

BRINGING ALL STUDENTS TO HIGH STANDARDS

NEGP Policy Recommendations adopted December 7, 2000

In the year 2000, under the leadership of Governor Tommy Thompson, the Goals Panel conducted 4 regional field hearings on how successful schools have raised student achievement and brought students to high academic standards. Based on this process, the Panel has made the following findings, and recommends the following course of action.

1. Leadership

Finding: That schools with demonstrated success in raising student achievement typically have strong leaders.

Recommendation: *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.*

2. Professional Development

Finding: That high quality professional development for educators is essential to effective efforts to raise student achievement.

Recommendation: *That the National Education Goals Panel reaffirms the following elements of improved professional development, specifically:*

- 1) **Pre-service Teacher Education:** *that 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.*
- 2) **Initial Teacher Licensure and Certification:** *that initial teacher licensure and certification be linked to their demonstration of knowledge of academic standards and related assessments.*
- 3) **State Support of Professional Development:** *that states 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.*

3. Involving Higher Education

Finding: That in too many states, higher education has been a missing partner in standards-based reform.

Recommendation: *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.*

4. Extra Help for Students

Finding: That testing student achievement will not improve learning unless it triggers additional help for the students and schools that need it.

Recommendation: *That states should 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.*

5. Data Use

Finding: 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.

Recommendation: *That schools of education and in-service professional development be asked 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.*

6. Staying the Course

Finding: That statewide improvements in student achievement are most likely among states with continuity of education reform policies, like Texas, North Carolina and Connecticut.

Recommendation: *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.*