

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

LOOSING DATA: A BY-PRODUCT OF IMPROVED TESTING

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

States beginning to revamp their testing programs are losing trend lines established when statewide testing began and the ability to make direct comparisons with student achievement over time, reports EDUCATION WEEK (Hoff, 5/2). The article highlights the efforts of Kentucky, Indiana, New York and Ohio as they change their testing systems to better reflect curriculum and standards.

According to the paper, "the only way to preserve the historical data . . . is to ignore the evolving improvements in the world of assessment." But testing experts say it's better to sacrifice longitudinal data to improve advances in testing methods and to "update performance standards to meet changing expectations," notes ED WEEK.

Advocates for testing and accountability argue for states to do what they can to save data that compares achievement across time.

For more information, visit EDUCATION WEEK at <http://www.edweek.com>. Click on EDUCATION WEEK and search for the 5/2/01 issue. Or, read a policy brief by Achieve, called Testing: Setting the Record Straight by visiting <http://www.achieve.org>.

FACT OF THE WEEK

Between 1992 and 1997, 13 states (out of 27) significantly reduced the percentages of students in Grades 9-12 who left school without completing a recognized secondary program.

—Promising Practices: Progress Toward the Goals, 2000

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.

TESTING: NASBE'S PRICE TAG (Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Testing every third- through eighth-grade student could cost states from \$2.7 billion to \$7 billion over the next seven years, according to the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). David Griffith, a spokesman for the group, said some education officials hold that President Bush's testing plan "asks states to test students more than necessary . . . without adequate funding." (AP/USA TODAY, 4/27).

Griffith said that 15 states currently test students in reading and math in grades three through eight and most rely on "off-the-shelf tests" that are not linked to the curriculum. The Bush proposal requires tests to be linked to curriculum.

"The costs are staggering, but not surprising to states who have put in place comprehensive assessment systems over the past 10 years," said Brenda Welburn, NASBE's executive director.

For more information visit the National Association of State Board of Education at <http://www.nasbe.org>.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

PARENT OUTREACH: SURVEYING NEW YORK CITY (Goal Eight: Parent Participation)

New York City Schools Chancellor Harold Levy made parent outreach a key to his mission for guiding the city's public schools. Earlier this month, he mailed 125,000 parents a two-page survey that asks parents to grade the tone and climate of their children's schools, comment on the responsiveness of the staff at the district and central school boards and grade their child's school.

The surveys went out in four languages, besides English. The Board of Education also approved a \$7 million contract for a telephone and mailing system that can deliver 100,000 voice mail messages and letters to parents in five hours and a \$4.6 million contract for a translation service to help school leaders communicate with parents

The National Education Goals Panel

GOVERNORS

Frank O' Bannon
Indiana, Chair, 2000

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Wyoming, Chair-elect, 2001

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Michigan

Jim Hodges
South Carolina

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Vacant

Vacant

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Illinois

Representative Douglas R. Jones
Idaho

Senator Stephen Stoll
Missouri

who do not speak English.

For more information on New York City Board of Education at <http://www.nycenet.edu>.

SCARSDALE'S MOTHERS AND TESTING

(Goal Three: Student Achievement And
Goal Eight: Parent Participation)

A group of mothers from affluent Scarsdale, New York, celebrated a successful boycott of tests that was carried out with the "precision and organization of a military exercise," reports the N.Y. TIMES (Zernike, 5/4). Earlier this month, only 95 of the 290 eighth graders scheduled to take the state standardized test did so, with 67 percent of the class participating in the boycott.

The paper reports that while Scarsdale schools were required to administer the tests, the superintendent and other officials "made it clear" in letters to the parents that they did not support the tests.

The parents stated that they do not object to tests, but the philosophy behind them: "that all children can be assessed using the same test." They advocate that the state should set high standards, but each district should be allowed to determine how to assess whether its students are meeting standards.

The Business Roundtable recently released a report that provides current public opinion research regarding the issue of public response to testing. The report can be found on the Business Roundtables Web site at <http://www.brtable.org/pdf/525.pdf>.

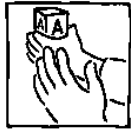
FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

EXEMPLARY: 95 TITLE 1 PROGRAMS

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

The U.S. Department of Education this month recognized 95 elementary and secondary schools for their outstanding Title 1 programs to help disadvantaged students reach high academic standards.

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



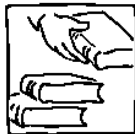
Goal 1: Ready to Learn



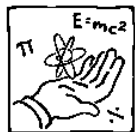
Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



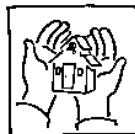
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

"These 95 schools have demonstrated that all children can learn and their success can be an example to other schools that are looking to improve," said U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

The 95 schools were recognized for offering the following:

- > opportunities for all children to meet proficient and advanced levels of performance;
- > curriculum and instruction to support achievement of high standards;
- > three years of achievement data that shows improvement;
- > professional development for educators;
- > coordination with other programs; and
- > partnership among schools, parents and communities.

For more information and a list of the winners, visit the Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/05-2001/title1.html>.

INTERNET ACCESS: WHERE SCHOOLS STAND (Goal Three: Student Achievement)

The National Center for Education Statistics released a new publication that presents data on Internet access in public schools from 1994 to 2000. *Internet Access in U.S. Public Schools and Classrooms: 1994-2000* provides trend analysis on the progress of public schools in connecting to the Internet, the ratio of students to instructional computers and to instructional computers with Internet access.

The report also examines the types of Internet connections used and, for the year 2000, information on student access to the Internet outside of regular school hours and on schools' acceptable-use policies.

For more information and a copy of the report, visit the National Center for Education Statistics at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2001071>.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

PRESCHOOL: LASTING BENEFITS FOR POOR CHILDREN

(Goal One: Ready To Learn)

Disadvantaged students who participate in intensive preschool classes are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to be arrested than poor children who did not attend such programs, according to a University of Wisconsin study (Steinberg, N.Y. TIMES, 5/9).

Researchers followed 1,500 children from Chicago beginning in 1985, who at the time were five-years-old. The children were tracked until they turned 20. The study concluded that programs like Head Start “can pay dividends long after children have learned to read, provided the programs are highly structured,” reports the paper.

The study is published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (5/9 issue). Visit the journal at <http://jama.ama-assn.org>.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING: NEW STANDARDS

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Oral language development - speaking and listening - is an “overlooked” part of literacy instruction, according to the group New Standards. The organization has developed speaking and listening standards for grades pre-K to 3.

In the book *Speaking and Listening*, a panel of experts led by Harvard University education professor Catherine Snow, offers a description of the oral language children should demonstrate at each major stage of development. Four CD-ROMs accompany the publication and they provide videotaped examples of children from preschool and primary-grade classrooms demonstrating the standards.

New Standards is a joint program of the National Center on Education and the Economy in Washington, D.C. and the Learning Research and Development Center of the University of Pittsburgh.

Copies of *Speaking and Listening* are available by calling (888)361-6233, or visit the National Center for Education and the Economy at <http://www.ncee.org>.

FEATURE STORY

CHILD CARE AND AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR: MORE NEWS

(Recently the NEGP Weekly reported on the release of a study by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) regarding child care. Due to overwhelming inquiries from our readership, we have decided to focus this week's feature on this issue.)

A recent study by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) found that toddlers who spend many hours in child care are more likely to turn out aggressive, disobedient and defiant by the time they are in kindergarten (Vedantam, WASHINGTON POST, 4/19).

Controversy surrounded the initial findings of this study as they were presented at a recent meeting of the American Educational Research Association. According to the Washington Post, the study was less certain whether child-care actually causes the problem or "whether children likely to turn out aggressive happen to be those who spend more hours in child care." The paper also notes that it is unclear whether reducing the amount of time in child-care will reduce the risk that a child will "turn into a mean-spirited bully."

Differences of opinion appear among even authors of the study. EDUCATION WEEK reports that, in a telephone news briefing, Sarah Friedman, the scientific coordinator for the NICHD study, "described the children with more behavior difficulties as 'demanding.'" (Jacobson, 4/25). Another researcher, Jay Belsky, principal investigator for the study, said the behavior was more than demanding. Yet he added that although the children demonstrated more behavior problems, "it doesn't mean they are out of control," reports ED WEEK.

ED WEEK also writes that many on the research team agree that they do not have a full explanation for the children's aggressive behavior. Belsky said the behavior may have less to do with child-care and more with the way children relate to parents after hours of separation.

Kathleen McCartney, a principal investigator for the study, said another interpretation could be that parents with difficult children choose to leave them in child-care for longer periods of time. McCartney also noted that most of the children who spent long hours in child-care situations did not demonstrate any behavior problems. "Hopefully our data can be used to improve child-care quality in this country," she said.

Marilou Hyson, associate executive director for the National Association for the Education of Young Children, told EDUCATION WEEK that "the findings suggest that training teachers to focus on intellectual and language development is not enough." According to Hyson, teachers also should learn how to provide children with activities that "support positive peer interaction."

In an interview after the release of the report, Friedman said that asking disadvantaged parents to work fewer hours to spend more time with their children "usually meant a loss of family income, which adversely affects children," reports the WASHINGTON POST.

For additional information on this issue, please visit Education Week at www.edweek; The National Governors' Association at http://www.nga.org/center/divisions/1,1188,C_ISSUE_BRIEF^D_1988,00.html; National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org; Children's Defense Fund at http://www.childrensdefense.org/cc_facts.html; and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/early_child_care.htm.

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