. The Institute will ensure the quality and objectivity of its work by submitting all Institute products to rigorous scientific review. The Institute will build the capacity of the education research community by supporting post-doctoral and interdisciplinary doctoral training in the education sciences, providing training to equip education researchers with the skills to conduct rigorous research and effectively engage stakeholders in that research, and conducting training in research design and methods and in the use of longitudinal data.