

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

DISABLED STUDENTS: MUST PASS INDIANA'S HIGH SCHOOL EXAM

(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

Students with disabilities are required to pass the same high school exam in Indiana as their peers who are not disabled, under a ruling from the Indiana Court of Appeals. Students must pass the test in order to graduate.

In a 1998 lawsuit, four disabled students claimed their due process rights were violated. They claimed that they were not given sufficient notice needed adjust their curriculum to pass the exam. The students also argued that the state violated the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) because they were denied test-taking accommodations.

The unanimous opinion made clear that the state had given the students enough time - three years - to prepare for the exam and that opportunities to retake the test were available to students who did not receive proper notice of the test. The justices also ruled that the state did not violate IDEA, stating that the federal law only requires that the students receive a free and appropriate education.

For more information, visit the state of Indiana at <http://www.in.gov/ai/gov/state/html>. Click on Judicial Branch and then Indiana Court of Appeals.

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.

OHIO REVAMPS STATE TESTS: ALIGNS WITH STANDARDS

(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

A new Ohio state law overhauls the state's proficiency tests by aligning them with academic standards (Rubin, EDUCATION DAILY, 6/15). The law also limits the tests' use in determining whether students will be promoted to the next grade or earn a high school diploma.

The new law is based on recommendations developed by Governor Bob Taft's Commission for Student Success. Last year, the Commission reported that the Ohio tests were "rushed into place before the academic standards they were meant to measure had taken hold," reports the paper.

For more information on the new law, visit <http://www.state.oh.us/gov/releases>. Click on "Taft Signs Student Success Bill into Law."

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

COMMUNITY INTERVENTIONS: KEEPS KIDS IN SCHOOL

(Goal Two: School Completion)

The Center for Community Change developed a community-based program, piloted in the District of Columbia, that has successfully helped at-risk students stay in school. The three-year Public Housing Graduates Demonstration Project (PHG) used a host of community interventions as well as stipends to motivate students to study and attend classes and avoid drugs, crime and teen pregnancy. Interventions included: stipends of \$100 per month for sophomores and juniors and \$200 per month for seniors who attended school and completed other assignments; after-school tutoring centers in every housing project with mentors, tutors, computers; two visit to local colleges each month to learn to be college-ready; and volunteer "Mighty Moms" and "Mighty Pops" from the community who offered students guidance and support.

According to the Center, four in five students (80 percent) who participated in PHG remained in school. Typically three in five youth living in public housing who enter eighth grade never graduate from high school. Seventy percent of the PHG students went on to college or a trade school.

The National Education Goals Panel

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For more information, visit the Center for Community Change at <http://www.CommunityChange.org>.

ASSIST: DELMAR, DELAWARE, PROGRAM HELPS SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS LEARN

(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

A program underway at Delmar Junior High School in Delmar, Delaware, is successfully improving special needs students' reading skills using technology. The ASSIST (Assistive Skills and Strategies Incorporating Special Technologies) Initiative was developed by Rebecca Kelly, a teacher at the school, and last year was awarded the International Reading Association's Presidential Awards for Reading and Technology.

Delmar is a small school for seventh and eighth graders, located in rural Delaware. Eighth-grade students enrolled in ASSIST saw an average increase of 2.4 grade levels from the spring 1998 administration of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test to the 1999 administration of the same test. Eighth-grade students who did not use the technology improved 1.2 grade levels. No student in ASSIST failed English in 1999.

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

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

COMMUNITY-BASED AID FOR DISABLED STUDENTS: HELP FROM THE DoED

(Goal Six: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)

Last month, President George W. Bush signed an executive order to provide greater opportunities for people with disabilities to engage fully in community life and in employment. Under the order, the U.S. secretary of education is directed to work cooperatively with the attorney general; secretaries of health and human services, labor and housing and urban development; and the commissioner of the Social Security Administration to provide assistance to states and communities in expanding community-based alternatives for persons with disabilities.

The order is intended to help states comply with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* [527 U.S.

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



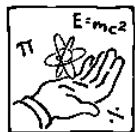
Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



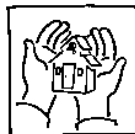
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

581(1999)]. According to the ruling, states are required to “place qualified individuals with mental disabilities in community settings, rather than in institutions, whenever treatment professionals determine that such placement is appropriate, the affected persons do not oppose such placement and the state can reasonably accommodate the placement, taking into account the resources available to the state and the needs of others with disabilities.”

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

“NO SUCH THING AS A VACATION FROM READING”: DoEd’S SUMMER READING PROGRAM (Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Page and Mrs. Lynne Cheney late last month kicked off the Department of Education’s summer reading campaign. “No Such Thing as a Vacation from Reading” encourages adults to read with children each day to prevent summer fall-off - the documented loss of reading skills that can take place when children do not practice reading during the extended summer vacation.

The reading program is supported by the Department of Education’s Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. The partnership was formed to involve businesses, community organizations, faith-based organizations, foundations, schools and other groups in building and supporting strong relationships between children and adults.

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

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

IBM’S REINVENTING EDUCATION: GAINS REPORTED (Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship and Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

In 1994, IMB launched a \$45 million education reform program with goals to improve academic performance for students in middle and high school, to improve teaching and to provide better overall management in school systems.

A three-year study of IMB’s program, Reinventing Education,

found the program has led to significant gains for students and school districts. The study, conducted by the New York City -based Education Development Center's Center for Children and Technology, found that the program:

- > aided grant recipients in creating effective and lasting professional development programs
- > districts were able to sustain reforms they developed using these grants even after their awards expired
- > helped establish programs that can serve as models for other school systems

For more information on Reinventing Education, visit IMB at <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/ibmgives>. For information on the study of Reinventing Education visit the Center for Children and Technology at <http://www.edc.org>.

THE RIVER PROJECT: A NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIAL (Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

The National Geographic Society last month unveiled a national river education campaign for students. The six-month initiative offers online resources for teachers, parents and students, including hands-on river-related projects, games, an interactive river system exploration program, K-12 educational activities and links to educational Web sites.

The river campaign also features an Aqua Heroes contest for students in grades K-12. Students must investigate a river-related problem and create a solution and publicize the issue to their communities.

For more information visit the National Geographic Society at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geographyaction>.

FEATURE STORY

WESTED: AIDING LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS (ALL GOALS)

WestEd, a nonprofit research, development and service agency originally created by Congress in 1966, is involved in a program that helps low-performing schools meet higher academic goals for students. California lawmakers passed a bill two years ago that allows selected low-performing schools to work with "external evaluators," including WestEd, which serves Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah.

Initially, WestEd worked with 21 low-performing schools throughout California, and this year the group added 31 more schools. WestEd's latest issue of R&D Alert features the group's work with El Verano Elementary School. The school's population consists of a growing number of English learners, students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches and "staff looking for knowledge and skills to address these changes," writes the newsletter.

WestEd's External Evaluator (EE) project first surveyed the staff and conducted classroom observations to gain first-hand knowledge of the challenges facing the school and its students. WestEd's EE project staff now are working with El Verano to create an action plan for improving student achievement, including the achievement of students in need of English Language

Development (ELD). “The core of our approach is that we take schools through a process that is collaborative and standards-based,” explained EE Project Director Shelia Weiss.

An individual EE is assigned to each school. The staff person uses a set of principles developed by WestEd as well as others, including WestEd curriculum experts and teacher leaders from the California Reading and Literature Project and the California Mathematics Project.

One WestEd goal is to ensure the entire school is involved in the process of reform. From the newsletter: “The EE provides an external review, but it is school faculty, administrators, students, parents and community members who must come together to write a plan for improving student achievement.”

WestEd also encourages the involvement of the school district by requesting the district to appoint a liaison to each school the agency is working with. “We want the district to really know what’s going on the whole way,” said Fred Tempes, director of WestEd’s Comprehensive School Assistance Program, which houses the EE project.

El Verano’s principal and staff attribute WestEd’s involvement with helping the school stay focused on student achievement. “Teachers here are very responsive to the needs of this changing population, but it’s a matter of resources. What resources do we need in place to be sure every child is going to succeed,” said El Verano’s principal Louann Carlomagno. “People are very willing to change once a vision is developed and goals are in place, but we need some coaching to know how to make that change.”

Tempes added that WestEd only works with schools that are willing “to contract with us on an extended, three-year basis, so that we come back periodically, monitor implementation of the plan, coach them on the implementation, help them modify the plan if it’s necessary, but keep them focused on the main issue, which is student achievement.”

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

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