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ED REVIEW

May 6, 2005

...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/>)

In a May 1 *USA Today* op-ed, "'Growing Pains' Won't Sidetrack *No Child Left Behind*," Secretary Spellings forcefully addressed the National Education Association's lawsuit. "It is interesting to note," she said, "that six of the nine districts in the suit successfully met their accountability targets under the law -- goals that are set by the state, not the federal government -- and the ninth district apparently received no rating whatsoever. In other words, students have already benefited, and their education is improving thanks to the law. In addition, almost every district in the lawsuit has seen its federal funds increase significantly since NCLB was passed, one as high as 300 percent." Notably, the Secretary continued, "this has happened before -- some states have chosen not to take part in federal education programs." For example, New Mexico opted out of the *Education of the Handicapped Act* (now called the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*) for six years, and five states initially rejected *Goals 2000*, forfeiting aid. "The contrary actions of a couple of states and one teachers union lobby do not constitute a 'grassroots rebellion,'" she concluded. "The bottom line is that most respected national education organizations are working with us to continue the unprecedented national progress that *No Child Left Behind* has begun." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/opeds/edit/2005/05012005.html>.

At the recent Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference (April 27), Secretary Spellings highlighted the administration's proposals to "treat teachers like the professionals they are." That includes a \$500 million Teacher Incentive Fund, "to provide states with money to reward teachers who take the toughest jobs and achieve real results." According to the bipartisan Teaching Commission, 76 percent of Americans and 77 percent of public school teachers support extra financial rewards for teachers willing to work in high-poverty schools, and a few "states [Minnesota] and

districts [Denver] have already started using these new systems with great success." "The Teacher Incentive Fund will...align the way we reward teachers with the goals of *No Child Left Behind*," she said. "If we expect results for every child, we must support teachers who are getting the job done in America's toughest classrooms." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2005/04/04272005.html>.

Special note: President Bush has nominated Kevin Sullivan to head the newly created Office of Communications and Outreach. Previously, he was Senior Vice President for Corporate Communications and Media Relations at NBC Universal.



SCIENCE EDUCATION

The next "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast (May 17, 8:00-9:00 p.m. ET) will explore preparing students for the global economy by improving science education. With the advent of the Information Age, virtually all jobs -- not just those covering scientific fields -- are demanding a deeper understanding of science than was necessary in previous generations. Indeed, of the 20 fastest-growing occupations projected for this decade, 15 of them require substantial math or science preparation. Moreover, what was once a developing trend has now become common practice: business leaders are looking to other countries for workers with math and science competency. Therefore, the challenge is to ensure that all students develop an appreciation for and mastery of science subjects. Among the key topics the broadcast will focus on: what strategies schools are using to increase proficiency levels in science and science-related coursework for all students; what tactics teachers are using to focus on science skills across the curriculum; and how *No Child Left Behind* addresses science instruction and educator qualifications. 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/>.)



PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS

This week, Secretary Spellings announced the selection of 141 high school seniors as 2005 Presidential Scholars. The Presidential Scholars program was established in 1964

to honor outstanding academic achievement and was expanded in 1979 to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the literary, visual, and performing arts. Each year, 141 students are named, including at least one young man and woman from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and American families living abroad. Another 15 graduates are chosen at-large, and 20 students are scholars in the arts. Over 2,700 candidates qualified on the basis of strong ACT or SAT assessments or nomination through the annual nationwide Arts Recognition and Talent Search. A 28-member Commission on Presidential Scholars (appointed by the president) then made the final selection from a pool of 500 semifinalists. Scholars will be honored June 25-28 in Washington, D.C. Also, since 1983, each scholar has invited his or her most inspirational teacher to participate in the recognition ceremony and receive a certificate of appreciation. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/programs/psp/>.



GRANTS FORECAST

Be sure to review the FY 2005 Grants Forecast (as of April 29) 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.)

Also: School districts representing large high schools (with an enrollment of 1,000 or more students) are eligible for grants under the Smaller Learning Communities Program. Awards are based on school size and the number of schools served, ranging from \$650,000-\$1,175,000 for one school to \$11,750,000 for local education agencies applying on behalf of up to 10 schools. Applicants must prioritize helping all students "succeed in rigorous academic courses." The deadline for applications is June 7. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/programs/slcp/>.



PARENT INVOLVEMENT

KSA-Plus Communications and the children's advocacy group Connect for Kids have teamed up to launch a new online resource, <http://www.connectforkids.org/taxonomy/term/328/>, which offers advice for parents looking to become more active participants in their children's education. This web site offers links to a variety of articles (for example, "8 Tips for Reading Your School's Report Card"), organizations, and recommendations about parent leadership and activism. Additional links connect parents with regional services to improve the safety and health of students.



AFTER-SCHOOL EVALUATION (PART III)

According to a national evaluation by Mathematica Policy Research of the Department's 21st Century Community Learning Centers (after-school) program -- the last of three evaluations -- elementary students who attended the federally funded, school-based after-school centers reported feeling safer, and the lowest-performing students recorded some gains in English grades. Nevertheless, generally at the elementary and middle school level, the program did not affect grades or test scores, and participants showed no difference in how often they completed their homework or got help working on it. Ironically, participants were also more likely to engage in behavior that warranted "discipline" during the regular school day. (Note: The *No Child Left Behind Act* restructured the program and focused greater attention on its potential for improving academic outcomes. Mathematica's studies have data from the 2000-01, 2001-02, and 2002-03 school years.) FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/Press%20Releases/21stcenturyfinal.asp>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"We ought to start with the presumption every child can learn, not just some. And, therefore, if you believe every child can learn, then you ought to expect every classroom to teach. I hear feedback from *No Child Left Behind* -- and, admittedly, I get

the cook's tour sometimes -- but I hear teachers talk to me about how thrilled they are with *No Child Left Behind*. They appreciate the fact that the [accountability] system now shows deficiencies early so they can correct those problems. And, it is working."
-- President George W. Bush (4/28/05)



UPCOMING EVENTS

This month, the Department's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives will host workshops in Springfield (May 18) and Chicago (May 19), Illinois, to assist faith-based and community organizations applying to become approved supplemental educational service providers. The workshops are free, although pre-registration is required. The deadline for registration is May 16. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/list/fbci/suppserv-workshops.html>.

Start spreading the word: on Memorial Day, Monday, May 30, 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/>.

The Education Industry Association's annual conference, EDVentures 2005, will be held July 20-22 at the Wyndham Hotel Inner Harbor in downtown Baltimore. This year's theme is "Standards for Excellence," and Secretary Spellings has been invited to give the keynote address. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.educationindustry.org/edventures/2005/>.

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

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