

California Recognized for *Promising Practices* in Goals Six & Eight Fact Sheet

Goal Six – Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning

This goal charges that every adult will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The objectives include strengthening connections between education and work with the assistance of every major U.S. business; providing every worker with the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to adapt to emerging technologies; increasing the number of quality programs that serve the needs of part-time and mid-career students; increasing the proportion of qualified students, especially minorities, who enter college and complete at least two years or earn a degree; increasing the proportion of college graduates who are able to think critically and communicate effectively; and increasing the number of programs which serve the needs of adults at various professional levels.

The indicator used in *Promising Practices* was participation in higher education and in particular what states increased the percentage of high school graduates who immediately enrolled in two or four year colleges in any state.

California: This state was among the top-performing and most improved states on this indicator. State officials attribute this to the following programs and policies:

- *Second to None*, a state education report, led to the creation of the California High School Network. This program brings high school leaders together with university officials to improve curricula, take on such new reforms as school-within-schools and close the gap between minority and white students. The connection between high schools and colleges eases the transition into post-secondary institutions.
- High school students were allowed to take college courses for credit, which motivated many students to pursue higher education.
- Higher standards and a more rigorous curriculum better prepared students for the college experience.

Goal Eight – Parental Participation

This goal aims to have every school promoting partnerships that will increase involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children. The objectives include developing policies that support the education community to establish programs to increase partnerships that address varying parent needs; ensuring schools actively engage parents and families in partnerships that support the academic work of children at home and share in educational decision-making process at school; and engaging parents and families to ensure that schools are adequately supported, and hold teachers and schools to high standards of accountability.

The indicator used in *Promising Practices* was the influence of parent associations and specifically which states increased the percentage of public schools principals reporting that the parent associations in their schools have influence in one or more of three areas of school policy: establishing curriculum, hiring new teachers, and setting discipline policy.

California: Thirty six percent of public school principals reported that parent associations have influence in school policy. State officials attribute this to the following:

- State board of Education policy encourages school boards to establish comprehensive, long-term efforts to involve families in their children's education.
- This state was the first in the nation to pass a law that requires local school boards to adopt parent involvement policies and encourage parent participation on school councils.
- School-site councils serve as a catalyst in coordinating school-based programs, paving the way for intense parent association involvement. Local PTA's offer a structure to reach parents for different cultures and bring them into the schools.
- Local education reform efforts also facilitated the creation of *Parent Centers*, which serve as lounges for parent volunteers, venues for parent training sessions and other activities.

What is *Promising Practices*?

- A report that details successful practices and policies in place in the states that have made progress toward the eight National Education Goals.
- Highlights the programs and policies that state officials attributed for their success.
- Serves as a tool to help states and schools replicate the highlighted successes. By extension it encourages greater progress in education, focuses attention on results and helps sustain public support for education improvement.
- For a copy of *Promising Practices*, please visit www.negp.gov or call 202-724-0015.

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