

Archived Information



ED REVIEW

April 11, 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/>)

On April 2, Secretary Paige joined U.S. Sen. Mike Enzi (R) and U.S. Reps. Ron Kind (D) and Denny Rehberg (R) to announce a new Rural Education Caucus that will help address the concerns of rural states and school districts. The Secretary also announced a high-level task force within the Department to identify rural challenges and work with the caucus on finding solutions; Deputy Secretary Bill Hansen, a native of Idaho, will chair the group. "Children in rural schools deserve a great education just like all the other children in America," Paige said. "We at the Department of Education recognize that every state has rural school districts that face unique challenges. I know; I grew up in rural Mississippi where schools were few and far between." Aside from the demands of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Higher Education Act during the coming year are among the caucus' top priorities. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/04-2003/04022003a.html>.

Earlier this week, West Virginia became the ninth state to receive formal approval for its state accountability plan. A number of the approved plans are currently posted online at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/CFP/csas/index.html>, and additional plans will be posted as they become available.

In the ongoing effort to assist states and school districts on implementation of *No Child Left Behind*, the Department recently released preliminary guidance on the McKinney-Vento program, which speaks to problems homeless children face in school, such as low enrollment, poor attendance, and lack of academic success. Among the points: districts and schools cannot segregate homeless children in a separate program within a school based on homelessness alone; schools must immediately enroll homeless students, even if the students are unable to produce the records normally required by other students for

enrollment; districts must ensure that homeless children are provided transportation (at the request of parents or guardians) to and from the school they attended just prior to becoming homeless; and districts must designate a local liaison for homeless children and youths. Studies show that changing schools significantly impedes both academic and social growth. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SASA/hmlsprogresp.html>.



RESEARCH TOPICS

The Department-funded What Works Clearinghouse (<http://www.w-w-c.org>) will produce "evidence reports" on the following seven topics:

- **Interventions for Beginning Reading** -- reading interventions in grades K-3 that are intended to increase phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, or comprehension, or any combination of these skills. There will be two reports under this topic. The first will focus on interventions for students who are having difficulties developing beginning reading skills. The second will review interventions designed for general beginning reading students.
- **Curriculum-based Interventions for Increasing K-12 Math Achievement** -- math interventions which contain learning goals that spell out the math that students should know and be able to do, instructional programs and materials that organize the math content, and assessments. There will be three reports under this topic, one each for elementary, middle, and high school.
- **Preventing High School Dropout** -- interventions in middle school or high school designed to increase completion, including such techniques as the use of incentives, counseling, or monitoring as the prevention/intervention of choice.
- **Programs for Increasing Adult Literacy** -- programs that focus on literacy and language skills needed to function effectively in everyday life, which serve adult non-native speakers of English and adults who are proficient in spoken English but lack basic literacy skills.
- **Peer-Assisted Learning in Elementary Schools: Reading, Math, and Science** -- interventions designed to improve an elementary school academic outcome in reading, math, or science, that routinely use students to teach one another in pairs or groups.
- **Interventions to Reduce Delinquent, Disorderly, and Violent Behavior both in and out of School** -- programs for preventing or reducing disruptive, illegal, or violent behavior among middle and high school students. Programs may be administered in

mainstream (school) or alternative settings and may provide individual or group-based treatment.

- **Interventions for Elementary English Language Learners** -- interventions designed to improve the English language literacy and/or achievement of elementary students who are English language learners.

The WWC is currently accepting nominations of specific programs, practices, products, policies, and studies to be reviewed within each of the topic areas and is continuously seeking nominations for future topic areas. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.w-w-c.org/topicnom.html>.



FINAL HISPANIC REPORT

Hosted by Hialeah Senior High School near Miami, Florida, the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans released its final report. "From Risk to Opportunity: Fulfilling the Educational Needs of Hispanic Americans in the 21st Century" is the result of an 18-month review and represents, to date, the most comprehensive plan aimed at closing the educational achievement gap for the nation's largest minority group. The report sets forth recommendations for parents, educators, and leaders in business, faith-based institutions, government, and local communities and advocates six specific strategies, from supporting and enforcing *No Child Left Behind* to launching a research agenda to support Hispanic American children. Currently, one in every three Hispanic Americans fails to finish high school, and only 10 percent graduate from four-year colleges and universities. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.yesican.gov/>.



TECHNOLOGY TOOLKIT

In collaboration with Department, the State Educational Technology Directors' Association (SETDA) is offering a new toolkit to help states with *No Child Left Behind* technology requirements. The kit includes resources and best practices in five areas: scientifically based research, technology literacy assessment, common data elements, effective teaching using technology, and the national education technology plan. Each

was identified as an area of concern by SETDA members. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.setda.org/nli2002/CD/index.htm>.



INTERNATIONAL LITERACY

The Education Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has produced a valuable study of reading literacy, comparing findings on American fourth-grade literacy with those from the 34 other countries that participated in the 2001 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). Results indicate that U.S. fourth-graders outperformed their counterparts in 23 of the nations but fell short of Sweden, the Netherlands, and England. Moreover, fourth-grade girls outperformed boys in every participating country, including the U.S., and American fourth-graders educated in public schools with the highest poverty levels score lower on literacy than their peers in schools with lower poverty levels. Progress? Almost all (95 percent) of U.S. fourth-graders attend schools with a curricular emphasis on reading -- versus the international average of 78 percent. Also, 65 percent of U.S. fourth-graders receive more than six hours of reading instruction per week -- versus 28 percent internationally. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pirls/>.



RACE-NEUTRAL ALTERNATIVES

As the Supreme Court heard arguments on affirmative action in university admissions, the Department presented a catalog of race-neutral "methods" colleges might consider to build campus diversity. The report highlights the percent plan admissions strategy used in Florida and Texas, where state colleges guarantee admission to a percentage of top students from every high school, as well as long-term partnerships between poor high schools and colleges, expanded financial aid offerings, and pre-college workshops for low-income students. "The Supreme Court will issue a decision, and I have no idea what it will do," said Gerald Reynolds, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, "but it seems to me schools should start developing a plan B." In addition, the Department is planning a conference on the issue April 28-29 in Miami. Details about this event will be available at a later date. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/ocr/raceneutralreport.html>.

Note: Public Agenda just issued its Higher Education Issue Guide, with facts and figures and analysis of major issues, including affirmative action. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

http://www.publicagenda.org/issues/frontdoor.cfm?issue_type=higher_education.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"Make no mistake that it will take time, creativity, and constant attention by government and university officials to pursue effective race-neutral policies. However, as Americans we owe it to our heritage and to our children to meet those challenges head on rather than looking for shortcuts that divide us by race and betray the nation's fundamental principles."

-- Secretary of Education Rod Paige (3/28/03)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Remember, the Department's next "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast is scheduled for April 15. The topic is highly qualified teachers. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://registerevent.ed.gov/downlink/event-flyer.asp?intEventID=166>.

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

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