

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a preliminary evaluation of three elementary school programs implemented by Alexandria City Public Schools during the 2000-2001 academic year:

Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics  
Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy  
Mount Vernon Community School Dual Language (Spanish/English) Program

The principal generic questions answered in the report are:

- Were the programs implemented as specified?
- Were the programs effective/beneficial?
- What were the effects of the programs on teaching and learning in the core curriculum?
- What were the effects of the programs on student performance on the Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT) and the Standards of Learning Tests (SOL)?
- What were the additional costs associated with the programs?

Data were obtained from CRT, SOL, PALS-K, and PRE-LAS test results, Information Technology Services, Human Resources, Budget, and Educational Facilities, as well as from on-site observations. The principals and teachers at each school provided additional program information.

Major findings include:

- Both focus schools, Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics and Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy, met their year one implementation goals.
- Neither of the focus schools met the requirements for full accreditation under Virginia's Standards of Accreditation (SOA) during year one; however, both schools had a substantial number of students in the 375-399 SOL score interval where the passing score was 400.
- Mount Vernon's Dual Language program was implemented in two kindergarten classes but the original design had to be substantially altered due to staffing problems.
- There was no statistically significant difference between the mean gain scores on the PRE-LAS (English) test for Mount Vernon Spanish-speaking kindergarten students in the Dual Language program and Mount Vernon Spanish-speaking kindergartners in regular Mount Vernon kindergarten classes.
- The visual and performing arts focus school model at Jefferson-Houston was at least as appropriate for students residing in the Jefferson-Houston neighborhood as a comparable, non-focus school program in a small elementary school.

The report offers eight focus school recommendations, which address the need for continued evaluation, improved cost/benefit attribution, and eventual determination of efficacy, as measured by student achievement.