

Archived Information



ED REVIEW

April 25, 2003

...a bi-weekly update on U.S. Department of Education activities relevant to the Intergovernmental and Corporate community and other stakeholders



NCLB UPDATE (<http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/>)

The Office of Innovation and Improvement's (OII) Innovation of the Week (<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OII/>) is the Troops-to-Teachers program. "The brave men and women fighting in Iraq -- and their colleagues around the world -- represent one of the most highly skilled, highly trained sectors of our society," Nina Rees, Deputy Undersecretary of OII, testified before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs April 9. "Many of our service personnel possess a command of mathematics and science, subjects that are critical to our nation's economic success in the 21st Century, and subjects for which there is a critical shortage of qualified teachers. Troops-to-Teachers promotes high standards by identifying and bringing these talented men and women, and their top-notch skills and abilities, into our nation's public schools." Since the program's inception in 1994, Troops-to-Teachers has placed over 5,000 new teachers in the classroom -- and many of them have filled needs that are of the highest priority. For example, approximately 40 percent of placements have been in the hard-to-fill areas of math, science, and special education. Participants are also heavily male and heavily minority. In addition, retention rates have been strong. As of 1999, 82 percent of participants were still in the classroom. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OII/portfolio/troops.html>. (Rees' statement is available at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OII/pr/20030409.html>.)

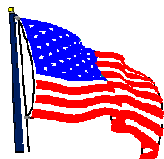
Staying on the theme of innovation, OII and Harvard University's Institute of Government Innovation just hosted a conference on "Innovations in Education," with Diane Ravitch, former Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement, giving the keynote address. "I was asked to respond to the question of whether education really needs more innovation in this new age of scientifically based research," Ravitch said in her introduction. "There is an implication in this question that innovation and science may be somehow mutually exclusive, or at least antagonistic to one another."

She went on to offer an excellent summary of the history of innovation, citing some of the biggest failures (like IQ testing) and significant successes (like charter schools and the revival of small schools in big cities). And, for those who will judge innovators seeking federal support, she volunteered some sound advice, such as "many proposals that claim to be innovative are not innovative at all but rather merely a revival of some failed idea from the past." In the end, Ravitch called for more innovation. "Innovation allows us to take a stand against complacency, passivity, and stagnation and to seek ever higher levels of success." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OII/pr/20030415a.html>.



TITLE I COSTS

Because of concerns about school district spending on administrative costs, Congress issued two separate mandates in the *No Child Left Behind Act* to examine expenditures under Title I, the federal government's primary program for disadvantaged children. The General Accounting Office collected data through two means: an examination of five existing studies related to Title I and its own review of Title I spending in several school districts. In the studies, district spending for administrative costs varied from four percent to 10 percent. Of the half-dozen districts reviewed, only one (San Diego) spent more than 10 percent on administrative expenses. Another district (Portsmouth, Rhode Island) spent zero, using local money for the costs. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03386.pdf>.



ON THE HOMEFRONT

President Bush and Secretary Paige have emphasized that school can be an anchor for children during these challenging times. Schools provide stability and a normal routine. The predictability of the classroom helps to cushion the impact of changes at home and in the community. Now, to help the children of military families -- children who suffer tremendous upheaval when their parents are called upon to serve their country at home and abroad -- the Department has prepared a new handbook. The handbook is intended to help educators build coping skills in their students during and after a deployment, with the goal of bringing support and understanding to the process as well as maintaining an optimal learning environment in the classroom and the school. Practical guidelines for

administrators, counselors, teachers, and other school employees are presented in order to identify age-related reactions and focus on appropriate intervention strategies. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/inits/homefront/>. (Be sure to check back later for more information, including links to organizations that may be of assistance.)

Also: The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' voluntary service home page, <http://www.va.gov/volunteer/>, explains how best to serve the men and women who have sacrificed so much for freedom. Subpages allow interested parties to learn more about the agency's programs -- from working in VA hospitals to providing transportation for veterans seeking VA services -- and actually sign-up to volunteer according to state and city. Too busy? The "I don't have the time to volunteer!" subpage may be of particular interest.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Time is running out to submit grant applications under a bevy of program competitions. The Early Childhood Professional Development Program complements President Bush's early reading initiative by funding replicable, high-quality professional development programs that improve the knowledge and skills of early childhood educators who work in high-poverty communities and who primarily serve children from low-income families (closes 5/16). The Smaller Learning Communities Program, now in its third year, awards grants to school districts for the planning and implementation or expansion of small, safe, and successful learning environments in large public high schools (closes 5/19). The Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Program provides a moderate amount of assistance to help charter schools meet their facility needs. Recipients may guarantee and insure debt to finance charter school facilities; guarantee and insure leases for personal and real property; facilitate a charter school's facilities financing by identifying potential lending sources, encouraging private lending, and other activities; and establish charter school facility incubator housing that new charter schools may use until they can acquire a facility on their own (closes 6/3).

<http://www.ed.gov/GrantApps/> lists all the competitions that are currently underway and provides links to electronic application packages, forms, and other key information.



HELPING YOUR CHILD SERIES

The Education Department continues to reissue its popular *Helping Your Child* series. These booklets offer practical activities to stimulate children's learning and a list of resources, such as books, computer programs, and web sites, that adults and children can enjoy together. Moreover, they have been updated with new information, including the latest research-based practices for helping children learn. See <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/hyc.html> for a list of the booklets (in English and Spanish) and ordering instructions. Recent editions include *Helping Your Child Succeed in School*, *Helping Your Child Through Early Adolescence*, and *Helping Your Child Become a Responsible Citizen*.



HISPANIC STATUS AND TRENDS

Less than a week after the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans released its final report, the Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) synthesized its statistics on Hispanic education into one single volume. The volume's indicators illustrate the educational gains made in recent years, as well as the many gaps that still exist. The indicators are examined in sections (demographics; preprimary, elementary, and secondary education; higher education; and outcomes of education). Hispanics have already become the largest U.S. minority group, representing 13 percent of the population. By the middle of this century, Hispanics are expected to comprise nearly one-fourth of the population. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003008>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"So does education really need more innovation? The answer seems obvious. Of course it does. Any field of endeavor that rejects innovation will wither intellectually. Any field that opposes improvement and experimentation is a dead field. Any field that is impervious to change and evolution becomes inert. Innovation is a necessity, not only because it allows possibilities for improvement, but because innovation attracts alert

and inquisitive minds. Only those who have achieved 'perfection' can afford to reject the value of innovation."

-- Dr. Diane Ravitch (4/15/03)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Start spreading the word: on Memorial Day, Monday, May 26, at 3:00 p.m. local time, Americans are asked to stop what they are doing and spend one minute in a Moment of Remembrance. The time was chosen because it is the time when many Americans are enjoying their freedoms on the national holiday. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.remember.gov/>.

If you are close to Washington, D.C., on May 29, consider attending the first session of the "Innovations in Education Exchange Series." Held regularly at the Department, each session will focus specifically on one promising practice. The first topic will be virtual schools. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT Amber Hutchinson at (202) 401-0850 or Amber.Hutchinson@ed.gov.

Please feel free to contact the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs with any questions:

Deputy Assistant Secretary -- Terri Rayburn, (202) 401-0404, <mailto:Terri.Rayburn@ed.gov>

Program Analyst -- Adam Honeysett, (202) 401-3003, <mailto:Adam.Honeysett@ed.gov>

To be added or removed from distribution, or submit comments (we welcome your feedback!), please contact Adam Honeysett. Or, visit <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OIIA/OIA/edreview/>.