



Posted on Thu, Jan. 06, 2005

K-12 wins, higher ed loses in Sanford plan

By JEFF STENSLAND
Staff Writer

Gov. Mark Sanford proposed a \$5.3 billion state budget Wednesday, calling for more money for K-12 education, lower income taxes and beefed-up law enforcement.

The proposal also calls for cuts at state colleges and elimination of many state programs.

Sanford's budget hits many of the same notes as the one he proposed last year, complete with lengthy justifications for restructuring state government and trimming existing programs.

Reaction from lawmakers and education officials was mixed, with some scrambling to digest the mammoth 346-page document.

"I think it's an excellent beginning, and we will take it from here," said Rep. Bobby Harrell, R-Charleston, who chairs the powerful House budget-writing committee.

This is the second budget Sanford has proposed. Last year, he broke with tradition by presenting a highly detailed spending plan instead of a mere summary of favored programs.

The budget he released Wednesday goes even further, indexing more than 1,400 individual state government functions.

"This is a budget that plows new ground," Sanford said. "Budgets traditionally ask the question of where do you spend the money, but not what do you spend it on."

Sanford's budget would:

- Spend an additional \$100 million on K-12 education
- Increase teacher pay while cutting yearly bonuses to most future nationally certified teachers by \$4,500
- Boost Medicaid by \$47 million
- Lower the top income tax bracket from 7 percent to 4.75 percent over six years
- Add 100 state troopers and other law enforcement officers
- Restore more than \$150 million to state trust funds raided during past budget deficits.

The plan also calls for axing 67 programs over a wide swath of state agencies, a move Sanford says will save more than \$160 million.

"This is a budget I think moves us toward getting our fiscal house in order," he said.

Questions remain about a plan to boost per-pupil education funding under the Education Finance Act formula.

Sanford proposed increasing per-pupil spending to \$2,213, partly by transferring money from existing education programs, something he calls "backpacking."

Debbie Elmore, a spokeswoman for the S.C. School Boards Association, said many education officials want to see more details.

"At initial glance, we are encouraged by the increase in the (funding formula)," she said. "But we're still trying to determine where the dollars are coming from. Is it true new money, or is he simply reshuffling the deck?"

Sanford says changing the funding formula merely allows local districts more flexibility in how they spend education dollars.

The proposal also includes a pitch for offering tax credits to families who send their children to private schools. But it does not account for how that would be paid for.

Democrats were quick to rip the notion of shifting tax dollars away from public schools.

"The bottom line is there's a continued failure on key issues, like support for public education," said Rep. James Smith, D-Richland.

State colleges might have fared worst of all in the budget plan.

Sanford again is calling for steep cuts in Clemson University's extension services and other programs, closing USC branch campuses in Union and Allendale counties, and trimming the budgets of the state's three research universities by 1 percent.

And while other state agencies would get money earmarked for pay raises, employees at the state colleges would get none.

"I would have liked to see at least a modicum of funding for salaries," said Commission on Higher Education director Conrad Festa.

Democrats in the House and Senate released a joint statement decrying cuts to colleges, which they say would lead to tuition increases.

But that criticism was balanced by praise for Sanford's plan to spend millions on disease prevention and hire more state troopers.

Sanford, who drew heat last year for not briefing Democrats on his budget proposal, made sure to meet with members of both parties Wednesday afternoon.

While the General Assembly is unlikely to adopt all his proposals, he said anything he can do to better sell them this year is time well spent.

"I don't think there's any magic bullet in how you approach any legislative body," he said. "You just keep on pushing."

Reach Stensland at (803) 771-8358 or jstensland@thestate.com. Staff writers Bill Robinson and Jennifer Talhelm contributed to this report.



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Thursday, January 06, 2005 12:00 AM

Police, schools top priorities

Governor lays out detailed budget plan touting 'fiscal fitness'

BY MATTHEW MOGULAND BRIAN HICKS
Of The Post and Courier Staff

COLUMBIA--Gov. Mark Sanford's \$5.3 billion budget proposal shifts money from higher to lower education and from cultural resources to law enforcement.

In his phone-book-sized plan, Sanford proposed 5 percent increases for K-12 education and health services, while chipping away at just about everything else.

"Budgets traditionally answer the questions of where you spend but not what you spend it on," the Republican governor said Wednesday in unveiling his spending blueprint. "This budget breaks down the what do you spend it on question."

Statehouse observers said the budget reflects a more focused approach than Sanford's last offering but that until they read a line-item breakdown, they won't know how realistic some of his proposals are.

Still, House members said many of the governor's proposals will get serious consideration in the upcoming session, as they reflect the policies he's talked about since taking office.

That also means, in typical Sanford fashion, that he dropped his budget tome on some toes. For instance, his budget:

-- Cuts all state money for Charleston's Spoleto Festival, requiring officials to apply for grants for state funding.

-- Gives each agency a pot of money for raises to distribute as it sees fit.

-- Provides no raises for anyone in higher education.

-- Cuts \$250,000 for The Citadel to handle ongoing costs of being a co-ed institution.

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-- Takes \$5 million for the beach renourishment at Hunting Island and gives it to other natural resources.

Dubbed the "Fiscal Fitness Challenge" for 2005, this spending plan fits with Sanford's political philosophy of running government like a business. He wants to curb the dependence on one-time money sources -- as opposed to recurring income -- to plug budget holes at state agencies. His budget pegs state spending to population growth plus the rate of inflation.

Much of the budget goes to furthering Sanford's five primary policy goals: reducing income tax, restructuring state government, offering charter school legislation and tuition tax credits, retooling liability laws and changing Senate rules. Changing the rules isn't a budgetary matter, but it's the key to Sanford's hopes of passing his agenda items. Most of them died in the Senate last year.

Sanford wants more troopers on the road and more guards in the prisons. Those are his most lavish spending increases, aside from K-12 education. To pay the bills, Sanford cuts most agency budgets and uses \$100 million in savings wrenched from the current budget. He claims \$160 million in savings in his budget.

A sizeable part of Sanford's plan is based on built-in assumptions, which if not realized, could force a deficit. South Carolina, for instance, is forecast to grow 3 percent in fiscal year 2005-2006, starting July 1, but what if it doesn't?

Sanford's spending map -- just a suggestion since the House Ways and Means Committee writes the state's budget bill -- assumes the governor's legislative initiatives, such as restructuring and lowering the state income tax's highest rate, will become law.

That, some lawmakers say, is not necessarily a given. Lowering the top tax bracket would cost \$7 million the first year. That plan stalled in the General Assembly last year, and there are no guarantees this year will be different.

House Speaker David Wilkins, R-Greenville, said he thinks the House will be receptive to many of Sanford's ideas. "It contains some solid ideas for reducing spending and slowing the growth of government, concepts long supported by the House," he said. "I think many of the governor's budget priorities will be adopted by the House."

Problem may come in the Senate, where most of Sanford's agenda died last year.

The governor says the Legislature should save money like a savvy business. Nothing, including bureaucratic turf, should be sacred.

"Consumers of government don't care about which agency is providing which activity," Sanford said. "What they care about is the actual activity and does it work in improving and helping their lives."

During the fall, the governor held a series of public hearings, which produced recommendations found in his budget proposal. While the budget is designed to spend \$5.3 billion, the total state budget is \$17.7 billion when federal dollars are included.

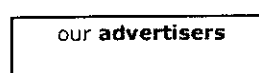
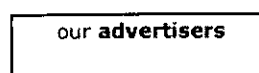
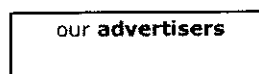
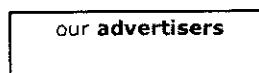
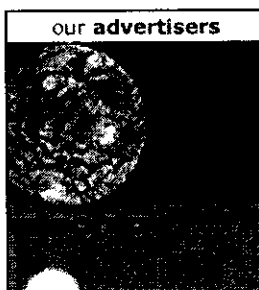
The 346-page plan is a lesson in exactitude, though one insider predicted many copies, which went to all legislators, will end up as doorstops. The governor has had notable dustups and little success with lawmakers.

"We don't think the executive branch has a better viewpoint than the legislative branch, just a different viewpoint," Sanford said.

Any success this go-around, some say, depends on Sanford warming up to the people who can make his plan a reality. State Rep. Bobby Harrell, R-Charleston, chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, said, "The governor did a very good job overall. This is absolutely the right way to go about it."

Sanford spent Wednesday hawking his plan to lawmakers from both sides of the aisle. Some Democrats were quick to find fault.

Sen. Robert Ford, D-Charleston, said Sanford's education increases were window dressing to cover the



Sen. Robert Ford, D-Charleston, said Sanford's education increases were window dressing to cover the fact that schools will lose money under his tuition credit program.

"This budget shifts money around but doesn't provide enough for public education," he said. "Basically, this governor has no interest in public education. This budget is lean, which may be good for Sanford, but it's a disaster for South Carolina."

Ford predicted dark days for Sanford's grand plans. An outspoken Sanford critic, Ford said lawmakers from both parties are leery of the governor's plans and offended by proposed cuts.

"I think he knows the General Assembly is not going to do that," Ford said. "They are talking to the Democratic Caucus trying to get support. Even Republicans aren't going along with the craziness he proposes."

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Sanford budget would expand breast cancer screening

Posted Wednesday, January 5, 2005 - 11:32 pm

By Dan Hoover and Liv Osby
STAFF WRITERS

Potentially thousands of poor women as young as 18 would gain access to free breast and cervical cancer screenings under Gov. Mark Sanford's budget proposal that earmarks another \$1 million to cancer research.

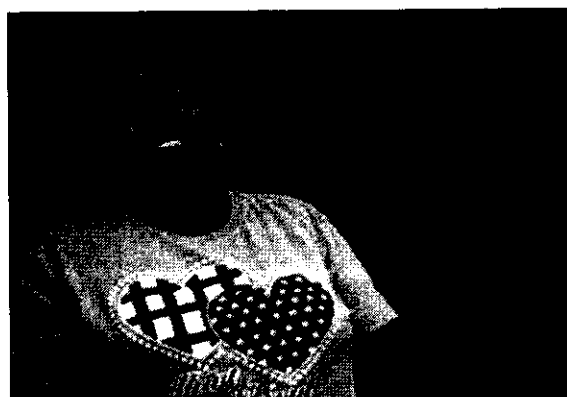
"That's a good start," said Nicole Henderson of Spartanburg. "More needs to be spent, but we have to start somewhere and that's better than where we were."

The 40-year-old's battle with breast cancer was recounted in a September special report in *The Greenville News* that revealed black women in the Upstate die from breast cancer at a much higher rate than blacks statewide and throughout the country.

Legislators have declined to use any of the state's \$1 billion tobacco settlement windfall to broaden screening and treatment programs.

Part of the problem is that black women are often diagnosed at a later stage when the cancer is less treatable, they tend to be younger and they get a particularly virulent form of the disease, cancer experts said.

On Wednesday, Sanford took steps to remedy that by proposing the state spend \$1 million to expand the Best Chance Network's coverage of 47- to 64-year-olds to include women as young as 18. And he proposed another \$1 million for research at the Medical University of South



Breast cancer survivor Lamisha Goldsmith of Greenville said proposals to spend more for cancer screening and research are 'awesome.' BART BOATWRIGHT/Staff

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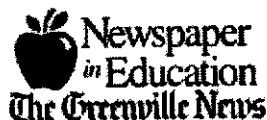
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Carolina's Ernest F. Hollings Cancer Center in Charleston.

The Republican's proposed \$5.3 billion state budget for 2005-06 also puts more troopers on the road and beefs up prison security but provides no money to create a program aimed at raising the state's lagging SAT scores.

Legislators from both parties praised the cancer screening initiative. And Upstate breast cancer survivors said it will go a long way toward saving lives by detecting cancers earlier.

Now 40, Henderson was diagnosed with breast cancer when she was 35 and after an initial remission is battling a recurrence of the disease. "Maybe next year," she said optimistically about getting more funding for breast cancer. "Maybe some more?"

Lamisha Goldsmith, who was diagnosed at 30, characterized both proposals as "awesome."

"I think that's wonderful," said the Greenville woman, now 31, who after chemotherapy is undergoing radiation before starting classes to become a certified nursing assistant — a decision she made since becoming ill.

"More research needs to be done," she said. "Maybe the next person may have a quicker recovery than mine."

Like many young women, neither Henderson nor Goldsmith ever thought breast cancer was possible in someone their age.

"With so many women, especially young ones, who don't even think about it, or don't have the insurance to do anything about it, that's really good to hear," Powdersville resident Kathy Rice, 48, another breast cancer survivor, said of Sanford's proposal.

"We need it so much because it's appearing in younger women all the time," said Bette Cantrell of Greer, who was diagnosed three years ago at 55. "There are women who just don't know they're at risk. And they should start mammograms much sooner than they're being told."

Greenville radiologist Dr. Kandace Farmer also said she was encouraged by the news.

"This will include all those patients we weren't able to reach with the Best Chance Network," she said. "Hopefully they will take advantage of this opportunity because early detection is key."

The Upstate affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation had been advocating for an increase of \$1.5 million in the Best Chance Network, said president Mary Lynn Faunda Donovan. Nonetheless, she called Sanford's proposal "an excellent step in the right direction."

"We also applaud him for expanding the age limits to include women between 18 and 46," she said. "This has been a key gap in the current eligibility criteria."

House Speaker David Wilkins, R-Greenville, hailed the additional cancer funding as "absolutely necessary" and predicted it would meet with consensus approval after the Legislature convenes Tuesday.

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Sanford's focus on preventive health care scored with Sen. Darrell Jackson, a Columbia Democrat.

"I like additional money for breast cancer screening," he said. "If that's enough, that's fine. Maybe there needs to be more. I think anything dealing with preventive health is a good idea."

Sanford said during a press conference that stressing prevention is common sense. "The more money we can spend on health care early in the process, the greater the dividends," he said.

The Hollings Center funding would be used to attract more research grants and treatment resources and help the facility win accreditation as a comprehensive cancer center. More than 17,000 new cancer cases are diagnosed each year in South Carolina.

Currently the Department of Health and Environmental Control's early detection program limits screening to women from 47 to 65 whose incomes are 200 percent below the poverty level.

DHEC Commissioner C. Earl Hunter has called for it to include the 18-46 group, but didn't include a projected cost. The program, the Best Chance Network, is federally funded and is administered by DHEC.

On Wednesday, Hunter said the agency is analyzing Sanford's proposal to determine how many more women might be served.

"We certainly are encouraged by the governor's proposal to increase cancer screening for more women, which is a great need in South Carolina," he said.

But there will be no crash program for SAT scores.

Sanford said he believed that other initiatives from greater spending flexibility for local school districts to greater choices of schools for students to increased graduation rates will boost SAT scores.

Saying that one size doesn't fit all, Sanford told reporters he doesn't believe programs aimed solely at raising test scores are effective, particularly given the state's limited resources.

"He's wrong," Columbia Democrat James Smith, the outgoing House minority leader, said of Sanford's indirect approach. Smith said it's too slow and lacks the focus to address the problem.

The News reported on last month that the state Education Department's SAT prep course funding has been cut by 75 percent, to \$240,000, since 2002 and the optional courses don't reach every college-bound student.

While South Carolina has achieved the fastest rate of SAT growth among the 50 states — 32 points over the last five years — it has fallen back to the lowest average score.

But Rep. Harry Cato, R-Travelers Rest, said Sanford made no mistake.

"I'm not for doing anything that artificially improves scores," Cato said, adding that he doesn't consider the SAT to be a valid measure of student's readiness for college.



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Posted on January 06, 2005

Governor unveils budget

By ROBERT W. DALTON | Staff Writer

COLUMBIA -- Gov. Mark Sanford's proposed budget for 2005-06 pushes for the consolidation of small school districts and advocates reducing the amount spent on testing students.

Sanford unveiled the balanced \$5.3 billion spending plan -- his second -- on Wednesday. The plan does not increase taxes.

Sanford wants to increase spending for K-12 education by \$100 million, to \$1.9 billion. The increase would raise the state's base student cost from \$1,852 to \$2,213. The total amount spent per pupil -- including local and federal money -- would rise to \$9,826.

Part of the increase is achieved by rolling some accounts into the Education Finance Act. Without the rollover, the base student cost would be \$1,944.

State Department of Education spokesman Jim Foster was critical of Sanford's approach.

"This is proposing to take line items for things such as summer school and saying that money will go toward the base student cost," Foster said. "It's robbing Peter to pay Paul."

House Speaker Pro Tem Doug Smith, R-Spartanburg, took exception to Foster's comments and said education department officials should not question the Legislature's commitment to education.

"That's a typical response from a bureaucrat that hides over in the Rutledge tower and tried to convince the public that this

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MARY ANN CHASTAIN

South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford explains his new budget Wednesday in Columbia.

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state's portion of funding for education is \$1,800 a year," Smith said.

Sanford's plan also includes \$53 million to increase teacher pay to \$300 above the Southeastern salary average.

It would, however, change the rules for teachers who become National Board Certified. Currently, every teacher who earns national certification receives a \$7,500 bonus for 10 years.

Under Sanford's plan, teachers who become nationally certified after Dec. 31, 2005, would only receive the full \$7,500 bonus only if they taught in critical needs schools or subjects. All other teachers who earned the certification would receive \$3,000 annual bonuses.

Sanford also proposes requiring all school districts in the state to have a minimum of 2,500 students by July 1, 2006. Consolidating smaller districts would save \$26 million in administrative costs, according to a 2003 study.

Sen. Jim Ritchie, R-Spartanburg, said consolidation wouldn't be something the Legislature would rush into.

"It's something we'll have to look at to see if it makes academic sense as well as economic sense," Ritchie said.

All seven of Spartanburg County's districts have more than 2,500 students. District 4 is the smallest, with 2,851 students. District 3 is next with 3,000 students.

Sanford also proposed reducing the amount the state spends on testing by \$2.7 million, to \$21 million. He said South Carolina spends about \$35.75 per student on testing, and that eventually bringing that cost more in line with the \$15.85 per student that Georgia spends would free up about \$13.2 million.

He also recommended that the state re-examine its contracts for accountability testing because the marketplace is more competitive. South Carolina has used the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests (PACT) since 1998.

Foster said cutting testing funds would mean cutting testing.

"If this \$2.7 million cut were to be enacted, we would ask the General Assembly for guidance on which testing programs they mandated should be eliminated," he said.

In crafting the budget, Sanford and his staff used an "activity-

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based" approach. They identified more than 1,500 government activities, prioritized them and then looked at funding needs. They eliminated 67 activities for a savings of more than \$160 million.

"This was a never before attempted process in our state that we believe led to some tangible, measurable benefits in terms of the budget we've laid out," Sanford said.

As he did in his first executive budget a year ago, Sanford proposed reducing the state income tax from 7 percent to 4.75 percent and restructuring state government.

Also as he did last year, Sanford targeted a phase-out of the University of South Carolina's Union and Salkehatchie campuses.

State Rep. Mike Anthony, D-Union, vowed to fight that move "to the end again."

"Next year will be its 40th year and we're going to celebrate it," Anthony said. "Union needs this really bad. The amount USC Union gets from the state is minimal (\$900,000), but look at what it's down to help kids in the region."

Sanford also wants to focus on replenishing trust funds that were raided in recent years to avoid budget cuts. He proposes putting \$200 million toward those funds next year.

"This moves us toward getting our fiscal house in order," he said.

The budget process begins with the state House in March, and Smith said Sanford had made their job easier.

"As far as I'm concerned, this is the type of budget the House will embrace," Smith said. "We'll give it the attention it deserves and pass most of it relatively without debate."

Robert W. Dalton can be reached at 562-7274 or bob.dalton@shj.com.



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Governor unveils proposed budget

Sanford calls for collaboration between USC Sumter, Central Carolina

By LESLIE CANTU
Item Staff Writer
lesliec@theitem.com

Gov. Mark Sanford is taking another stab at restructuring state government with the proposed budget for the 2005-06 fiscal year he presented Wednesday.

Many of the themes from last year reappear this year, including his effort to persuade the University of South Carolina Sumter and Central Carolina Technical College to collaborate by reducing funding. Much of the governor's proposed cost savings throughout the budget rely on restructuring and consolidating departments and activities.

The governor presented his budget to legislators in advance of their first session Tuesday. Legislators might adopt some of the governor's ideas or none.

The budget process was different this year, Sanford said, because he and his staff concentrated on activities rather than agencies. For example, they held budget hearings with all health agencies at once to find out if any of their services overlapped. If there was overlap, the staff examined how the agencies could be restructured or consolidated to save money.

Taxpayers don't particularly care which agency provides a service, he said. They just want to know they will receive services.

"This is a budget that I think moves us toward getting our fiscal house in order," Sanford said.

Despite the apparent upswing in the state's overall economy, he cautioned he doesn't want legislators to leap into spending all the additional revenues starting to appear.

"I think there are frightening gray clouds out there with regard to the national economy," Sanford said.

The national economy isn't out of the woods, he said, because of the weak dollar and the war in Iraq, so the state should be careful about committing to new spending.

Sanford highlighted his budget's education component, saying his budget gives \$100 million more in new money to education and gives local school districts more discretion over how to use an additional \$200 million.

He proposed a base rate of per-pupil spending of \$2,213, which would rise to \$9,826 when local, state and federal dollars are included.

Local school districts know best how to spend money on their students, Sanford said. However, since the state is footing part of the bill, the state should require small districts to consolidate. The budget includes a proviso requiring all school districts to have at least 2,500 students by July 1, 2006.

Calendar

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30	31	1	2	3	4	5

Though small districts might complain about this mandate from above, Sanford said the historical origins of school district lines have nothing to do with local control over education.

"It's more than a control issue. ... It's out of a past that probably has less to do with education than a racially divided South of the 1950s," he said.

Sumter School Districts 2 and 17 educate well more than 2,500 students each, but the Lee County School District just squeaks past the mark with 2,595 students. Clarendon School District 2 also clears the bar with 3,378 students, but Clarendon 1 and 3 educate 1,190 and 1,301 students, respectively.

The budget still underfunds education, state Sen. Phil Leventis, D-Sumter, said.

"You can talk about efficiencies all you want," he said, but the reality is "we've got larger class sizes than we've had in years (and) we've done away with extracurricular activities that enhance education."

He pointed to a girls' soccer team in Sumter School District 2, which had to raise \$4,500 just to continue playing.

However, Leventis praised the money set aside to increase manpower on the state's highways and in the prisons.

"I'm excited about the new class of state troopers and more guards at state prisons," he said. "I have not found in the budget where they intend to get the money for that."

In higher education, the executive budget shows savings of \$110,622 if USC Sumter and Central Carolina collaborate, although the budget doesn't elaborate on how they should work together.

"This represents a 3 percent reduction in the state funding for USC Sumter," the budget states.

Just as in last year's executive budget, this year's states that "these two schools are literally only separated by a fence," yet each has its own bookstore, library and information technology system.

Sanford also argues for a stronger Commission on Higher Education that could oversee the state's public colleges and universities.

"During the past year, we saw several examples of a weak CHE. USC Sumter was authorized to move from two-year to four-year status," the budget states.

Once again, the governor is proposing reducing the top rate of personal income tax from 7 percent to 4.75 percent over six years. He argues that a reduced income tax rate will make the state more attractive to affluent retirees who might otherwise move to Florida, which has no income tax, as well as to startup businesses.

Sanford would also like to reduce the commission the state pays to retailers who sell lottery tickets from 7 percent to 6 percent, which he said would be more in line with the national average.

Cutting those commissions affects local businesses, though, Leventis said. The average retailer sells 300,000 lottery tickets each year.

"You have to have at least one additional person there to sell those tickets," Leventis said.

Cutting the average retailers' commission would mean reducing the money available to pay that additional worker from \$21,000 to \$18,000, he said.

"It's an interesting exercise, but I think the House will build the budget differently," Leventis said.

Contact Staff Writer Leslie Cantu at lesliec@theitem.com or 803-774-1250.



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Sanford's budget takes more shots at Clemson

Governor also singles out Tri-County Tech administrative costs

By **STEPHANIE TRACY**
Independent-Mail

January 6, 2005

Gov. Mark Sanford's 2005-06 Executive Budget released Wednesday would slash funding for Clemson University Public Service Activities for the fourth consecutive year, delivering another 12 percent cut to a program that has seen its state budget decrease by more than 50 percent since 2001.

After sustaining a 10 percent reduction in state funding last year, Clemson's public service program endured a cost-cutting and efficiency overhaul that included employee buyouts and extensive restructuring.

University spokeswoman Cathy Sams said university and Public Service Activities officials had hoped to start rebuilding this year.

"What happened is we decimated some of our most senior positions in the agricultural areas," Ms. Sams said. "We had hoped to reallocate money from privatizing some activities to help rebuild in those areas. But with another budget cut that's going to be hard."

Fed at \$54 million in 2001, Clemson's public services budget had been cut to \$36 million by last year, Ms. Sams said. The governor's budget for next year brings total state funding for Public Service Activities to \$31 million.

Among some of the cost-saving measures recommended was a reduction of the Public Service Activities' forestry research and education programs. By delegating the work to Clemson's academic programs and the state Forestry Commission, Gov. Sanford hoped to save the state \$1.8 million.

"It's really surprising to see a \$1.8 million cut in an industry that's so important to the state, like forestry," said John Kelly, vice president of public service and agriculture.

Mr. Kelly said the governor's cuts to other public service education programs and further cuts to its agricultural activities would be a blow to any hopes of rebuilding the already lean institution, but said Wednesday's opening salvo from the governor was just the first step.

"We're certainly willing to work with the legislature," he said. "The governor's budget is just a suggestion."

The governor did commit to sustaining or even increasing funds to some of the Public Service Activities' programs, including a 50 percent increase in funding for the Animal Health and Diagnostic Lab, and 10 percent more money for the meat inspection program. Agricultural biotechnology research also was funded at its current level of \$1 million.

Golf course turf-grass research and nuisance species abatement would be cut completely in favor of privatization. Gov. Sanford also proposed eliminating funding for public service programs in government and public affairs research and education; rural community leadership development; rural community public issues education; and community and economic affairs research and education — a total savings of \$794,864.

In addition to its public service arm, Clemson University's general education funding also would take another 2 percent cut on top of the 2 percent decrease ultimately levied in the 2004-05 budget. The university's Board of Trustees was forced to raise tuition by 12.7 percent in July to make up for the lack of state money.

Gov. Sanford's budget would cut 1 to 2 percent from most of the state's major public universities "to encourage collaboration."

http://www.independentmail.com/and/cda/article_print/0,1983,AND_8203_3449039_ARTICLE-DETAIL-... 1/6/2005

Ms. Sams said it was too early to say whether this year's cuts would necessitate another tuition increase.

"A lot can happen between now and May," she said.

Technical colleges and some four-year institutions also found themselves the victims of the governor's red pen when he called for a reduction in administration at some schools, an action that would save the state \$2.8 million.

Tri-County Technical College in Pendleton was singled out as spending the highest percentage of its total budget on non-instructional personnel — cited in the executive budget as 14.15 percent.

"That number has got to be wrong," said Tri-County Tech President Ronnie Booth. "We're not sure where that number came from. I don't think they're reflecting current numbers."

Mr. Booth said the most recent number his staff produced for a state-mandated report showed 9.6 percent of the college's total budget going toward administration positions that include admissions, financial aid, and other support staff.

"I have to believe that those decisions or assessments have been made without an adequate understanding of what it takes to run a college," Mr. Booth said. "I have asked my staff to find out how (Gov. Sanford) got that number."

Stephanie Tracy can be reached at (800) 859-6397, Ext. 342 or by e-mail at tracysk@IndependentMail.com.

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The Greenville News

The state can raise scores

Posted Tuesday, December 28, 2004 - 9:50 pm

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Today's series points out how state can improve SAT scores that help students earn scholarships, college admission.

As much as parents, educators and state leaders fret over South Carolina's perennially last-in-the-nation SAT scores, it's disappointing that many students are not taking relatively easy steps to boost their scores.

While many public high schools in South Carolina offer SAT prep classes — including all 14 of Greenville County's public high schools — the courses do not reach all college-bound students, according to a *Greenville News* series of articles published today.

The task, then, for parents and educators is clear: More students need to be steered toward the free SAT prep courses that can raise their scores. Greenville County schools offer a variety of SAT programs — some provide one-day workshops; others have before-school or after-school classes. Public schools outside of Greenville County that don't offer the prep courses need to seriously consider funding such classes, even in the face of limited resources.

In addition, parents who can afford the commercially available programs proven to raise SAT scores should consider the \$800 or so price tag to be a wise investment that would improve a child's chances of earning a scholarship and gaining admission to a top-notch

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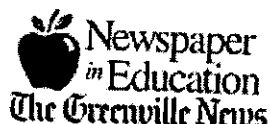
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State lawmakers who bemoan the state's low SAT scores should

question why the General Assembly as a whole has reduced the state's SAT improvement funding from \$1 million to \$240,000 since 2002. To their credit, state lawmakers do pay for all 10th-graders to take the PSAT, a practice test for the SAT.

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As today's *News* series points out, school districts elsewhere in the nation also have found success by partnering with commercial SAT prep companies such as Kaplan and The Princeton Review. Those programs are expensive, but they usually guarantee students' SAT improvement. The series suggests that South Carolina's business, education and volunteer community would be willing to band together to fund more SAT prep programs.

The state can do much better, in short, by simply focusing its attention and funding on raising SAT scores. It's true, of course, that SAT prep courses have their full share of critics, as today's articles point out. A legitimate concern is that public schools today put too much emphasis on prep courses that merely teach test-taking skills. Likewise, it's possible that a narrow test-oriented curriculum in South Carolina is robbing students of a truly broad-based education.

Such criticisms are reasonable, but they sidestep two crucial purposes of the SAT: helping students earn both college admission and scholarships. Universities, for good or ill, demand a supposedly objective standard by which to judge the academic competence of students — and that standard has become, for many or most universities, the SAT.

Likewise, merit-based scholarships, such South Carolina's LIFE scholarship, require a minimum SAT score. A student must earn 1100 on the SAT to be eligible for the LIFE scholarship, which pays \$4,700 for tuition and \$300 for books.

It's especially important for schools to strive to raise the SAT scores of minority students, who still are vastly underrepresented in universities.

In addition to SAT prep courses, state lawmakers can do a number of things proven to boost academic achievement throughout a student's schooling, including investing in early education, lowering class sizes in the elementary grades, providing more competitive salaries to improve teaching quality and funding the more rigorous high school courses that best prepare students for college-level work.

Lawmakers also should continue to support the state's rigorous curriculum reform, begun in 1998, that established grade-by-grade standards and testing to ensure that students were learning the material. That reform effort has been credited with making South Carolina No. 1 in the nation in SAT improvement over the past five years.

What's needed most of all is general agreement among parents, educators and lawmakers that improving SAT scores really should be a top priority. SAT scores can be lifted through stronger parental encouragement, student initiative and better public and private sector funding. High goals are achievable if the statewide commitment is solid.



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Programs put SAT gains within reach of students

Posted Tuesday, December 28, 2004 - 9:55 pm

By Ron Barnett
STAFF WRITER
rbarnett@greenvillenews.com

Jan. 22 looms as one of the most important dates in the life of high school students so far.

That's the day the SAT will be administered next. The test could determine what doors will open for your child in higher education and even what direction their career will take.

As important as that date is for students, it is critical for South Carolina as the state struggles to shed an image scarred by bottom-of-the-nation SAT scores and tries to prove itself in the new knowledge-based economy.

A long-term cure for this lag in SAT scores is as complicated as the sociological, economic and political forces that shape our lives. But for now, set aside things such as school funding, teacher training and the rigor of classroom courses.

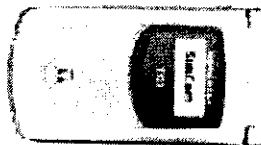
Some students are boosting their scores 100 points or more by taking SAT prep courses on their own, through their schools and with any number of private companies that offer help free and for a price.

But while many public high schools in South Carolina offer SAT prep courses - including all 14 of Greenville County's public high schools - the courses are optional and don't reach all college-bound students,



In an SAT prep class at Easley High School, English teacher Dr. Ken Grant works with students getting ready for the standardized test that is used by college admissions offices to evaluate applicants. OWEN RILEY JR./Staff

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And even fewer may know about
some of the commercially
available programs that are
proven to raise scores, or the free
offerings that are available.

The News has compiled a guide
to help you sort out what's out
there and how to get it.

And the newspaper has brought
together leaders in the business,
education and volunteer
communities to discuss a
partnership that would get this
kind of help into the hands of
more students - to narrow the gap
between the haves and the have-
nots.

An unequal advantage

The disparity between those who can afford such help and those who can't is apparent every
day in South Carolina schools.

Consider Emily Wilson's case. The 18-year-old senior at Southside Christian School in
Greenville had been accepted to Auburn University. But she had a problem. She needed to
raise her SAT score by 100 points to qualify for a scholarship.

So her family plunked down \$799 for a 12-week SAT training program at Kaplan Test Prep in
Greenville. She'll find out whether the investment paid off when she takes the test in January.

"I feel like I don't have enough time to take the test, and they teach you how to use your time
wisely and stuff," she said.

Carmisa Morris had a problem, too. In preparing to take the SAT this past fall, she said she
wasn't ready to drop that kind of money for test-taking tips in spite of being nervous about the
test. Her preparation consisted of a free afternoon workshop at school three days before the
exam.

She said she got the score she needed to get into Clemson University on a track scholarship.

"I just don't think it should cost that much to study for the SAT," the 18-year-old Carolina High
senior said. "A lot of people can't afford it."

If such programs could be used to boost the state's SAT average, the results could be
dramatic.

A jump of 100 points in the state average would push South Carolina to first in the nation
among states in which more than half of their high school students take the SAT. It now ranks
22nd in that group, above only the District of Columbia.

Success elsewhere

Some school systems across the country already are using this approach to raise their
scores.

Fulton County Schools in Atlanta pays half the cost of a \$250 course offered by Kaplan, one

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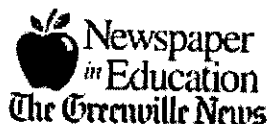
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of the biggest companies in the \$1 billion test prep industry. Average SAT scores in the district have risen nearly 10 points each year since 1999 when the program began, according to T.H.E. Journal, an Internet-based magazine about teacher training.

Fulton County boasts average SAT scores 34 points above the national average, compared with Greenville's scores at 17 points below the national mark. The counties have similar proportions of students from low-income families. Income is considered a strong determining factor in SAT performance.

The Beaumont Independent School District in Texas is picking up the whole tab for a program offered by The Princeton Review, another major player in the SAT prep business.

The \$700,800 three-year program started just this fall, but Birdie Harrison, coordinator of guidance services for the district, said she already has seen significant improvement in students' scores on practice SATs.

"We're loving it," she said.

Some schools in the Upstate have gotten on board as well. Riverside High in Greer, which perennially posts some of the highest average school SAT scores in the state, is offering a Kaplan program at a discount after school. So many Riverside students were already taking the course at full price that the company was willing to offer an \$899 program for \$600 at the school.

"For us it was a no-brainer," said guidance counselor Cathy Derrick.

For schools in which most students don't have the money even for a discounted program, the tools would have to come from somewhere else - perhaps the business and industry sector, which has such a large stake in the state's national standing in public education.

State Superintendent of Education Inez Tenenbaum said she supports the idea of students using such study aids as the programs offered by Kaplan and The Princeton Review to help improve SAT scores.

She said that when she first took office, she and then-Gov. Jim Hodges met with representatives from Kaplan to talk about creating an SAT prep program for all South Carolina high schools.

"What we found out was it was just too expensive for us to do statewide," she said.

Help for students varies

What South Carolina's high schools do offer are SAT prep courses that vary from practice tests to computer programs.

Greenville County's public high schools offer courses during the school day, as well as workshops. They use everything from computerized programs, workbooks, practice tests and worksheets.

But some have cut back on the SAT prep courses they offered. Daniel High near Clemson, a school that posts some of the highest average SAT scores in the state, has gone to holding such a class only every two years, said guidance director Ann LaVerne White.

The school hopes to offer a Kaplan class starting in January, but students would have to pay the full cost themselves, she said.

"Pickens County just doesn't have the money," she said.

There are SAT coaches in every high school, and the state pays for all 10th graders to take the PSAT, which provides practice for the SAT. It also covers the cost of the PLAN, a

predictor of success on the ACT Assessment, another college entrance exam. The cost for these tests total about \$450,000 a year, according to the Education Department.

"We've done a number of things to improve SAT scores, and every year except this past year our score had gone up," Tenenbaum said. "We had the highest improvement in the nation two years in a row. But this is the one year it dipped. And we need to go back and find out what is going to improve SAT scores this coming year."

Bob Horton, a professor of secondary math education at Clemson, said that studying sample SATs and practicing test-taking skills do little to help students learn to think. He said the money would be better spent on things such as teacher training.

"Our focus should be on learning. It shouldn't be on taking tests," he said.

Lorin Anderson, an expert in testing from the University of South Carolina, said the SAT is very narrow in the scope of what it tests. Prodding students with pointers on how to play the test-taking game artificially inflates SAT scores while leaving students unable to solve real world problems, he believes.

"They're like little doggies. Jump through this hoop," he said.

Bill Dingleline, a private educational consultant in Greenville who uses Princeton Review material to help students boost their SAT scores, said he doesn't disagree with the professors' assessment.

"They are not by any stretch of the imagination achievement tests," he said of the SAT.

But raising IQ or improving learning ability is not the point of SAT prep courses, he said. The point is helping students make the score they need to get accepted to the college they want.

And colleges, he said, have little choice but to look at standardized test scores in deciding whom to admit given the degree of grade inflation in recent years, particularly in states where lottery-funded scholarships are dangled in front of students with B averages.

The SAT score is only one factor Clemson admissions director Robert Barkley said he looks at in deciding whether to offer admission. But he said it is one that is helpful in comparing applicants.

Competition tightens

The number of applications to public four-year institutions in South Carolina rose by nearly 10,000 between 1999 and 2003, a jump of 22 percent. At the same time, the number of students who enrolled rose by fewer than 2,000, according to the state Commission on Higher Education.

That competition for a seat in class is pushing SAT scores of incoming freshmen higher as schools can afford to become more selective.

At Clemson, for example, the average SAT score of incoming freshmen rose from 1128 in 1996 to 1204 this fall, according to Barkley.

In addition to admission, a score of at least 1100 on the SAT is one criteria in determining eligibility for a state-funded LIFE scholarship, which pays up to \$4,700 for tuition plus \$300 for books.

The College Board, which administers the SAT, says the best preparation for the test is taking rigorous courses in high school.

The board's research indicates much less impressive gains from "coaching" for the test than what's claimed by the companies offering such services.

The typical gain from coaching is eight points on the verbal test and 18 points on math, according to College Board research. That works out to about one additional correct verbal question for 25 to 30 hours of effort and one more correct math question for eight or more hours of effort.

"Students and parents have got to weigh not only the financial costs of these courses but also the time that they take," said College Board spokeswoman Kristin Carnahan.

But that hasn't stopped the company from getting into the coaching game. The College Board offers an online course for \$69.95 and a book for \$19.95.

The Princeton Review guarantees improvement of 100 points on the SAT and says it will bump that to 200 points when a new version of the SAT with an essay portion is released next March.

The average score increase of students who take Princeton Review courses is 140 points, and the top 25 percent of students raise their scores 190 points or more, said Drew Deutsch, vice president of the New York-based company.

Are such gains possible on a statewide basis using the company's programs?

"I don't see why not if they're taking our course seriously and doing the work," he said.

That could be a big if. Deutsch said that not all students have the motivation to follow through with the program.

To help keep students on track, The Princeton Review offers courses that give personalized instruction, even for those who never meet their instructor face to face. The \$399 online course includes e-mail contact and text chat with an instructor.

"There's always a living, breathing person there to assist at any hour," Deutsch said.

The Princeton Review also offers a \$99 online course, conducts free SAT strategy sessions and has a free SAT lesson and practice test on its Web site.

For those who can afford \$899 for SAT prep, the company runs a six-week course that meets two to three times a week. That course also uses online components such as multimedia animation and audio.

Students can practice writing the essay for the new SAT, which will be administered for the first time on March 12. They upload it to New York where it's graded by an instructor and returned with feedback two hours later.

Free help

You don't have to spend a dime to practice the SAT, though.

The College Board has a free practice SAT on its Web site and sends paper versions to high schools across the country that students can copy.

A company called Number2.com offers a free online SAT prep course that is "every bit as good" as what's offered by the ones you have to pay for, according to Josh Millet, president of the company.

He said it's misleading of the others to guarantee score improvements.

"That's kind of like a diet company guaranteeing a weight loss," he said. "It really depends on what the student puts into the course."

Studies have shown increases in SAT scores are proportional to the amount of time students spent on Number2.com's Web site, he said.

Kaplan says its programs not only teach students how to take the test but also help them better understand the subject material.

"We make sure that they have strong critical reading skills not only because that's what the test requires, but because that's what life requires," said Jennifer Karan, director of SAT and ACT programs for the company.

Kaplan's programs range from one-on-one tutoring and classroom courses to online courses and books. It also has programs for handheld computers and cell phones.

Dr. Haresh Baxi, a Greer pediatrician whose two daughters took Kaplan's course, said he thinks it should be available to all students in public schools.

"It kept their momentum going toward getting the higher score," he said of his daughters, Khyati and Khanjan, both now students at Furman University. "And they did extremely well."

State Rep. Ronnie Townsend, chairman of the House committee that oversees education, said the state is paying for plenty of SAT preparation already by covering the cost of the PSAT for all 10th graders.

Townsend said he can't see trying to beef up SAT scores with money that's needed to do such things as operate prisons and pay for Medicaid.

"It's a matter of, I think, too much emphasis being put on the SAT primarily by those who don't know what the SAT is about," the Anderson Republican said.

The Alliance for Quality Education, an advocacy group for public education in Greenville County, has funded teacher grants to help SAT prep classes but doesn't have the resources to help on a large-scale basis, said Grier Mullins, executive director.

She said she hopes the money can be found to help students who can't afford private tutors or computerized SAT prep courses.

"All kids deserve the opportunity that only a few kids have," she said.

Staff writer April Silvaggio contributed to this report.

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Effects of Teachers' Mathematical Knowledge for Teaching on Student Achievement

(Heather C. Hill, Brian Rowan, Deborah Lowenberg Ball, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, May 2004,
<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~dcball/HillRowanBallMay04.pdf>)

This study is the capstone of nearly two decades of research by Deborah Lowenberg Ball and her colleagues on what teachers need to know to teach math effectively. It finds: (1) teachers need a particular type of content knowledge to accommodate students' differing learning styles and aptitudes, and (2) this type of "flexible and expressible" knowledge is positively linked to student learning gains.

Ball's research team designed a 30-item "mathematical knowledge for teaching" assessment that was given to 699 1st- and 3rd-grade teachers at 115 predominantly high-poverty schools drawn from the Consortium for Policy Research in Education's large-scale, longitudinal Study of Instructional Improvement.

The researchers also tested those teachers' students twice – in the fall and spring of the same school year. The results showed greater learning gains for pupils whose teachers also had scored high on the mathematical-knowledge test. They found students got an extra one-third to one-half of a month's learning growth for every standard-deviation rise on their teachers' test scores.

Teachers' scores on the mathematical-knowledge assessment seemed to matter more, the study found, than how much time they spent teaching math during an average school day. This finding applied whether teachers were certified or whether they had taken extensive mathematics or math teaching courses.

Teaching math well, the study concluded, requires not only a solid grounding in the subject and an understanding of how children think at particular developmental stages, but also the ability to apply mathematical knowledge quickly, in ways that make sense to students. A teacher has to be able to "unpack" ideas and procedures to help students grasp the reasons behind them, to pinpoint the sources of the errors their students make, and to choose assessments that show whether students are "getting it," not just making lucky guesses.



Bayer Facts of Science Education 2004: Are the Nation's Colleges Adequately Preparing Elementary Schoolteachers of Tomorrow To Teach Science?

(Bayer Corporation, May 2004,

<http://www.bayerus.com/msms/news/facts.cfm?mode=detail&id=survey04>)

The Philadelphia-based Bayer Corporation's 10th annual report on science education in America concludes that efforts to improve elementary school science have yielded only marginal gains over the past decade. Science, it says, remains a second-tier subject, both in teacher training programs and elementary classrooms.

The report is based on a nationwide survey earlier this year of 250 college and university education school deans and 1,000 of the newest generation of K-5 school teachers (those with three to five years of experience). Among its major findings are the following:

- Only one-third of elementary school teachers reported teaching science every day. One in three said they teach science fewer than two times a week.
- When asked to rate the quality of science education in their schools, only 18% of the teachers assigned it an A, and nearly one-third assigned it a C or D. Only 7% of the deans surveyed said they were "very confident" that elementary school pupils are receiving a good science education. More than half, 56%, said they were "a little confident" or "not confident" at all.
- Only 14% of the teachers surveyed gave an A rating to their preservice training in science. And a strikingly large percentage – 35% – said they rely more on what they learned in their high school science courses than on what they learned in college to teach science. A large majority of both teachers and deans agreed elementary teacher education programs should require more coursework both in science itself and in science teaching methods.
- Only one in 10 teachers said they have participated in programs that offer an opportunity to work directly with scientists and/or engineers on science curricula and other professional development activities. Among those who had, an overwhelming majority said the experience helped them better understand science content, improved their teaching of science content, and bolstered their motivation and enthusiasm for teaching the subject.

Teachers and education school deans overwhelmingly agreed that having students conduct hands-on experiments, form opinions, and discuss and defend their conclusions with others is the most effective way for students to learn science. Both groups also voiced strong support for increased emphasis on inquiry-based science teaching, both in teacher training programs and in elementary school classrooms.



Science and Engineering Indicators 2004

(National Science Foundation and National Science Board, July 2004,
<http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/seind04/start.htm>)

The diminishing number of young people interested in – and prepared for – careers in science, engineering and technology is one of several converging trends that threaten to undermine America's competitive edge in today's knowledge-based global economy.

That is among the major findings of the National Science Board, which every two years takes the measure of scientific and technical capacity worldwide by analyzing a range of national and international demographic, education, labor force, and research and development trends.

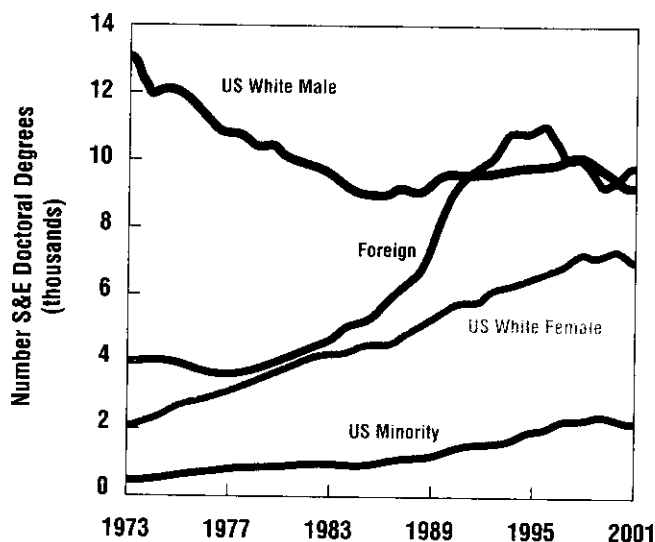
The chapters on elementary, secondary and postsecondary education – an easy-to-use mix of tables, charts and explanatory text – paint a mixed picture.

Nearly all states have established academic standards in both science and math, the report notes, and the annual testing of core subjects mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act will be

extended, in the 2007-08 school year, to include science. Classroom access to computers and the Internet has expanded significantly in the past several years, as has the availability of Advanced Placement science and math courses. Student achievement in math has risen overall.

On the other hand:

- Large numbers of the nation's middle school and high school students receive science and math instruction from underqualified teachers. For example, nearly 20% of high school students – and more than half of middle school students – study mathematics with a teacher who did not major or minor in mathematics or a related field.
- One in three 8th graders in the United States attends a school that does not offer an algebra class – widely considered a “gatekeeper” course for more-advanced science and math courses.
- In 1975, the United States ranked third in the world in the percentage of students pursuing natural science and engineering degrees. Now it is 17th. Over the past 10 years, the number of high school seniors planning on careers in engineering has dropped more than 35%.



U.S. science and engineering doctoral degrees, by sex, race/ethnicity and citizenship status: 1973-2001 (*Science and Engineering Indicators 2004*)



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The report concludes with a call for greater efforts – beginning immediately – to attract more students into science and engineering. Otherwise, it warns, “we could reach 2020 and find that the ability of U.S. research and education institutions to regenerate has been damaged and that their pre-eminence has been lost to other areas of the world.”