

# Archived Information



## ED REVIEW

May 5, 2006

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

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

On April 27, in Philadelphia, Secretary Spellings kicked-off the first of several *No Child Left Behind* summits, discussing the role of teachers and administrators in ensuring every child is capable of learning on grade level by 2014. "Business as usual doesn't always serve the needs of teachers or students," she said. "For example, today, you're likely to find the most experienced and qualified teachers in our wealthiest communities. But, in high-poverty middle and high schools, only half of math teachers majored or minored in the field they're teaching. For science teachers, that number drops to only a third. We don't serve teachers or students by placing our least experienced teachers in our most challenging environments. Nor do we serve teachers by asking them to teach subjects they don't know much about." To support teachers, the Department is spending more than \$3 billion this year. The Secretary also highlighted two specific initiatives to the audience of 300 education leaders: free Teacher-to-Teacher workshops (<https://www.t2tweb.us/Workshops/About.asp>), by which "teachers may even obtain highly qualified teacher status without ever leaving their homes," and the newly created \$100 million Teacher Incentive Fund (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherincentive/> -- applications are now available), to encourage more experienced teachers to go to high-poverty schools and reward them for results. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/04/04272006.html>.

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### SUPPLEMENTAL STUDENT AID

To ensure the implementation of the program this coming school year and to allow current high school seniors and college students to understand if they might be eligible,

the Department has issued interim guidelines for Academic Competitiveness (AC) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) grants. In general, Pell Grant-eligible students who have completed rigorous coursework in high school OR who are pursuing degrees in STEM fields or critical languages are eligible for a slice of the \$790 million in new federal funding for higher education. However, there are some other statutory requirements.

Under the AC Grant program -- up to \$750 for a first-year student, up to \$1,300 for a second-year student -- students must have completed rigorous programs of study in high school. By statute, these programs are to be established by states or school districts and recognized as rigorous by the Secretary. The Secretary is also required to recognize at least one program in each state. Therefore, to provide multiple options to all students (including private and home-school students), the Secretary is immediately recognizing four options for eligibility:

- Advanced or Honors diploma programs. The agency estimates that 19 states already offer such diplomas upon completion of certain coursework.
- State Scholars Initiative requirements. Fourteen states participate in this program, with eight more states chosen for participation yet this year (<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/04/04212006.html>).
- Course requirements similar to the State Scholars Initiative. This program includes four years of English, three years of math, science, and social studies, and a year of a foreign language.
- Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) coursework and scores. This program requires two AP or IB courses and a minimum passing score (AP-3+, IB-4+) on the exams for those courses.

Moreover, states that wish to identify alternative programs of study for 2006-07 have the option of submitting proposals to the agency by June 1. Any state that does not submit a proposal by this date will signify its affirmation of the options listed above.

Under the SMART Grant program -- up to \$4,000 per year for third- and fourth-year students -- institutions of higher education already have most of the information that is required to determine a student's eligibility. The Department has published a list of eligible majors in STEM fields and critical foreign languages at <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/>.

After an initial two years, the Secretary hopes to increase the requirements for a rigorous program of study, to even more accurately reflect what is required for success in college. This is expected to be accomplished through formal rulemaking.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/05/05022006.html>.

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## NEW TOOLS FOR PARENTS

The next "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast (May 16, 8:00-9:00 ET) will underscore the latest tools for parents under *No Child Left Behind* and provide tips on how parents -- especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds -- can access information on the performance of their children's schools and exercise the full range of options available to them under the law. Indeed, through tailored report cards and other items, the law supplies parents with more information than ever before. Thus, today, parents are more effective educational advocates and consumers: the number of students in free tutoring programs increased five-fold in the first two years of the law; charter schools (with some federal aid) have grown from 2,000 nationwide in 2001 to over 3,600 in 2005; and, in Washington, D.C., a federally funded opportunity scholarship program is giving 1,700 low-income students the chance to attend the school of their choice. 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/>.)

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## RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Last week, in a South Lawn ceremony with President Bush, First Lady Laura Bush, and Secretary Spellings, Kimberly Oliver, a kindergarten teacher at Maryland's Broad Acres Elementary School, was named National Teacher of the Year -- the 56th recipient of the nation's top teaching honor. The National Teacher of the Year program, which is sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers, ING, and Scholastic Education, designates an outstanding representative of the nation's teachers from among 56 State Teachers of the Year (representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, four outlying territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity -- see [http://www.ccsso.org/projects/National\\_Teacher\\_of\\_the\\_Year/](http://www.ccsso.org/projects/National_Teacher_of_the_Year/)). Oliver was selected by a panel representing the 14 leading national education organizations. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/04/20060426-5.html>.

This week, as part of Celebrating Teachers Week, the First Lady and Secretary hosted a teacher roundtable in Columbus, Ohio. Also, the Secretary published a statement honoring teachers: <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/05/05022006a.html>.

And, on May 1, the Secretary launched National Charter Schools Week with remarks at the Department's charter school showcase:

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/05/05012006.html>.

Then yesterday, Secretary Spellings announced the selection of Presidential Scholars. The Presidential Scholars program was established by Executive Order in 1964 to honor outstanding academic achievement and was expanded in 1979 to identify students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the creative, 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 U.S. families living abroad. Another 15 students 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 scores or nomination through the nationwide Arts Recognition and Talent Search. The Commission on Presidential Scholars, appointed by the President, chooses the finalists. Scholars will be honored June 24-27 in Washington, D.C. Each scholar will invite the teacher who had the greatest impact on his/her success to participate in the ceremony and receive a certificate of appreciation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/psp/awards.html>.

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## SPECIAL EDUCATION TOOLKIT

Striving to help all students achieve to high standards, the Department recently released a new state toolkit on fully implementing the accountability provisions of *No Child Left Behind* for students with disabilities. The "Toolkit on Teaching and Assessing Students with Disabilities," a joint effort of the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, bestows up-to-date guidance on assessing the achievement and progress of special education students. It also includes a series of technical assistance products that offer practical, research-based approaches to the challenges schools are facing in instruction, assessment, accommodations, and behavioral interventions. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.osepideasthatwork.org/toolkit/>.

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## GLOBAL LITERACY

First Lady Laura Bush has announced an upcoming Conference on Global Literacy to be held in September in New York. The conference will take place prior to the opening of the new session of the United Nation's General Assembly. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://usinfo.state.gov/scv/Archive/2006/Apr/25-37813.html>.

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## QUOTE TO NOTE

"The *No Child Left Behind Act* has brought out the best in our teachers. And they have brought out the best of this law, turning high standards and accountability into real results for our children. Across the country, test scores are rising while the decades-long achievement gap is beginning to narrow. As we expand the successful reform principles, we must not forget the vital role our teachers play. The course they set now will determine our nation's success in the future."

-- Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings (5/2/06)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

The Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education will hold its fifth and final meeting in Washington, D.C., on May 18 and 19. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/>.

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**Please feel free to contact the Office of Communications and Outreach with any questions:**

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