

# The NEGP WEEKLY

June 15, 2001

Volume 2 — No. 105



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

## CONTENTS:

**STATE POLICY NEWS.....Page 1**

**COMMUNITY AND  
LOCAL NEWS.....Page 2**

**FEDERAL POLICY  
NEWS.....Page 3**

**RESEARCH AND  
EDUCATION PRACTICE...Page 4**

**FEATURE STORY.....Page 5**

## STATE POLICY NEWS

### **STATE SPENDING ON EDUCATION: MINNESOTA MAY TAKE FULL SHARE** (All Goals)

Minnesota Governor Jessie Ventura plans to shift education financing from the local property-tax base to the state (Bowman, EDUCATION WEEK, 6/6). Currently, the state picks up about 70 percent of the cost of running schools, which includes teacher salaries, books and fuel bills. According to the paper, the rest is covered by local property taxes.

In a speech before the state legislature, Governor Ventura explained key elements of his proposal, which include:

- > Eliminate the state-mandated general education property tax levy and other property tax levies that fund state-wide or regional, rather than local needs.
- > Make the school funding system more uniform across school districts by increasing the general education per-pupil amount by \$310 per student by replacing that same amount of referendum revenue with state funding.

Senator Sandra Pappas, chairwoman of the senate education committee, said that while it is possible to shift education funding to the state, she does not believe a "total takeover is that wise." Pappas: "It means we're moving away from funding education with a fairly stable source of revenue - property tax - to less reliable income and sales taxes, . . . "

For more information, visit Governor Ventura's web site at <http://www.mainserver.state.mn.us/governor>. Click on "Current News" and scroll down to May 25, 2001.

The NEGP WEEKLY is a publication of:  
The National Education Goals Panel  
1255 22nd Street NW, Suite 502  
Washington, DC 20037;  
202-724-0015

## *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.

## **PRESCHOOL TEACHERS: NEW JERSEY MAY OFFER INCENTIVES**

(Goal One: Ready To Learn and Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

New Jersey's acting Governor Donald DiFrancesco is planning to offer incentives to entice college graduates to teach in preschools (Johnston, EDUCATION WEEK, 6/13). His plan would give potential teachers a first-year "cash-recruitment bonus" of \$3,500 and \$6,000 for high-achieving college graduates with a grade point average of 3.0 or above. All new preschool teachers would receive laptop computers to keep.

Other financial incentives to be paid out over four years "could be used to repay college loans or pay for graduate school," notes the paper.

New Jersey is facing a shortage of preschool teachers and is under a 1998 state Supreme Court order to provide preschool programs in 30 high-needs school districts.

For more information on New Jersey education, visit the state of New Jersey at <http://www.state.nj.us>.

## **COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS**

### **BUFFALO'S ED REFORM PLAN: PRESENTED AT PUBLIC MEETING**

(All Goals)

A plan to divide Buffalo into three districts, each with its own neighborhood schools, early childhood centers and choice schools with special themes received a "supportive but often skeptical response" during a public hearing held last week (Simon, BUFFALO NEWS, 6/6). Parents would be able to choose any one of their neighborhood schools.

Under the plan, most high schools would have a "broad array of programs." Students from throughout the city could attend any of the high schools, with preference given to local residents.

Some parents questioned whether the neighborhood schools would become as "superior" as the magnet schools, which are reputed to be better than the current neighborhood schools.

## 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

### MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION

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

For more information, visit the Buffalo school district at <http://www.buffalo.k12.ny.us>.

### **HOUSTON'S GOOD NEWS: TAAS SCORES UP, ESPECIALLY FOR HISPANIC STUDENTS**

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Test scores of Spanish-speaking students in Houston on the Texas statewide exam are on the rise, with Hispanic students leading an overall surge in test scores citywide (Markley, HOUSTON CHRONICLE, 6/70.) School district data show that four percent more students passed the English version of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Students taking the Spanish version showed a remarkable 13.5 percent increase.

A survey of principals found that the district's promotion standards are a significant reason for the increases. "I think the promotion standards really drive the expectation level," said Interim Superintendent Kaye Stripling. "Give us the standards, the resources and a little time, and we'll get there," she added. "And I think that is what these scores have proven."

According to the paper, the higher scores for Spanish-speaking students comes two years after the state began to hold schools accountable for those students' TAAS scores in grades five and six. Before, student scores on the Spanish version were not counted toward a school's rating.

For more information, visit the Houston Independent School District at <http://www.houston.isd.tenet.edu>

## FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

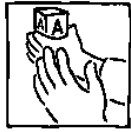
### **SCHOOL QUALITY: INDICATORS FOR SUCCESS**

(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

The spring issue of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) journal Education Statistics Quarterly reports on indicators used to monitor school quality. The article, "Monitoring School Quality: An Indicators Report," examines why some schools are better at helping students learn than other schools.

According to the report, school quality affects student learn-

## THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



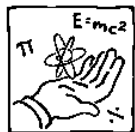
Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



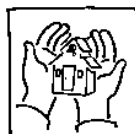
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

ing in these areas: through the training and talent of the teaching force, what goes on in the classroom and the overall school environment. Researchers developed 13 indicators of school quality within the above areas and reviewed national data that shows the status of America's schools. For example, indicators under "classroom" are class size, technology, pedagogy and course content.

For more information, visit NCES at <http://www.nces.ed.gov>. Click on "What's New." Then hit "What's New Archive" for May 2001.

### GATEWAY: A GEM FOR TEACHERS (Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

The Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM) provides educators with "quick and easy access to thousands of educational resources" found online at sundry federal, state, university, and non-profit and commercial Internet sites. Lesson plans, activities and projects are available on over 200 GEM Consortium member sites.

GEM is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and is a project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information & Technology.

For more information, visit GEM at <http://www.thegateway.org>.

### RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

#### LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD BOOKS: THE IRA HAS SOME IDEAS (Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

The International Reading Association (IRA) recommends several of its books for teachers, parents and others interested in summer reading about education:

- > Collaboration for Diverse Learners: Viewpoints and Practices discusses collaboration efforts that involve teachers, specialists, administrators and families who come together in pairs, teams and large groups to accelerate the literacy development of diverse learners.
- > Kids InSight: Reconsidering How to Meet the Literacy Needs of All Students challenges teachers to focus on students as individual learners. The authors call on teachers to reflect

and reconsider their instruction.

> *Ideas Without Boundaries: International Education Reform Through Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking* presents first-hand lessons learned by those involved in the Reading and Writing Critical Thinking Project (RWCT). The RWCT program began in 1997 when educators from nine former socialist countries joined forces with educators from the U.S. and Canada to launch RWCT, an international school-improvement project. Today, RWCT is in operation in 24 countries.

> *Reading Researchers in Search of Common Ground* covers a 10-year period, while Rona Flippo, the author, conducted her groundbreaking study of eminent literacy scholars in search of common ground among experts with widely differing philosophies and perspectives on reading research.

For more information, visit the International Reading Association at <http://www.reading.org>.

### **SUMMER CAMP: FOR PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS** (Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

The Texas A&M University System will sponsor the 2001 Future Teacher Summer Camps in June and July at each of its nine university campuses. The camps provide high school students with an opportunity to learn more about the profession and courses of study at the college.

Students will live on campus, visit area public schools and design and present a classroom lesson.

The Texas A&M University System is committed to increasing the number of teachers its universities graduate and certify by 33 percent by 2004 as part of the Regents' Initiative for Excellence in Education. The universities also are focusing on recruiting potential teachers in high-need areas, including special education, math, science, technology, foreign language and bilingual/English as a Second Language.

For more information on programs for future teachers, visit the Future Urban Teachers of America, located at Rutgers University, at <http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/Bookstore/5772>. For information on the Texas A&M future teachers summer camp, visit <http://www.partnerships.tamu.edu>.

## **FEATURE STORY**

### **AIMING FOR SCHOOL SAFETY: RESEARCH NOTES** (Goal Seven: Safe Schools)

The Hamilton Fish National Institute on School and Community Violence is funding an interdisciplinary research consortium dedicated to examining violence-prevention programs for students (Viadero, EDUCATION WEEK, 5/30). The Institute was created in 1997 and is reviewing seven experimental, violence-prevention projects.

The goal is to target programs that have reported success, develop them further and "rigor-

---

ously” evaluate the programs using common measurement tools, writes the paper. “There are lots of programs out there, and lots of people who think they’re effective, but they’re working from impressions or anecdotal evidence,” said Rickie Ovell, a University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee researcher. “The number of programs that have had rigorous evaluations is very small,” added Ovell, whose research is supported by the institute.

According to the paper, the Hamilton Fish consortium’s interest in violence-prevention programs predated the nation’s tragic school shootings. The consortium consists of the following universities: Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Kentucky; Florida State University, in Tallahassee; Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta; Syracuse university in New York; the University of Oregon in Eugene; and the university of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. The research project is funded by a \$3.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Justice’s office of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention.

Projects under review include an alternative school in Fredericksburg, Virginia, a career-internship program for at-risk middle school students in Florida, schoolwide violence-prevention programs in Atlanta and rural eastern Kentucky and a school-within-a-school in suburban Springfield, Oregon.

“My optimistic belief is that we’ll be able to have several viable models that will be used in other places,” said Stephen Rollin, a Florida State university researcher involved in the project. “And these will be models that will be supported empirically and not just by good feelings.”

EDUCATION WEEK notes that the Hamilton Fish consortium is not the only group devoted to a research study of school violence. The paper cites the Center for the Study of Prevention of Violence located at the University of Colorado in Boulder that examines the research supporting school-violence-prevention programs. However, what makes the Hamilton Fish consortium unique, writes the paper, is that “all seven projects are using the same survey to gauge the effectiveness of the projects they test.” The goal is to ‘build a sort of meta-analysis, a study that analyzes the accumulated effects of many other studies, form the ground up,” writes the paper.

For more information, visit <http://www.edweek.org>

The NEGP WEEKLY is a publication of:  
The National Education Goals Panel  
1255 22nd Street NW, Suite 502  
Washington, DC 20037;  
202-724-0015

NEGP Acting Executive Director: John Barth  
Publisher: John Barth  
Editor: Barbara A. Pape  
[www.negp.gov](http://www.negp.gov)

The NEGP/ Daily Report Card (DRC)  
hereby authorizes further reproduction and  
distribution with proper acknowledgment.