

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

MASSACHUSETTS: EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

(Goal One: Ready To Learn and Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Massachusetts education leaders have developed new guidelines to help early childhood programs offer "developmentally appropriate" instruction for young students (Cohen, Boston GLOBE, 8/5). According to the paper, the preschool guidelines offer activities and lessons in each subject that match a student's ability. The guidelines are based on the state's K-12 curriculum frameworks in English, math, science and social studies.

While critics worry that the guidelines will purge creativity from preschool classes, others praised the guidelines for being appropriate for preschoolers.

The guidelines must be approved by the Board of Education. Board members are expected to review the guidelines in the fall.

For more information, visit the Massachusetts Department of Education at <http://www.doe.mass.edu>.

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.

CONNECTICUT: ORDER DISTRICTS TO DEVELOP LOCAL GRADUATION CRITERIA

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

New state legislation directs Connecticut's school districts to develop a list of skills students must demonstrate to graduate from high school. Under this plan, school districts will be permitted to establish their own graduation requirements, "as long as they include student results on Connecticut's 10th-grade assessment," writes EDUCATION WEEK (Archer, 8/11).

The paper reports that the bill is a compromise "amid debate over whether to adopt an exit-exam system in which students' scores on statewide assessments would determine who earned a high school diploma and who didn't."

For more information, visit the Connecticut General Assembly at <http://www.cga.state.ct.us>

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

LATINO COMMUNITY EDUCATION GRANT: A CAPITOL PROGRAM

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

The District of Columbia public school system is launching a new effort to improve educational services to the city's burgeoning Hispanic population (Chan, WASHINGTON POST, 8/9). The Latino Community Education Grant Program will award \$1 million in grants to community groups to provide education services to the Hispanic community.

According to the paper, city leaders will conduct a session later this month for community groups to explain the program's purpose, with the deadline for proposals set at August 31. Grants will be announced September 19, with funding to commence on November 1. Each community group will be able to receive up to \$50,000.

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

The National Education Goals Panel

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EDISON: IN CHARGE IN LAS VEGAS

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

A court ruling has determined that Edison Schools, a for-profit business, will operate two North Las Vegas and four Las Vegas elementary schools and one Las Vegas middle school for the 2001-2002 school year (AP/SAN FRANCISCO GATE, 8/8). A district judge last week dismissed a lawsuit by the Nevada State Education Association, the Education Support Employees Association and State Assemblyman Wendell Williams, all of whom were trying to void the school district's contract with Edison.

Clark County school officials unanimously agreed to a five-year contract with Edison last April.

Clark County District Judge Nancy Saitta said, "I have some grave concerns about the program we are going to be imposing on the kids of these schools. I want to make it clear: If this contract brings us to a juncture that there are problems, these issues will need to be revisited."

Edison will receive per-student funding from the state and pour up to \$1.5 million in start-up money into each school it manages, writes the paper. Part of the funds will be targeted to reading and math instruction. School days and the school year will be lengthened.

For more information, visit Edison Schools at <http://www.edisonproject.com>.

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

ARTS EDUCATION: A DoED MODEL

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

The U.S. Department of Education's Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant program is designed to further develop model projects that effectively strengthen and integrate arts in elementary and middle school core academic curriculum.

The program will support projects that develop, document, evaluate and disseminate promising models that demonstrate their effectiveness in several ways, including:

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



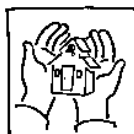
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

> integrating arts into the core elementary and middle school curricula by strengthening the use of high-quality arts in academic instruction and strengthening the place of arts as a core academic subject in the school curricula;
> improving students' academic performance, including their skills in creating, performing and responding to the arts.

The Arts in Education program was created by Congress to provide grants to school districts and other groups to help them further develop promising practices.

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

AMERICAN HISTORY: GRANTS FROM THE DoED

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

The goal of the U.S. Department of Education's Teaching American History Grant program is to support programs to raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of American history.

Under the proposal, school districts and institutions with expertise in American history will collaborate over a three-year period to ensure that teachers develop the knowledge and skills necessary to teach traditional American history in an "exciting and engaging way." Districts must demonstrate comprehensive professional development approaches for providing high-quality American history instruction.

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

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

DATA LITERACY: HELP FROM TERC

(Goal Five: Math and Science)

TERC and Key Curriculum Press have announced a partnership designed to improve the model for teaching and learning middle and high school statistics. The primary research vehicles for the project are two advanced soft-

ware programs, Fathom Dynamic Statistics, for use by high school students, and Tinkerplots, for middle school students. The intuitive, visual interface used by the programs allows students to easily manipulate data, writes a TERC press release.

The National Science Foundation-funded project is expected to reach hundreds of teachers and thousands of students. It will combine data visualization tools with academic research about the way teachers and students learn and process statistical concepts.

For more information, visit TERC, a non-profit education research group based in Cambridge, Massachusetts at <http://www.terc.edu>.

WELFARE-TO-WORK: IMPACT ON TEENS

(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Seven: Safe and Drug-Free Schools)

A study conducted by Manpower Research Demonstration Corps found that teens whose mothers participated in welfare-to-work programs “appear to do worse in school and have more behavior problems than teens from other welfare families,” writes the BOSTON GLOBE (Meckler, 7/31). The paper also points out that other studies of the effects younger children whose mothers are part of welfare-to-work are more positive.

Three studies in Florida, Minnesota and Canada all found that teens with mothers in welfare-to-work fared less well than their counterparts in families that stayed in the traditional welfare system. For example, Florida teens with parents in the Family Transition Program showed lower school achievement and were more apt to be suspended from school. Forty percent of teens in the program had been suspended, compared with 32.7 percent of teens whose families were in the traditional welfare system.

For more information on welfare-related issues, visit the Welfare Information Network at <http://www.welfareinfo.org>.

FEATURE STORY

STATE OF OUR NATION’S YOUTH: A HORATIO ALGER SURVEY

(Goal Seven: Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Goal Eight: Parental Involvement)

The Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans recently released its latest survey of American youth. The State of Our Nation’s Youth 2001 found that American teens nationwide decidedly want parents to be involved in their lives. Almost half of the teens surveyed picked a family member as a role model. More than a quarter of those surveyed said school violence is caused by parents spending too little time with their children. Only the bullying of students by others garnered more votes in this category.

“Having a strong relationship with our families is very important to our success,” said Michael Hsia, a rising senior in Livermore, California. “Maybe it’s time for mothers and fathers across the nation to realize that and provide more support.”

Other findings from the survey include:

- > 84 percent of teens said future success would be defined by whether they have close family relationships. Also rated high were having a close group of friends, making a contribution to society and having an active spiritual life. Making money and being famous were favored by far fewer as indicators of success.
- > A majority also said they do not feel pressured to look a certain way, get along with their parents, have sex, use drugs or drink.
- > The largest problem cited by teens was the pressure to get good grades.
- > 75 percent said they plan to go to either a four-year or -two-year college, with another 17 percent stating that they plan on some post-high school education.
- > One-third of high school students said peer pressure to take drugs, drink or have sex, is at least a minor problem for them.
- > Only 57 percent of teens said they lived with both of their parents.
- > Nearly half of all minority high-school students and 42 percent of inner-city students reported that they worried a great deal about violence.

The Horatio Alger Association intends to use its State of Your Nation's Youth reports to gain a "better understanding of the attitudes, opinions, fears and hopes of students . . . [so to] better target its outreach programs to reach more students at risk.

For more information and copies of this year's and past year's surveys, visit the Horatio Alger Association at <http://www.horatioalger.com>.

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