

# Archived Information



## ED REVIEW

August 1, 2003

*...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.nochildleftbehind.gov/>)

In addition to approved state accountability plans, the Department is posting state-by-state decision letters (<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/CFP/al/index.html>) which document aspects of each plan that still require final action. Provided the action occurs, whether it entails legislative/regulatory change or just the submission of documents, the Department will "fully approve that plan." One frequent comment? The approval of accountability plans is not the approval of standards and assessment systems. Twenty-five states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico are either on a timeline waiver or have entered into a compliance agreement to meet *No Child Left Behind* standards and assessment requirements.

West Virginia and Montana are the 37th and 38th states to pass a rigorous review plan for Reading First funds. The Mountain State will receive \$6.1 million for the first year of this multi-year grant. Over six years (subject to appropriations and implementation), the state will receive \$43.8 million. The Treasure State will receive \$2.9 million in the first year and \$20.2 million over six years. In both states, a competition for subgrants is planned yet this summer. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/readingfirst/>.

On July 28, the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice announced more than \$41 million in grants to 23 school districts. These Safe Schools/Healthy Students grants aim to make schools safer, foster healthy child development, and prevent aggressive and violent behavior and drug and alcohol use among the nation's youth. Districts submitted comprehensive plans developed with law enforcement officials, local mental health authorities, and, frequently, juvenile justice officials and community-based organizations. (In fiscal year 2002, more than 350 applications were received. Less than 15 percent were funded. This year's grantees were selected from

the rank-order list of unfunded applicants.) FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/07-2003/07282003.html>.

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## URBAN DISTRICT ASSESSMENT

The National Assessment of Educational Progress' 2002 urban district assessment offers a wealth of baseline data about the reading and writing performance of fourth- and eighth-graders in six large urban systems: Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, and Washington, D.C. Not surprisingly, in most categories, all six scored lower than the national average. However, Houston and New York City fourth-graders had average scale scores and percentages at or above proficient in writing comparable to the national average. Also, once disaggregated:

- Black fourth-graders in Houston and New York earned average scores in writing that were significantly higher than the national average for blacks.
- The percentage of New York black fourth-graders performing at or above proficient in writing was significantly higher than the national average for blacks.
- In reading and writing, white fourth-graders in Atlanta and Washington scored significantly higher than the national average for whites in both average scores and percentages at or above proficient. And white fourth-graders in New York achieved average scores in writing that were significantly higher than the national average for whites.
- In the category of fourth-grade students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, Houston and New York earned average scores in both reading and writing that were comparable to the national average. And the students in Houston, Los Angeles, and New York scored at a level comparable to the nation as a whole in the percentage at or above proficient.

The Council of the Great City Schools is organizing a panel to study the results and analyze the policies and programs in the six districts that help or inhibit achievement. Later this year, the 2003 assessment in reading and mathematics will be released. It will include the six districts above plus four new ones: Boston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Cleveland, and San Diego. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>. (The Secretary's statement on the results is available at <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/07-2003/07222003.html>.)

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## TITLE IX LETTER

In a recent "dear colleague" letter, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Gerald Reynolds offers "further clarification" to "strengthen Title IX's promise of non-discrimination in the athletic programs of our nation's schools." For example, he encourages high schools and colleges to take full advantage of flexibility in Title IX's three-prong test for compliance, stressing that "nothing in Title IX requires the cutting or reduction of teams in order to demonstrate compliance with Title IX and that the elimination of teams is a disfavored practice." He also promises to aggressively enforce standards and ensure "enforcement practices" do not vary by region. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/title9guidanceFinal.html>.

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## NEW APPOINTMENTS

Seeking to fill a couple of critical vacancies in the Department's leadership structure, the White House has announced its intent to designate the current Undersecretary of Education, Gene Hickok, to be Acting Deputy Secretary of Education, and Ron Tomalis, who currently serves as Hickok's Chief of Staff, to be Acting Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). Since March, Hickok has served as both Undersecretary and Acting Assistant Secretary for OESE. He remains a policy advisor to Secretary Paige on all major programs and management issues, including the *No Child Left Behind Act* (<http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/07-2003/07232003.html>). Tomalis joins OESE at a busy time: the close-out of fiscal year 2003. Previously, he was executive deputy secretary, second in charge, of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and served in the Justice Department (<http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/07-2003/07232003a.html>). Also, Phoebe Cottingham has been appointed Commissioner of the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Part of the new Institute of Education Sciences, the center conducts studies of programs, distributes information on the effectiveness of programs through the *What Works Clearinghouse*, and is responsible for 10 regional educational laboratories that conduct applied research and provide technical assistance to states and school districts (<http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/07-2003/07242003.html>).

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## DATA COLLECTION

Last month, the Consortium of School Networking released a in-depth paper to help school leaders learn how to use data to improve student achievement. The paper, "Vision to Know and Do," focuses on the successful practice of school districts and consortia that have transformed their organizations to respond to the needs of all students and provide community accountability. (Chugach [AK] and Pearl River [NY], the first districts to receive the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige award, are presented.) The paper also offers lessons with respect to the scale and scope of implementation, data needs and quality, reporting, costs of adoption, professional development needs, and establishing partnerships. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://3d2know.cosn.org/publications/>.

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## DISTANCE LEARNING

According to "Distance Learning at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions: 2000-01," the National Center of Education Statistics' (NCES) third such survey, enrollment in distance education courses has nearly doubled since 1995, to 3.1 million, with over half (56 percent) of the nation's two- and four-year colleges offering distance courses. "Distance education is both a sign of the times and a harbinger on the future delivery of education services," explained John Bailey, director of the Department's Office of Educational Technology. "We'll continue to see an upward trend, not only at the post-secondary level. We're seeing it in K-12, too." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003017>.

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## QUOTE TO NOTE

"For me, it doesn't matter about a child's ZIP Code. It doesn't matter about their dialect, or whether they have one parent or two. They still deserve our best efforts. And when we give them that, they tend to show us things that we didn't expect to be there. They learn at the same rate as any other child. This achievement gap is not a product of these children's DNA. It is the product of our efforts. Let's get together

and fix this. Let's own this in our own communities. Let's assume this responsibility. Let's take it upon ourselves to make sure our children are getting a quality education. We have the power.... Let's just do it."

-- Secretary of Education Rod Paige (7/28/03)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

August 3 is National Kids Day. Boys & Girls Clubs of America, in collaboration with KidsPeace and other organizations, is spearheading the event, which honors America's children by promoting the concept of "meaningful time." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.kidsday.net/>.

On October 29, in Memphis, Tennessee, the White House and the Departments of Education, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice, and Labor are co-hosting a conference to help faith-based and community organizations learn more about President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative. The government is committed to helping these groups compete on an equal footing for federal dollars, receive greater private support, and face fewer bureaucratic barriers. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.dtiassociates.com/fbci/>. (If you are unable to attend, you may want to download the White House's guidance on partnering at <http://www.dtiassociates.com/fbci/downloads/GuidanceDocument.pdf>.)

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