

### Arne Duncan – Secretary of Education

Arne Duncan was born in 1964. He received a bachelor's degree from Harvard University. Following graduation, he spent four years playing professional basketball in Australia.

In 1992, Duncan returned to the United States to serve as director of the Ariel Institute, which is charged with creating educational opportunities for inner-city students on the south side of Chicago. In 1998, he joined the Chicago Public Schools as deputy chief of staff to then-CEO Paul Vallas.

In 2001, Duncan was named CEO of the Chicago Public Schools by Mayor Richard Daley, a position he has held continuously prior to his nomination. The third-largest district in the country (behind New York and Los Angeles), the Chicago schools have by certain accounts done well under his leadership. Test scores have gone up, participation in Advanced Placement (AP) courses has risen significantly, and graduation rates are higher. However, the city's on-time graduation rate of 51 percent has been cited as a number lower than most of the nation's largest school districts.

Under Duncan's stewardship, the school district has implemented a number of new programs. Renaissance 2010 was begun in 2004 to open 100 new schools over the next six years. Fifty-five such schools have opened since that time. Their attendance rate is 95 percent, which is 1 percent higher than the district-wide average, while their graduate rate (90 percent) is 17 points higher than the average city rate. Duncan has also instituted programs that award performance pay for teachers and increase the number of children enrolled in early childhood education.

In 2006, Duncan called on the federal government to double funding for the No Child Left Behind Act.

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