

# Archived Information



## ED REVIEW

October 21, 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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NAEP 2005

On October 19, the non-partisan National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) released national and state-by-state results of the 2005 Nation's Report Card in reading and math, detailing fourth- and eighth-grade achievement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Among the findings:

- Overall, fourth- and eighth-grade math scores rose to all-time highs, and fourth-grade reading scores matched the all-time high. (Eighth-grade reading scores decreased by one point.)
- In fourth- and eighth-grade math, higher percentages of white, African-American, Hispanic, and Asian students performed at or above proficient levels, as defined by NAEP, than in any previous year.
- The achievement gap between white and Hispanic fourth-graders narrowed, reaching an all-time low in reading and matching an all-time low in math.
- The gaps in eighth-grade math between white and African-American students and white and Hispanic students narrowed to their lowest point since 1990.
- Forty-three states and the District of Columbia have either improved or held steady in all four categories.

"These results, like the long-term July data, confirm that we are on the right track with *No Child Left Behind*," Secretary Spellings said after the release, "particularly with younger students who have benefited from the core principles of annual assessment and disaggregation of data.... It's notable that as our student population has become increasingly diverse, the scores have continued to rise. That is no accident. It is a tribute to the hard work of classroom teachers, school principals, and local policymakers." FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nationsreportcard.gov/>. (Fact sheets may be found at <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/accountability/achieve/report-card.html>, and state-by-states profiles are available at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/>.)

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

"Case Studies of Supplemental Services Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*: Findings from 2003-04," a new report by the Department's Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development, examines the implementation of supplemental educational services in nine school districts in six states. The report finds participation in districts ranged from seven to 86 percent of eligible students. However, even in districts with low participation, several used all of their federal funds allocated for tutoring (an amount equal to 20 percent of their federal Title I allocation), while another came rather close. Also, the report shows the number of providers continues to increase. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/disadv/supplementalyear2/>.

Over the next couple of weeks, the Department will unveil new guidance on *No Child Left Behind's* highly qualified teacher provisions. (The deadline for highly qualified teachers in core classes is the end of the current school year.) The guidance will be posted at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/legislation.html#guidance>.

Meanwhile, the Department recently awarded grants to 20 new Comprehensive Centers. The 15 regional centers -- providing frontline support -- and five content centers -- focusing on the areas of assessment and accountability, high schools, innovation and improvement, instruction, and teacher quality -- will assist states and school districts working to meet the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. The centers replace the Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers and numerous math, science, and technology centers. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/newccp/>.



## BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

October has been a busy month on the business-education front. First, October 5-7, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosted the initial public meeting of the Business Education Network (<http://www.businesseducationnetwork.net/>), a coalition sponsored by the Chamber and other business organizations and corporations to address the issues

facing public education. Second, on October 12, a panel convened by the National Academies (chaired by Norman Augustine, retired chairman of Lockheed Martin) called for, among other things: creating 10,000 scholarships to attract top students into careers in teaching math and science; improving the math and science skills of 25,000 teachers now on the job; doubling the number of students who take Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in those subjects; and tripling the number of students passing AP and IB tests (<http://www.nap.edu/books/0309100399/html>). Third, yesterday (October 20), Secretary Spellings hosted a meeting of 15 business organizations seeking to double the number of math, science, and technology graduates by 2015 (<http://www.businessroundtable.org/pdf/20050803001TAPfinalnb.pdf>).

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## DIGITAL WORKSHOPS

Hundreds of thousands of teachers have visited the Department's free Teacher-to-Teacher online professional development web site. Thirty-two sessions are available, including reading, writing, math, science, history, differentiated instruction, standards-based assessment, data, inclusion, and *No Child Left Behind* basics. Presenters are exemplary practitioners who share the strategies they have used to help all children learn and progress. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.paec.org/teacher2teacher/>. (Note: Many states allow teachers to meet their professional development requirements by using e-Learning workshops. To see if your state is one of them, go to <http://www.paec.org/teacher2teacher/map.html>.)

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## SENIOR PROFILE

A new report from the Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "A Profile of the American High School Senior in 2004: A First Look," looks at four aspects of high school seniors in the spring term of their last year of high school: tested achievement (How proficient are the nation's seniors in math?); educational expectations (How much more education do the nation's seniors expect to achieve?); factors in choosing a college (What matters most to seniors in selecting a college?); and life goals and values (How important to seniors are education, work, and/or leisure?). Remarkably, more than two-thirds of students who were high school seniors in 2004 expected to complete a bachelor's degree, and 35 percent planned to get a graduate or

professional degree. Yet, almost two-thirds had not mastered intermediate math skills, and nearly one-third were incapable of basic problem solving. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006348>.

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## HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Earlier this week (October 17), Secretary Spellings opened the inaugural meeting of the Commission on the Future of Higher Education. Below are some key excerpts from her remarks.

"As you all likely remember, in April 1983, we awoke to the news that America was 'A Nation at Risk' thanks to 'a rising tide of mediocrity' in our public primary and secondary schools. Overnight, the report turned education reform into a hot topic of conversation and a front-page story. And while 'A Nation at Risk' certainly didn't have all the right answers, it started a national debate that helped pave the way for higher standards, accountability, *No Child Left Behind*, and, ultimately, improved student achievement for all children. It's now time to launch a national dialogue on our shared vision for higher education. Let me begin this conversation by saying the circumstances are far different from the ones that led to 'A Nation at Risk.' Rather than facing a 'tide of mediocrity,' we're starting our discussion with the finest system of higher education in the world -- the very best."

"As taxpayers, we all have a stake in our higher education system. Many people don't realize that federal dollars, including funds for research, make up about one-third of our nation's annual investment in higher education. By comparison, the federal government's investment in K-12 education represents less than 10 percent of spending. But unlike K-12 education, we don't really ask many questions about what we're getting for our investment in higher education. And as a result, we're missing valuable information on how the system works today and what can be improved.... This absence of good, sound data makes it difficult to set policy at the federal, state, and institutional levels."

The Commission's final report is due August 1, 2006. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/>.

Also: According to the College Board, college tuition increases at public institutions are significantly smaller in 2005-06 than they were in the last two years, while increases at

private institutions are similar to last year's. And, grant aid continues to increase, although at a slower rate than student loans. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.collegeboard.com/press/article/0,,48884,00.html>.

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#### QUOTE TO NOTE

"[NAEP 2005] is an encouraging report...because it shows there's an achievement gap in America that is closing; that minority students, particularly in fourth-grade math and fourth-grade reading, are beginning to catch up with their Anglo counterparts.... It also shows that a system that measures and focuses on every child is a system that can help us achieve a goal that we really want in America, and that is every child learning to read and add and subtract, and no child being left behind. This is an important yardstick; it's an important measuring tool."

-- President George W. Bush (10/19/05)

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#### UPCOMING EVENTS

The next "Education News Parents Can Use" broadcast, "Special Education: Ensuring Excellence for All," is scheduled for November 15. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/news/av/video/edtv/>.

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