

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

California Bonuses: Teachers Earn Rewards
(Goal Three: Student Achievement & Citizenship & Goal Four: Teacher Education & Professional Development)

Teachers and other school staff working in struggling schools that showed the best test-score increases two years in a row on the state's Stanford 9 test earned onetime bonuses of \$5,000, \$10,000 and \$25,000 (May, San Francisco CHRONICLE, 8/70. According to the paper, about 7,500 teachers and administrators will receive \$5,000 each, 3,750 will receive \$10,000 and 1,056 will receive the top bonus of \$25,000.

"The program is designed to attract and retain our best teachers and staff where the need is greatest," said state Education Secretary Kerry Mazzoni.

However, some educators complained that too much emphasis was being placed on test scores. "Why don't they just pay teachers more all around?" questioned Principal Virginia Green, who is one of the recipients of \$10,000.

Closing The Gap: News From A Georgia Commission

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Georgia Governor Roy Barnes recently announced the formation of the Georgia Closing the Achievement Gap Commission (Jacobson, EDUCATION WEEK,

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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 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.

10/10). "We're going to have some real challenges," said Tom Upchurch, chairman of the commission and the president of the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, an organization at work to raise achievement statewide.

Commission members plan to begin their task by visiting schools in and out of Georgia to identify strategies that work best. The commission also will examine whether more "needs to be done to close the gap before children even enter kindergarten," writes the paper.

The Southern Regional Education Board's vice president Jim Watts (SREB) pointed out that several other southern states also have organized commissions to study the achievement gap challenge and make recommendations. These states are: Kentucky, North Carolina and South Carolina.

For more information, visit the Governor's office at <http://www.state.ga.us/governor>.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

High School Education: On A New Track In Baltimore (Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Baltimore high schools are being turned into smaller schools that give students more choice (Bowie, Baltimore SUN, 10/9). Under her plan "Blueprint for Neighborhood High Schools," schools chief Carmen Russo said she expects to open one new high school for 200 to 300 students next year.

School officials expect the high school reform to cost \$55 million over five years and they are seeking more state aid and financial support from foundations and businesses.

Russo plans to focus on the nine failing neighborhood schools attended by more than half of all high school students.

For more information on Baltimore public schools visit <http://www.bcps.k12.md.us>.

The National Education Goals Panel

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Philadelphia's Teaching Plan: By The Books (Goal Three: Student Achievement & Goal Four: Teacher Education & Professional Development)

Philadelphia soon will implement a well-received instructional plan that calls for teachers to deliver a specific curriculum in a designated order that is tied to state standards and tests (Snyder, Philadelphia INQUIRER, 10/8). The plan also meets a mandate established by Commonwealth Court Judge Doris Smith in the state's desegregation lawsuit against the district, reports the paper. Smith's directed the district to offer a more equitable education program across all its schools.

The city's teacher union and "some members of the rank and file" welcome the new plan. "We are somewhat limiting the autonomy of teachers, but there is still flexibility," said Deidre Farmbry, the district's chief academic officer and a former English teacher. "What I've come to realize is there is a need for more coordination across the city."

For more information on the Philadelphia public schools, visit <http://www.philsch.k12.pa.us>.

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

Nationwide Pledge Of Allegiance: A Call From Secretary Paige

(Goal Three: Student Achievement & Citizenship)

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige has called on elementary and secondary school principals nationwide to encourage them to participate in Pledge Across America, a synchronized Pledge of Allegiance on 12 October 2001.

The Pledge of Allegiance will begin at 2pm EDT, 1pm CDT, noon MDT, 11am PDT, 12am in Alaska and 8am in Hawaii.

Pledge Across America is being organized by Celebration USA, a nonprofit organization whose "purpose is to teach children the basic principles of

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



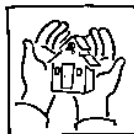
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

American democracy and to invigorate patriotism.”

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

Special Education Centers: New Grants From The Department Of Education

(Goal Two: School Completion & Goal Three: Student Achievement & Citizenship)

Department of Education grants recently were awarded for the purpose of creating nine centers to study issues related to reading, behavior and learning disabilities. Centers will be located at the universities of Kansas in Lawrence; Nebraska in Lincoln; North Carolina in Charlotte; Oregon in Eugene (two); South Florida in Tampa; Texas in Austin; Wisconsin in Madison; and Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Six of the projects will focus on improving reading skills and behavior among students in grade K-3, while another will coordinate the evaluation of the effectiveness of the centers. Of the other centers, one will focus on learning disabilities, while the final one will work to identify effective practices to meet the needs of very young children with or at risk for behavioral problems.

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

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

Math Summit: Less Is Best

(Goal Five: Math & Science)

Math Summit organized by the American Association of Publishers (AAP) ended with the recommendation that the new math texts should cover fewer topics in more depth, give teacher the resources to customize lesson plans and present material for students at all levels (Hoff, EDUCATION WEEK, 10/10).

Stephen Driesler, executive director of the AAP's school

division noted that the meeting was held because math education is one of the most controversial curriculum areas.

The recommendations that emanated from the meeting include: publishers could produce a series of books detailing key math concepts and principles to be used by all students. Supplemental materials could “go beyond the standards” for use by students interested and able to do higher level math.

For more information on math instruction, visit the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics at <http://www.nctm.org>.

Opening The Gates: To Smaller Schools

(Goal Two: School Completion & Goal Three: Student Achievement & Citizenship)

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has targeted the small-school reform model for funding. Tom Vander Ark as head of the foundation’s education division has awarded more than \$200 million in grants to schools intent on creating smaller schools (Hill, EDUCATION WEEK, 10/10). From the paper, “That puts the foundation at the forefront of the movement to demolish the ‘big is better’ mentality that has long dominated high school design.”

Rick Lear, director of the Gates-funded Small Schools Project at the University of Washington, briefs grant recipients on the possibilities and the problems associated with moving to smaller schools.

For more information, visit the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation at <http://www.gatesfoundation.org>.

FEATURE STORY

The American Teacher: Key Elements Of Quality Schools

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

Last year’s findings from the Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher 2000 revealed “feelings of alienation” prevalent among students, parents and teachers at the secondary school level. It also found that while students held high expectations for their futures, teachers’ and parents were more pessimistic for what the future holds for their students and children.

The 2001 survey followed up on these findings by examining how teachers, principals and students evaluate their own schools on key measures of an effective school environment, including:

- * Are students experiencing high-quality teaching?
- * Are academic standards and expectations for students high?
- * What are students' attitudes toward learning?
- * Do students have high expectations of themselves?
- * Do teachers feel satisfied with their career and plan to remain in teaching?

The nationally representative survey of 2,049 public school students in grades 7 through 12, 1,273 public school teachers in grades K-12 and 1,004 public school principals asked participants to evaluate teachers in their school on factors including: knowing their subject; caring about students; believing all students can learn; maintaining discipline; and teaching individual students according to their different needs and abilities.

From the report: "The survey's findings affirm that teaching counts." For example, students who rate the quality of teaching they receive as a B or C are nearly half as likely as those receiving A quality teaching to report that their school is helping a lot to prepare them for a successful future (41 percent vs. 75 percent). Teachers who rate the overall quality of teaching at their school as B or C are less likely than those who rate the quality as A to report that all or most of their students will achieve their full potential for the school year (65 percent vs. 81 percent).

Students who reported A-level teaching quality are more likely than students reporting lower teaching quality to have high expectations for their future, enjoy school and their classes, really like to learn, very often participate in class and report that students in their school care about learning and getting a good education.

Students who give teaching quality at their schools a lower score also report that their schools do not have enough classrooms, are not very safe or clean and are too noisy to be able to concentrate.

The report also concludes that large gaps exist between schools with significant proportions of low-income and minority students and those with few such students. Low-income students are also less likely to report that their principal cares about all the students in their school or makes the school a safe place, that their school is helping to prepare them for the future or that their teachers encourage them very much to do their best.

"The subtle nuances of low expectations for low-income and minority students are troubling," writes the report.

Other findings include:

- * high-quality teaching is linked to a high-quality school environment
 - * students experiencing low-quality teaching are more likely than those with high-quality teaching to be boys, low-income and students with low grades
-

- * secondary school teachers and principals report lower quality education than elementary school teacher and principals
- * secondary school teachers and principals have lower expectations of their students and secondary school students have even lower expectations
- * low-income students have greater needs for support, which often interfere with receiving a high-quality education

For more information and a copy of the report, visit http://www.ced.org/docs/report/report_survey_american_teacher01.pdf.

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NEGP Acting Executive Director: John Barth
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Editor: Barbara A. Pape
www.negp.gov

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