

# 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

### REFORMING SCHOOLS OF EDUCATION: GEORGIA GETS TOUGH

(Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

Schools of education, both public and private, where students continue to perform poorly on teacher-licensing exams, will be closed under a new proposal developed by Georgia Governor Roy Barnes' Education Reform Study Commission (Blair, EDUCATION WEEK, 12/13). The recommendation calls for at least 80 percent of graduates of every racial and ethnic group to earn passing scores on the PRAXIS II exam.

The Georgia Legislature would not be required to approve the plan, according to state leaders. If Governor Barnes decides to approve the plan, it would be phased in so colleges would not be in "immediate jeopardy," said Jan Kettlewell, assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs for the university system of Georgia.

Arthur Wise, president of the National Association for Accreditation of Teacher Education, cautioned that the adoption of the proposal could "close the teaching profession to some people."

For more information, visit the state of Georgia at [www.state.ga.us/governor](http://www.state.ga.us/governor)

Upon the retirement of Executive Director Ken Nelson, Emily Wurtz has been appointed Acting Executive Director of the National Education Goals Panel.

The NEGP WEEKLY is a publication of:  
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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 Goals 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](http://www.negp.gov). Publications requests can be made by mail, fax, e-mail, or on-line.

## **TEACHER SHORTAGE: LOOMS LARGE IN ILLINOIS**

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

About 20 percent of Illinois' 124,000 public school teachers are eligible for retirement within the next three years, while student enrollment is projected to rise by nearly 5 percent by 2008, according to a new study released by the Illinois State Board of Education (Banchemo and Spencer, Chicago TRIBUNE, 12/14). The state board anticipates that school districts will need to fill about 60,000 teaching positions within three years and to hire about 4,000 administrators and about 8,000 school librarians, nurses, social workers and other employees.

"I fear that the teacher shortage, the administrator shortage, threatens to bury several school districts in three to four years," said state schools Superintendent Max McGee.

Chicago Schools Chief Paul Vallas said his district already is taking "aggressive steps to stem the teacher shortage tide," writes the paper. For example, Chicago school leaders have developed recruitment drives at Big Ten schools, hired retired teachers and filled numerous positions through alternative certification programs.

State board officials also have developed a plan to retain teachers. One component is a \$5 million teacher-mentoring program to be introduced next year.

For more information, visit the Chicago Public Schools at [www.cps.k12.il.us](http://www.cps.k12.il.us) and the Illinois State Board of Education at [www.isbe.state.il.us](http://www.isbe.state.il.us)

## **COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS**

### **CAREER ACADEMIES: WORKING IN SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN**

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Southfield Public Schools, in Michigan, offer four high school academies, where students are put through the paces of a rigorous academic program, while pursuing career-related instruction (Naylor, THE DETROIT NEWS, 12/14). The academies offer programs in the arts, busi-

## The National Education Goals Panel

### GOVERNORS

Tommy Thompson,  
Wisconsin, Chair, 1999

John Engler  
Michigan

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Wyoming

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North Carolina

Frank Keating  
Oklahoma

Frank O'Bannon  
Indiana

Paul E. Patton  
Kentucky

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West Virginia

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U.S. Secretary of Education

Michael Cohen  
U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education

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U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman  
New Mexico

U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords  
Vermont

U.S. Representative William F. Goodling  
Pennsylvania

U.S. Representative Matthew G. Martínez  
California

### STATE LEGISLATORS

Representative G. Spencer Coggs  
Wisconsin

Representative Mary Lou Cowlshaw  
Illinois

Representative Douglas R. Jones  
Idaho

Senator Stephen Stoll  
Missouri

ness, medical and natural sciences and engineering and manufacturing. Each program is offered within four separate schools-within-schools.

The career programs offer internships and other real-world experiences. Students also are required to produce a professional quality project. For example, engineering students must design and build a robot for competitions around the country.

For more information, visit the Southfield Public Schools at [www.southfield.k12.mi.us](http://www.southfield.k12.mi.us).

## HOUSTON STANDARDS: ON THE RISE

(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

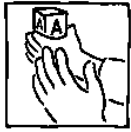
Houston school board members unanimously approved making high school graduation requirements more rigorous by including more math, science and foreign language (Bryant, HOUSTON CHRONICLE, 12/15). Students now will be required to take Algebra 1, geometry and Algebra II as part of the Houston School District's basic graduation program. Algebra II has never been required.

Students also will be required to take biology and either chemistry or physics, and take two years of the same foreign language. The new requirements will be effective next year.

School officials said the changes are necessary because 11th graders must take a revised version of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) test in 2004 that includes algebra, geometry, history and biology. The presidents of the city's two teacher unions protested the changes, saying the district is moving "too fast and too extreme." Michael Verdone, president of the Houston Congress of Teachers, and Gayle Falon, president of the Houston Federation of teachers, expressed concern over the added pressures the new requirements will have on "academically challenged" students.

For more information, visit the Houston public schools at [www.houston.k12.mn.us](http://www.houston.k12.mn.us)

## 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

## FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

### SCHOOL-TO-WORK: A STATUS REPORT

(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Six: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)

School-to-work programs, while raising career awareness among students, has “failed to successfully meld academic and workplace experience,” according to several researchers presenting at a school-to-work conference held earlier this month in Philadelphia (EDUCATION WEEK, 12/13). The conference, sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Laboratory for Student Success at Temple University, brought together various researchers and school-to-work officials who debated the status of school-to-work programs.

EDUCATION WEEK notes that President Clinton in October created the National Task Force on Preparing Youth for 21st Century College and Careers, chaired by the U.S. secretaries of education and labor. The purpose of the task force is to help state and local agencies find resources to build on existing school-to-work efforts.

For more information, visit the Mid-Atlantic Laboratory for Student Success at Temple University at [www.temple.edu/LSS/](http://www.temple.edu/LSS/)

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A TOOLKIT

(Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

Most schools and districts do not know how to implement high-quality professional development activities and lack sufficient resources to start and sustain effective, long-term programs, according to a new report issued by the U.S. Department of Education. Does Professional Development Change Teaching Practice? also found that when high-quality professional development is long-term, aligned with district and school goals, focused on knowledge in a specific subject and actively engages groups of teachers in learning new skills and knowledge, it can have a significant impact on the quality of teaching.

In response to the need to better design and run professional development, every school district will receive a toolkit developed by the department in partnership with the

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North Central Regional Educational Laboratory and Mid-Continental Regional Education Laboratory.

The toolkit is available on-line at [www.ncrel.org/pd/toolkit/htm](http://www.ncrel.org/pd/toolkit/htm). For a copy of the report, visit [www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES/school\\_improvement.html#subepdp1](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES/school_improvement.html#subepdp1).

## RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

### **DIGITAL DIVIDE: TOO MUCH CALCULATOR USE IN INNER CITY SCHOOLS?** (Goal 5: Math and Science)

The WALL STREET JOURNAL reports on the digital divide that exists in calculator use among students from the inner city and the wealthier suburbs (Golden, 12/15). According to a Brookings Institution study, calculator use in the elementary grades is high for poor minority students, with less usage among their white and wealthy counterparts.

Educators disagree over whether calculator use in the early grades will hamper a student's ability to understand math. While some argue that calculators are a motivational tool for some students, others counter that calculators provide only an "illusion of progress," reports the paper.

For more information, visit the WALL STREET JOURNAL at [www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com) or The Brookings Institution at [www.brookings.org](http://www.brookings.org).

### 8.) \*\*\*\*\* THE STATE OF BLACK EDUCATION: CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP AND START IN THE EARLY YEARS (Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Early literacy is the second phase of a national campaign to improve the state of black education sponsored by the National Urban League and Howard University. The groups' intention is to stress reading in the early grades, with the goal of improving student achievement in the upper grades.

"We know that a lousy education leads to economic apartheid," said Hugh Price, president of the National Urban League. The early literacy initiative is part of the Campaign for African-American Achievement, which the National Urban League began in 1997. The campaign, along with the Congress of National Black Churches and other organizations, also created the national Achievers Society, an honor group for black high school students.

For more information, visit the National Urban League at [www.nul.org/caaaaabout.html](http://www.nul.org/caaaaabout.html).

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FEATURE STORY

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## FEATURE STORY

### **BRINGING ALL STUDENTS TO HIGH STANDARDS: A GOALS PANEL REPORT** (All Goals)

The National Education Goals Panel released a report last week that highlights findings and makes recommendations for school improvement based on a series of four regional field hearings held throughout the country. The hearings sought out how successful schools raise student achievement and help students reach high academic standards.

The hearings were held in Alhambra, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Burlington, Vermont; and Chicago, Illinois. "I came away from these four field hearings optimistic about education reform," said Governor Tommy Thompson (Wisconsin) and chairman of the Goals Panel.

Common themes emerged from the meetings, which the Goals Panel used to form a series of recommendations:

- > Leadership- the Goals Panel found that schools that are able to raise student achievement levels typically have strong leaders. The Panel recommends that schools of education and local school districts review how they identify and train potential school leaders and elevate the attention and resources devoted to training school principals in instructional leadership aimed at increasing student achievement.
- > Professional Development- high quality professional development is essential to the success of efforts to raise student achievement. The Panel offers three recommendations:
  - > Pre-service education - the accreditation of teacher education programs be linked both to the ability of their graduates to demonstrate mastery of the academic standards they are preparing to teach, as well as to their competence as teachers.
  - > Initial Teacher Licensure and Certification - initial teacher licensure and certification should be linked to the demonstration of knowledge of academic standards and related assessments.
  - > State Support of Professional Development - states should support and reward teachers who complete continuing education and professional development activities linked to standards that increase their teaching competence and combine the study of teaching, learning and subject matter knowledge - whether offered at schools or universities, such opportunities should last long enough and be sufficiently intense to make teachers more effective helping all students meet high academic standards.
  - > Involving Higher Education - the Goals Panel finds that higher education is a missing partner in too many states. The Panel recommends that state policy should link academic standards to the accreditation of teacher education programs, the certification of teachers and the provision of university-based professional development. State policy should encourage school-college collaboration from the establishments of formal K-16 councils to informal cooperation. Further, the admissions requirements of public colleges and universities should be linked to state academic standards.
  - > Extra Help For Students - the Goals Panel finds that testing student achievement will not improve learning unless it triggers additional help for the students and schools that need it. States should, the Goals Panel recommends, provide policy and resources to provide

students with additional opportunities, such as summer school, after-school programs or other instructional opportunities with high quality teaching and assistance where it is needed.

> Data Use - the Goals Panel finds that successful schools have used a wealth of information from student assessments and community outreach (beyond student scores and rankings) to guide decisions on policy, practice, and resource allocation. The recommendation is for schools of education and in-service professional development to provide training in the fundamentals of data use so that educators and administrators are prepared to base their decisions on data and information. Local businesses can be an important resource in these efforts.

> Staying the Course - according to the Goals Panel findings, statewide improvement in student achievement is most likely to occur in states with continuity of education reform policies, like Texas, North Carolina and Connecticut. The Goals Panel recommends that states attempt to maintain consistency, predictability and fairness in their education reform policies by making continual mid-course refinements in efforts to define and implement academic standards, seizing every opportunity to explain their purpose and address public concerns.

For more information on the report, *Bringing All Students to High Standards: A Report on the National Education Goals Panel's Field Hearings*, visit the National Education Goals Panel at [www.negp.gov](http://www.negp.gov).

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