

# Archived Information



## ED REVIEW

August 12, 2005

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

This week, the Department released non-regulatory guidance regarding alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. This guidance is a supplement to the Department's regulations released on December 9, 2003 (<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2003-4/120903a.html>), and includes sections about alternate assessments (section B), Individualized Education Program teams (section D), alignment (section E), the "one percent cap" (sections F and H), the exception process (section G), and reporting (section I) that provide clear explanations and examples. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/saa.html#guidance>. (Note: This guidance only addresses issues related to the December 9, 2003, regulation. It does not address the recently proposed "two percent" policy or the issue of modified achievement standards.)

Also, the Department has released revised and expanded non-regulatory guidance for highly qualified teachers and Improving Teacher Quality State Grants (Title II, Part A). Many of the changes, including new policies pertaining to teachers in rural districts, science teachers, and teachers of multiple subjects, were made in response to feedback from Teacher Assistance Corps and monitoring visits. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/legislation.html#guidance>.

Meanwhile, a new, free resource is available to help parents and community leaders build excitement about and understanding of supplemental educational services, or SES. The "SES in Action Toolkit" offers strategies, tips, and tools for helping parents learn about SES, navigate the system to sign up for services, and pick a quality SES provider for their children. The toolkit was developed by the Supplemental Educational Services Quality Center, which is funded through a grant from the Department's Office of

Innovation and Improvement. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO  
<http://www.tutorsforkids.org/ToolkitDownload2.asp>.

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## SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Never one to slow down during the summer months, Secretary Spellings has been criss-crossing the country discussing *No Child Left Behind*. The following excerpts are from her major addresses since mid-July.

- National Council of La Raza (July 18): "I'm committed to working with you to make this law work for all students -- including those students new to the English language. Many of you have shared concerns with me about finding the best way to assess these students to make sure they're keeping pace in school. And because of that, we're convening a working group of researchers and educators to study the issue.... We need to get this right. The key is listening to people like you on the front lines."  
(<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2005/07/07182005.html>)
- National Reading First Conference (July 26): " *Time* magazine asked me if I thought these [*Harry Potter*] books had 'educational value.' I told them most any time kids read, that's a good thing. I know everybody here agrees with me about that! And you know that reading is more than a pastime. In today's world, it's a survival skill.... A child who can read is a child who can learn, and a child who can learn is a child who can succeed in school and in life."  
(<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2005/07/07262005.html>)
- Teacher-to-Teacher Workshop (July 27): "When we passed the *No Child Left Behind Act*, we knew the hard work of closing the achievement gap would fall on your shoulders. We also knew you wouldn't want it any other way. You never lose hope in a child. And as a nation, we're learning what you have always known. With a great teacher, every child can learn.... We want to provide teachers with strategies that are proven to work. We have a lot of good scientific research on how children learn..."  
(<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2005/07/07272005.html>)
- American Legislative Exchange Council (August 4): "[The *No Child Left Behind Act*] is good policy and good politics because the American people see education as a value, not an issue. There is a difference. Values represent the hopes and dreams that parents have for their children. A value is a belief we hold close to our hearts. It is a principle, a standard, and a quality that is worthwhile and desirable. That's why the majority of adults in our country say a high-quality public education system is the most important factor in our country's global success. They know education is

a fundamental part of our nation's legacy of innovation and achievement."  
(<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2005/08/08042005.html>)

The release of the new *Harry Potter* book also prompted a widely published op-ed from the Secretary: <http://www.ed.gov/news/opeds/edit/2005/07242005.html>.

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## FROM THE FIELD...

Only days after Deputy Secretary Ray Simon announced the Department will be independently calculating each state's four-year graduation rate, to be published alongside states' currently reported graduation rates (<http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2005/07/07132005.html>), 45 governors (subsequently, 46) and 12 national organizations signed a pact to produce graduation rates that more accurately gauge how well states do at ensuring students finish on time. "This change in reporting graduation rates ultimately helps not just educators, but students as well," Simon said in a statement regarding the governors' move. "Improving the accuracy of our graduation statistics allows us to better target resources and tailor instruction for children who might otherwise fall through the cracks and eventually drop out." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0507GRADCOMPACT.PDF>. (The Deputy Secretary's statement is available at <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/07/07172005.html>, while his op-ed is posted at <http://www.ed.gov/news/opeds/edit/2005/07282005.html>.)

Then, on July 27, 15 leading business organizations called for doubling the number of science, technology, engineering, and math graduates by the year 2015. These groups -- representing businesses of every size and from every sector of the economy -- released an action plan focused on five areas: building public support; motivating students and adults to enter careers in these disciplines (with a special effort geared toward under-represented groups); upgrading elementary and secondary teaching in math and science; reforming immigration/visa policies to enable the U.S. to attract and retain students; and boosting and sustaining funding for basic research. "The call...is a realistic one, if we make the right choices," Secretary Spellings said in a statement regarding the plan. "Key to achieving this goal is to increase our K-12 pipeline by improving our high schools." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.businessroundtable.org/pdf/20050803001tapfinalnb.pdf>. (The Secretary's

statement is available at

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/07/07272005.html>.)

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NLTS2

According to the Department-funded National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), students with disabilities have made significant progress in their transition to adulthood during the past 25 years. For example, the percentage of students with disabilities completing high school rose from 53.5 percent in 1987 to 70.3 percent in 2003, and, over the same period, the rate at which students with disabilities enrolled in any type of postsecondary education rose from 14.6 percent to 31.9 percent. Moreover, in 2003, 70 percent of students with disabilities who had been out of school for up to two years had paying jobs, versus only 55 percent in 1987. However, challenges remain. African-American and Latino students with disabilities continue to lag behind their white peers on key indicators (completion rate, postsecondary attendance, independent living, etc.), and no real increase in earnings among young people with disabilities occurred over a 16-year period. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.nlts2.org/>.

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NEW COMMISSIONER

President Bush has formally nominated Mark S. Schneider to be Commissioner of Education Statistics, for the remainder of a six-year term expiring June 20, 2009. No stranger to federal service, Dr. Schneider now serves as Deputy Commissioner of the National Center for Education Research, another arm of the agency's Institute for Education Sciences (IES). Previously, he served as a professor and chairman of the Department of Political Science at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. IES' National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collects, analyzes, and reports data concerning the nation's education progress. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/07/07272005a.html>.

Also: Before leaving town on recess, the Senate confirmed new assistant secretaries for Communications and Outreach (OCO), Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), and Legislation and Congressional Affairs (OLCA). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/07/07292005a.html>,

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/07/07292005b.html>, AND  
<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/07/07292005c.html> (respectively).

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## MONITORING AMERICA'S CHILDREN

Data from the 2005 edition of "America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being," compiled by the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, suggests that the next generation of adults is off to a healthy start. First, the teen birth rate dropped to a record low in 2003 (the most recently available data): 22 births for every 1,000 girls ages 15 to 17, compared to 39 in 1991. (African-American teens showed the greatest decline, from 86 per 1,000 in 1991 to 39 in 2003.) Also, the percentage of young children receiving the recommended series of immunizations has increased, and child mortality (ages 1 to 4) has been declining in the last two decades, dropping by more than half between 1980 and 2002. On the other hand, poverty is up, with 18 percent of all children (ages 0 to 17) living below the \$18,810 for a family of four poverty threshold. And, the rates at which youths committed or were victims of serious violent crimes has increased. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/>. (Note: This year's report has special features on asthma, lead in the blood of children, and parental reports of behavioral and emotional difficulties, as well as a section on family structure and children's well-being.)

What about education specifically? In "Youth Indicators 2005," a separate report from NCES, America's young people have made substantial improvements academically over the previous three decades, demonstrating improved mathematics performance during their teenage years and very nearly doubling their college completion rates. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2005050>.

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## QUOTE TO NOTE

"Many people in America want to help children, but they're not sure how to get started. On October 27th, I'll host a White House Conference on Helping America's Youth here in Washington, D.C. We'll invite researchers, service providers, and volunteers who can help us understand the challenges faced by today's youth and recommend effective pro-

grams to help children. By bringing together experts and sharing knowledge, we can foster connections between people making a difference in their communities and people who have the motivation but need to get started. We want to reach enough people so that every child in America has a parent, a teacher, a coach, or a mentor that he can turn to for support and love."

-- First Lady Laura Bush (7/29/05)

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

The first "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast of the season, "High Schools: Expanding the Promise of *No Child Left Behind*," is set for September 20 at 8:00 p.m. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/av/video/edtv/>.

September 11-14, in Philadelphia (PA), the Hamilton Fish Institute on School and Community Violence is sponsoring "Persistently Safe Schools." The conference is intended to be a creative and informed conversation and debate about the state of school violence research and its practical application in schools. J. Robert Flores, from the Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, is among the keynote speakers. There is a registration fee. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://hamfish.org/conference/>.

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