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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

College Costs: Out Of Site In All But Five States

(Goal Six: Adult Literacy And Lifelong Learning)

College costs are spiraling out of control in all but five states, according to a new study released by the Lumina Foundation for Education (Levinson, AP/DETROIT NEWS, 1/7). Only Alaska, Arkansas, Hawaii, Kentucky and Wyoming offer four-year public college education that is affordable for low-income people, reports the Foundation.

However, critics of the study argue that "the study doesn't reflect reality: 15 million people from all income levels attend college at two- and four-year schools," writes the paper. "Enrollments go up every single year," said Terry Hartle, vice-president of the American Council on Education. "If this is correct, there are a lot of people in higher education who aren't supposed to be there."

Jerry Davis, Lumina's vice president for research, counters that the report focuses on the hardships some families must make to provide a college education to their children. "We're saying students and families must make inordinate financial sacrifices to attend those schools," he added.

For more information, visit the Lumina Foundation for Education at <http://www.luminafoundation.org>.

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 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.

School Takeovers: Making Way In Arizona *(All Goals)*

Arizona's 45th Legislature's second session begins next week, with lawmakers focusing on "how to keep the pressure on [schools] for academic accountability," writes the ARIZONA REPUBLIC (Flannery, 1/6). One proposal is to give the Board of Education the authority to "turn over to outside contractors perennially failing schools," notes the paper.

Jaime Molera, superintendent of public instruction, said that under this plan, excelling school districts, non-profits, universities or private businesses could contract for the job. Molera's proposal also would allow the state "to revoke the certificates of school administrators whose schools were negligent in devising improvement plans once their school was labeled failing," according to the paper.

For more information, visit the ARIZONA REPUBLIC at <http://www.arizonarepublic.com/arizona/articles/0106edleg06/html>.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

Harrisburg's Takeover: Unconstitutional *(All Goals)*

In a 6 to 1 decision, a Commonwealth Court ruled that the state takeover of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, schools is unconstitutional: a decision that pleased those arguing against the school takeover in Philadelphia (Wiggins, Philadelphia INQUIRER, 1/4).

Specifically, the court decision stated that the Harrisburg school-takeover law violated the home-rule and special-legislation provisions of the state constitution. State officials plan to appeal the decision.

For more information, visit the Philadelphia INQUIRER at http://inq.philly.com/content/inquirer/2002/01/14/front_page/.

The National Education Goals Panel

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State Representative Douglas R. Jones of Idaho

State Senator Stephen Stoll of Missouri

Teacher Training: Districts Reach Out To Cyberspace *(Goal Four: Teacher Education And Professional Development)*

Although still in a nascent stage, thousands of teachers in California and several other states are enjoying training sessions via interactive and web-based video (Wood, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, 1/3). However, the paper remarks that the cyberspace training may be "the most affordable way yet for school districts to overcome a long list of hurdles - shortages of time, staff, money, coordination - that has hindered teacher training for decades."

In Los Angeles, teachers use LessonLab technology to improve math instruction. The LessonLab technology also is being used by a number of school districts and universities for mentoring, principal training, coaching, social studies and English language development.

For more information, visit the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR at www.csmonitor.com/2002/0103/p2s1-ussc/html

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

Pell Grants: Upping The Max *(Goal Six: Adult Literacy And Lifelong Learning)*

House and Senate members recently raised the Pell Grant ceiling. It was increased from \$3,750 to \$4,000. Students will begin to receive the increase beginning in the 2002-2003 school year.

A report released by the White House Office of Management and Budget noted that the current average Pell Grant covers about 40 percent of the costs of four-year public colleges and only 15 percent of the costs at four-year private colleges. For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Education at http://www.ed.gov/prog_info/SFA/StudentGuide.

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

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

GED: A New Look

(Goal Six: Adult Literacy And Lifelong Learning)

For the first time since 1988, the General Educational Development (GED) test has been revamped (Samuels, WASHINGTON POST, 1/7). The reason for its new look is to keep the GED test in line with what high school students must know and be able to do in today's schools.

For example, the social studies section now requires students to understand excerpts from "key document," including the U.S. Constitution and Supreme Court decisions. Math questions no longer are multiple choice, but call on test takers to fill in the correct answer.

Another change: test takers can no longer "roll over" a passing score from any one of the five-sections of the test. Students must pass all five sections.

For more information, visit the American Council of Education's Center for Adult Learning at <http://www.acenet.edu/calec>.

Quality Counts: Ed Week Study Features Early Childhood Education

(Goal One: Ready To Learn)

EDUCATION WEEK'S annual report, "Quality Counts," this year examines sundry issues surrounding early childhood education. The report, "Quality Counts 2002: Building Blocks for Success," examines what states are doing to provide early learning experiences for young children; to ensure that those experiences are of high quality; to prepare and pay early childhood educators adequately; and to measure the results of early childhood programs.

Each state's commitment to kindergarten, viewed as a "transition point into the formal public education system," also is reviewed.

In general, the paper found that “states’ efforts to finance and monitor the quality of early childhood education vary greatly.”

For more information, visit EDUCATION WEEK at <http://www.edweek.com>.

FEATURE STORY

ESEA: Signed, Sealed, Delivered *(All Goals)*

This week, President Bush signed into law the revised Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Bush’s proposal, called the “No Child Left Behind” Act of 2001, includes the “largest dollar increase ever in federal education aid,” notes EDUCATION WEEK (Robelen, 1/9). Under the new bill, the Department of Education’s overall budget will increase by \$6.7 billion in fiscal 2002, to about \$49 billion.

“These reforms express my deep belief in our public schools and their mission to build the mind and character of every child, from every background, in every part of America,” said President Bush.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 passed both houses of Congress by overwhelming majorities. The bill provides the “most sweeping reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act since it was enacted in 1965 by turning federal spending on schools into a federal investment in improved student performance,” reports the Department of Education. It redefines the federal role in K-12 education by requiring all states to set high standards of achievement and create a system of accountability to measure results. The bill also requires all states to test every child in grades 3 through 8 in reading and math to ensure they are making progress.

The bill offers greater flexibility and local control by eliminating federal red tape, reducing the number of federal education programs and creating larger more flexible programs that place decision-making at the local level “where it belongs,” writes the Department of Education.

The legislation provides expanded options and choice for parents by, for example, allowing students in failing schools to transfer to higher performing public schools or get help such as tutoring.

Researched-based methods to teach reading are stressed in the bill, as are investments in teacher training.

EDUCATION WEEK writes that the bill “reflects a political compromise by a range of

interests, but embraces many of the president's original proposals unveiled just days after Mr. Bush took office a year ago this month."

"When federal spending is an investment, it gives the federal government leverage to demand results," said Secretary of Education Rod Paige. "And demanding results is what the Department of Education will do."

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov> or EDUCATION WEEK at <http://www.edweek.com>. Search for the January 9,2002 issue.

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