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3-15-03

■ OTHER EDITORS

'No Child Left' law fails without funding

The Anniston (Ala.) Star

It's been more than a year since the "No Child Left Behind Act," hailed and marked by the Bush administration as a landmark piece of public schools legislation, was signed into law. Its emphasis is on accountability in the classroom, making sure that every student in the United States has a chance at a quality education. ...

As the first year of the policy's implementation comes to a close, it's becoming clear that so far it's not all it's cracked up to be.

In a two-part series reported by The Star, local administrators said that while they agree with the "No Child" concept in its purest form ... the plan's road map to improvement is a confusing one, and one that requires many more resources than most area school systems now have on hand.

Alabama schools have been told to expect budget cuts of 8 to 12 percent for the coming fiscal year. Meanwhile they are also being asked to achieve at higher levels, to meet tougher federal guidelines than ever before in regard to teacher training and individual students' improvement on test scores.

There's nothing wrong with raising the bar in hopes that our students and teachers and schools will improve. But let's give them a fighting chance. While "No Child Left Behind" may be perfectly fine public policy, we will never know that for sure until it is more thoughtfully communicated and more fully funded at the federal level.

EXHIBIT O Senate Committee on Finance

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