

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

STATE POLICY NEWS

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Teacher Salaries: New Structure Proposed In Arizona

(Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

An Arizona task force of business and education leaders has proposed paying teachers "what they are worth," and giving raises to top-notch teachers (Sherwood, ARIZONA REPUBLIC, 11/28). Task force member Penny Kotterman, president of the Arizona Education Association said the proposal rewards "teachers who do their jobs well and it professionalizes the art of teaching, which is valuable in itself."

Arizona Governor Jane Hull appointed the task force members and charged them with overhauling the current education salary structure in which teachers are rewarded for years of service and extra education.

If the state legislature approves the new plan, Arizona will join Iowa as the second state to reject the uniform pay scale, notes the paper.

For more information on Arizona education, visit the Arizona Education Association at <http://www.arizonaaea.org>.

Nationally Certified Teachers: Financial Incentives Cut In Virginia

(Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

An unexpected high number of teachers certified by the National Board of Professional Teaching Stan-

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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.

dards has forced Virginia to become the first state to reduce the amount of money it awards these teachers, according to Charles Pyle, spokesman for the Virginia Department of Education (Carroll, Richmond TIMES-DISPATCH, 11/28).

The National Board last month announced that a record 6,500 teachers earned certification this year, including 132 from Virginia. Currently, the state boasts 278 board-certified teachers.

For more information, visit the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards at <http://www.nbpts.org>.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

Sanctions On Parents: Chicago's Tough Anti-Truancy Policy

(Goal Two: School Completion and Goal Eight: Parent Involvement)

Chicago public school leaders last month unveiled a new get-tough program to curb truancy: sanctions on parents or guardians who make "little effort" to get their children back to school (Quintanilla, 11/29). The program is being piloted in several high schools with the highest truancy rates.

The new program calls for parents or guardians to attend mandatory hearings with school counselors and administrators if their child is absent from school for more than 18 days without a valid excuse. If parents are uncooperative, they will be sent to the state's attorney's office for prosecution and could "face penalties such as performing community service," writes the paper.

For more information on Chicago public schools, visit the Chicago Public Schools at <http://www.cps.k12.il.us>.

Parents and Payzant: Boston's Latest Dispute

(Goal Eight: Parent Involvement)

Boston Superintendent Thomas Payzant's plan to cut about \$500,000 of funding to parent advocacy groups and instead focus on building parent involvement on a school-

The National Education Goals Panel

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State Representative Douglas R. Jones of Idaho

State Senator Stephen Stoll of Missouri

by-school basis and strengthen his department's three parent Information Centers has caused much consternation from the advocacy groups and some parents (Hayward, BOSTON HERADL, 11/29).

Payzant said he is no longer willing to fund groups that "often are at odds with department policies," writes the paper. The BOSTON HERALD also reports that many of the groups "were created by court decisions to resolve failings of the department."

For more information, visit <http://www.boston.k12.ma.us>.

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

Teacher Preparation: ED Releases State Report *(Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)*

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige announced the release of study reporting on the quality of teacher preparation from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and outlying territories. Paige noted in the state reports and submit findings to Congress by spring 2002.

Each state report includes information on efforts to boost teacher quality, including:

- * data for each college and university with a teacher education program, including number of students taking state certification assessments, number and percentage of students passing each assessment and the school's quartile ranking based on pass rates;
- * certification and licensure requirements; and
- * information on alternative routes to certification.

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

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



Goal 1: Ready to Learn



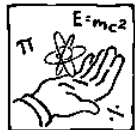
Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



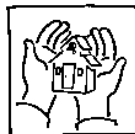
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



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

Long-Term NAEP: It's Future Is Dim (Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

Members of the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) are pondering the future of the National Assessment of Educational Progress's (NAEP) long-term trend assessment (Galley, EDUCATION WEEK, 11/28). Instead, state-by-state tests would be given more often.

Problems continue to plague the long-term assessment, including obsolete questions and grammatical problems. Gary Phillips, acting commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics, the branch of the Department of Education responsible for the nation's "report card," wrote that some background items asked on the trend test "could be regarded as poor quality, inappropriately personal, intrusive or controversial." Phillips letter led to the "first systematic review of the questions in the trend test by the board," reports the paper.

For more information, visit the National Assessment of Educational Progress at <http://www.nagb.org>.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

Microsoft's Settlement: Technology For Needy Schools

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

Up to 14,000 schools may benefit from a proposed settlement plan that calls for Microsoft Corporation to "launch a \$1 billion company-sponsored program to pour technology into needy schools." (Trotter, EDUCATION WEEK, 11/28). Microsoft faces "scores of private lawsuits for allegedly using its monopoly position to overcharge computer buyers for its software products," report the paper. Under the settlement, the company would provide the schools with cash, computer software and hardware and training for five years. Microsoft also would establish a national educational foundation and award it \$150 million

in seed money to make grants to local foundations and community organizations to purchase computers and software for schools.

For more information on Microsoft and education, visit <http://www.microsoft.com/education>.

Early Childcare: An NICHD Study *(Goal One: Ready To Learn)*

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) recently released a study of early childcare that found small increases in family income can better prepare low-income students for school. These financial gains help young children improve social skills, vocabulary and knowledge of colors, shapes and letters, according to researchers from Harvard University and Baylor University.

Researchers are following the children and plan to measure their development at frequent intervals from birth through middle childhood. Phase One of the study began in 1991.

For more information, visit NICHD at <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/crmc/secc/index.htm>.

FEATURE STORY

Small Is Beautiful: Research Backs Claim *(Goal Two: School Completion and Goal Three: Student Achievement and Professional Development)*

A growing body of research points to the many benefits of smaller schools, reports EDUCATION WEEK (Viadero, 11/28). From the paper: “Studies conducted over the past 10 to 15 years suggest that in smaller schools, students come to class more often, drop out less, earn better grades, participate more often in extracurricular activities, feel safer and show fewer behavior problems.”

Mary Anne Raywid, a “pre-eminent” researcher in the field, goes so far to say that the superiority of smaller schools has been established “with a clarity and a confidence rare in the annals of education.” Raywid, professor emeritus of education at Hofstra University, adds: “An awful lot of people, including some who are professional educators, think the secret of education is in curriculum and pedagogy, and those are the only two things that matter. And that is wrong.”

EDUCATION WEEK notes conflicting data from the public. The paper refers to a Public Agenda survey published this fall that found one in four parents and teachers would oppose breaking up their large high school into smaller schools of 500 or fewer students.

The article traces the growth of large, comprehensive high schools, beginning with the

1959 report by the late James Conant. The former Harvard University president argues for schools with no fewer than 400 students in order to offer students “an adequate range of rigorous academic courses,” writes the paper. However, the next 40 years found the size of high schools burgeoning to over one thousand students to support competitive football teams and music programs, with lower-level schools growing as well.

EDUCATION WEEK reports on the more recent dissatisfaction with these mega schools and the growth of the small-school movement, led by educators “mostly in impoverished neighborhoods in New York City, Philadelphia and Chicago.” The article features a Chicago charter school, Perspectives, which is a 150-student public school situated in the city’s downtown area.

Perspectives, launched in 1992 by two high school teachers, embraces a student body of 150 in grades 6 through 12. About 90 percent of students enroll in postsecondary education, the school’s dropout rate is zero and 98 percent of students return each year.

“When teachers, regardless of what they’re teaching, know the names of all the children in the school, that makes a big difference,” said Patricia Wasley, lead author of a small schools study of Chicago high schools. In this study, a team of researchers from Bank Street College of Education found that “on average, students in smaller schools or sub-schools came to class more often, dropped out less frequently, encountered less violence in school and got better grades than those in regular-sized schools.

Advocates for larger schools point out the tradeoffs made when moving to smaller schools: Small schools cannot maintain a “wide range of athletic teams, clubs, theatrical productions and competitions that Americans expect from high schools,” reports the paper. But Kathleen Cotton, a researcher at the Northwest Regional education Laboratory, notes that only 5 percent to 12 percent of students in large schools participate in these activities. “If you think of the situation in a large school, it kind of has a small school in the middle of it,” she said. “There are concentric circles, and at the center are a small number of students who participate in everything and get most of the attention of the adults in the school.”

A review of the research also suggests that the creation of smaller school units within larger schools does not always produce results equal to that of smaller schools. For example, the Bank Street study found that many schools-within-schools are “fragile,” with several of those studied closing after two years. “The minute they become more successful than the host school, things like this hap-

pen,” explained Wasley. “The principal will want the teachers to come and do coaching with the larger school faculty, or the host school staff becomes resentful of the smaller unit and works to undermine it.”

For more information on research about small schools, visit the ERIC Clearinghouse at http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed425049.html.

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