

# Archived Information



## ED REVIEW

November 19, 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/>)

As reported last week in *Education Week*, the National Research Council -- an arm of the congressionally chartered National Academies -- is undertaking three studies aimed at exploring how students most effectively learn science and how it is best taught and tested. Specifically, the council has convened three committees of experts to work on the projects, two of which are expected to be finished next year. One of those short-term studies, on testing, will address a topic of increasing urgency to states; *No Child Left Behind* requires states to assess students in science by the 2007-08 school year. The goal of the project is to provide states with "practical advice" about how to design tests that will ask students to demonstrate a broad range of skills in science -- without encouraging school districts or states to scale back their curricula in the subject. The other short-term study, on teaching, will examine the role that laboratories should play in the high school classroom. The goal of the project is to determine the proper balance between classroom experimentation and more direct forms of instruction. Meanwhile, the two-and-a-half-year study on learning will focus on increasing our understanding of how students learn science, with a special emphasis on kindergarten through eighth-grade. The committee working on the project will examine existing research, identify areas in which new research is needed, and determine what the body of work suggests about how science subjects should be taught. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www7.nationalacademies.org/cfe/>.

Shifting gears, the Department has published a brochure titled "Character Education: Our Shared Responsibility." The brochure, printed in English and Spanish, emphasizes the importance of character education and informs parents, educators, and citizens of the Department's involvement in character education. TO ORDER THE BROCHURE, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.edpubs.org/>.

---



## PAIGE RESIGNS, SPELLINGS NOMINATED

On November 5, the Friday after Election Day, Secretary Paige submitted his letter of resignation to President Bush. "I am very proud of the many accomplishments achieved by the talented and committed men and women of the United States Department of Education," the Secretary said, asserting, among other items:

- The *No Child Left Behind Act's* reform initiatives have been well launched. Despite highly financed and organized opposition, a penchant for waiver requests, and other types of delays, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have approved accountability plans, and all states are working vigorously to gain and maintain compliance with NCLB law and regulations.
- The Department has held the line on Elementary and Secondary Education Act compliance issues and has, for the first time in the Department's history, exercised its authority to withhold administrative funds from states for clear failure to comply with the substance of the ESEA.
- The national education culture is changing. Across the nation, the education dialogue is now about results, and less about inputs.
- The stubborn -- and I believe unacceptable -- academic achievement gap between minority students and their white peers, essentially stagnant throughout the period between 1992 and 2000, has begun to close.
- Minority test scores, especially in the big urban centers of our nation, are beginning to rise. The percentage of African-American and Hispanic fourth-graders who know their reading and math basics increased more substantially from 2000 to 2003 than in the previous eight years combined.

The resignation is effective January 20, the end of the President's first term, although the Secretary agreed to continue to serve "until such time as my successor is confirmed." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/staff/bios/paige-resignation.html>.

As expected, President Bush has nominated Margaret Spellings to be the next Secretary of Education. Spellings currently serves as Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy. She is responsible for the development and implementation of policy on education, health, housing, justice, labor, transportation, and other elements of President Bush's domestic agenda. Prior to her White House appointment, she worked for six years as Governor Bush's Senior Advisor, with responsibility for developing and implementing education policy. Her state work included the Texas Reading Initiative,

the Student Success Initiative to eliminate social promotion, and one of the nation's strongest school assessment and accountability systems. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/11/20041117-4.html>.

---



## BINATIONAL AGREEMENT

One of the highlights of the Secretary's term has been his ongoing relationship with Mexico Secretary of Education Tamez Guerra. On November 8-9, Paige and Guerra co-chaired the latest meeting of the U.S.-Mexico Binational Commission's Education Working Group and renewed formal bilateral cooperation through the signing of Annex VIII to a Memorandum of Understanding between the nations. This agreement outlines ways in which the U.S. and Mexico will work together to strengthen educational opportunities for Hispanic students in the following areas: language acquisition, migrant education, special education, vocational education, higher education, education technology, visas for educational and cultural visits, teacher exchange options, and the development of bi-cultural study programs. The U.S. engages in more education-related cooperation with Mexico than with any other nation, primarily due to geographic proximity and the very large U.S. student population of Mexican origin. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/11/11092004a.html>.

---



## GRANTS FORECAST

Be sure to review the FY 2005 Grants Forecast at <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>, which lists virtually all programs and competitions under which the Department has invited or expects to invite applications for awards and provides actual or estimated dates for the transmittal of applications under these programs. The lists are in the form of charts -- organized according to principal program offices -- and will be updated regularly through July 2005. (This document is advisory only and is not an official application notice of the Department of Education.)

Note: The agency's Advanced Placement grant programs support state and local efforts to increase access to Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes and tests for low-income students. AP Incentive Grants, awarded to states and

school districts, must be used to expand access for low-income individuals to prepare for and succeed in AP or IB courses (intent 12/15, closes 1/5). AP Test Fee Grants, awarded solely to states, cover all or part of the cost of test fees for needy children who are enrolled in AP or IB classes and plan to take AP or IB tests (intent 12/1, closes 12/13). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii/funding.html>.

---



## DROPOUT RATES

"Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001" is the most recent in a series of reports by the Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) on high school dropout and completion rates that started in 1988. Estimates of rates in 2001 and time series data on high school dropout and completion rates for 1972 through 2001 are included. The unsurprising finding? While "progress" was made during the 1970s and 1980s in reducing high school dropout rates and increasing completion rates, these rates have since stagnated. In fact, from 1990 to 2001, between 347,000 and 544,000 students in grades 10-12 left school each year without successfully completing a high school program. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/dropout2001/>.

Note: Admitting the limitation of its data (for example, current data does not separate regular diploma holders from GED recipients), "NCES is currently working with experts in the field of high school outcomes research to develop graduation rate statistics that can be produced on an annual basis...."

---



## COLLEGE QUALITY

The 2004 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) report, self-supported through institutional participation fees, summarizes the views of 163,000 first-year and senior students at 472 four-year colleges and universities on five critical benchmarks: (1) level of academic challenge, (2) active and collaborative learning, (3) student-faculty interaction, (4) enriching educational experiences, and (5) supportive campus environment. On the one hand, only 11 percent of full-time students say they spend more than 25 hours per week studying -- the amount of time that most faculty members say is

necessary to succeed in college -- yet 40 percent of students say they earn mostly A's and 41 percent say they earn mostly B's. On the other hand, three-fifths of seniors and 37 percent of first-year students do community service or volunteer work and, since the survey's inception in 1999, the percentage of students who say they have held "serious" conversations with peers espousing different political, religious, or social views has increased from 45 percent to 55 percent. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.iub.edu/~nsse/>.

---



#### QUOTE TO NOTE

"Rod Paige has been at the forefront of fundamentally reforming and improving our nation's public education system so that no child is left behind in America. His passion for taking on the status quo and fighting for reform underscores his strong commitment to our country's young people and his desire to give them a brighter future. Throughout his life, Rod has overcome great obstacles and achieved great successes. He represents the best of America... We have only begun the long-term transformation of education so that future generations can enjoy all of the promise and opportunity America has to offer. Thanks to the hard work of Rod Paige, we have a very strong start and are well on our way to fulfilling that promise."

-- President George W. Bush (11/15/04)

---



#### UPCOMING EVENTS

Deputy Undersecretary Nina Rees will participate in a panel on supplemental services at the Education Leadership Council's Ninth Annual Conference, December 3-4 in Orlando. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.educationleaders.org/elc/events/conferences.html>.

---

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

Deputy Assistant Secretary -- Ken Meyer, (202) 401-0404, <mailto:Ken.Meyer@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/news/newsletters/edreview/>.**

*This newsletter contains hypertext links to information created and maintained by other public and private organizations. These links are provided for the user's convenience. The U.S. Department of Education does not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of this outside information. Furthermore, the inclusion of links is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed, or products or services offered, on these sites, or the organizations sponsoring the sites.*