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ED REVIEW

August 25, 2006

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



BACK TO SCHOOL EVENTS

On August 22, Secretary Spellings kicked-off her second Back to School season by helping open the Davidson Academy, a school for the profoundly gifted on the campus of the University of Nevada at Reno

(<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/08/08222006b.html>). Then, yesterday, she visited Benjamin Franklin Elementary School, a New Orleans magnet school that was the first non-charter public school to reopen after the hurricanes, opening its doors to all students (<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/08/08242006.html>). "With *No Child Left Behind*, we set an historic goal to ensure every child, regardless of race, income, or zip code, can read and do math on grade level by 2014," she explained. "And, in schools all across the country, in all different types of neighborhoods, with all different kinds of students, teachers and educators are getting the job done. We can and will reach our goal, but to do so we must run faster, hold our schools accountable, and encourage innovation. If we raise the bar of expectations, our students will achieve to new levels." During the next month, Department officials will visit all 50 states, spotlighting students, teachers, schools, and communities that are excelling.

As part of Back to School, the agency is honoring 2006 American Stars of Teaching -- teachers who are improving student achievement (some of them are nearing 100% proficiency!) and using innovative strategies to make a difference in the lives of their students. One American Star will be recognized in every state and the District of Columbia during surprise school visits. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/america-stars-factsheet.html>.

Also this week, in separate events, Deputy Secretary Ray Simon (8/22, Louisiana) and Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education Henry Johnson (today, Mississippi) announced the donation of 200,000 Random House children's books under the Gulf Coast Back to School Book Donation. This initiative, a joint venture between the Department and First Book, is designed to replenish reading materials in hurricane-

affected communities. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO
<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/08/08222006.html>.



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

The Department has published Fiscal Year 2006 Title I allocations by school district. Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, school districts must spend up to 20 percent of their Title I, Part A allocation to cover school choice-related transportation costs and pay for supplemental educational services. Districts have some discretion to determine the allocation of funds between the activities, but they must spend at least one-quarter (five percent) of the 20 percent "reservation" on each activity if there is demand for both. Moreover, for supplemental services, districts are required to pay the lesser of the actual cost or an amount equal to the district's Title I, Part A allocation divided by poor students in the district, as determined by Census Bureau estimates. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/titlei/fy06/>. (Note: The actual amounts received by districts will be smaller than shown due to state-level adjustments.)

Also, the Department has released initial peer review feedback and related information on revised Highly Qualified Teacher state plans. The vast majority of states made "serious efforts" to develop plans for having experienced, well-trained educators in classrooms, particularly in disadvantaged, low-performing schools. Indeed, based on the analysis of a team of external experts, nine states -- Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, South Carolina, and South Dakota -- satisfied all six criteria outlined in guidance from the agency, while 37 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico partially satisfied these criteria and will be required to improve their plans by September 26. However, four states failed to sufficiently meet any of the requirements. These states will have to undergo auditing and monitoring of their teacher quality data and, with federal support, submit new plans by November 1. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/hqtplans/>. (Note: A fact sheet is available at <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/methods/teachers/stateplanfacts.html>.)



IDEA REGULATIONS

On August 3, after a year-and-a-half-long process, Secretary Spellings announced new regulations for Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA). The regulations, aligned with *No Child Left Behind*, focus on ensuring that students with disabilities achieve to high standards. They further provide flexibility in spending resources to ensure that students with disabilities are identified early and accurately, and they receive the support they need; ensure that students with disabilities have highly qualified teachers; reduce paperwork for educators and administrators; and strengthen parents' involvement in their children's education. The Department has prepared a user-friendly package to guide the public through the changes, including an analysis of the public's comments and a summary of the significant changes since the draft regulations' publication. Also, the agency has posted some model forms for Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), notices of procedural safeguards, and prior written notices. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html>. (Note: A fact sheet is available at <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/speced/ideafactsheet.html>.)



PERKINS REAUTHORIZATION

On August 14, President Bush signed into law the reauthorization of the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act*. The act, last amended in 1998, governs the flow of about \$1.3 billion in federal aid to state and local work-related classes, programs, and training. Among the notable changes: references to "vocational" have been updated to "career and technical"; CTE programs will be required to report state test results and graduation rates, as defined by the *No Child Left Behind Act*, and CTE programs will be required to establish "programs of study," or plans for integrating academic- and career-oriented courses leading to a degree or industry certification. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://edworkforce.house.gov/press/press109/second/08aug/vocedsigning081406.htm>. (Note: The Secretary's statement is available at <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/07/07292006.html>.)



HIGHER EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

After eight meetings and a year of debate, the Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education has reached strong consensus on a list of recommendations for revamping the nation's higher education system. The draft report (posted online) offers proposals in six areas: access, cost and affordability, financial aid, learning, transparency and accountability, and innovation. Chairman Charles Miller will formally present the final report to the Secretary in mid-September. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/>. (Note: The Secretary's statement is available at <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/08/08102006.html>.)

The Department's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) continues to add to its list of frequently asked questions and answers concerning Academic Competitiveness (AC) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) grants. Many of the list's specific questions can be generalized to scenarios at different schools. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/IFAPWebApp/currentHERAPag.jsp?p1=c> (see left-hand margin).

The Department's Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) intends to establish up to four negotiated rulemaking committees to develop draft regulations under Title IV of the *Higher Education Act*. In preparation for these committees, OPE will hold a set of regional hearings to solicit issues (including both the items noted above) that should be considered for action. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2007/hearings.html>.



NCES REPORTS

Over the last month, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has published a variety of interesting studies. A sample:

- "The Digest of Education Statistics, 2005" -- a compilation of statistical information covering the broad field of American education (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006030>).

- "Current Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: 2003-04" (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006352>).
 - "Public Libraries in the United States: 2004" (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006349>).
 - "A Closer Look at Charter Schools Using Hierarchical Linear Modeling" -- a unique re-analysis of 2003 data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), allowing a comparison of student achievement between traditional public schools and public charter schools (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006460>). (Note: The Secretary's statement is at <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/08/08222006a.html>.)
 - "Student Financing of Undergraduate Education: 2003-04," with a special analysis of the net price of attendance and federal education tax benefits (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006186>).
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QUOTES TO NOTE

"Every student deserves individual attention. And every student deserves to be challenged -- whether you're rich or poor, black or white, a striving reader or reading Dickens at the age of four. If there's one thing I've learned in my travels around the country, it's that education is not a one-size-fits-all enterprise. Different children have different needs...."

-- Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings (8/22/06),
delivering remarks at the new Davidson Academy in Reno



UPCOMING EVENTS

September is the American Library Association's Library Card Sign-Up Month. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ala.org/ala/pio/otherinit/card/librarycard.htm>.

The National Mathematics Advisory Panel's third meeting is planned for September 13-14, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/mathpanel/>.

A final reminder! The National Conference on Aviation and Space Education (NCASE) is scheduled for October 19-21 in Arlington, Virginia. Don't miss this opportunity to interact with educators, aviation and space personalities, and industry representatives. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ncase.info/>.

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

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