

# Archived Information



## ED REVIEW

September 13, 2002

*...a bi-weekly update on U.S. Department of Education activities relevant to the Intergovernmental and Corporate community*

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### NCLB UPDATE (<http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/>)

The Department has released a document to answer questions and provide guidance for carrying out programs under Title V, Part A -- State Grants for Innovative Programs. Just go to <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/asst.html>. The document is available under "NCLB Policy Guidance," "Policy Guidance for Programs..." (Any regulations issued for the federal law are available under "NCLB Regulations," "Regulations for Programs...")

On September 4, President Bush and Secretary Paige met with educators from Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, and New York to discuss implementation of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. "Implementing the NCLB law is doable because these people are doing it," the Secretary explained. "They don't make excuses. They don't complain. They just get the job done." Consider: Last spring, St. Paul (MN) schools sent letters to parents of children in low-performing schools, informing them of their option to enroll in better-performing schools. The early start allowed officials to manage more than 500 applications, and nearly all received their first or second choice. Indiana has put detailed data about school and student performance on the state agency web site. Parents can go online to find out if their child's teacher is qualified. And, this summer, Alabama trained 2,300 teachers to help children learn to read using solid, research-based reading instruction, and Arkansas is putting Literacy Leadership Teams in schools with full-time Literacy Coaches. As the President concluded, "I think leaders around the country, when they realize what is possible from examples here, will be more than willing to challenge the status quo if the status quo is failing; to insist every child can learn; to raise the bar, and by raising the bar, raise the hopes of everybody who is lucky enough to be called an American." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/09-2002/09042002.html>.

Looking for more highlights? On the first and fifteen of every month, *The Achiever* (now published in lieu of *Community Update*) will feature an individual or school making the *No Child Left Behind Act* work at the local level, as well as "Close-Ups" on critical aspects of the law. The premier issue includes an article by Bernice Whelchel, who led the dramatic turnaround of City Springs Elementary School in Baltimore. You may receive the newsletter electronically or in hard copy. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.nclb.gov/Newsletter/>.

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## BACK TO SCHOOL ADDRESS

Earlier this week, Secretary Paige gave his annual "Back to School" address. After chronicling the changing landscape brought forth under the *No Child Left Behind Act* -- "we're plowing historic new ground here" -- the Secretary focused on the importance of teachers. "[E]ven under the most difficult circumstances, children can learn if you get it right," he said. "And the best way to get it right is to make sure that the teacher at the front of the classroom knows the subject matter." As evidence, Paige cited *Foundations for Success*, a recent study by the Council of the Great City Schools that looked at four large, urban school districts, noting common elements utilized to close the achievement gap, like boosting teacher quality. He also told the story of Pat Hymel, principal of Hoffman-Boston Elementary School in Arlington (VA), who, upon learning of the terrorist attacks, ensured the safety of her students first, waiting until that evening -- after the last child was picked up -- to check on her husband, a Pentagon employee. Sadly, Robert Hymel had been killed. "I know I speak for the President when I say that our teachers and principals are the quiet heroes of 9-11," the Secretary concluded. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/Speeches/09-2002/09092002.html>.

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## HELPING YOUR CHILD SERIES

The Education Department is reissuing its popular *Helping Your Child* series. These colorful booklets offer practical activities to stimulate children's learning and a list of resources, such as books, computer programs, and web sites, that adults and children can enjoy together. Moreover, they have been updated with new information, including the latest research-based practices for helping children learn. See

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/hyc.html> for a list of the booklets ready for use: *Helping Your Child Become a Reader*, *Helping Your Child With Homework*, and *Helping Your Preschool Child*.

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## BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

On September 6, Secretary Paige and U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the creation of the *Brown v. Board of Education* 50th Anniversary Commission. The commission will work with the federal government and the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence, and Research (<http://brownvboard.org/>) to "plan and coordinate public education activities and initiatives, including public lectures, writing contests, and public awareness campaigns" to commemorate the 1954 landmark ruling. The first meeting is scheduled for November 13 at Howard University; Howard was at the epicenter of the civil rights movement and was a venue for much of the planning of the *Brown* litigation. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/09-2002/09062002.html>.

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## STUDENT LOAN DEFAULT RATE

The national student loan default rate remains at an historically low level -- 5.9 percent for Fiscal Year 2000 -- and three-fourths less than it was at its peak (22.4 percent) in 1990. In addition, only five institutions had 2000 default rates that put them in danger of becoming (or remaining) barred from participation in federal student aid (loan and/or Pell Grant) programs. The "watch list" includes schools with default rates of more than 40 percent in one year or 25 percent or more for three consecutive years. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/09-2002/09122002.html>. (Note: Individual school default rates are posted at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/defaultmanagement/cdr.html>.)

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## PUBLIC ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

The National Center for Education Statistics' 2001 "District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs" is the first national study of public alternative schools and programs offering data on availability, eligibility, enrollment, staffing, and services. Overall, during the 2000-01 school year, 39 percent of school districts had either alternative schools or programs for at-risk students, enrolling upwards of 612,900 students. (At-risk students in the remaining districts may have attended private or regional alternative schools or programs.) Services varied. Three-quarters had policies requiring curricula leading toward a regular high school diploma, academic counseling, smaller class size than in regular schools, remedial instruction, opportunity for self-paced instruction, crisis intervention, and career counseling. Least commonly required were an extended school day or year, security personnel on site, and evening or weekend classes. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002004>.

Also: NCES has prepared a guide to assist reporters who need information to put their local education stories into national context. The guide links to national data with accompanying plain-English analyses. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/press/index.asp>.

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## QUOTE TO NOTE

"Tomorrow is September the 12th. A milestone is passed, and a mission goes on. Be confident. Our country is strong. And our cause is even larger than our country. Ours is the cause of human dignity; freedom guided by conscience and guarded by peace. This ideal of America is the hope of all mankind. That hope drew millions to this [Ellis Island] harbor. That hope still lights our way. And the light shines in the darkness. And the darkness will not overcome it. "

-- President George W. Bush (9/11/02)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Secretary Paige is encouraging the nation's more than 100,000 schools to mark Constitution Day (September 17) by participating once again in "Pledge Across America." The synchronized Pledge of Allegiance will begin at 2:00 p.m. EDT; 1:00 p.m. CDT; 12:00 noon MDT; 11:00 a.m. PDT; 10:00 a.m. in Alaska; and 8:00 a.m. in Hawaii. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.celebrationusa.org/paa.htm>.

In his August 31 radio address to the nation (<http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/08-2002/wh-020831.html>), President Bush called Americans to a "September of Service." Students are encouraged to begin a service activity or project this school year, and USA Freedom Corps (<http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/>) introduced a guidebook for educators to help them enlist young people and develop the habits of civic participation, responsibility, and volunteerism that are essential to American democratic life. Bush has called on all Americans to commit at least 4,000 hours -- the equivalent of two years over the course of their lives -- to the service of others.

Cable & Wireless' Childnet Awards (<http://www.childnetawards.org/>), now in their sixth-year, recognize the creativity of children (and those working with them) who have developed innovative web sites -- which benefit children across the globe. There are four categories of awards: individual, schools, non-for-profit, and new to the net. The deadline for submissions is December 6.

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

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