

The NEGP WEEKLY

September 14, 2001

Volume 2 — No. 117



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

Test Suspension: Arizona Puts Off High School Exam

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

The Arizona State Department of Education earlier this month suspended the AIMS test, giving high school students "a break this fall," writes the ARIZONA REPUBLIC (Flannery, 9/7). Department of Education officials hired a new testing contractor, Harcourt Educational Measurement of San Antonio, and charged them with creating new test questions.

State schools chief Jaime Molera plans to revamp the statewide test before making it a graduation requirement.

For more information, visit the Arizona Department of Education at <http://www.ade.state.az.us>.

Teaching Teachers: California Plans New System

(Goal Four: Teacher Education & Professional Development)

California's Commission of Teacher Credentialing approved "sweeping changes" in the way the state's university system teaches teachers (Hardy, SACRAMENTO BEE, 9/7). "Standards are not just for kids, they're for those who enter the profession," said Delaine Eastin, state superintendent of schools.

Both public and private universities in the state have up to 27 months to restructure their undergraduate

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.

programs for teachers to stay accredited, reports the paper. School districts that have teacher-preparation intern programs must abide by the same deadlines. According to the paper, the standards are "voluminous and range from reading instruction to the use of computers in classrooms to identifying students with learning disabilities."

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

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

Weakest Teachers: Assigned To Most Disadvantaged Says Sun-Times

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

A Chicago SUN-TIMES analysis finds that children in the highest-poverty, highest-minority and lowest-achieving schools are about five times more likely to be taught by teachers who failed at least one teacher certification test than children in the lowest-poverty, lowest-minority, highest-achieving schools (Grossman, Beauupre and Rossi, 9/7).

A statewide survey shows that in five Illinois school districts - Cicero, Chicago, south suburban Harvey and Ford Heights and Downstate East St. Louis —, almost 20 percent or more of teachers tested since 1988 failed at least one test of teacher competence. The statewide average is less than 8 percent.

The paper analyzed nearly 166,000 tests taken by more than 67,000 teachers. This group of teachers, who were employed full-time last fall, "represents more than half of the state's public school teachers and covers every teacher tested since the instruction of the certification exams in 1988.

In Chicago, eight of the 10 high schools with the highest teacher flunk rates last year were on academic probation. Of the 74 teachers, counselors and administrators statewide who each flunked 10 or more tests, 63 teach in Chicago.

The National Education Goals Panel

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For more information on the SUN-TIMES study, visit the paper at <http://www.suntimes.com/cgi-bin>, or visit <http://www.suntimes.com> and search for the survey in the 9/7/2001 issue.

Calling For A Takeover: East Palo Alto's Mayor (Goal Three Student Achievement)

East Palo Alto Mayor Myrtle Walker and others testified to a federal judge that a state takeover of the Ravenswood City School District is the only option for students to grow into "productive and confident adults." U.S. District court Judge Thelton Henderson, who is deliberating on the takeover option, held the district in contempt last month for failure to improve services to special needs students after the judge ordered them to do so almost two years ago.

A San Jose MERCURY NEWS investigation concurred with Walker that the district's administration is not meeting the needs of its children. However, the state NAACP and others have petitioned the court on behalf of the district.

For more information, visit the city of East Palo Alto at <http://www.ci.east-palo-alto.ca.us>.

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

Who Has Computer Access?: Minority Children In The Minority

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

A U.S. Commerce Department study released this month found that African-American and Hispanic children are far less likely to have a computer at home than white children. According to the survey, about 77 percent of white children who are not Hispanic have a computer at home; 72 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander children do; yet only 43 percent of African-American children and 37 percent of Hispanic children have a computer at home.

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



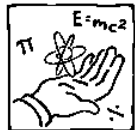
Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



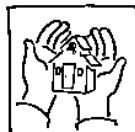
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

The report noted that given the disparity in home computer use, computer access at schools and public libraries is critical for these children. "Libraries are the on-ramp to the information highway for these children," said John Szabo, Clearwater, Florida library system director.

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

Star Schools: U.S. Department Of Education Grants (Goal Four: Teacher Education & Professional Development)

U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education William Hansen today announced the award of a \$10 million Star Schools grant to help Western Governors University (WGU) launch its Teachers College, a national telecommunications network that will provide accredited, online degrees and certificates to K-12 teachers and prospective teachers.

Hansen, joined by Utah Gov. Michael O. Leavitt, made the announcement during a visit to Washington Elementary School, where they participated in President Bush's Putting Reading First campaign, which focuses on the importance of researched-based reading instruction for America's children.

The Star Schools Program supports the use of technology-via telecommunications networks-to improve teaching of literacy and job skills, as well as various subjects such as math, science and foreign languages. The program also assists underserved populations such as disadvantaged, limited-English-proficient, and disabled students. Further, the grants help produce educational projects that transmit course work and curriculum modules via satellite and other telecommunication systems. The grant announced today will award WGU \$2 million a year for five years to help develop and acquire educational programming for preservice and in-service teacher education programs and to operate and maintain the existing Internet telecommunications system of WGU.

WGU is a consortium of 19 western states and about 40 universities. WGU Teachers College will provide teacher certification and advanced degrees in reading, math,

science, technology, and English as a Second Language (ESL). A professional development portal will also be established for the ongoing training and development of existing teachers.

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

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

“Lethal Violence In Schools:” A Study By Alfred University (Goal Seven: Safe And Drug-Free Schools)

Almost 10 percent of America’s students in grades 7 through 12 may have tendencies to behave violently, according to a survey of 2,017 students conducted by Alfred University. And, another 2.6 percent of these students in these grades could be considered dangerous because they have an inclination for violence together with the means to commit a violent act.

EDUCATION WEEK reports that several reporters at a news conference to release the survey questioned the methodology used to garner the data, including the use of the Internet to interview students (Bowman, 9/5). In the survey, students were asked to agree or disagree with statements such as, “I have thought about shooting someone at school,” and “I could easily get a gun if I anted to.”

For more information, visit Alfred University at <http://www.alfred.edu/teenviolence>.

Teacher Training: More Time Needed (Goal Four: Teacher Education And Professional Development)

Professors and educators around the country are calling for additional time to prepare teachers for the classroom (Mathews, WASHINGTON POST, 9/4). “The idea is to train teachers like doctors,” reports the paper. Long internships, under supervision of mentor teachers, would go a long way to producing high-quality teachers prepared for classroom duty.

According to the paper, Stanford University education professor Linda Darling-Hammond reported that both Colorado and North Carolina require at least a year of student teaching for individuals seeking to earn teacher licenses. Darling-Hammond added that some universities have a two-year program, where teacher candidates earn a salary during the second year.

However, some educators argue that extending the length of teacher training increases the cost of becoming a teacher “without doing anything to improve salaries and working

conditions once interns become full-time teachers,” writes the paper, citing Willis D. Hawley, professor of education and public affairs at the University of Maryland. “Even with lengthy internships, student teachers would still likely experience a limited range of classroom problems and instructional situations,” said Sharon J. Derry, professor of educational psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. “Not all mentoring teachers will have the time or capability to help student teachers think about, reflect upon, interpret and learn from the experiences they do encounter.”

For more information, visit the WASHINGTON POST at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A37308-2001Sep3?language=printer>

FEATURE STORY

URBAN SCHOOLS AND MATH AND SCIENCE: REPORT FROM THE FIELD

(Goal 3: Student Achievement)

A new report offers encouraging signs on math and science instruction in 22 large urban school districts. Academic Excellence for All Urban Students: Their Accomplishment in Science and Mathematics evaluates the National Science Foundation’s Urban Systemic Initiative (USI), which focuses on standards-based curriculum and instruction and alignment of assessment, policies and professional development. The USI program has been up and running since 1993 in 22 urban school districts nationwide.

The report found “noteworthy gains in student achievement, with the greatest gains seen in school districts that have participated in the USI program for the longest period of time.”

For example, there has been a marked increase in the number of students enrolling in demanding courses across all USI sites. The average percentage of grade 9 through 12 student taking gate-keeping and higher level science courses increased from an average of 40 percent of total students in the first year of USI implementation to 62 percent in school year 1998-1999.

Math course taking rates have increased from 30 percent to 39 percent during the same time period.

Underrepresented minority students have had enrollment increases greater than the total student population, resulting in reduced enrollment gaps. For example, the science enrollment gap between black and white students in five cities - Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Miami-Dade and New York - has narrowed from 183 per thousand during the school year 1993-1994 to 132 per thousand during the 1998-1999 school year. The Hispanic to white gap has narrowed even more dramatically, from 253 per thousand to 155 per thousand.

However, the report also found that Algebra 1 or above 8th-grade enrollment trends

have shown mixed results. In Cleveland, Columbus, Fresno, Los Angeles, Memphis and Philadelphia, black students showed a “remarkable” 82 percent enrollment rate increase between school years 1994-1995 and 1998-1999, compared to a 10 percent increase for white students and a 22 percent decrease for Hispanic students.

Other findings from the report include:

- * Science and math test scores are rising in the vast majority of the USI districts;
- * College entrance examination (SAT, ACT, AP) participation increases reflect rising student aspirations;
- * Professional development is seen as a key lever to school reform;
- * Partnerships built around each USI site provide strong support for systemic changes.

The National Science Foundation began the USI program eight years ago to “encourage and invest in system-wide reform of K-12 mathematics and science education in some of the most disadvantaged urban school systems,” according to an NSF press release.

“This is a story of school systems willing to do the work and take on the risks of change,” said Judith Sunley, NSF’s interim assistant director for education and human resources. “The report indicates this is showing results.”

For more information, visit NSF at <http://www.nsf.gov/od/lpa/news/press/01/pr0153.htm> or Systemic Research Inc at <http://www.systemic.com>.

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

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