

Archived Information



ED REVIEW

July 30, 2004

...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/>)

The Department has released two revised non-regulatory guidance packages regarding charter schools. One provides guidance on the Charter Schools Program (CSP) (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/cspguidance03.pdf>). For example, charter schools that receive CSP funding and have more applicants than seats may "weight" their lottery in favor of students seeking a transfer under *No Child Left Behind's* school choice provisions. The other provides additional guidance on charter school accountability under Title I (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/charterguidance03.pdf>).

The Department's "Early Implementation of Supplemental Educational Services (SES) under the *No Child Left Behind Act: Year One Report*" documents how successfully (or unsuccessfully) nine school districts in six states implemented the law's SES provisions during the 2002-03 school year. Separately, the report analyzes the efforts of states, districts, providers, and parents in the process. Among the more intriguing findings:

- Several case study states required provider applicants to include evidence of connections between their proposed supplemental services and state standards, and most states rejected applicants that did not provide evidence of effectiveness.
- No district exhausted funds set aside for supplemental services -- generally because few parents applied for services.
- In spite of misgivings among some school staff, many teachers and principals expressed a willingness to help support implementation of supplemental services for their students.
- Some providers offered individualized instruction, but most offered group instruction with student-to-tutor ratios ranging from 3:1 to 8:1. Also, providers often adapted their services to the funds available, typically by increasing the student-to-tutor ratio and decreasing the number of sessions they provide.

- Most parents in the districts in this study chose to apply for supplemental services rather than transfer their child to another school, even when districts made efforts to educate parents about the choice option.

One word of caution. The study sample was purposefully selected to include states and districts that appeared to be relatively far along in implementing supplemental services, so the findings are not representative of implementation efforts nationwide. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/disadv/supplementalyear1/>.



NEW READING PANEL

The National Institute for Literacy -- an independent federal agency administered by the Secretaries of Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor -- is soliciting nominees for a new 15-member commission to continue and expand upon the work of the National Reading Panel. Unlike the earlier panel, which was authorized only to review quantitative research, the Commission on Reading Research will have more leeway to look at different types of studies, including correlational and descriptive research, with the goal of applying research in the classroom. Jack M. Fletcher, a professor of pediatrics and co-director of the Center for Academic and Reading Skills at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston, will chair the group; Sandra Baxter, the literacy institute's executive director, is accepting nominations at sbaxter@nifl.gov.



TEACHER SUMMIT

Last week, Secretary Paige welcomed more than 150 teachers from every grade level, academic discipline, and nearly every U.S. state to the National Research-to-Practice Teacher Summit. The event teamed up education researchers and teachers who have effectively put research into practice in the classroom and asked them to demonstrate their strategies in reading, math, science, and the arts. In turn, participating teachers will share what they have learned with colleagues in their schools and districts. And, to reach as many teachers as possible, the Department will make 10 of the best sessions

from the summit and corresponding regional workshops accessible via the Internet and on satellite television; the tapes should be available by the start of the new school year. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/>. (Secretary Paige's summit remarks can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2004/07/07202004.html>.)

Also: Several days later, Secretary Paige addressed the nation's school principals, praising them as "the public face of public education." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/07/07232004.html>.



MONITORING AMERICA'S CHILDREN

Data from the 2004 edition of "America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being," compiled by the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, suggests that the next generation of adults is off to a healthy start. Indeed, the teen birth rate dropped to a record low in 2002 (the most recently available data): 23 births for every 1,000 girls ages 15 to 17, compared to 39 in 1991. (Note: Black teens showed the greatest decline, from 86 per 1,000 in 1991 to 41 in 2002.) Also, today's youth are less likely to be victimized in a serious violent crime or to commit one, and all indicators for regular teen smoking are at their lowest level since the information was initially collected in 1975. On the other hand, the number of overweight children has increased, from six percent in the late 1970s to 16 percent between 1999 and 2002, and poverty is up, hitting 11.6 million children in 2002. In terms of education, the number of preschoolers who are read to every day by a family member increased from 54 percent in 1999 to 58 percent in 2001. Moreover, since 1982, there has been a marked increase in the percentage of high school graduates taking advanced courses in English, math, science, and a foreign language. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/>.



NATIONAL FILE FORMAT

Under a voluntary standardized format for electronic files, students with blindness, poor vision, and print disabilities are expected to gain improved access to textbooks. When textbooks and classroom materials are produced using this voluntary standard,

they will be in a format that can be adapted to products from Braille editions of textbooks to on-screen displays of text and graphics. In the past, the lack of a standard meant that publishers had to produce materials in multiple formats, and students with disabilities often did not receive their textbooks in time for the beginning of the year. The Department's Office of Special Education Programs provided funding to establish the standard. It is also funding two centers to support further development and assist states with the standard. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.cast.org/NCAC/NFF/>.



HBCU GRANT

On July 26, Secretary Paige announced a \$1 million grant to the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Education, the United Negro College Fund Special Programs Corporation, and Hampton University for a collaboration to improve fiscal management, campus operations, and professional development at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). "As a graduate of an HBCU [in Mississippi], I understand and appreciate the essential role these institutions play in offering equal educational opportunities for African-Americans," the Secretary said. "This grant will help these vital academic institutions meet new challenges to ensure their future." HBCUs currently graduate 30 percent of the African-American students who receive degrees annually. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/07/07262004.html>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"After you listen to the [political] ads and the [convention] speakers, I would ask you to do one more thing: listen to the children and their parents. They don't spend millions on ads. They don't hold conventions or fundraisers. But they want your help. Lend them your ears and your voice. As [principal] Cindy Rudrud put it, 'The core attitude you need to have is the belief in all students.' Your attitude will help determine their aptitude."

-- Secretary of Education Rod Paige (7/23/04)



UPCOMING EVENTS

On September 14, in St. Louis, Missouri, the White House and the Departments of Education, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor are hosting a conference to help faith-based and community organizations learn more about President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.fbci.gov/>. (Note: The deadline for registration is September 3.)

October 27-29, the Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence is sponsoring "Persistently Safe Schools." The conference will review past and present school violence prevention milestones and propose directions for future research, practice, and partnerships. Bill Modzeleski, from the Department's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, is one of three keynote speakers. There is a registration fee. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://hamfish.org/conference/>.

The "Very Best in Youth" program, sponsored by Nestlé and Reading is Fundamental, honors 30 young people (ages 9-18) who have made reading a priority in their lives and, in the process, have made real contributions to the quality of life in their communities. The winners will be featured in a special publication and praised in a Los Angeles ceremony. Nestlé will also donate \$1,000 in the name of each winner to the charity of his/her choice. Applications are due by November 1. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.rif.org/what/eventscontests/verybestinyouth/>.

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

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