

Archived Information



ED REVIEW

January 16, 2004

...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.ed.gov/nclb/>)

On January 8, to celebrate the two-year anniversary of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, President Bush and Secretary Paige traveled to Knoxville, Tennessee. There, in a roundtable discussion at West View Elementary School, they hailed the law's accomplishments (<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/01/01082004factsheet.html>) and encouraged educators to continue to "challenge mediocrity." The roundtable included five educators from across the country with NCLB-inspired successes: James Pughsley, superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, discussed his district's progress in closing the achievement gap by raising the performance of African-American students; Kathy Cox, Georgia state superintendent, said the law has bolstered Georgia's efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism and truancy; both Norm Mishelow, an elementary school principal in Milwaukee, and Margie Willis, a Hattiesburg literacy coach, talked about advances in reading; and Jerry Hodges, executive director of Project GRAD for Knoxville, explained how his program embraces the law with tutors, parental support, and scholarships. "We're just beginning in America," the President concluded. "One of these days, we won't have enough room on the stage as we bring people from all around the country to talk about what is happening, the tremendous success as a result of the *No Child Left Behind Act*." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040108-3.html>.

Earlier that week, the President praised Pierre Laclède Elementary School during a visit to St. Louis, Missouri. "I'm here for the simple reason to show what is possible across America," the President said. "What is possible is to take [third-grade] reading scores from seven percent [at grade-level in 1999] to 80 percent [today] in places like St. Louis and elsewhere...." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040105-2.html>.

Envious? The new National Center for Reading First Technical Assistance will offer free training and support to states and school districts that have received Reading First grants. The national center will have three regional centers, administered by Florida State University, the University of Oregon, and the University of Texas. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/01/01072004.html>.



THE NEXT *BROWN*

In his recent remarks commemorating the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruling, Secretary Paige referred to the *No Child Left Behind Act* as "the next step after *Brown*." "It addresses latent segregation, a de facto apartheid that is emerging in our schools. Like *Brown*, *No Child Left Behind* is facing resistance," he emphasized. "But if we have the will, this law will have a profound and healing impact on our society." In turn, the Secretary found it "staggering that the very critics and organizations that fought so hard for civil rights could leave African-American, Hispanic-American, and special needs children behind. Some of the very people and organizations that applauded *Brown* and worked to implement it are now opposing *No Child Left Behind*..." Remember, the Secretary stressed, "We must make our schools equitable in order to make our society and culture equitable. Our schools are the leading indicator for later problems. So, unless we begin to eliminate racism in our schools, other attempts will probably be unsuccessful." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2004/01/01072004.html>.



BUDGET PRIORITIES

In conjunction with *No Child Left Behind's* anniversary, the White House released some key figures from the President's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year (which begins October 1, 2004). First, to help close the achievement gap, he will ask Congress for an additional \$1 billion for the Title I program, the Department's signature program providing resources to turn-around low-performing schools, improve teacher quality, and, if necessary, offer public school choice and supplemental educational services. Second, the President is seeking \$138 million more for the Reading First (to help children learn to read by the end of third-grade) and Early Reading First (to improve pre-reading skills

in pre-school) programs. Third, he will request a \$1 billion increase for special education programs. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/newsletters/extracredit/2004/0108.html>.



STATE AND LOCAL FLEXIBILITY

Attempting to dispel the persistent myth that the *No Child Left Behind Act* is a "one-size-fits-all" approach to education reform, the Department's Office of Public Affairs (OPA) has compiled a list of 40 separate implementation issues under the control and responsibility of state and local education agencies, from the minimum group size for accountability, participation, and reporting to the definition and evaluation of "qualified paraprofessionals." Moreover, for each issue, OPA offers a brief narrative highlighting the variety of state strategies. Consider this excerpt:

Integration of existing state accountability systems with NCLB. States have great flexibility in joining their current accountability systems with NCLB. Some states (like **California** and **Louisiana**) used their current accountability systems as additional academic indicators. Other states (like **North Carolina** and **Virginia**) decided to give their schools two ratings -- their state rating and the NCLB AYP rating. A few states (like **Ohio**) are using AYP as a conditional requirement for achieving the highest state rating.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2004/01/01142004.html>.

Also: Be sure to review the new guidance on school and district improvement provisions embedded in the law and Title I regulations. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/schoolimprovementguid.doc>.



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Education Week's eighth-annual "Quality Counts" report examines what the 50 states and the District of Columbia are doing to integrate students with disabilities in testing and accountability systems. Specifically, *Education Week* asked states to provide data

on the percentage of general versus special education students who took state tests in reading and math in grades 4, 8, and 10 in 2002-03. Only 13 of the 37 states that provided data tested 95 percent or more of their special education students in both reading and math in all three grades. It also asked what percentage of the total enrollment of general versus special education students scored at or above proficient on those tests. On fourth-grade reading tests, 30 of the 39 states had achievement gaps of 30 points or more. In six states, the gap was over 50 points! In addition, *Education Week* polled 800 general and special education teachers. While a majority of teachers believe their special education students make "significant academic progress," most question whether such students should have to meet the same academic requirements as others their age. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.edweek.org/sreports/QC04/>.

Note: On January 13, Christine Wolfe, Director of Policy in the Office of the Undersecretary, participated in a special education web chat. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO http://www.edweek.org/ew/tb/tblive/transcript_01-13-2004.htm.



NEWS FLASH

The National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) News Flash is an e-mail-based subscription service, designed to alert anyone interested in education data to new NCES publications, web tools, and other resources. Subscribers can pre-select areas of interest (for example, early childhood education, elementary and secondary education, or postsecondary education), and all notices contain a link to the appropriate NCES URL. To subscribe, all you need is a valid e-mail account. (E-mail addresses are not collected for any purpose other than notifications.) FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/newsflash/>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"*No Child Left Behind* is an aggressive rapid action program to eliminate racism and segregation by closing the achievement gap. There are some who believe that enforcement of current civil rights laws is enough. It is not enough.... Some of this is embedded in the hearts and minds of people. Further action is required. It cannot co-exist with the achievement gap. If this country firmly is committed to a future where

racism is eradicated, then it must recognize that *Brown*, itself, was a good start but only a start. And that affirmative action is only transitional.... At some point we must eliminate these disparities directly and completely."

-- Secretary of Education Rod Paige (1/8/04)



UPCOMING EVENTS

January is National Mentoring Month. All Americans are called to recognize the importance of mentoring, look for opportunities to serve as mentors in their communities, and celebrate with appropriate activities and programs. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/20040109-12.html>.

As part of Excellence in Science, Technology, and Math Education (ESTME) Week (<http://www.ostp.gov/html/estme/> -- to be updated January 19), the Department is hosting top leaders, including NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe and Nobel Laureate Carl Wieman, for a day of dialogue about effective science education. The March 16 Summit on Science is part of the agency's national Math and Science Initiative, which began in February 2003 with the goal of increasing student achievement in math and science. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/progs/mathscience/>.

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

Deputy Assistant Secretary -- Ken Meyer, (202) 401-0404, <mailto:Ken.Meyer@ed.gov>

Program Analyst -- Adam Honeysett, (202) 401-3003, <mailto:Adam.Honeysett@ed.gov>

To be added or removed from distribution, or submit comments (we welcome your feedback!), please contact Adam Honeysett. Or, visit <http://www.ed.gov/news/newsletters/edreview/>.