



ED REVIEW

January 3, 2007 (Happy New Year!)

...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.ed.gov/nclb/>)

On January 8, the *No Child Left Behind Act* turns five years old! In celebration of this milestone, the Department is holding an anniversary event at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (by invitation only). A variety of other forward-looking activities are also planned this month, leading up to the President's January 23 State of the Union address and the February 5 roll-out of the President's Fiscal Year 2008 budget request.

Education Week's eleventh-annual "Quality Counts" report introduces a new Chance for Success Index, which tracks state efforts to connect education from preschool through postsecondary education and training. This "perspective" on the importance of education throughout a person's lifetime is based on 13 indicators that note whether children get off to a good start, succeed in elementary and secondary school, and hit key educational and income benchmarks as adults. Strictly for K-12 education, the report also includes a new Achievement Index that ranks every state based on whether its students are significantly above or below the national average or are making progress on 15 indicators. Unlike years past, the 2007 report does not grade the states. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2007/01/04/>. (*Education Week* is offering free access to "Quality Counts" until January 18.)



NCLB: STORIES OF SUCCESS

Speaking of anniversary events, the next "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast (January 16, 8-9 p.m. ET) will spotlight examples of high-performing public schools that are meeting the goals of the law. Unique video stories capture these schools' class-

rooms in action and conversations with award-winning principals and experts about how assessment, accountability, parent options, and a belief that all children can learn is raising the bar as never before. Over the last five years, significant progress has been achieved nationwide: on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), nine-year-olds have made more progress in reading since 2001 than in the last 28 years combined; nine- and 13-year-olds earned the highest scores in the history of the test; and the achievement gap is narrowing, with the scores of black and Hispanic students at all-time highs. However, there is still considerable work to be done if all children are to be proficient in reading and math by 2014. The broadcast will tackle such critical questions as:

- Five years after being signed into law, how do we know that *No Child Left Behind* is working?
- How can the law be extended to high school and beyond, and why is this important to American competitiveness?
- What new ideas have strengthened *No Child Left Behind* over the years, such as growth model pilots, teacher incentives, and other initiatives?

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/av/video/edtv/>.
(You can watch live and archived webcasts at <http://www.connectlive.com/events/ednews/>.)



SAFETY CD-ROM

Before the holidays, the Department and the Secret Service released another tool to improve school safety, an interactive CD-ROM titled "A Safe School and Threat Assessment Experience: Scenarios Exploring the Findings of the Safe School Initiative (SSI)." A quick recap: the SSI examined 37 incidents involving 41 school attacks that occurred between 1974 and 2000. The study found that school attacks are rarely impulsive. Rather, they are typically thought out and planned well in advance. Therefore, one of the key recommendations of the SSI was that schools form threat assessment teams to assist with identifying, assessing, and managing students who may pose a threat of targeted violence. It is for these threat assessment teams that the CD-ROM was developed. Through the use of two hypothetical school-based scenarios, teams may advance their skills in conducting a virtual threat assessment inquiry. The interactive format integrates the study findings, threat assessment processes, and implications for prevention. In addition, the CD-ROM contains research findings, full interviews with

study authors and practitioners, and links to more resources. This month, copies will be distributed to law enforcement and school safety personnel across the U.S. Copies may also be ordered via <http://www.edpubs.org/>. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO http://www.secretservice.gov/ntac_ssi.shtml.

Also: The Department's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) is offering two training sessions (February 21-23 in Philadelphia and May 9-11 in St. Louis) to provide school personnel with information and resources on emergency management. Emphasis will be placed on emergency management plan development and enhancement within the framework of the four phases of emergency management: prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. There is a registration fee to help defer costs. Travel and lodging assistance is available. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/emergencyplan/emtrain07.html>.



CHARTER GRANTS

Grant applications are now available for the Charter Schools Program, which seeks to increase public understanding of the charter school model and to expand the number of high-quality charter schools by providing some financial assistance for the planning, program design, initial implementation, and evaluation of charter schools. States are eligible to apply if they have a charter school law in place. If a state elects not to participate or does not have an application approved, charter schools from that state may apply directly to the Department. This year's competition includes a priority for secondary schools. Applications are due by February 16. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/programs/charter/>.

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



WORDS OF WISDOM

On December 18, Secretary Spellings delivered the fall commencement address at Middle Tennessee State University. "Earning a college degree isn't easy," she noted. "All of you logged countless hours at the library, pulled your fair share of all-

nighters, and probably consumed more caffeine than you'd care to remember.... In the process, you've turned what some might perceive as obstacles [one-quarter of MTSU's students are first-generation college students, and more than 85 percent are commuters] into opportunity and had the perseverance to remain committed to your goal." She encouraged the graduates to make the most of their education and find ways to give back to others: "These days, compassion, kindness, and humor are in just as much demand as PlayStation 3; you just don't see people fighting over them.... The impact of that choice [to serve] will not only improve the lives of others, it will enlarge and enrich yours as well." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/12/12182006.html>.

Also: A new First Look from the Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) presents findings from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System 2005 data collection, with surveys on institutional characteristics for the 2005-06 academic year and student completions covering the period July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2005. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007167>.



VOLUNTEER SERVICE

The Corporation for National and Community Service is encouraging Americans to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy on January 15 by making the holiday a day ON, versus a day off. This year marks the 21st observance of the King holiday. The observance became a national day of service in 1994, when Congress passed legislation to give the holiday even more significance. A new web site enables organizers to register projects in every state and the District of Columbia. That same web site has a host of ideas and resources, as well as photographs of previous King holiday activities. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.mlkday.gov/>.

Note: The King Day of Service is mid-way through National Mentoring Month, which emphasizes the importance of bringing caring adults into the lives of children who need guidance, support, and encouragement. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/initiatives_nmm.asp.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"Our public schools are no better than we make them. They can provide a solid educational foundation for our children. They can provide a training ground for leadership development. They can offer an opportunity for expanded technical knowledge and cultural enrichment through continued education. They can become a center for community involvement. But the future our schools provide is, in large measure, dependent upon our involvement."

-- President Gerald R. Ford (5/10/75)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Now in its fourth year, the National School and Business Partnerships Awards, created by the Council for Corporate and School Partnerships, recognize exemplary school-business partnerships that improve the academic, social, or physical well-being of students. Partnerships involving public schools and/or districts and businesses are eligible to apply. The Council will make six awards; those selected will get \$10,000. Applications are due by January 30. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.corpschoolpartners.org/award.shtml>.

Please feel free to contact the Office of Communications and Outreach with any questions:

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