CHAPTER 1

Structure and Science in Federal Education Research

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The education research function has generally stood apart from the fierce controversies over the legitimate role of the federal government in education policy. Indeed, the creation of the earliest U.S. department of education, in 1867, centered on a national sanction for building and diffusing scientific knowledge in the field. Though such efforts have continued across a century and a half, longevity does not imply stability. The institutions housing the education research and development mission have changed frequently and rapidly. Since 1980 alone, when the modern Department of Education was created, the National Institute of Education (NIE) has yielded to the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), itself replaced in 2002 by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES).[1]

At the same time, the name of the legislation creating IES—the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA)—hints at one key consistency underlying these mutations. Proponents of each organizational reinvention sought to broaden the scope, utility, and use of education research and development, as well as the resources accorded to it. To reach those goals, they sought to make education more "scientific," on a par with research in the natural sciences or medicine. Only then, they reasoned, would education research receive the respect it required, to receive the support it required, to make a difference for students and society. Take, for instance, President Hoover's advisory committee on education. A section of its report, grandly entitled Truth vs. Partisanship, held that "governmental policy cannot hope to rise above partisanship . . . unless mere differences of opinion, tenaciously held, are dissolved by revelations of pertinent facts established by scientific method and presented in

understandable terms."[2] Seventy-five years later, IES touts a like determination to spark "the transformation of education into an evidence-based field in which decisionmakers routinely seek out the best available research and data before adopting programs or practices."[3]

If history is any guide, IES faces heavy odds against such a rationalizing transformation. Christopher Cross, a former head of OERI, concludes that "of all the potential federal functions, the research role remains the most unrealized in the course of the past half century."[4] Fault for this widely shared view has been laid consistently at the feet of IES's predecessors. James March lamented in 1978 that the NIE, "an organization dedicated to rational procedures, excellence, and the use of intelligence came to be indecisive, incompetent, and disorganized."[5] The replacement of NIE by OERI changed little: OERI director Diane Ravitch argued that her "agency itself bears a measure of blame for the low status accorded federal educational research."[6] And by the turn of the twenty-first century, congressional observers were describing that agency in "language . . . [that] cannot be printed in a family-oriented academic journal."[7]

Such assessments spring both from the nature of education research and from the way the federal government has approached it. Education research, as Carl Kaestle has noted, has an "awful reputation." It is accused of being irrelevant, inconsistent, and fond of ratifying the obvious.[8] But just as importantly for the dictates of science, it is simply difficult to do well: education is a field in which all else is too rarely equal to make ready claims of causality. Its subjects are moving targets motivated by multiple inputs for which researchers cannot always account or control. Because students and teachers cannot be sent randomly to different schools or classrooms, or purposely given less or worse educational "treatment," it is hard to know whether a given variable or a myriad of other inputs caused the observed difference.[9] Further, while facts might be determined by the scientific method, values cannot be—and questions of education are naturally driven by value-laden, aspirational lines of inquiry. Thus, while it is commonly observed that "education research has not yielded dramatic improvements in practice of the kind one can point to in medicine,"[10] others object even to the metaphor. Douglas Christensen, Nebraska's education commissioner, told Congress that modeling education research on medicine was "abhorrent . . . Our children are not sick or diseased. Education and instruction are not treatments."[11] While in principle, then, the IES mission to conduct scientific research seems uncontroversial—at least to outsiders—in practice, such aims have attracted little consensus within the education community or its friends in government. In short, education is inextricably political.

As if this were not enough, education research has also been *politicized.* That is, it has been wrapped up in a "politics of bureaucratic structure"[12] that privileges influence over insulation and constituent service over science. Research has not been given adequate autonomy, separation from the projects and policies it is supposed to evaluate, or resources on a scale that might attract sufficient and sufficiently talented staff to convincingly conduct it. Instead, education research agencies have often been charged with serving partisan purposes, by bolstering party-line arguments on everything from compensatory education to school choice to abstinence.[13] As a Senate task force noted in 1998, this engenders "little faith in our current education infrastructure to produce the needed research on policies and programs that work."[14]

Despite all this, there is general optimism—albeit cautiously expressed—that IES, the current organizational incarnation of that infrastructure, has a fighting chance to earn such faith. To understand why, we need to take the issues of science and structure raised already and show how the latter might help enable the former. This chapter lays out some basic issues of bureaucratic politics, then traces those insights across the political history of education research in the United States, especially with regard to the three major agencies (NIE, OERI, and IES) noted above. While the discussion focuses on the Department of Education, it is important to note at the outset that much federal sponsorship of education research occurs elsewhere. Indeed, as discussed below, agencies like the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) have been longtime lodestars for education researchers seeking reform.

The final section of this chapter discusses the differences between IES and its predecessors, and evaluates its progress five years after its founding. Its experience begins, at least, to answer the question of what needs to happen—in terms of agenda setting, personnel policies, peer review procedures, insulation from party politics—for empirics to trump emotion in the field of federal education research.

BUREAUCRATIC STRUCTURE AND SCIENCE

This chapter is organized around the structural politics of education for a simple reason: structure matters to outcomes, and, thus, to political actors. The way a bureau is organized matters for its responsiveness to officials and interests of all stripes, as well as for the kinds of policy options that push to the top of its hierarchy. Structural choices, then, affect both the types of problems an agency perceives and the kinds of solutions it puzzles out—

and their effectiveness. Structure shapes how well issues are coordinated and how resources can be distributed. Arguably, the struggle of organized interests over agency structure means that practically no public bureau can live up to the purest tenets of public administration. Terry Moe posits that "any notion that political actors might confine their attention to policymaking and turn organizational design over to neutral criteria or efficiency experts denies the realities of politics."[15]

We should expect this observation to have particular bite in a values-driven policy realm such as education, as well as special ramifications for efforts to support "science" in government. If science requires neutral methodology, the ability to follow research where it leads and, not unimportantly, patience, then it should be particularly difficult to achieve through a political process driven by short-term electoral concerns in an era of partisan polarization. A science agency needs, in some ways, to be left alone. Yet this is hard to pull off—especially since being left alone requires the appropriated cash to live independently. As March trenchantly observed of NIE, its creation "celebrated the possibility of a new life; but it was conceived in the usual way, born innocent, and lost its virginity in a Senate subcommittee."[16]

Most important for our purposes, then, is the notion of autonomy (from that Senate subcommittee, say), and how to get it. Political scientist David E. Lewis lays out various measures of what he calls "insulation," battles over which are often played out through the politics that create a given agency. For instance, who chooses appointees, and which positions require Senate confirmation? Are there fixed terms? Are there limitations on appointments or removals? Most fundamentally, who governs the agency—a commission, a single administrator, a director with an advisory board? (A commission or empowered board makes it harder to politicize an agency because more actors must be influenced in order to change its direction.)[17]

In general, Lewis finds, agencies created by executive action (such as the 1985–1994 version of OERI) are less likely to be insulated than those created by statute (such as NIE or IES). The reason is that presidents tend to oppose insulation: they want control, a hierarchical bureaucracy responsive to executive direction. Members of Congress would rather the president be constrained in his ability to manage a given agency, if only to keep their lines of influence open into the bureaucracy in ways that benefit their own favored interests. These preferences are hardened or mitigated by party control; divided government generally enhances insulation, because a Congress (or even a chamber of Congress) controlled by an opposing party will be more cautious about allowing executive flexibility—as we will see with the long process that reauthorized OERI in 1994, or the 2002 authorization of IES.[18]

To be sure, Kaestle is right to say that there is no structural "haven from politics. . . . Politics can scale any walls in Washington, especially if the walls were built with federal dollars."[19] Yet at the same time, the bureaucracy literature makes clear that politics can help erect insulating walls as well as knock them over. Politics, that is, is all about shifting incentives and imperatives, and the conditions under which they are altered. And in some cases, Congress has indeed been convinced to recuse itself from interference. The repeated rounds of military base closings, for example, attempt to rationalize the nation's overall security posture by imposing pain on numerous individual districts—achieved by delegating the task to an independent commission, whose work must be accepted or rejected as a whole. Likewise, legislators have periodically granted presidents "fast track" authority to reach agreements over tariffs and trade issues. Here, too, members of Congress agree to accept or reject the president's offering as a whole, without seeking to pick it apart to protect parochial interests.[20]

There are good examples, too, of bureaucratic autonomy. The Federal Reserve, for instance, is led by a board made up of appointees with long (fourteen-year), staggered terms. Better yet, the Fed is self-funding, and, thus, in a position both to avoid budget season pandering and to pay its analytic personnel well enough to compete for the best newly minted economics PhDs. NSF and NIH, as noted earlier, are also well-respected science bureaucracies. Their autonomies create what former education commissioner Harold Howe called, rather enviously, a "permanent cadre of really capable people" that give an agency "the kind of respect" that helps "fend off political invasions."[21] Such personnel also institutionalize a professional research ethos within an organization.

The key question, then, becomes whether there are conditions under which moving education research off the partisan target range can be made politically—that is, electorally—profitable. To be sure, the course of the educational infrastructure has rarely run this way. But as we will see, IES was a self-conscious effort to move in this direction, helped along, in part, by the high salience of the No Child Left Behind Act and the political cover it provided.

"SIMPLY TO COLLECT INFORMATION": EDUCATION RESEARCH, 1867–1954

As noted at the outset, the nineteenth-century department of education's statutory assignment was to gather and disseminate "statistics and facts" that would improve American education. Indeed, this was its *only* purpose. "What is this bureau to do?" asked Representative Nathaniel Banks (R-MA)

on the floor of the House. "Simply to collect information; nothing more than that."[22] Congress created a "department," in name. But this exalted status was not backed up in fact. The organization was to be headed not by a cabinet-level secretary but by a commissioner overseeing just four employees.

Still, that Banks' assurance was necessary illuminates the disputes over the new agency's structure and reach. Though some argued data gathering was sufficient reform—that information about good practices could be used as leverage to force (if only by embarrassment) educational improvement, an argument with obvious echoes today—many had wanted more, structurally and substantively.[23] Some urged a full department of public instruction or a national "agent for education," housed perhaps in the Smithsonian Institution. Horace Mann thought that secessionism could be forestalled by national education reforms, and after the Civil War, Congress debated a resolution to "enforce education, without regard to race or color, upon the population of all such States as shall fall below a standard to be established by Congress."[24]

National standards, even leaving race aside, represented a position that then, as now, scared off fans of state autonomy. In pushing, instead, for a circumscribed agency, critics joined constitutional concerns about the federal government's legitimate role in education with state education officers' reluctance to share authority. The first commissioner, Henry Barnard, had grand schemes "just shy of federal control" for leveraging centralized power over how states organized and implemented their educational systems.[25] Instead, in 1868, Congress quickly made the agency's nomenclature consistent with its limited powers, creating an "Office of Education" within the Department of the Interior and cutting the commissioner's salary by 25 percent.[26]

Under the long tenure of John Eaton, the bureau's second commissioner, the agency attained some organizational stability. Its functions remained limited, though, resolutely centered on information gathering and coordination. It watched rather than drove the field's research interests, and did not have the funding to adequately disseminate its findings.[27] Later commissioners such as William Torrey Harris (1889–1906) were well-regarded by educators but not by public administrators (who decried his "degree of indifference with regard to . . . detail") or members of Congress. These failings limited the agency's appropriations and undercut the efficacy of its services.[28] A small but telling detail is that the commissioner's salary remained at its 1868 level of $3,000 per annum until a decade into the twentieth century. At the same time, the bureau lost autonomy, attracting extraneous functions. Until 1907, for example, it ran a program in Alaska for purchasing and breeding reindeer and training Alaskans in their care.[29]

As progressive ideals arose and spread, by 1914 the bureau was promoting its ability "to give"—though only "upon request"—"expert opinion to state, country, and city officials . . . for the promotion of education."[30] But it continued to oversee the territorial school system until 1931—a huge task that necessarily dwarfed other agency functions and obscured the research role. In 1929 the secretary of the interior recognized this problem, saying he would seek to reorganize the enterprise on the "principle" of "the establishment of the Office of Education as a research organization rather than an administrative agency."[31] In 1931, the national advisory committee cited earlier likewise denounced the half-hearted measures by which education policy, and in particular, research, had been advanced: the department, bureau, and office "have in this respect been minor agencies of the Government attempting to cope with a major interest."[32] To achieve the "truth" available through scientific management, more funding was necessary, but so was an organizational revamping. Research needed "adequate status," clout sufficient to make policymakers take it seriously and permit it "to present forcibly both to Congress and to the President" the scientific facts underlying educational needs.[33]

NATIONAL INSTITUTES

Such uses of force did not become immediately plausible. The number of professional positions in the Office of Education (OE) bumped up in 1931 but leveled off thereafter, and did not rise even during the New Deal's grand expansion of government.[34] The Office itself moved from the Department of the Interior to the new Federal Security Agency in 1939—thus, it no longer reported through a cabinet-level position.

However, the ethos behind the Advisory Committee Report, and the institutional structure it implied, remained ready to be reborn. This section traces that resurrection sequentially through the most recent agencies that have sought to give the education research function enhanced stature and independence: the NIE from 1972 to 1985, the OERI from 1985 to 2002, and the IES from 2002 to the present.

The Research Bandwagon

World War II and the science that sprang from it helped reinstate the early twentieth-century faith in rational administration; Richard Dershimer is one of many chroniclers of the era stressing "the exalted place that the concept of research had reached in the 1950s."[35] The natural sciences were the largest beneficiaries, with the creation of the Atomic Energy Commission (in 1946), the National Institute of Mental Health (1946), the NSF (1950), and the like,

joining the older National Institutes of Health (1930, but made formally plural with a large expansion starting in 1946).

Education returned to the cabinet with the creation of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) in 1953. The next year, the Cooperative Research Act allowed HEW's Office of Education to fund "the conduct of research, surveys, and demonstrations."[36] While modestly funded—two-thirds of the first appropriation was earmarked for research on the education of the mentally retarded—the act was nonetheless OE's first officially sanctioned, substantive foray past the statistics-gathering function established in 1867. By 1960, some $3 million annually was being spent on education research and its dissemination; by 1965 the figure was $17 million.[37]

Yet even as technocracy ascended to new heights of prestige along the New Frontier, the research program seemed disjointed, small-scale, as "Miscellaneous," said the Chief State School Officers association, "as a list of dissertation titles."[38] A series of organizational efforts, combined with increased appropriations, were therefore undertaken to scale up both the scope and the science of education research. Indeed, they were modeled directly on how the federal government had managed research and development in the natural sciences.[39]

First, a series of research and development centers, intended to be large, national institutions affiliated with major universities, were created under the authority of the Cooperative Research Act in 1964. By 1967, 10 were in operation. Around the same time, President Johnson's education task force, led by John Gardner, proposed the creation of new educational laboratories to serve as educational equivalents of the "great national laboratories of the Atomic Energy Commission." These were authorized in Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.[40] Further, using as a model the Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information, the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) was created as a means of disseminating exemplary research.

But by the late 1960s, key political actors were already dissatisfied with the science of education research and OE's ability to support or spur it. Despite the new centers and laboratories, the research agenda remained underwhelming, in part because the labs, when implemented, were not national, but regional and small-scale. This was based, in part, on two related political calculations by OE: to get many labs operating quickly, given legislative attention spans, and to place them strategically across the country to build local constituencies. "Title IV labs are going to be pork barrel," OE commissioner Francis Keppel told one interlocutor; "every Congressman is going to want one in his region."[41]

Further, while the centers and laboratories were created to match priority research needs with research projects, there was no definitive list of those priorities. Turnover and staffing were major problems, exacerbated by stifling micromanagement from the Johnson White House and frequent reorganizations in a quest for "central management and coordination of education research and development programs."[42] The result was, instead (at least after one 1965 reorganization), that "for days and weeks, people could not find each other's offices—sometimes not even their own."[43]

One dismayed observer was the Bureau of the Budget (BoB), the president's all-purpose supervisor and evaluator of executive branch action. The Bureau, which had high hopes and standards for rational research, supported White House efforts (pushed by Nixon advisor Daniel Patrick Moynihan and his aide Chester Finn) to start over by revamping the research function in a brand new organizational form. "Out of frustration with the failure of OE and belief in the power of scientific research, the NIE proposal was born."[44]

The National Institute of Education

The OE's Bureau of Research had been created in the 1965 reorganization. Though it united previously scattered programs within its purview, it remained buried bureaucratically. Its associate commissioner (one of 15) oversaw six divisions and reported to the OE commissioner, who reported to an assistant secretary for education, who reported to the secretary of HEW.[45]

Creation of a new, independent institute, as BoB and the White House saw it, would afford the research function a status equal to that of OE itself and, crucially, follow the successful models of NSF and, especially, NIH. Its autonomy would provide newfound prestige, which would attract better people both to its staff and to its advisory councils. These better people would spark, and produce, better (i.e., more scientific) research, which would attract other top researchers (and congressional support), thus forging a virtuous circle.

Accordingly, Nixon's message to Congress in March 1970 urged that policymakers "stop pretending that . . . we are significantly applying science and technology to the techniques of teaching."[46] The NIE he outlined would have the ability to hire a "permanent staff of outstanding scholars from such disciplines as psychology, biology and the social sciences, as well as education"; it would conduct its own research, as well as contract with other researchers; and serve as "a focus for educational research and experimentation in the United States." As such, Nixon anticipated a quarter-billion- dollar annual appropriation. The BoB's Emerson Elliott, who became the first acting director of NIE, has said it aimed even higher: "It was formulated by Moynihan as a billion-dollar agency."[47]

The result was significant structural change. After passage of the Education Amendments of 1972, NIE became, with OE, one of two co-equal parts of a new Education Division within HEW; its director had the same bureaucratic status as the commissioner of education. NIE was given a flexible personnel system that could evade civil service constraints and the authority to carry funds over from year to year, so as to underwrite long-term research programs. It could also spend 10 percent of its budget on its own internal research programs.[48]

These results are in line with Lewis's argument that divided government, especially when accompanied by marked distrust of the president by Congress, leads to additional insulation. Indeed, Democrats in Congress went so far as to endow the 15 members of the new agency's National Council on Educational Research (NCER) with fixed terms and a good deal of their own policymaking authority. NIE, legislators stressed, must be independent of OE—willing and able to "spit in [its] eye," as Rep. John Brademas (D-Ind.) put it.[49]

The Nixon administration (especially after Moynihan left the government) would prove apathetic toward the new institute, and Congress little more passionate.[50] Chester Finn calls Brademas "arguably the last member of Congress to give a damn" about education research or knowledge generation.[51] In the end, apathy turned to hostility, and structure could not overcome it. Michael Timpane, who directed NIE in the late 1970s, later noted that it "inherited at best a mixed bag of research projects, was slow to organize, inexpert at explaining itself, and soon fell from political grace."[52] As a clear indicator of the latter plunge, consider that Nixon's half-billion-dollar agency would wind up at $75 million by fiscal year 1974, $70 million the following year, and barely $50 million 10 years later. Even the $75 million was consumed by previously committed projects and did not allow for new work with an independent NIE imprint.[53]

One reason for NIE's failure, to be sure, was a dearth of political acuity. Certainly its first full-time director, Thomas Glennan, had few connections to the education research community, or to Congress.[54] Another reason was that OE continued to carry out activities that seemed to duplicate what NIE was funding. Yet even as NIE was criticized for, as Rep. Edith Green put it, "plowing the same ground over and over," when the agency sought to carry out new experimental work, members of Congress were slow to understand its import.[55] Sen. Warren Magnuson's (D-WA) 1974 exchange with NIE director Thomas Glennan sets the tone:

Magnuson: You mean you cannot read about it?

Glennan: No. It is set up as an experiment.
M: They have got reports on it. I am sure they have.
G: No, they do not. We are helping to produce them.
M: They have their own reports.
G: They have not introduced [these tests] as yet.
M: You could get the reports.[56]

Thus, NIE's structural autonomy, so clear in statute, was never allowed to take tangible form. On Capitol Hill, Congress battered it with a lethal combination of cuts and earmarks. The education research community has rarely been a unified political interest, and NIE failed to attract support from local educators or (as its funding vanished) education researchers. NCER failed to help much in this regard; even when its members had individual clout, they rarely used it on behalf of NIE.[57] On the other hand, the R&D centers and, especially, the regional laboratories, had what OERI's Cross would call "a wonderful political network" centered on a Council for Educational Development and Research (CEDaR) that "protected them from everything" from budget cuts to NIE attempts to control their behavior.[58] As the centers and labs evolved, the former had become home to larger-scale research projects and the labs providers of technical assistance to states and school districts. The local focus of the latter had (as OE had, in fact, predicted) made them important to local constituencies and, thus, to members of Congress. Legislators therefore consistently mandated the preservation of their regional structure and their funding from NIE interference and/or competition, even during the huge cuts in NIE appropriations in the early 1980s. CEDaR was unsympathetic, arguing that NIE ("a disappointment from the outset") could have leveraged the labs' political connections instead of trying to hamstring them.[59]

At the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, executive interference (in terms of both action and inaction) was also problematic. An early delay in appointing the members of NCER, given that board's many powers, proved problematic in developing agency priorities and requesting start-up funding—leading to a lawsuit when the agency sought to move ahead on these matters without the as-yet-nonexistent board's approval. As with OE, turnover was a constant problem in long-term planning; during NIE's 13-year tenure it had six directors plus five acting directors, and was subject to constant reorganizations—four between August 1972 and November 1974 alone. These did not succeed in repositioning the agency to gain congressional favor. A later reshuffle under director Patricia Graham simplified agency structure and better linked its organization to its research themes. While she felt this allowed

her to regain some funding and improve staff recruitment, the energy spent in reorganization nonetheless proved hugely distracting to carrying out agency functions.[60]

In 1981, presidential attention increased, but in an unwelcome way. Upon taking office, President Reagan fired the entire NCER board, fixed terms or no, and appointed Edward Curran to direct NIE. Curran penetrated whatever agency insulation was left when he wrote to the president complaining of its (left-leaning) ideological rigidity and decrying NIE's basic "premise that education is a science, whose progress depends on systematic research and development. . . . I know that this premise is false."[61] Though Education Secretary Terrel Bell subsequently fired Curran, his successor shared much of his skepticism regarding the federal role in education.[62] Defenders fired back, catching NIE in a media crossfire that further undermined its mission.

One result was massive turnover of a professional staff that felt itself newly vulnerable to outside attack: only 7 percent of excepted service personnel and 25 percent of civil servants at NIE in spring of 1979 remained there in 1986.[63] Another result was the agency's demise. By now, as Finn notes, NIE was "unloved in Washington," whipped back and forth between the parties and "despised by both."[64]

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement

If "the NIE was a case study of how not to be effective in Washington," as Michael Kirst has noted, more successful by far was the National Education Association's (NEA) efforts to cash in on its support for Jimmy Carter's 1976 campaign with the creation of a new Department of Education.[65] Despite the increased salience the new department brought to education generally, NIE actually moved down one level in the federal hierarchy under a new umbrella Office for Educational Research and Improvement at the assistant secretary level. OERI also included the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which lost its independent status but did not gain control of relevant NSF programs, as Carter had hoped. A Federal Interagency Committee on Education (FICE) was created instead, with the idea of coordinating education programs across the bureaucracy. This proved "feeble."[66]

By 1985, after the sequence of events recounted above, Bell's successors as education secretary had begun to think about streamlining NIE. The Department of Education Organization Act provided authority to restructure the research function, and Secretary William Bennett did just that, merging NIE and NCES into OERI proper while wiping out NCER's policy authority. In the new OERI, an Office of Research joined a Center for Statistics and the Programs for Improvement of Practice under an assistant secretary for education

research. This was Chester Finn who, after helping to create NIE, returned to government to help put it out of its misery.

While most in the educational community had not favored the reorganization, feeling that it downgraded the importance of the research function, they "recognized the importance of changing the entrenched public and congressional perception that federal education research and development was so politicized that it deserved little support."[67] This helped convince Congress to ratify Bennett's action in statute in 1986.[68] Still, OERI was structurally less independent from political line authority than it had been (at least in statute) as NIE. The replacement board for NCER, the National Advisory Council for Educational Research and Improvement, was "totally politicized" with little authority.[69] Further, Finn held the title "counselor to the secretary" as well as assistant secretary, making him part of the department's immediate political team. His efforts to compile and disseminate causal findings in comprehensible form, as in the 1986 volume *What Works*, attracted acclaim but also heated partisan charge and counter-charge. The head of the Office of Research at this time, Sally Kilgore, described the interaction between OERI and its critics as two sides that "would rather sink on a ship, if they could hold the flag they liked, than get the ship across to the shore."[70]

In any case, for Finn the research function did not hold much promise: it did not receive enough money and what was provided was already spoken for (Finn's fierce attacks along these lines on the laboratories, e.g., as "entrenched institutions whose primary goals seem to be self-perpetuation," tended merely to motivate their congressional defenders to provide additional protection for those institutions, as noted below).[71] On the other hand, NCES was revamped under old BoB hand Emerson Elliott and given additional structural protections. OERI's priorities became basic statistical and assessment data, and the notion that statistics could leverage reform received new life. As Finn told Congress, "the American people, equipped with reliable information, accurate data, and solid research findings, can be counted on to fix their own schools."[72]

Over time, the new OERI suffered from some of the same problems as the old NIE. It had frequent changes of leadership, each of which shifted the direction of the research agenda and, thus, undercut support for long-term projects.[73] Most new monies it received were encumbered by newly assigned duties, such as programs serving the gifted and talented, math and science students, or literacy. It was difficult to attract a first-rate staff, a problem assistant secretary Diane Ravitch attributed to the OERI's lack of autonomy and funding. She also noted that OERI provided an example of a "bizarre reversal of the classic 'iron triangle,'" whereby the interests supported by the agency

and its legislative overseers did not protect it from interference, but rather sought actively to "keep it enfeebled" and permeable; "fearing that administrators would pursue political or ideological ends, lawmakers . . . had written into law every program that we manage, with strong safeguards that make each one almost impervious to legitimate review."[74] Among other statutory controls, legislators continued to keep the labs and centers independent forces. As a spoof performer at a 1996 retirement party at OERI crooned, "Centers and Labs, Centers and Labs / They play their game, while we pay the tab / They'll never lose their luster / And we can't have one."[75]

Reauthorizing OERI

OERI came due for reauthorization in 1991. Leading up to that date (and extending past it), a variety of new structural ideas were debated, with issues of politicization and, thus, insulation, front and center. Rep. Major Owens (D-NY) took the lead, arguing strongly that OERI needed to be "depoliticized, so that priorities can be properly identified and research activities can gain the kinds of credibility and support they merit." He favored the restoration of a powerful policy board composed largely of researchers and practitioners, supported by an independent staff from the department. The board would oversee OERI operations and spending; as with NCER in the days of NIE, this represented a structural means of keeping OERI out of "opposition" hands by limiting its flexibility and boosting field-initiated research proposals.[76] It was, as the AERA's Gerald Sroufe notes, a "distinctly researcher-friendly" draft, as abetted by the access his association had to the Democratic majority, and that majority's distrust of the administration.[77]

At the same time the NSF/NIH model came again to the fore. As Clinton OERI head Kent McGuire puts it, it was time "to take another shot at the same target."[78] Many in the education research community felt that OERI had been too amorphous to build coherent priorities that could gain legislative understanding and support. Thus, the idea was to organize the research field around distinct directorates or "institutes" within the agency. Each was to focus on addressing a different educational ill in the way that NIH's institutes address illnesses.[79] In the end, five national research institutes were created, centered on early childhood education, at-risk children, curriculum and assessment, postsecondary education and lifelong learning, and educational governance and management.[80]

While worried that there would be insufficient funds to support each, or any, of the institutes, the George H. W. Bush administration accepted this approach. However, OERI was not reauthorized until 1994's Goals 2000 Act: congressional Democrats decided to wait for the 1992 election, banking that

happy days would come again. The delay highlights the politics of insulation: one result of President Clinton's victory was that the tight reins in the earlier legislative language were dramatically relaxed. In the end, the new National Educational Research Policy and Priorities Board did not keep control over the research agenda, but rather was tasked to "work collaboratively" and "in consultation" with the assistant secretary. Some funding streams were still constrained: for fiscal 1996, for example, a fifth of the budget given the institutes had to go to field-initiated research and another third to R&D centers.[81]

The institute idea, however, did not work as hoped. Christopher Cross would soon argue that the new structure "created a disaster. It has led to less communication and coordination, unhealthy competition for very scarce resources, excess overhead expenses, and Balkanization that would do Eastern Europe proud!"[82] Cross (and others) thought the institutes would need $50 million each and a staff of fifty or so. But funding in fiscal 1996 totaled just $43 million. Subsequent reviews of the research produced by the nine R&D centers now funded by the institutes were not encouraging; "with a few notable exceptions reviewers found little evidence of systematic development" but rather a focus on idiosyncratic settings with little hope of wide replicability.[83] Each institute director reported to OERI assistant secretary Sharon Robinson, who had other duties that made it hard for her to exercise direct supervision over their research. It did not help that this major reorientation of OERI was accompanied by an additional "reinvention" prompted by the Clinton administration's government-wide National Performance Review. Thus, even as the institutes divided the Office of Research into five, OERI reorganized its existing centers, for example, shifting the Programs for the Improvement of Practice office to an Office of Reform Assistance and Dissemination (ORAD).

Further, as new programs (such as one dealing with educational technology) were added to OERI by Congress, they were added not to the institutes but as discrete parts of the agency more generally, enhancing managerial difficulties and leading to the "balkanization" Cross decried. One result was that research was often bottom-up, dictated by field desires rather than what Kent McGuire termed a "robust research planning engine" guiding consistent priority planning. Subsequent reviews of the work produced by the nine R&D centers now funded by the institutes were not encouraging in terms of systematic development or wide replicability.[84]

During this period, staff turnover fed a "dilution of research orientation and research capacity" as fewer and fewer actual researchers remained part of the OERI hierarchy. Observers compared OERI unfavorably in this

area even to NIE.[85] Further, after Robinson's relatively long tenure, a series of acting assistant secretaries were put in place; and these, some observers argued, were "those closely identified with the top political leadership of the Department." At the same time, the administration decided to use OERI staff and discretionary funds to develop and oversee a system of voluntary national tests for fourth and eighth graders, leading to further charges that the agency had been politicized for the president's policy purposes.[86] Congress reacted harshly to the testing proposal, finally forcing the issue out of OERI's purview.

Indeed, the legislative climate had cooled globally. With the elimination of the Select Committee on Education after the 1994 elections, research interests found themselves outside looking in. Rep. Michael Castle (R-DE), chair of the House Education Reform Subcommittee, had a long list of complaints about OERI, including "the creeping influence of short-lived partisan or political operatives, the funding and dissemination of questionable studies, programs, and practices, and an overly bureaucratic office with no real sense of mission, mired by duplicative programs and competing interests."[87] In this environment, not surprisingly, yet another new structure began to take form.

The Institute of Education Sciences

Reauthorization of OERI was due in 1999, but had to compete for attention with the higher-priority Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also ready for reauthorization that year. The ESEA process was not completed until the very end of 2001 with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB); meantime, OERI legislation received subcommittee approval but moved no further. In early 2002, though, the bipartisan coalition that formulated NCLB proved important to passage of what would become the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA).

Rep. Castle, the legislative driver of the new reauthorization, introduced a draft as early as July 2000. Castle echoed some of Owens' rationale from the previous go-round: the purpose, he said at a later hearing, was to "insulate our federal research . . . from partisan or undue political influences." This would be achieved by producing research that "improv[ed] student achievement—not [by] protecting the current structure."[88] And indeed, the new legislation would dramatically reshape that structure.

Castle's original July 2000 draft set a basic template for the ultimate legislation. Blowing up OERI, it created a National Academy for Education Research, Statistics, Evaluation, and Information as an independent agency outside of the Department of Education. It was to be run by a director serving

a fixed six-year term and working with a large (19-member) board of directors made up of educators, researchers, business leaders, parents, and various government officials. Instead of five institutes there would be three centers (for research, statistics, and evaluation), each headed by a presidential appointee serving a like six-year term with boards of their own and, in the research office, backed by a "senior scientist." Some regional technical assistance programs would continue to exist, but the extant lab/center structure was not mandated. The agency was to guarantee that its activities "conform to high standards of quality, integrity, and accuracy, and are free from ideological agendas and undue political influence." Indeed, strict prescriptive guidelines for what constituted valid research were to be set in statute. For quantitative studies, hypotheses would be

> evaluated using experimental designs in which individuals, entities, programs, or activities are assigned to different conditions with appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest through random assignment experiments, or other designs to the extent such designs contain within-condition or across-condition controls.[89]

Some changes were made over time as others—especially new Bush OERI staff, such as director Grover "Russ" Whitehurst—gave their input. The academy was moved back into the department, but retained its independent director, who gained appointment power over the centers' commissioners. The standards defining "scientific" research were shifted somewhat, in part to track those in NCLB. A regional role was retained and strengthened, with at least two entities in each of ten regions mandated; "the maintenance of this system," House Democrats noted when the committee reported the bill, "was a critical priority."[90] Contracts would be awarded by the education secretary but overseen by regional contract boards and advisory committees; extant labs were temporarily grandfathered.

The House majority was willing to give the president line control over the agency, for instance in the appointment of commissioners. But when Democrats regained control of the Senate in May 2001, Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) took over the Senate HELP committee, and his staffers became "an irresistible legislative force" in ensuring that the Senate took action on the research agency bill.[91] New language restored the NCES commissioner as a direct presidential appointee (not subject to removal by the director of the new agency) and gave the post a six-year term that was calibrated to begin in June 2003—thus shielding the appointment process from the electoral cycle. The Senate draft also preserved the governing power of the National Assessment Governing Board over national achievement tests.[92]

Other insulating features of the bill remained intact, including the director's six-year term, and the first statutory definition of "scientifically based research standards" for education that, while not as proscriptive as in earlier drafts, still limited causal claims to research designs that could bear their weight—most notably, random assignment experiments. While IES was to be within the Education Department, its director ranked as a level II position on the executive schedule, just one rung beneath a department secretary and at the same rank as the director of the National Science Foundation. Assistant secretaries, by contrast, are normally at level IV. The director was to be aided by a deputy director for science, and commissioners in the three centers for education research, education statistics, and education evaluation and regional assistance.[93]

The new National Board for Education Sciences (NBES) was largely advisory, but did have formal approval powers over the institute's long-term research priorities and its revamped peer review process. For the first time, the board was to be composed of a majority of researchers, rather than practitioners or other consumers of research. Cementing the research focus of the institute, the bill removed technical assistance functions (as in the Office of Reform Assistance and Dissemination) from the new structure and instead gave it lead responsibility for evaluating programs implemented elsewhere in the department. Additional excepted service positions were authorized to aid in hiring skilled personnel on an expedited basis.

In urging passage of the bill in October 2002, both Castle and Kennedy hailed a new era of "scientific rigor" and (as ever) compared the new structure to NIH. As Kennedy said, "We want to be able to look to this Institute when we have education questions in the same way that we look to the NIH when we have medical questions. This bill provides a sound foundation to do so."[94]

A "TIPPING POINT"? FIVE YEARS LATER

Was Kennedy right? As we have seen, the magniloquent rhetoric pitting "truth vs. partisanship" has usually been met over time with meager resources, with small-bore structures that protect political constituencies and that don't aggregate research over time so much as they simply reshuffle it. As OERI's Cross laments, "when research contradicts personal experience or political ideology, research usually loses."[95]

Yet new IES director Russ Whitehurst, in 2002 testimony to Congress, argued that "we are close to a point where the right investment in the right structure could get us close to a tipping point, where education becomes an

evidence-based field."[96] Has the field finally tipped past its envy of the "hard science" institutes? If so, what helped that to happen?

Certainly the language of "rigorous scientific standards" emanating from IES has been loud and consistent, extending the call for "scientifically based" education research across all program areas. But while such rhetoric is not unimportant—and in this case, of course, it has statutory backup—the narrative above shows that it is also not new. Along these lines, the American Association of School Administrators suggested that the IES legislation "is an extension of current law. Whatever the state of education research is now, it is going to be unchanged based on the work in that bill."[97] Has anything really changed?

The short answer is "yes," which might best be witnessed by the nervous complaints issued by those in the education community most skeptical about the applicability of "science" to education research. For them, the new focus on "transformation" via "evidence-based intervention" amounts (perversely enough) to a sort of faith-based recovery program—an unrealistically dogmatic view of what "counts" as research—namely, random-assignment controlled experimental methodologies. Not all good research is experimental or quantitative, after all. Should rigor, or relevance, be the goal? In mission and execution, IES clearly emphasizes the former, albeit as a tool to enhancing the latter, and the occasional heat of the debate suggests that some oxen have, indeed, been gored.[98]

Still, five years after its creation, IES receives what an *Education Week* survey termed "mixed, but mostly positive, grades."[99] Most observers, even those nervous about scientific single-mindedness, see the shift as "very positive in terms of structure" and personnel.[100] Its legislative authority is "much improved," noted former OERI head McGuire, in ways that are "not sexy but critical." "There is hardly anything in place now that is like it was in previous regimes," noted the AERA's Gerald Sroufe.[101]

For instance, peer review for grant applications has been revamped in a manner Whitehurst terms "explicitly modeled on NIH," emphasizing separation of the review and contracting processes. As noted, the peer review process was statutorily required to gain approval of NBES's cadre of researchers, who endorsed it in 2006 as "of the highest merit and comparable to" that at NSF and NIH's National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)—each of which has an ex officio member on the board.[102] Reports emanating from the agency are subject to a separate Standards and Review Office process modeled on that used by academic journals. The ERIC clearinghouse system is in the process of reinvention and an online What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) has been created to provide state and local practitio-

ners with information on the impact of curriculum or programs, as vetted by strict methodological standards. (The standards were high enough that little was quickly approved; critics soon dubbed WWC the "nothing works" clearinghouse.)[103]

The shedding of the "whole Christmas tree" of programs extraneous to research and the addition of evaluation functions has helped "get the noise out of the agency" and attract new staff. Excepted service hiring approval, restored after being largely wiped out in the early 1990s, has been a valuable means of bolstering personnel. And new budget authority allows the agency to roll funds over multiple fiscal years if not enough worthy grant applications are received in a given cycle.[104]

The agency has so far displayed impressive independence vis-à-vis the Department of Education and the administration generally. For example, while the Reading First program has strongly pushed phonics-based reading curricula, the WWC gave high marks to the rival Reading Recovery program. Likewise, WWC found that widely (and expensively) touted math texts and test preparation software and technology had little effect on student outcomes.[105] Whitehurst himself was careful to cast caveats upon Secretary Margaret Spellings' claims that National Assessment of Educational Progress scores offered "proof" of NCLB's effectiveness. One insider noted a dramatic contrast between the "most *partisan* Department of Education I have seen since 1988, and the most *independent* research and stats agency."[106]

Such insulation is good for the perceived integrity of the institute, though it runs the risk of cooling departmental ardor for institute initiatives—or appropriations. And it can mean that the institute avoids (or is avoided in) shaping legislation with important ramifications for research—the administration draft of the NCLB reauthorization, for example. Whitehurst admits, "It can be somewhat difficult to be inside the tent while dropping stink bombs inside the tent." But, he argues, "better inside than out," in terms of influencing the decisions of the wider department, and says IES has received no "pushback" pressuring it to change its ways.[107]

Other observers also see "détente," so far, helped by the director's six-year term and status as a presidential appointee. They worry, however, that IES has dropped far down the list of secretarial priorities—as indicated, for example, by its relative lack of emphasis in a recent departmental strategic plan, compared to former Secretary Rod Paige's version in 2002.[108] It is worth noting, perhaps, that ESRA does not prevent the president from removing the director, even without formal cause. Further, in a statement issued upon signing the ESRA into law, President Bush claimed the ability to override provisions in the law imposing qualification standards upon appointees. And

though one section of the law specifically authorized the IES director to "prepare and publish" research or reports "without the approval of the Secretary" of Education, Bush's signing statement ordered the IES "to implement" that section "subject to the supervision and direction of the Secretary of Education." Administrative action on these claims could perforate the agency's insulation.[109]

If IES seems to have successfully avoided centralized control by the president, it has also sought to impose its own. Chester Finn, for example, argues that NCES is "excessively subject to the IES hierarchy," which has centralized grant making authority and the review and reporting process.[110] Some would prefer an organizationally independent NCES; as it stands, the NCES commissioner is the only center head who also serves as a fixed-term, presidential appointee. That decision may be re-fought when IES is reauthorized.

The "knowledge utilization division"—grounded in the R&D centers and regional laboratories—has also felt the pinch of IES control. The centers have tightened their research foci, in part to reflect smaller funding allotments. At $2 million per year per center, down from $5.5 million or so, Jim Kohlmoos of the Knowledge Alliance, an advocacy group for education research, suggests there is enough to "fund a project, but not a program," and that the research infrastructure is being eroded. The labs, too, have been handed a new mandate to conduct experimental research in preference to their traditional role of local dissemination and "rapid response" technical assistance.[111]

For some observers, these developments showed IES was enhancing the labs' rigor at last. For others, especially in the regions themselves, they were less welcome. "It's kind of like we're left without something," complained Nebraska education official Polly Feis. And "when customers start complaining they're not being served," Kohlmoos notes, "they go to their member of Congress."[112] This raises the broader question of organized interests—the labs and centers, the large contractor sector supported by IES grants, and so on—and whether they might seek to threaten IES's hard-won autonomy through legislative appeals. Interestingly, IES seems to have taken some proactive steps itself to stock the interest pool. In 2006, for instance, the institute awarded a $760,000 start-up grant to the new Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness, which Whitehurst praised as a "professional association . . . organized around rigorous research designs."[113] The grant set off another round of argument over pluralism in education research—but the bitter edge of that conversation seems to have dulled over time (especially as IES does continue to fund descriptive research). That the conversation is happening at all is some tribute to the changes wrought by IES.

The Politics of Insulation

Any such success is contingent, of course, and so must be any early evaluation. Still, there are several reasons why the politics of bureaucratic structure at last favored insulation of and autonomy for the education research function—why the statute creating IES was different, in structure and emphasis, than past iterations with similar intent.

One, quite simply, was a sense of desperation born from deep dissatisfaction, a notion in Congress and the education community that this was a critical—even the last—chance to make significant change.[114] If OERI was strike two, the next swing might end the game.

At the same time, there was new reason to think that education research could pay dividends if properly nurtured. Ironically, this evidence came from outside the education department: Since the early 1980s, NICHD had funded a series of studies on reading and language development, arguing that illiteracy was its own health crisis. By the latter 1990s, this research generated evidence on the effectiveness of phonics curricula.[115] This appealed both to scientists and to conservative education activists, who often had additional reasons for promoting phonics over whole language approaches.

The election of George W. Bush provided a policy agenda around which such partisan synergy could rally. The president made education a centerpiece of his 2000 campaign and his 2001 legislative agenda, pushing especially hard on issues of measurement and assessment. Beyond rallying public and legislative support, Whitehurst suggests, such rhetorical leadership cut through bureaucratic inertia; it "provided context *within* the administration for thinking that education research was necessary."[116]

It was necessary, of course, because of the focus of the No Child Left Behind Act on "scientifically based research." NCLB was a critical Bush priority, its blueprint sent to Congress only days after the president's inauguration in January 2001. Though the definition of such research varies even within NCLB, its centrality clearly benefited ESRA. Indeed, in signing the latter bill into law, the president praised it as "an important complement" to NCLB that would "substantially strengthen the scientific basis" behind education research.

The Democratic members so crucial to the passage of No Child Left Behind similarly endorsed ESRA. As research became salient, so did producing "good" research: the link between the measurement required to enforce district progress under NCLB, and the broader rigor needed in measuring educational outcomes more generally, gave what would have been a bill of little interest to most members of Congress a needed push. And as the national debate over education became inseparable from a broad endorse-

ment of "accountability," IES became an agency for which legislators of all stripes could claim credit as a contribution to that cause—at relatively low cost. Insulation became good politics.

Finally, as IES moved forward, its new mission was to be implemented by new personnel at top and bottom. Many of the new leaders of IES were scholars, but relative outsiders to the education research community. At lower rungs, the creation of the new institute led to a clean sweep of prior personnel either by transfer or (using a provision of the 2001 Patriot Act) via early retirement. NCES remained relatively stable, but the other centers (perceived as "tainted" by OERI's history) saw large-scale turnover. This meant the agency could be reshaped from the ground up--though it also meant the loss of extensive bureaucratic expertise, a trade that could have long-term costs.

Truth and Partisanship

No matter the organizational changes, education research will never work exactly like health-care research. Different market (and regulatory) forces apply to the two areas, and to the extent education is a values-driven enterprise, "the problems of educational research are not structural in nature."[117] But that does not mean that structure is irrelevant. If (as Rep. Castle suggested in 2002), agency independence depends on the quality of the research it underwrites, structure might matter to the extent it buys the credibility that gives processes that promote good research the chance to institutionalize. That has not occurred in the past, when incentives have, in fact, gone the other way—rewarding efforts to avoid cumulation, disparage one's predecessors, and leave a new, if transient, mark. Five years in, IES shows promise of revising this history.

Of course, OERI and NIE also had promise. Structure matters, but so do resources; and the "politics of knowledge" is no different from politics as a whole in being defined by who gets what, when, and how.[118] By this standard, IES remains undercapitalized. ESRA authorized some $400 million annually for IES research activities, a distinct increase, but less than half of that is currently available. Recall Pat Moynihan's 1970 vision of a billion-dollar NIE: that would be a $5.3 billion vision today.

One additional question remains, as the reauthorization of both NCLB and ESRA return to the floor of Congress: Will the politics of structure continue to reinforce insulation? That is, Can the tides of partisanship continue to run in favor of shielding education research from political manipulation? Ironically, we need that kind of partisanship--to get a chance for truth.

For their guidance in mapping my journey across this policy arena, I would like to thank—among others who have asked to remain unnamed—Gina Burkhardt, Christopher Cross, Emerson Elliott, Michael Feuer, Chester Finn, Carl Kaestle, Jim Kohlmoos, Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, Kent McGuire, Joe Schneider, Gerald Sroufe, Russ Whitehurst and, through his writings, Maris Vinovskis. Any errors in fact or interpretation are, of course my, own. Special thanks are due to Rick Hess and Juliet Squire. Finally, thanks to Ellen Simon for early research assistance.

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26. Chapter 1
    Structure and Science in Federal Education Research
27. Andrew Rudalevige
28. As noted below, federally sponsored education research is also carried out under the auspices of other offices, such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. Although this chapter will reference that work, it focuses on the role of the Department of Education in such efforts.
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30. Institute of Education Sciences, "Director of the Institute of Education Sciences," http://ies.ed.gov/director/ (accessed July 19, 2007).
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38. Douglas D. Christensen, quoted in Debra Viadero, "Bill Would Remake OERI into 'Education Sciences' Academy," *Education Week* 21 (March 6, 2002): 31.
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42. Thomas Hammond and Paul A. Thomas, "The Impossibility of a Neutral Hierarchy," *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 5 (1989): 155–84; and Moe, "Politics of Bureaucratic Structure," 268.

43. Sproull et al., *Anarchy*, ix; and see Cross, *Political Education*, 153–54.
44. David E. Lewis, *Presidents and the Politics of Agency Design* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 5, 30–35.
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51. Warren, *To Enforce Education*, 39, 47–54, 77–91. The quoted section of an 1865 resolution is on p. 78.
52. Warren, *To Enforce Education*, 109.
53. Smith, *Bureau of Education*, 3–4, 10–11. Note that while the official title of the organization was as an "Office," it was referred to (even in appropriations legislation) as a "Bureau."
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55. Smith, *Bureau of Education*, 14.
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66. Sproull, Weiner, and Wolf, *Anarchy*, 19.
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84. Kaestle, *Fourth Grade*, 56.
85. Christopher Cross, interview with author, April 5, 2007.
86. Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, Ch. 4; and Joe Schneider (former executive director of CEDaR), e-mail message to author, May 22, 2007.
87. Kaestle, *Fourth Grade*, 32–33, 50.
88. Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 102–4.

89. Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 102–4.
90. Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 102–4.
91. Finn interview.
92. Michael Kirst quoted in David G. Savage, "Education Research: Anatomy of U.S. Agency that Failed," *Los Angeles Times*, October 1, 1985, A1.
93. Finn interview; David Stephens, "President Carter, the Congress, and NEA: Creating the Department of Education," *Political Science Quarterly* 98 (Winter 1983–84): 641–63; and *The Department of Education Organization Act*, Public Law 96-88, 96th Cong., 1st sess. (October 17, 1979).
94. Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 109.
95. The Higher Education Amendments of 1986, Public Law 99-498, 99th Cong., 2nd sess. (October 17, 1986).
96. Sally Kilgore (Office of Research Commissioner), quoted in Kaestle, *Fourth Grade*, 57.
97. Kilgore, quoted in Kaestle, *Fourth Grade*, 34; and see Gene V. Glass, "What Works: Politics and Research," *Educational Researcher* (April 1987): 5–10, and the OERI reply in the October 1987 issue, 24–26.
98. Chester E. Finn, Jr., quoted in Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 111.
99. Chester E. Finn, statement before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Select Education, 99th Cong., 2nd sess., February 19, 1986, 8.
100. After Finn, three acting assistant secretaries combined to last one year, followed by a similar stretch of instability in the mid-1990s. On the 1980s, see Jaemin Kim, "As New Head of Education Research, Ravitch Brings Her Advocacy of Tough Standards to Reform Efforts," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 11, 1991, A31.
101. Diane Ravitch, "Enhancing the Federal Role," and "State of the Agency," *OERI Bulletin* (Winter 1992–93), http://www.ed.gov/bulletin/winter1993/winter92-3.html (accessed April 29, 2007).
102. This should be sung to the tune of "Love and Marriage." Quoted in Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 158.
103. House Staff Report, 1988, cited in Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 119; and Gerald Sroufe, interview with author, April 17, 2007.
104. Gerald Sroufe, "Legislative Reform of Federal Education Research Programs: A Political Annotation of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002," *Peabody Journal of Education* 78 (2003): 221–22.
105. Kent McGuire, interview with author, April 6, 2007.
106. Arthur Wise was another key actor. See Kaestle, *Fourth Grade*, 58–59.
107. "Education Research Renewal Would Reorganize Office," *CQ Weekly* 51, no. 44 (November 6, 1993), 3056; and Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 121–28.
108. Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 128.
109. Christopher T. Cross, "The Federal Role in R, D, & D: A Vision of the Future," in *Collection of Background Materials for OERI Reauthorization*, National Educational Research Policy and Priorities Board (Washington, DC: OERI, August 1999), 53–58.
110. Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 141–44 (the quote is from 143).
111. McGuire, interview; Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 141–44.
112. Quoted in Kaestle, "Comment," 384; and see Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 134–35; and McGuire, interview. On NIE comparison, see Maris Vinovskis, *History and Educational Policymaking* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), 55.
113. Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 175.
114. *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002*, HR3801, 107th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 148, no. 51 (April 30, 2002): H 1739.

115. Quoted in Richard Morgan, "Lawmakers Criticize Research Office," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 15, 2002, A27; the hearing was held February 28, 2002.
116. *Scientifically Based Education Research, Statistics, Evaluation, and Information Act of 2000*, HR 4875, 106th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 146, no. 93 (July 18, 2000): E1271; see also Debra Viadero, "Research Bill Clears House without Fuss," *Education Week*, May 8, 2002, 1.
117. House Committee on Education and the Workforce, *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002*, 107th Cong., 2nd sess., H. R. 107-404, 139. See also Rep. Ron Kind of Wisconsin, speaking for the Education Sciences Reform Act on April 30, 2002 on the House floor, 107th Cong., 2nd sess., *Congressional Record* 148, no. 51 (April 30, 2002): H1742.
118. Sroufe, "Legislative Reform," 227, and interview with author.
119. Debra Viadero, "Senate May Vote on Overhaul of OERI before Fall Elections," *Education Week*, July 10, 2002, 37.
120. A National Center for Special Education Research was added to the roster after the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 2004.
121. Richard Morgan, "House Passes Legislation to Reform Educational Research Office," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 10, 2002, A26; and *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002*, Public Law 107-289, 107th Cong., 2nd sess. *Congressional Record* 148, no. 51. (October 15, 2002): S10480.
122. Cross, *Political Education*, 150. After all, as Carl Kaestle observes, "everybody's been to fourth grade."
123. Viadero, "Bill Would Remake OERI," 31.
124. Bruce Hunter, quoted in Lisa Fine Goldstein, "Senate Panel Passes Federal Research Bill," *Education Week*, October 2, 2002, 27.
125. Karl Hostetler, "What Constitutes 'Good' Educational Research?" *Educational Researcher* 34 (August/September 2005): 16–21; Debra Viadero, "Push for Science-Based Research is Expanded," *Education Week*, February 2, 2005, 32; Debra Viadero, "Ed Dept Issues Practical Guide to Research-Based Practice," *Education Week*, January 7, 2004, 12; and Therese Mageau, "Determining 'What Works,'" *T.H.E. Journal* 31 (January 2004): 32–37.
126. Debra Viadero, "IES Gets Mixed Grades as It Comes of Age," *Education Week*, September 27, 2006, 1, which includes the Sroufe quote; and McGuire, interview.
127. Jim Kohlmoos, interview with author, April 6, 2007; and interviews generally
128. Viadero, "IES Gets Mixed Grades as It Comes of Age," September 27, 2006, 1.
129. Grover J. (Russ) Whitehurst, interview with author, April 30, 2007; National Board for Education Sciences, *Annual Report 2006* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Education, July 2006), 10; and Debra Viadero, "Review Process for U.S. Education Research Approved," *Education Week*, February 1, 2006, 24.
130. Debra Viadero, "'One Stop' Research Shop Seen as Slow to Yield Views that Educators Can Use," *Education Week*, September 27, 2006, 8.
131. Interviews; and see Vinovskis, *Revitalizing*, 131–32.
132. Kathleen Kennedy Manzo, "Scathing Report Casts Cloud Over Reading First," *Education Week*, October 4 ,2006, 1; Debra Viadero and Kathleen Kennedy Manzo, "Out-of-Favor Reading Plan Rated Highly," *Education Week*, March 28, 2007, 1; Amit Paley, "Software's Benefits on Tests in Doubt," *Washington Post*, April 5, 2007, A1; and Debra Viadero, "What Works Reviewers Find No Learning Edge for Leading Math Texts," *Education Week*, January 24, 2007, 1.
133. Anonymous interview; Spellings quoted in Viadero, "IES Gets Mixed Grades," 9.
134. Whitehurst interview.

135. U.S. Department of Education, *Strategic Plan, 2002–2007* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2002); and U.S. Department of Education, *Strategic Plan, 2007–2012* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2007), especially the draft for public comment dated February 2007. (IES received some additional attention in the final draft published in May 2007.)
136. George W. Bush, "President's Statement on H.R. 3801: Act to Provide for Improvement of Federal Education Research," Office of the White House Press Secretary, November 5, 2002, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/11/20021105-4.html (accessed July 25, 2007); and Debra Viadero, "New Research Agency's Independence in Question," *Education Week*, November 13, 2002, 26. In an interview, Whitehurst, however, argued there have been "no issues," as IES has implemented the relevant section, §186(a), as written in statute: "the signing statement is not the law." Interview with author, April 30, 2007.
137. ~~Whitehurst~~ interview, April 13, 2007.
138. Debra Viadero, "Control of Regional Education Labs Shifting," *Education Week*, March 29, 2006, 32; and Kohlmoos, interview.
139. Debra Viadero, "Shift in Regional Education Labs' Role Stirs Concern," *Education Week*, March 14, 2007, 8; and Kohlmoos, interview.
140. Grover J. (Russ) Whitehurst, quoted in Debra Viadero, "New Group of Researchers Focuses on Scientific Study," *Education Week*, February 1, 2006, 16.
141. See, e.g., Panel on Improving Education Research report on OERI reauthorization, *Recommendations for the Improvement of the Federal Education Research Program* (Washington, DC: AERA, 2000).
142. Cross, *Political Education*, 124–25.
143. Whitehurst, interview. For Bush, measurement issues, and NCLB, see Andrew Rudalevige, "Forging a Congressional Compromise," in *No Child Left Behind? The Politics and Practice of School Accountability*, ed. Paul E. Peterson and Martin R. West (Washington, D.C.,: Brookings Institution Press, 2003).
144. Chester Finn, quoted in Debra Viadero, "New Research Agency's Independence in Question," *Education Week*, November 13, 2002, 29.
145. Harold Laswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, and How* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958).

CHAPTER 2

The Evolving Relationship Between Researchers and Public Policy

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1. Carl F. Kaestle, "The Awful Reputation of Education Research," *Educational Researcher* 22, no. 1 (1993): 23, 26-31. Kaestle's point was that this reputation was not fully deserved.
2. Maris A. Vinovskis, "The Presidential Address 1995: The Changing Role of the Federal Government in Educational Research and Statistics," *History of Education Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1996): 118.
3. Frederick M. Hess and Laura LoGerfo., "Chicanas from Outer Space," *The National Review*, May 8, 2006: http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=ZDYwOGExMmUxOWYOZDgxNGQxMGEwZjg4NTNhMzQ2M2M= (accessed October 22, 2007)
4. Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *An Elusive Science: The Troubling History of Education Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).