

Archived Information



ED REVIEW

November 17, 2006

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



EAST ASIA DELEGATION

Since last Friday (November 10), coinciding with International Education Week, Secretary Spellings and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Dina Habib Powell have been leading a high-profile delegation of 12 U.S. college and university presidents across Japan, Korea, and China. Meeting with various student, university, government, and business leaders, the delegation is carrying the message that the U.S. welcomes and values international students who want to study in the U.S. "We can learn a lot from each other to better prepare our students," Secretary Spellings told the audience at Waseda University in Tokyo. "For example, Japan has strong math and science programs, and America is known for its emphasis on critical thinking and creativity. Working together, we can give all our students a better education." Despite the challenges of 9/11, foreign student enrollment in the U.S. has rebounded (see below); in the last year, the number of student and exchange visas hit an all-time high of more than 590,000. Also, in the past 10 years, the number of Americans studying overseas has increased 10 percent. "Companies today want graduates skilled in the fields of math, science, and foreign languages, the new currencies of our global economy," the Secretary noted. "These days, companies are following talent, whether that talent is in Texas or Tokyo. Since our universities are at the heart of recruiting and nurturing talent, they must adapt to make sure a college education equips students to be competitive with the new international workforce." The trip concludes tomorrow (November 18). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/international/asia-tour/>.

In other higher education news:

- The Institute of International Education's "Open Doors 2006" is an annual report on foreign student enrollment in the U.S. (142 institutions hosted at least 1,000 international students) and Americans studying abroad (China hosted 6,389 U.S. students, a 35 percent increase from the previous year). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.opendoors.iienetwork.org/>.

- On November 1, the Department's Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) published in the *Federal Register* final regulations implementing (1) the Academic Competitiveness (AC) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) grant programs (<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2006-4/110106a.html>) and (2) the provisions of the *Higher Education Reconciliation Act* relating to Title IV federal student aid programs (<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2006-4/110106b.html>).
 - "Placing College Graduation Rates in Context," a new study by the Department's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), offers a system-wide overview of how graduation rates of comparable four-year institutions vary with selectivity and the size of the low-income population. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007161>.
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NCLB UPDATE (<http://www.ed.gov/nclb/>)

On November 9, Secretary Spellings announced the approval of three additional high-quality growth-based accountability models. Delaware is immediately approved to use the model for the 2006-07 school year. Arkansas and Florida are also approved, provided their assessment systems are fully approved by the Department by the end of the 2006-07 school year. The agency intends to approve no more than 10 models for the pilot program. North Carolina and Tennessee received approval to implement their growth models last school year. Thus, five slots remain. Nine states have applied for those remaining slots. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/growthmodel/proficiency.html>.



TUDA 2005: SCIENCE

On November 15, the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) released results from the 2005 Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) in science. The TUDA provides comparable data on fourth- and eighth-grade student achievement in 11 of the nation's urban school districts. (Results from the reading and math assessments were released

in December.) Ten districts participated in the science assessment. All of the districts have a majority of students who are not white, and nearly all have high proportions of low-income students. Among the findings:

- In seven of the 10 districts, fourth-graders scored as well as or better than students in large central cities (population 250,000 or more) across the U.S. However, compared to public schools nationwide, all but one district had lower average scores.
- Similarly, in six of the 10 districts, eighth-graders scored as well as or better than students in large central cities across the U.S. However, compared to public schools nationwide, all districts had lower average scores.
- In many districts, average scores for white, black, Hispanic, and Asian students were higher than or not significantly different from the national average for their peers.
- For both fourth- and eighth-grade, the gap in average scores between the nation and individual districts for all students ranged from two to 30 points, with the nation's score higher. However, when that comparison is based only on low-income students, the gaps ranged from almost none to 19 points, with, again, the nation's score higher.

This is the third time districts have participated in the TUDA. Six districts took reading assessments in 2002. In 2003, 11 districts took reading and math assessments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO

http://nationsreportcard.gov/tuda_science/.



HELPFUL HINTS

In case you missed it, the November 15 emergency planning webcast is archived at <http://www.connectlive.com/events/edschoolsafety/>. Also, the Department's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) and the Emergency Response and Crisis Management (ERCM) Technical Assistance Center has announced a series of publications, called "Helpful Hints," to help school districts improve emergency management practices within their school communities. The first of this series, titled "Emergency Go-Kits," is now available online at http://www.ercm.org/views/documents/HH_GoKits.pdf. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ercm.org/index.cfm?event=hints>.



BALLOT ISSUES

While most of the attention during last week's general election was reserved for congressional races, voters in 19 states decided a wide variety of education-related ballot issues. Consider:

- In Idaho, Michigan, Nebraska, and Ohio voters defeated measures that would have provided additional funding for education. But proposals in Maine, Nebraska, and Oregon that had the potential to restrict spending on schools -- the idea known as a Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR) -- were also rejected.
- Arizona and Nebraska voters approved measures to fund early childhood education.
- In Colorado, voters rejected two separate "65 percent solution" measures, which would have required districts to funnel a minimum of 65 percent of their budgets directly into classrooms.
- A proposal to ban affirmative action programs in Michigan passed with 58 percent.

Meanwhile, Arizona, Georgia, Oklahoma, and Wyoming reelected their incumbent Chief State School Officers, and Idaho -- an open seat -- chose a new chief. The race in South Carolina -- another open position -- is undecided. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO [http://www.iandrinstitute.org/BW%202006-5%20\(Election%20results\).pdf](http://www.iandrinstitute.org/BW%202006-5%20(Election%20results).pdf).



PROMISES NOT KEPT

According to a new report by America's Promise -- the alliance of education and business groups founded in 1997 by retired U.S. Army General Colin Powell to promote volunteerism on behalf of youth -- less than one-third of American children ages 6 to 17 are receiving the critical developmental resources, or "promises," that correlate with success: caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, an effective education, and opportunities to help others. The network calculates that children who enjoy four of the promises are significantly more likely to be successful across various contexts of their lives. Yet, more than 10 million children are experiencing zero or one promise, with 20 percent of children (or 8.5 million) lacking caring adults in their lives. Moreover, African-American and Hispanic children are half as likely as white children to receive four or five promises. Nevertheless, 90 percent of children say they have set goals and

are willing to work hard to reach them. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.americaspromise.org/OurWork.aspx?id=208>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"[The U.S.] government is committed to ensuring that our education system provides students with the resources and instruction they need to be competitive and succeed in the new global economy. For us, the internationalization of education means sharing best practices, fostering innovation, and increasing transparency. Because no matter what nation we call home, all of us share the same commitment to see students succeed. Education opens the doors of opportunity and is the foundation for a better life and a bright future."

-- Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings (11/13/06),
delivering remarks at Waseda University in Tokyo, Japan



UPCOMING EVENTS

December 5 is International Volunteer Day, an opportunity for individual volunteers or volunteer organizations to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Those goals include combating disease, hunger, illiteracy, poverty, discrimination against women, and environmental degradation. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/>.

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