

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

COLLEGE: NOT A CHOICE FOR FAR TOO MANY COLORADO STUDENTS

(Goal Six: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)

Colorado Governor Bill Owens recently appointed a panel to discover why Colorado ranks 30th in the nation in the number of high school graduates entering college (Curtin, DENVER POST, 8/3). Only 38 percent of the state's 43,000 high school students attend college immediately after graduation, according to the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

"When you have a state growing like ours we need to look carefully at why people aren't going on to college. It's a major economic driver," said Owens, when he announced the 18-month study.

The panel also will examine the constitutional roles and missions of the state's 28 colleges and universities.

For more information, visit the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education at <http://www.highereducation.org>.

VOC ED STUDENTS: LOUISIANA MAKES SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY EASIER

(Goal Six: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)

A bill passed by Louisiana lawmakers drops the minimum American College Test (ACT) score requirement for students seeking nonacademic degrees at technical schools or community colleges in the state who want to qualify for the Tuition Opportunity Program for Students scholarship program (Learner, EDUCATION DAILY, 6/26). The current ACT requirement of 19 was dropped to 17.

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.

However, the ACT requirement was not dropped for students seeking a two-year associate degree. The legislation also "eases some of the course requirements" for nonacademic vocational education students. For example, these students could substitute applied math for higher-level courses.

For more information, visit the Louisiana Legislature at <http://www.legis.state.la.us>

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

TEACHING FELLOWS PROGRAM: D.C.'S EFFORT TO RECRUIT NEW TEACHERS

(Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

In February, Washington D.C. School Superintendent Paul Vance and first lady Laura Bush created the District's Teaching Fellows Program, a project designed to help non-educators move to the head of the class (Honawar, WASHINGTON TIMES, 8/3). Fellows are federal workers, physicists, journalists and administrators. They earn between \$31,000 and \$37,000.

According to the paper, fellows participate in a seven-week program, "during which they are teamed with experienced teachers and prepared by professors from local universities."

All teachers have a minimum bachelor's degree, although most have advanced training in other fields.

Fellows make a two-year commitment to the program and agree to work toward earning teacher certification during that time. They receive a \$5,000 stipend for summer training and \$7,000 toward tuition for a master's degree or to complete certification programs.

For more information, visit the District of Columbia public schools at <http://www.k12.dc.us>

TEACHER TRAINING: NEW SCHOOL OPENS IN CHICAGO

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

The Chicago Academy is billed as being the "first public laboratory school in the country," where it is expected to become a model for teacher training (Breslin, CHICAGO TRIBUNE, 8/7). The school was conceived by Chicago venture capitalist Martin "Mike" Koldyke.

Koldyke and others have hired some of the city's top teachers who will work with "two sets of students": youngsters and a

The National Education Goals Panel

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group of about 40 resident teachers. Two interns will be assigned to each class, giving each class an 8-1 student/teacher ratio.

"Some educators around the nation consider the academy a bold model to address a pressing issue in education: the training and retention of teachers, especially in large urban school districts," writes the paper.

For more information, visit the CHICAGO TRIBUNE at <http://www.chicagotribune.com> and search for The Chicago Academy in the August 7, 2001, edition.

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

HOME SCHOOLING: NEARING THE MILLION MARK (Goal Three: Student Achievement)

The number of students schooled at home stands at 850,000 nationwide, according to a new study released by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Homeschooling in the United States: 1999 reports that about 1.7 percent of children ages five through 17 were homeschooled.

"The number of parents taking direct responsibility for teaching their children through homeschooling is approaching a million," said U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige, "and we expect the next report on homeschooling will reflect growth in the population and new homeschooling opportunities."

Reasons parents gave for homeschooling their children are: they could give their child a better education at home, religious reasons, or a poor learning environment at school.

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

SCHOOL CHOICE IN MAGNET SCHOOLS: NEW GRANTS (Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Eight: Parent Participation)

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige has announced 14 new grants totaling \$20.4 million in federal support for magnet school programs that bring diverse groups of children together, offer public school choice and create innovative educational programs for students.

The grants, under the federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program, will help school districts set up or strengthen school-

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



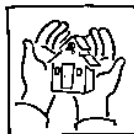
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

choice programs in: Cerritos, La Quinta, Moreno Valley, Pasadena and San Francisco, California; Boston; St. Paul, Minnesota; Freeport and Greenburgh, New York; Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Midland and Victoria, Texas and Yakima, Washington.

Several requirements for receiving the grant are:

- > foster interaction among students of different social, economic, ethnic and racial backgrounds in classroom activities and extracurricular activities;
- > encourage greater parental decision-making and involvement; and
- > carry out a high-quality educational program that will substantially strengthen students' reading skills or knowledge of math, science, history, geography, English, foreign languages, art, music or vocational skills.

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

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

GED TAKERS: DOWN IN 2000

(Goal Two: School Completion)

Although the number of American school dropouts who earned a GED high school diploma dropped by 3.1 percent last year, Susan Porter Robinson, who oversees the GED Testing Service for the American Council of Education, predicts an increase this year. "For sure, we'll see a jump," she said.

An update of the test, which was introduced in 1942 for returning World War II veterans who did not complete high school, is expected in January. The new test will "reflect the move toward higher standards in public education," reports the NEW YORK TIMES (AP, 7/30). The new GED will feature the application of knowledge in the workplace or in real-life situations, like personal budgeting.

For more information, visit the GED Testing Service at <http://www.gedtest.org>.

UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL: AN AFT PRIORITY

(Goal One: Ready To Learn)

The American Federation of Teachers is calling for universal preschool and full-day kindergarten. "It's time that we get it right from the start," said AFT President Sandra Feldman.

Feldman's proposals includes:

- > Creating a universal pre-school initiative for 3- and 4-year-olds, with Head Start as the foundation.
- > Implementing a cost-sharing funding mechanism combining federal, state and local funding with additional fees for those families who can afford to pay, according to a sliding scale.
- > Providing full-day kindergarten for youngsters across America who only have half-days or no kindergarten at all. Currently, 15 states offer full-day programs, with six requiring attendance. Twenty-six states offer half-day programs, with nine requiring attendance.
- > Establishing early childhood centers in hard-to-staff schools and allowing teachers to enroll their own young children along with neighborhood children.
- > Using federal education funds (Title I) to extend both the school day and school year for pre-K through 12th grade in low-performing schools located in districts that have high concentrations of poor children.
- > Creating culturally rich summer school programs for poor students in pre-K through 12th grade that would offer rich academic activities that also involve the kinds of cultural, athletic, and other stimulating activities that advantaged children routinely receive in their communities.

For more information, visit the AFT at <http://www.aft.org>.

FEATURE STORY

NAEP MATH: A MIXED REPORT (Goal Five: Math and Science)

The Nation's Report Card: Mathematics 2000 finds that American fourth and eighth graders continue to make gains in math achievement. However, the gap between the achievement of white students and their black and Hispanic classmates remains open, and twelfth-grade students' scores show a slight drop.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in math was given to about 43,000 students randomly selected in 41 states last year. The test ranks students in four categories: below basic, basic, proficient and advanced.

According to this latest NAEP math exam, average scores rose for students in the fourth and eighth grade since 1990. Twelfth-grade students' scores increased until 1996, but dropped in 2000.

Other results from the report card:

- > The sample of 14,000 fourth graders scored an average 228 on a 500-point scale, a 4-point jump since the test was last given in 1996. It also is a 15-point increase since the test was first administered in 1990.
 - > The average score for eighth-grade students increased by 3 points since 1996, to 275. It is a gain of 12 points since 1990.
 - > About 70 percent of fourth-grade students and two-thirds of the 16,000 eighth-grade students scored at the basic level or higher, both grade levels showing increases over earlier tests.
 - > The 13,000 twelfth-grade students who took the test scored an average 301 points, a three-point drop since 1996. The group averaged 294 points in 1990 and 299 points in 1992.
 - > Fewer than 5 percent of students in each grade showed "advanced" knowledge and skill in math.
 - > African-American and Hispanic student scores showed significant gains, but not enough to catch up with their white classmates. For example, the average score for black fourth graders is 205, a 16-point jump over the past decade and five points better than 1996. Hispanic fourth graders
-

showed an average of 212 points, which is six points better in 1996 and 14 points more than 1990. Yet, white fourth graders hold a lead of 30 points or more over their minority classmates throughout the decade.

> Fewer than 40 percent of black students and fewer than half of Hispanic students scored at least at the basic level, while 80 percent of white fourth graders and about three-fourths of white eighth and twelfth graders scored at least at that level.

> Eighth-grade students of teachers who reported having a certification or extensive experience teaching math performed better on the test than their counterparts.

> Most states showed at least small gains in student results.

> At the state level, a group of nine states clustered at the top for highest average scores for fourth graders: Minnesota, Massachusetts, Indiana, Connecticut, Iowa, Texas, North Carolina, Kansas and Vermont.

> At the eighth-grade level, students from three states tied for the lead in 2000: Minnesota, Montana and Kansas.

This year's report is the first time The Nation's Report Card's math exam reported scores for an assessment sample that allowed accommodations for students with disabilities and limited-English-proficiency students. In 2000, two different samples were used, one that permitted accommodations and one that did not. In each grade, no significant differences were noted in the scale scores of the students who received accommodations and those who did not.

The National Center for Education Statistics plans to issue a science report card in the fall of 2001.

For more information, visit the National Center for Education Statistics at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/mathematics/results>.

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