



NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

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NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL ACCEPTS SWEEPING RECOMMENDATIONS IN MEASURING EDUCATION PROGRESS

Changes Include Annual State NAEP and Exploring Reshaping Goals

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 24, 2001) – The National Education Goals Panel today accepted a far-reaching set of recommendations for how the nation measures school performance and committed to urging Congress and the Administration to act on them. Key among the changes supported by the Panel is urging an expansion of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) so that information on student achievement is collected and reported every year.

“The Goals Panel offers a bipartisan forum consisting of elected federal and state officials that is calling for sweeping changes in the way we measure education progress as a nation,” said Governor Frank O’Bannon (D-IN), the new chair of the National Education Goals Panel.

The Panel accepted recommendations to make state NAEP annual and provide funding to states to administer the assessment on an annual basis. NAEP has provided national assessments since 1969. At the state level, NAEP assesses grades 4 and 8 in reading and writing, or mathematics and science at four-year intervals. The recommendations presented to the Panel were the result of the work conducted by the Measuring Success Task Force, chaired by former Governor John McKernan (ME), and including leading educators, policy makers and researchers.

“Annual NAEP tests are the first step in improving the measures of education progress,” said Governor O’Bannon. “These recommendations – coming out of a year-long process by the Panel and its advisors – are particularly relevant now that the new President and Congress have made education reform a priority,” said Governor Jim Geringer (R-WY), the chair-elect of the Panel.

The set of recommendations accepted by the Panel today would significantly increase the annual budget of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). “I am as committed to the National Education Goals today as I was ten years ago when they were first created,” said Governor McKernan, chair of the Measuring Success Task Force. “But the only way we can truly have an impact is by making this investment to ensure that achievement data is regularly available and comparable across the states.”

The Goals Panel will continue to look at measuring education progress by re-evaluating the National Education Goals. “John McKernan’s Measuring Success Task Force has done a great job in looking at where we can improve our measures in education progress,” said Governor O’Bannon. “We must not stop there. By working with Congress and the new administration to re-shape the National Education Goals, we hope to have a better understanding of how to assess school performance.”

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“We have made enormous progress in saying what we want students to know, and by putting standards in place to guide them there,” said Governor McKernan. “Now, if we are serious about reaching our education goals, we need to invest in the data that will tell us whether we are succeeding.”

This was the first meeting with Governor Frank O’Bannon (D-IN) as the newly elected chair and Governor Jim Geringer (R-WY) as chair-elect. The Panel also welcomed two governors as new members of the Panel: Governor Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Governor Jim Hodges (D-SC).

Other task force proposals accepted by the Panel today included:

- Establishing better measures of the links between state standards and policies for certifying teacher education programs and new teachers;
- Developing a regular schedule of participation in international assessments of student academic performance, such as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS);
- Providing regular data on adult literacy at the state and national levels; and,
- Collecting information about the readiness of young children when they start kindergarten on a regular 4-year cycle.

The task force’s recommendations have been endorsed by The Business Roundtable, the National Alliance of Business, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Conference of State Legislatures. “From the vantage point of business leaders, the dearth of timely data on student achievement that is comparable across states is a source of great frustration,” said Edward Rust, Chairman and CEO of State Farm Insurance and Chair of The Business Roundtable Education Task Force. “The BRT applauds your recommendations....we need this data to gauge education progress over time and to continuously improve education policies and practices.

About the National Education Goals Panel

Created in July 1990, the National Education Goals Panel is a bipartisan body consisting of an equal number of Republicans and Democrats from the federal and state levels of government. The Panel is made up of eight governors, four members of Congress, four state legislators and two members appointed by the President. The eight National Education Goals call for greater levels of: student achievement; high school completion; teacher education and professional development; parental participation in the schools; adult literacy and lifelong learning; and safe, disciplined, and alcohol-and-drug-free schools. The Goals also call for all children to be ready to learn by the time they start school and for US students to be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.

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