

Archived Information



ED REVIEW

March 28, 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/>)

To assist states, school districts, and schools in implementing the *No Child Left Behind Act*, the Department recently released non-regulatory draft guidance on standards and assessments and charter schools. The standards and assessments guidance (the first of three documents planned for this topic) addresses, among other things, special populations. For example, students with disabilities (schools should decide who receives accommodations on tests on an individual basis, not by their disability category); English language learners (all English learners must be included in the state assessment program after they enroll); migrant students (states must include migrant students in their testing programs, even if they will return to their home school in another state and be tested there); and private school children (if a school district provides Title I services to a private school student, it must devise ways to assess that student to improve such services). The charter school guidance supplies information on how NCLB requirements impact charter schools, from the definition of a highly qualified charter school teacher to whether charter schools are required to make adequate yearly progress (AYP). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/asst.html>. (Along the top of the screen, select "NCLB Policy Guidance..." and then "Policy Guidance for Programs...")

Speaking of charter schools, the Education Department is now accepting applications for its Public Charter Schools Program. A notice inviting applications for new awards was published March 14 in the *Federal Register*. The deadline for applications is April 28. State education agencies are eligible to compete for grants if they have charter school legislation in place; charter schools may apply directly to the Department if their state chooses not to participate or is ineligible. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OII/portfolio/charter.html>.

Meanwhile, on March 20 in Atlanta, Secretary Paige kicked-off the *No Child Left Behind* Summer Reading Achievers program. The new program encourages children in grades K-8 to read 10 books (about one book a week) over the summer to avoid the loss of reading skills that often occurs during vacation. Atlanta was chosen as the pilot site because of the district's strong school leadership and gains in student achievement posted over the past several years. If successful the program will expand to schools nationwide in 2004. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/03-2003/03202003.html>.



ON THE HOMEFRONT

With hundreds of thousands of men and women from all over the country serving in the armed forces and away from their homes, the USA Freedom Corps is offering resources to Americans who want to express their support for the military and help their families in meaningful ways:

- Through **Defend America**, sign an online thank you card for troops (<http://www.defendamerica.mil/nmam.html>).
- Through **Operation Dear Abby**, send email messages to deployed troops (<http://anyservicemember.navy.mil/>).
- Through **Operation USA Care Package**, contribute to the purchase of a package of items requested by troops, like disposable cameras, prepaid calling cards, sunscreen, and toiletries (<http://www.usocares.org/home.htm>).
- Working with the National Guard and Reserve, local chapters of the American Legion, American Red Cross, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, BPO Elks of the USA, Camp Fire USA, National 4-H Headquarters, National Fraternal Congress of America, Salvation Army, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and YMCA of the USA are matching volunteers with families that need help in household repairs, cleaning, and tutoring. Some of these organizations are also helping to take care of children, after school and on weekends, whose families have a parent or caregiver away from home.

Local opportunities for volunteer service -- such as mentoring a child, teaching someone to read, working in a local police department, or serving at a local food shelter -- can be found through the USA Freedom Corps web site at <http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/> or by calling 1-877-USA-CORPS.

Also: The Education Department is reminding student loan lenders and guaranty agencies that active duty military personnel are not required to make student loan payments while deployed and encouraging postsecondary institutions to assist students and borrowers who have been mobilized. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/03-2003/03252003a.html>.



HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

The next "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast (April 15, 8:00-9:00 ET) deals with ensuring every child has a highly qualified teacher. Research shows that the most significant factor in student achievement is the teacher. Furthermore, studies also show that verbal ability and content knowledge are the most important attributes of highly qualified teachers. But while America is blessed with many fine teachers, there are not enough of them -- a problem that is especially acute in inner-city schools and certain subject areas, including math, science, and special education. Over two million teachers will need to be hired to match the projected enrollment in our elementary and secondary classrooms by 2007; more than half of these will be first-time teachers, and they will need to be the best-prepared teachers our nation has ever known. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://registerevent.ed.gov/downlink/event-flyer.asp?intEventID=166>. (You can watch live and archived webcasts of each show by going to <http://www.connectlive.com/events/ednews/>.)



NEW CERTIFICATION BOARD

On March 18, Secretary Paige headlined a briefing at the National Press Club regarding the quality and value of the new American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (American Board). Authorized in the *No Child Left Behind Act*, the American Board:

- offers a cost-effective route to earn a teaching credential based on subject area mastery and professional teaching knowledge as demonstrated by testing standards;
- encourages young professionals and mid-career changers to become teachers by reducing the barriers; and
- provides a teaching credential that is nationally recognized and portable from state to state.

In turn, states that adopt the American Board route would gain an increased pool of highly qualified teaching candidates; a reduction in the number of out-of-field teachers by providing schools with educators for hire in their specific area of need; and a new tool to meet the requirements of placing a "highly qualified" teacher in every classroom. "Some people will argue that this change is too radical," the Secretary said, "that it's too risky, that we should maintain the status quo. Well, I agree that it's radically better than the system we have now, a system that drives thousands of talented people away from our classrooms. The American Board will not replace current systems of teacher certification, but it can supplement these systems and provide a rigorous route into the classroom for thousands of candidates." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.abcte.org/>. (The Secretary's remarks are available at <http://www.ed.gov/Speeches/03-2003/03182003.html>.)



INTERNET USE

According to a new report from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, almost two-thirds of U.S. children between the ages of two and 17 logged onto the Internet during 2002, with the biggest gain -- a 205 percent increase -- occurring among African-American children. However, the report also reveals that these increases have not erased the historical disparities between under-served and more advantaged children when it comes to Internet access. Just consider: 66 percent of children from high-income families use the Internet at home, compared to 49 percent of children from middle-income households and only 29 percent of children from low-income households. In addition, the report finds that parents play a critical role in their children's use of the Internet, parents are satisfied with their children's online use, and Internet use is now approaching parity with television viewing. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.cpb.org/ed/resources/connected/>.



FROM THE INTERAGENCY STAFF...

In its second study of K-12 educational programs offered by the nation's museums, the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) found that the percentage of museums' median annual operating budgets spent on such programming increased four-fold since 1996. The study also calculates that America's museums commit more than

18 million instructional hours every year on programs for K-12 children, in core subjects like language arts, math, science, and social studies. IMLS is the primary source of federal grants for the nation's museums and libraries. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.imls.gov/whatsnew/current/012903.htm>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"The financial challenge obviously is going to be a difficult one for states generally, and we've yet to see what the implications are. But in the long run, the beauty of accountability systems is that, in times of scarcity or surplus, states will be better prepared to make budget decisions based on what works and what doesn't."

-- Undersecretary of Education Gene Hickok (3/15/03)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Charter school leaders and supporters are gearing up for the nation's fourth annual National Charter Schools Week (April 28-May 2). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.charterfriends.org/csweek/welcome.htm>. (A listing of events, state-by-state, is available at <http://www.charterfriends.org/csweek/state.htm>.)

For your convenience, the current issue of *ED Review* is saved, below, as a PDF file. Viewing, printing, and forwarding the issue from the PDF file should reveal all graphics.

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

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