

# 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

### **A STATE'S REPORT CARD: NO "Fs" IN FLORIDA** (Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Not one public school in Florida earned an "F" grade this year, with the number of failing schools dropping since the state began awarding grades in 1999 (Ryan, ST. PETERSBURG TIMES, 5/31). According to the paper, 41 percent of schools earned "A" or "B" grades, which is up from 21 percent in 1999. Forty-six percent of schools got a "C", and only 12 percent earned a "D". The four schools that earned failing grades last year all improved to a "D".

One principal of a school located in a disadvantaged community attributed her school's improvement to extensive tutoring programs, "some led by students from Florida International University," writes the paper.

Florida leaders continue to "tweak" the grading system. The state is expected to soon field-test a science exam that will be included in school grades, and plans are underway to raise standards in reading, math and maybe writing. Beginning in 2002, the state also will begin to track individual student progress.

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For more information about education in Florida, visit MyFlorida.com at <http://www.myflorida.com/myflorida/education/index.html>

## *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](http://www.negp.gov). Publications requests can be made by mail, fax, e-mail, or on-line.

## **BULLY POLICY: MICHIGAN DEBATES LEGISLATION** (Goal Seven: Safe Schools)

Michigan state Representative Samuel Thomas introduced a bill that would require school districts to have a specific policy and discipline code to address bullying (Franklin, AP/DETROIT NEWS, 5/30).

School districts would choose either to set their own policy or adopt a model policy developed by the state Department of Education. Teachers, administrators and parents would participate in developing the local discipline code.

According to the paper, each district would have to submit its policy to the state superintendent by September 1, 2002. The bill (HB 4746) is before the House Education Committee.

For more information on HB 4746, visit the Michigan Legislature at <http://www.michiganlegislature.org> and click on "Bill by Number. Search for HB 4746.

## **COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS**

### **L.A.'S BEST: AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM IS A WINNER**

(Goal Two: School Completion, Goal Three: Student Achievement, Goal Seven: School Safety And Goal Eight: Parent Involvement)

Los Angeles's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) after-school program earned top marks in a study conducted by the Center for the Study of Evaluation at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). The study found that not only do children find the program enjoyable, but they receive higher scores than their peers on standardized tests (EDUCATION DAILY, 5/30).

"The results of the UCLA study are very encouraging," said Terry Peterson, chief counsel to former-Education Secretary Richard Riley. "Most impressively, L.A.'s BEST has shown longitudinally its positive impact on key issues facing families and communities including safety, homework assistance, better achievement, staying in school and enrichment programs including access to the arts."

## The National Education Goals Panel

### GOVERNORS

Frank O' Bannon  
Indiana, Chair, 2000

Jim Geringer  
Wyoming, Chair-elect, 2001

John Engler  
Michigan

Jim Hodges  
South Carolina

Frank Keating  
Oklahoma

Paul E. Patton  
Kentucky

Jeanne Shaheen  
New Hampshire

Tom Vilsack  
Iowa

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Vacant

Vacant

### MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman  
New Mexico

U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords  
Vermont

U.S. Representative George Miller  
California

Vacant

### STATE LEGISLATORS

Representative G. Spencer Coggs  
Wisconsin

Representative Mary Lou Cowlshaw  
Illinois

Representative Douglas R. Jones  
Idaho

Senator Stephen Stoll  
Missouri

Los Angeles school district leaders plan to have programs like BEST in all of its elementary and middle schools by 2005. San Jose, Sacramento and San Diego have used the Los Angeles program as a model for their after-school programs.

For more information on UCLA's Center for the Study of Evaluation, visit <http://www.cse.ucla.edu>.

## STANDARD & POOR'S: INTO EVALUATING SCHOOLS (All Goals)

The Wall Street firm Standard & Poor's late last month released its first review of a public school district. The firm, known for "gauging the financial health of businesses and governments," has posted online an analysis of the Michigan public school districts.

According to EDUCATION WEEK, Michigan has a five-year, \$11 million dollar contract with Standard & Poor's. Data will be added annually to the Web site (Keller, 5/30). The firm is hoping that more school systems will contract for services provided by its new school evaluation division. Pennsylvania already has hired Standard & Poor's, with an evaluation expected to come online in the fall.

For more information, visit Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services at <http://www.ses.standardandpoors.com>

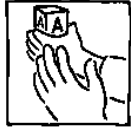
## FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

### BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS: 264 TOP PERFORMERS (All Goals)

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige late last month announced the 264 public and private elementary schools awarded a Blue Ribbon. The 18-year-old program highlights schools around the country that have excelled in school leadership, teaching, curriculum, student achievement and parental involvement.

Paige added that the schools shared several characteristics, including:

## THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



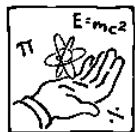
Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



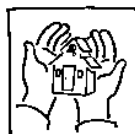
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

- > a clear vision and shared sense of mission;
- > a challenging, up-to-date curriculum;
- > policies and practices to ensure a safe campus conducive to learning;
- > evidence of family involvement; and
- > a commitment to help all students achieve high standards.

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

### SPECIAL EDUCATION AND DISCIPLINE: A TOUGH STANCE (Goal Seven: Safe Schools)

Students with disabilities could be disciplined in the same manner as other students, under an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act passed late May in the House. Students with disabilities could be suspended, expelled or offered alternative instruction if they were involved in serious offenses involving drugs, weapons or aggravated assault.

Representative Charlie Norwood (Georgia), sponsor of the amendment, said the bill would "create a safer and fairer school environment," writes EDUCATION WEEK (Fine, 5/30).

However, Lynda Van Kuren, a spokeswoman for the Council for Exceptional Children, told the paper that her group plans to fight the amendment. "We hope the rest of Congress understands the detrimental effects of suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities," she said.

For more information, visit the Council for Exceptional Children at <http://www.cec.sped.org>, or the office of Representative Charlie Norwood at <http://www.house.gov/norwood>.

## RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH: NEW PROGRAM FROM ACHIEVE AND THE COLLEGE BOARD** (Goal Five: Math And Science)

Achieve's Mathematics Achievement Partnership has joined with The College Board to produce a package of professional development, classroom tests and an 8th-grade end-of-course exam in math. This is the first time the College Board has worked below the high school level.

The fourteen states that already are part of the Mathematics Achievement Partnership will receive the math package. According to EDUCATION WEEK that means that 40 percent of the nation's middle school students will participate in the project.

For more information, visit Achieve at <http://www.achieve.org> or The College Board at <http://www.collegeboard.com>

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT: AN EDUCATION FOR THE YOUNG** (Goal Eight: Parent Involvement)

Educating Children for Parenting is a 25-year-old program designed for elementary and middle school students that introduces to young students the joys and responsibilities of parenthood. According to EDUCATION WEEK, the program's curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of even the youngest students (Jacobson, 6/6). For example, the youngest students may learn that words can be helpful or hurtful to a young child. Older students can be exposed to more complex theories of child development.

Some critics claim that children in preschool or elementary school are far too young to understand the meaning of being a good parent. "People aren't interested in child development until they have a baby," said David Elkind, professor of child development at Tufts University. "It's hard for kids at that stage to reflect on their own behavior and to take on the parent's role."

For more information on parenting and parenting education, visit the National Parenting Education Network at <http://www.npen.crc.uiuc.edu>.

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## FEATURE STORY

### THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION: NCES REPORTS (All Goals)

Americans of all ages are enrolling in schools at greater numbers, according to the newly released annual report from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), *The Condition of Education 2001*. The report includes a vast amount of data that gives shape to education in America.

Fifty-nine indicators convey the most current information about enrollment, outcomes, context and support for education. The report also presents the United States ranking on international comparisons. This year's report, in addition to focusing on the scope and quality of American education, highlights first-generation college students and the factors that increase their likelihood of entering college and educational success.

Although U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige notes several positive trends in the document, he cautions that, "The Condition of Education tells us concretely that we are far from where we need to be in terms of student performance. We are failing to close the persistent achievement and attainment gaps - and we lag behind other developed nations in mathematics and science achievement."

The gaps in achievement begin early in the education process. From the beginning of kindergarten to the end of first grade, most children show significant improvement in reading and math, but initial gaps in achievement, that are associated with a child's mother's education, remain. Children from better-educated families continue to score higher and acquire more advanced skills and knowledge as they progress through first grade than children from less educated families.

Other findings from the report:

- > Among high school graduates whose parents had no postsecondary education, the enrollment rate of those who took advanced math (64 percent) greatly exceeded the enrollment rates of their peers who did not take advanced math (ranging from 4 to 34 percent).
  - > While the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) shows that reading performance has improved since 1971 for 9- and 13-year-olds, scores have not improved for 17-year-olds. Although the long-term trend data show a decrease in the performance gap between whites and blacks, most of this reduction occurred between 1971 and 1988.
  - > Trends in science performance are characterized by declines in the 1970s, increases during the 1980s and 1990s, and mostly unchanged performance since then. The black-white achievement gap remains unchanged.
  - > Not only do more high school graduates now enroll in college - but also more of them do so immediately after high school.
  - > The percentage of high school students armed or fighting at schools has fallen since 1993, although threats and weapons injuries are unchanged.
  - > More people are finishing high school. From 1972 to 1999, the percentage of 16- to 24-year old dropouts fell from 15 percent to 11 percent.
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- > The likelihood of earning some degree after high school has risen since 1983. More black and white students go on to college, however there has been no change in the number of Hispanic high school students who go on to college.
- > Women earn more than half of the nation's bachelor's degrees.

For more information and a copy of the full text of the report, visit NCES at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubinfo.asp?pubid+2001072>.

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