

The NEGP WEEKLY

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A Weekly News Update on America's Education Goals and school improvement efforts across America from the National Education Goals Panel

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STATE POLICY NEWS

OHIO COMMISSION ON STUDENT SUCCESS: CALLS FOR OVERHAUL OF STATE TESTS (Goal Three: Student Achievement)

A 33-member panel recommended an overhaul of Ohio's state tests, claiming that the tests were put in place before standards were set. Republican Governor Bob Taft told the CINCINNATI ENQUIRER that the situation had "put the cart before the horse." "Now were doing this the right way," he added.

The Governor's Commission on Student Success called for the development of "clear, rigorous and reasonable academic standards," with an assessment system aligned with the standards. They also recommended providing extra help for struggling students, such as summer school and other remedial programs, reports EDUCATION DAILY (Gladfelter, 12/18).

For more information on the recommendations, visit <http://www.osn.state.oh.us/gcss>.

NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL REPORT CARD: AN AVERAGE GRADE (All Goals)

North Carolina's first report card on its schools found that the state's public education system earned average grades on five indicators (Manzo, EDUCATION WEEK, 12/13). The North Carolina Education

Upon the retirement of Executive Director Ken Nelson, Emily Wurtz has been appointed Acting Executive Director of the National Education Goals Panel.

The NEGP WEEKLY is a publication of:
The National Education Goals Panel
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What is the National Education Goals Panel?

The National Education Goals Panel is a unique bipartisan body of state and federal officials created in 1990 by President Bush and the nation's Governors to report state and national progress and urge education improvement efforts to reach a set of National Education Goals.

Who serves on the National Education Goals Panel and how are they chosen?

Eight governors, four state legislators, four members of the U.S. Congress, and two members appointed by the President serve on the Goals Panel. Members are appointed by the leadership of the National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the U.S. Senate and House, and the President.

What does the Goals Panel do?

The Goals Panel has been charged to:

- Report state and national progress toward the National Education Goals.
- Work to establish a system of high academic standards and assessments.
- Identify promising and effective reform strategies.
- Recommend actions for state, federal and local governments to take.
- Build a nationwide, bipartisan consensus to achieve the Goals.

The annual Goals Report and other publications of the Panel are available without charge upon request from the Goals Panel or at its web site www.negp.gov. Publications requests can be made by mail, fax, e-mail, or on-line.

Research Council, an independent research organization, was asked to develop the report card. A panel of education leaders, including the state schools chief and the chairman of the board of education, are members of the panel.

State schools received a B-minus grade on three indicators: children's readiness to learn; teacher and principal quality; and strong family, business and community support. Student performance, determined by a review of state and national tests and other indicators, earned a C. School climate earned a C+.

For more information on North Carolina public schools, visit the state of North Carolina at <http://www.ncgov.com>, click citizen, then click K-12 education.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

EMPLOYABILITY GRADES: ON THE BOOKS IN WASHINGTON SCHOOLS

(Goal Three: Student Achievement And Goal Six: Adult Literacy And Lifelong Learning)

The Kent school district in the state of Washington grade high school students on "employability," which includes attitudes and behaviors determined to be essential for success at work (Learner, EDUCATION DAILY, 12/7). Kent students are graded on indicators for work success such as punctuality, cooperation and commitment to quality.

A 1996 study produced by the district in collaboration with the Kent Chamber of Commerce sparked the new grading system. The report examined how well district high schools had prepared students for the workplace; and the answer was not so well.

All students receive grades using the "Employability and Life Skills Assessment," not only students expecting to attend vocational programs after graduation.

For more information, visit the Kent public schools at <http://www.kent.wednet.edu>

The National Education Goals Panel

GOVERNORS

Tommy Thompson,
Wisconsin, Chair, 1999

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North Carolina

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New Mexico

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U.S. Representative William F. Goodling
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California

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Wisconsin

Representative Mary Lou Cowlshaw
Illinois

Representative Douglas R. Jones
Idaho

Senator Stephen Stoll
Missouri

TIGER PAWS: NEW BRIGHTON, MINNESOTA, AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Tiger Paws is an after-school program situated in an apartment complex that includes low-income housing in New Brighton, Minnesota. Licensed teachers work with the Belair Elementary School students who live in the complex to give them more academic support.

Stacy Vanderport, a Belair teacher, conceived of the program and sought the support of her local teacher union, the Mounds View Education Association. The union applied for a \$5,000 urban grant from the National Education Association to purchase computers, a television/VCR and Internet service for the program. Polynesian Village, the apartment complex, donated space and \$150 a month for supplies.

Fifteen licensed teachers take turns tutoring the students, helping with homework and organizing activities. Tiger Paws is popular among the children living in Polynesian Village.

For more information, visit the Mounds View School District at <http://www.ci.new-brighton.mn.us/Schoolli.html>.

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

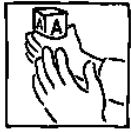
PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE NETWORK: A SHOT AT COLLEGE

(Goal Six: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)

A group of national education reform leaders, joined by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley and National Economics Advisor Gene Sperling, last month announced the launch of the New Pathways to College Network. The Network is an historic alliance of major private and corporate foundations, non-profit organizations, educational institutions and the U.S. Department of Education, all joining forces to improve preparation for and access to higher education for under-represented students from low-income families.

The Network's goal is to identify the most effective means of preparing under-represented youth for college success

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



Goal 5: Mathematics and Science



Goal 6: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning



Goal 7: Safe, Disciplined and Alcohol- and Drug-free Schools



Goal 8: Parental Participation

and helping them gain access to higher education.

For more information, call the Pathways to College Network at (617)426-0681.

ED FLEX: NORTH CAROLINA GETS THE NOD (All Goals)

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley late last month granted North Carolina special program flexibility to help advance its school improvement efforts under the new Education Flexibility (Ed Flex) Partnership Act. The law allows states to waive many of the requirements of seven federal education programs to advance their school improvement efforts. States must demonstrate they can waive state educational requirements that limit flexibility to improve schools and districts.

States qualify for Ed Flex by holding children in schools that receive Title I funds to the same academic standards as other schools in the state. In order to meet the eligibility requirement under Title I that all students must be included in assessments, North Carolina will undergo a rulemaking process to amend its policies for including limited English proficiency students in the 2000-2001 administration of the state test.

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov>.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

TEACHERS AS SCIENTISTS: BRINGING INQUIRY INTO THE CLASSROOM

(Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development and Goal Five: Math and Science)

Several programs exist that provide K-12 teachers with real scientific research experience. EDUCATION WEEK features the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Teachers Experiencing Antarctica and the Arctic as a program designed to give science teachers hands-on experience with field research in the Antarctic and Arctic. The intent is not for teachers to return to the classroom and lecture students on what the teachers did last summer, but to bring scientific

inquiry into everyday teaching.

A committee of former participants in the NSF Antarctic and Arctic program helps teachers once they return from their scientific expedition by reviewing lesson plans that teachers post on the program's web site. Teachers also are invited to participate in summer study periods where they develop lesson plans and share ideas with each other.

For more information on the NSF program, visit <http://www.tea.rice.edu>.

SCHOOLWIDE REFORM: A GUIDE FROM NEW AMERICAN SCHOOLS (All Goals)

The non-profit New American Schools released a set of guidelines to help local school officials make a decision about the best provider of comprehensive school reform for their students and schools. A Blue Ribbon panel released the Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of National Design-based Assistance Providers after spending six months developing, discussing and refining the guidelines.

Along with the guidelines is a checklist of performance indicators and a tool kit designed to serve as a user's guide for the guidelines.

For more information and a copy of the guidelines, checklist and tool kit, visit New American Schools at <http://www.newamericanschools.org>.

FEATURE STORY

PRESIDENT-ELECT GEORGE BUSH: ON EDUCATION (All Goals)

Regular testing of students and increased education flexibility for states will be the primary focus of the new Bush Administration, according to the WASHINGTON POST (Milbank, 1/2) Bush has selected Rod Paige, Houston schools superintendent, to become the next U.S. Secretary of Education. Paige's nomination received a warm welcome from teachers unions. "Our union and local leadership in Houston have enjoyed a good relationship with Mr. Paige during his tenure as Houston's school superintendent," said Sandra Feldman, president of the American Federation of Teachers. "We hope to continue this spirit of cooperation at the national level. His experience in urban education will be helpful in keeping the nation's schools on the path to reform," she added.

Specifically, Bush's proposals call for reducing the more than 50 categories of federal aid to states under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to five, writes the paper. The Bush plan also calls for spending an additional \$25 billion over five years. A high percentage of the funds would be targeted to a reading program and college grant program for low-income students. Under the Bush proposal, states would set their own standards and then test students in the third through eighth grades each year in reading and math.

States would be required to devise annual tests for students.

Democratic Senator and former vice presidential candidate Joe Lieberman (CT) has offered a similar package of education reform legislation. The Lieberman plan also would reduce the federal aid to five categories. Lieberman's plan calls for spending an additional \$35 billion over five years, with more funds targeted to the poorest areas, reports the POST. He would test students every fourth year.

According to the paper, Bush's proposals on testing and state flexibility should have smooth sailing in Congress, with a compromise between the Bush and Lieberman plan easy to forge.

One campaign proposal that Bush apparently has put on the back burner is school vouchers. From the POST: "The incoming Bush administration has concluded that it faces insurmountable opposition in Congress to its private school voucher plan and has decided to focus instead on two other key education goals: regular testing of students and increased education flexibility for states." The selection of Paige as education secretary also speaks to the low-priority placed on voucher legislation. Paige, reports the POST, showed only "lukewarm support for vouchers in Houston." While he created a limited voucher program, Paige placed more emphasis on improving public schools. Yet Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer was quick to point out that "school choice is, indeed, a component of what President-elect Bush believes needs to be done to improve our schools. He stands by it. Whoever he named to be the education secretary understands that."

Bush's reform plan has six basic objectives:

- > Close the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers by, among other things, empowering low-income parents with the option of transferring to another public school or using their share of federal funding to pay for another option of their choice. Bush also calls for increasing federal funding for Historically Black Colleges and offering enhanced Pell grants (an additional \$1,000) to low-income students who take rigorous math and science courses in high school.
- > Strengthen early learning. One option he gives is to establish the Reading First program by investing \$5 billion over five years to ensure that every disadvantaged child can read by third grade.
- > Raise standards through local control, accountability and choice.
- > Give parents more options from kindergarten to college.
- > Improve teacher quality and increase resources.
- > Restore school safety and promote character development by, among other things, requiring schools to enact a zero-tolerance policy on classroom disruption.

For more information on President-elect George Bush's education agenda, visit <http://www.georgewbush.com>.

****Correction: In the December 21, 2000 edition of the NEGP Weekly, the incorrect web address for the Houston Independent School District was listed. The correct web address is <http://www.houston.isd.tenet.edu> ****

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