

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

Beyond Test Scores: California Breaks Ground In College Admission *(Goal 6: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)*

California's "comprehensive review" for college admission is breaking ground in the state (Sappenfield, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, 11/19). University of California campuses for the first time will go beyond test scores to consider other factors for admission, including overcoming hardship and musical talent.

While some critics charge the latest admission policy is an attempt to skirt the state's affirmative-action ban, others observe that the policy is the "latest gambit to ensure fairness in a rapidly changing collegiate world."

The paper notes that the trend toward "comprehensive review" is growing. Texas already includes non-academic criteria for several years for half its students, while the other half are accepted automatically by finishing in the top 10 percent of their high school.

For more information, visit the University of California Board of Regents at <http://www.ucop.edu/regents>

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Virginia: Not Meeting Their Financial Goals *(All Goals)*

Virginia's quarter-century old education funding system is "profoundly broken," according to auditors for the state's General Assembly (Timberg and

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.

Helderman, WASHINGTON POST, 11/21). The report, conducted by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, noted that an error eight years ago short-changed school districts by tens of millions of dollars a year. Inflation and routine underestimation of the cost of teacher raises also contributed to the poor financial state of Virginia's public schools.

"It's long overdue for the state to acknowledge the extent that it under funds education in Virginia and the extent to which local property taxpayers are left to pick up the slack," said Stuart Gibson, Fairfax County School Board member.

The paper notes that many of the state's education standards are not being met due to lack of funds.

For more information, visit the Virginia General Assembly at <http://legis.state.va.us/>. Click on Legislative Agencies to find the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

Ibooks: Verdict Still Out

(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

A group of Maine educators and Apple Computer representatives discovered that many students in Godwin High School are not enthusiastic about the use of iBooks in their classroom (Dovi, TIMES-DISPATCH, 11/19). The group was touring the school to view how iBooks works in the classroom. The program operates in Maine's Henrico County schools.

"It's basically a \$1,200 CD player and Game Boy," said one student. "They'd be OK if the Internet wasn't down half the time," said another. Another student explained the problem. From the paper: "The School Board didn't set the infrastructure in place, supply the proper training or set defined rules for use by students before going live the first day of school."

Henrico School Superintendent Dr. Mark Edwards remains confident of iBooks. "I really do believe it will take two or three years to hit stride with this," he said.

The National Education Goals Panel

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For more information, visit iBooks at <http://www.ibookzone.com>.

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

White House Kids: New Website Launches Freedom Timeline (Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

The White House added a new feature to its web site for children: the Freedom Timeline. The web site, www.whitehousekids.gov, was launched in August and the new feature is related to the Lessons of Liberty effort kicked off by President Bush, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige and U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi to promote learning about the American ideals of liberty, democracy and freedom.

The Freedom Timeline is a five-part series on topics such as diplomacy and liberty. It includes five stories, a vocabulary list, a quiz and a teacher's guide. The timeline spans the years 1777 to 1948.

For more information, visit <http://www.whitehousekids.gov>.

Peer Grading: A Supreme Court Decision (Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship and Goal Eight: Parent Involvement)

In *Owasso Independent School District v. Falvo*, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear arguments against and in support of the age-old practice of peer grading (Walsh, EDUCATION WEEK, 11/21). According to the paper, "at issue is whether teachers may require students to swap their quizzes, papers, or other work with classmates for grading."

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



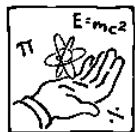
Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



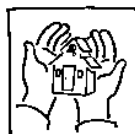
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

According to the lawsuit filed against the district, peer grading falls within the protection of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Teachers' unions and other educators argue that peer grading of class work is a "traditional classroom teaching method that Congress did not intend to prohibit under FERPA," writes the paper. However, Kristja Flavo, mother of four children who attend school in Owasso, Oklahoma, filed the suit because she claims that peer-grading causes undo embarrassment for many students.

For more information, visit the U.S. Supreme Court at <http://www.supremecourtus.gov> and search for Owasso.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

Baby Boom Echo: Ready For College (Goal Six: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)

A census survey shows that the population of students in grades one through eight is slightly more than that of high schools and colleges combined, causing concern that higher education will not be prepared to handle the influx of students in upcoming years (Divito, AP/RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH, 11/20).

In Virginia, for example, the State Council of Higher Education projects public college enrollment to grow 80 percent in the next decade. The Council expects nearly 40,000 additional students to enter Virginia's colleges by 2010.

For more information, visit the Virginia State Council of Higher Education at <http://www.schev.edu>.

Dropout Rates: Steady As She Goes (Goal Two: School Completion)

The nation's dropout rates have remained comparatively stable during the 1990s, according to a new report issued by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education and Statistics (NCES). "Despite the

growing investment in education at all levels, student achievement has lagged,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige. “The study released today is another indicator that we have not made enough progress in recent years to improve access to quality education and that comprehensive change is needed.”

Findings from the report include:

* In 2000, the event dropout rate for Hispanics was 7.4 percent, 6/1 for blacks, 4/1 percent for whites and 3/5 for Asians/Pacific islanders.

* In 2000, the dropout rate for students from the lowest 20 percent of all family incomes was six times that of their peers from families in the highest 20 percent.

* In 2000, about three-fourths of the current-year dropouts were ages 15 through 18; 42 percent of the dropouts were ages 15 through 17.

For more information and a copy of Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000, visit NCES at <http://www.nces.ed.gov>.

FEATURE STORY

NAEP Science Scores: No Growth, Some Decline *(Goal Five: Math and Science)*

High school seniors’ performance in science has declined since 1996, according to the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP report in science. The scores of fourth- and eighth-grade students remain stable.

“The decline is not huge, but it is statistically significant and morally significant, as well,” said Education Secretary Rod Paige. “After all, 12th-grade scores are the scores that really matter. If our graduates know less about science than their predecessors four years ago, then our hopes for a strong 21-st century workforce are dimming just when we need them most.”

In 2000, 29 percent of fourth graders scored Proficient or better on the NAEP science assessment, as did 32 percent of eighth graders and 18 percent of high school seniors. Student scores are ranked as either “basic,” “proficient,” or “advanced.”

The NAEP study also collected performance data on fourth and eighth graders in states and other jurisdictions. At the state level, six states had the highest average scores for fourth-graders in 2000: Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, North Dakota, Montana and Iowa. The average scores for these states did not differ significantly from one another. At the eighth grade, Montana had the highest average score.

The report also found that the numbers of black and white students who were proficient in science had narrowed slightly, due to “steeper falloff” in the scores of white 12th-grade students than black seniors.

Gender differences continue to exist, with males in grades four and eight outscoring females. In 2000, the score gaps favoring males widened by 3 points at grade four and 5 points at grade eight.

Other findings include:

* Eighth-grade students whose teachers majored in science education had higher scores than students whose teachers did not. At fourth grade there was not a relationship.

* Eighth graders who took life science had lower scores than students taking earth, integrated science, biology, chemistry or physics.

* Fourth-graders who used computers to play learning games had higher scores than those who did not. Eighth graders who used computers for simulations and analysis also scored higher.

For more information and a copy of The Nation’s Report Card: Science 2000, visit <http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/html>.

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