

Archived Information



ED REVIEW

July 3, 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/>)

In a recent letter to Chief State School Officers (to be posted at <http://www.ed.gov/News/Letters/>), Secretary Paige supports "Title I requirements that *all* students, including students with disabilities, be held to the same challenging content and achievement standards. Similarly, state assessment systems must provide for the participation of *all* students, including students with disabilities." However, recognizing the unique assessment issues that students with disabilities raise, he is authorizing the following transition policies for the 2003-04 school year, based on data from assessments administered during the 2002-03 school year:

- To calculate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for schools and districts, a state may use alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who take an alternate assessment. In order to calculate AYP, the percentage of students held to alternate achievement standards at the district and state levels may not exceed one percent of all students in the grades assessed. (This policy was communicated to states through the accountability system approval process.)
- During the 2002-03 school year, if a state permitted the use of Instructional-Level Assessments (ILAs) to measure the progress of students with disabilities, the state may hold schools and districts accountable for the achievement of these students against instructional-level standards rather than grade-level standards. This policy applies only to assessments that were administered during the 2002-03 school year.

The Department has received over 95 comments on a notice of proposed rulemaking (<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/proprule/2003-1/032003a.html>) that would permit states to establish alternative assessment standards for those students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. A final regulation is likely later this summer.

To assist rural school districts in using federal resources, the Department's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education has released guidance on the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP), which incorporates two separate initiatives: the Small Rural School Achievement (SRSA) Program, including REAP-Flex, and the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) Program. The SRSA program authorizes the Secretary to award formula grants directly to eligible districts to support a wide range of local activities. It also provides districts with greater flexibility in using the formula grant funds that they receive under certain state-administered federal programs. The RLIS program authorizes the Secretary to award formula grants to states, which in turn make grants to eligible districts either competitively or by formula. But, any district that is eligible under the SRSA program may not receive funding under the RLIS program. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/reap.html>.



SCHOOL CHOICE

On July 1, at the KIPP DC: KEY Academy, President Bush and Secretary Paige highlighted the administration's support for expanding educational options for parents, including a new School Choice Incentive Fund that would provide scholarships to eligible elementary and secondary students in Washington, D.C., and other communities throughout the country. "I want my second home to become a model of excellence so that when people...see the educational entrepreneurial spirit alive and well in D.C., they realize they can do the same in their own communities," the President said. Of the \$75 million requested for the fund, \$15 million would be carved out for a program in the District of Columbia. Days earlier, Secretary Paige testified before the House of Representatives' Committee on Government Reform. "Choice is essential for authentic public school reform," Paige explained. "And I'll tell you why: our society today is the most choice-saturated of all time.... Many parents in the District who can afford it send their children to some of the finest private schools in the nation that happen to be right here in the District. But most parents in the District don't have the luxury of choices. They get what they get." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/07-2003/07012003a.html>. (The President's remarks are posted at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/07/20030701-3.html>, while the Secretary's testimony is available at <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/06-2003/06242003.html>.)



DIGEST OF EDUCATION STATISTICS 2002

The 2002 edition of the "Digest of Education Statistics" is the 38th in a series of publications. Its primary purpose is to provide a compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education, from pre-kindergarten through graduate school, drawn from both government and private sources, but especially from surveys and other activities carried out by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Among the new material: number and characteristics of charter schools (tables 100 and 101); revenue, by source, and expenditures, by purpose, of for-profit degree-granting institutions (tables 336 and 346); and use of the Internet by persons age three and over (table 425). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003060>.



FOUNDATIONS FOR LEARNING

The Department's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools is soliciting applications for the Foundations for Learning Grants Program (<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSDFS/foundations.html>), which supports projects to help a certain, challenged subset of children become ready for school. Eligible applicants include school districts; local councils; faith-based and community organizations; other public and non-profit private entities; or a combination of such entities. To receive funds, a project must: (1) deliver services to eligible children and their families that foster eligible children's emotional, behavioral, and social development; (2) coordinate and facilitate access by eligible children and their families to the services available through community resources, including mental health, physical health, substance abuse, domestic violence prevention, child welfare, and social services; and (3) develop or enhance early childhood partnerships and build toward a community system of care that brings together child-serving agencies or organizations to provide individualized support for eligible children and their families. All applications must be received by July 30.



POLL: NCLB REPORTING

As states prepare to release their lists of schools "in need of improvement," a poll commissioned by the Business Roundtable shows that majorities of parents and voters support the disaggregated reporting of student achievement data under the *No Child Left Behind Act*. According to the national telephone survey:

- **Majorities believe NCLB's reporting requirements are fair.** 56 percent of parents and 59 percent of voters agree that a school should be labeled as "needing improvement" if even one group of students is falling behind.
- **Majorities say they would be concerned to learn that specific groups of students are found to be falling behind.** 91 percent of parents say they would be concerned if their own child was meeting requirements but some groups were not.
- **Many parents and voters may be surprised to learn that schools in their communities are not serving all students well.** More than two-thirds of parents and voters believe that all groups of students receive the same quality of education in their local schools. 51 percent of parents and 44 percent of voters predict fewer than one-third of the schools in their state will be on the needs improvement list.
- **Parents recognize that there are differences between the schools on the list.** 74 percent of parents want the needs improvement list divided to make distinctions based on the amount of improvement needed by the schools.
- **Moral obligation.** When offered a choice among four rationales, 43 percent of parents and 40 percent of voters picked "society has moral obligation" as the most compelling reason to strive for every student meeting state standards by 2014. Smaller percentages picked the need for a stronger economy (25 percent of parents and 18 percent of voters), more accountability in spending tax dollars (16 percent and 26 percent), and preparation for work/citizenship (16 percent and 17 percent).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.brt.org/press.cfm/966>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"Success is more than just a personal accomplishment. It is about living a life of honor and decency and compassion for others. As Dr. Martin Luther King so famously reminded us some years ago, the time is always right to do right, and I hope that for

some of you [President Scholars] that means taking your compassion and gifts and following in the footsteps of the great teachers you applauded last night. Our nation's schools would be very, very blessed to have you."

-- Secretary of Education Rod Paige (6/25/03)



UPCOMING EVENTS

The first district-level National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results will be released in mid-July. Five large urban districts (New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, and Atlanta) participated in the NAEP 2002 Trial Urban District Assessment in reading and writing. The results will set a benchmark for the performance of fourth- and eighth-graders in these districts. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.



100 AND COUNTING!

Just a quick thank you for your continued interest in *ED Review* and, more importantly, your commitment to education. Today is the electronic newsletter's 100th issue, spanning two administrations and nearly four years. Throughout, our goal has remained the same: to provide up-to-date information on Education Department activities and events, written specifically for the Intergovernmental and Corporate community and other non-traditional stakeholders. Remember, *ED Review* is in the public domain, so please feel free to send it to others in the office or in the community. Sharing is easy: either forward the text embedded in an email message (just as you receive it) or utilize the attached PDF file. Also, we are happy to add anyone to the distribution list.

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

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