

Cindy  
632-0952

Orig: CTR (pk)  
xc: Galston - see E-5, G-6: I am  
the "Second Admin. Rep."

**LEADERSHIP ASSIGNMENTS OF PANEL MEMBERS (T)**

**ROLE OF PANEL LEADERS.** To provide guidance to NEGP staff and Working Groups, review recommendations prepared for Panel consideration, make recommendations to the Panel on consensus items, make introductions to the Panel on information/discussion items.

**ASSIGNMENTS BY AREA.**

**A. GOAL 1: SCHOOL READINESS**

**LEADERS:** Senator Bingaman, Representative Goodling, Governor Carlson and Governor ~~Romer~~ Nelson

**PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON:** Emily Wurtz

**MAJOR ISSUES:** Establishing an Early Childhood Commission; Refining further the definition of "readiness for school" and promoting its adoption by local communities.

**B. GOAL 2: SCHOOL COMPLETION**

**LEADERS:** Governor Branstad and Governor Nelson

**PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON:** Leslie Lawrence

**MAJOR ISSUES:** Adopting a core set of definitions related to measures of dropouts, school completion and other Goals-related indicators as part of a voluntary student record system.

**C. GOALS 3 & 4: CHALLENGING SUBJECT MATTER AND CITIZENSHIP**

**LEADERS:** Representative Kildee and Governors Bayh, Campbell and Carlson

**PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON:** Edward Fuentes

**MAJOR ISSUES:** Use of NAEP achievement levels to monitor progress, indicators for monitoring citizenship, expansion of NAEP by Congress, ESEA Chapter 1 re-authorization related to the Goals, standards and assessments.

D. GOALS 3 & 4: ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS COUNCIL

LEADERS: Secretary Riley, Representative Goodling, Governor Campbell and Governor Romer

PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON: Wilmer Cody

MAJOR ISSUES: Legislative authorization, appointment of NESAC members, criteria for Panel adoption of national standards.

E. GOAL 5: ADULT LITERACY/WORKFORCE SKILLS

LEADER: Senator Cochran, "Second Administration Representative", Governor Engler and Governor ~~Nelson~~ Romer

PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON: Cindy Prince

MAJOR ISSUES: Panel response to the Resource Group recommendations on workplace literacy, development of multiple definitions of adult literacy for purposes of monitoring progress.

F. GOAL 5: COLLEGIATE ASSESSMENT

LEADER: Governor Bayh and Governor Carlson

PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON: Edward Fuentes

MAJOR ISSUES: Whether to pursue the creation of a national collegiate assessment system.

G. GOAL 6: DISCIPLINED ENVIRONMENT

LEADER: Governor McKernan and "Second Administration Representative"

PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON: Leslie Lawrence

MAJOR ISSUES: Develop new indicators for a "disciplined school environment."

**H. REPORT ON THE FEDERAL ROLE RELATED TO EDUCATION FUNDING, PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY AND THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL MANDATES ON THE STATES.**

**LEADERS:** Secretary Riley, Senator Cochran, Representative Kildee, Governors Branstad, Engler and Nelson

**PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON:** Edward Fuentes

**MAJOR ISSUES:** What to include in the Report.

**I. ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY IN ACHIEVING THE GOALS.**

**LEADER:** Senator Bingaman and Governor McKernan

**MAJOR ISSUES:** Investigate how interactive communications networks can be established and used to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

**PRINCIPAL NEGP STAFF LIAISON:** Martin Orland

## ASSIGNMENTS BY PANELIST. (r)

Governor Bayh -- Goals 3 & 4 (challenging subject matter ...), Goal 5 (collegiate)

Governor Branstad -- Goal 2, Federal Role

Governor Campbell -- Goals 3 & 4 (challenging subject matter ...), NESAC

Governor Carlson -- Goal 1, Goals 3 & 4 (challenging subject matter ...), Goal 5 (collegiate)

Governor Engler -- Goal 5 (adult literacy/workforce), Federal role

Governor McKernan -- Goal 6, Education technology

Governor Nelson -- Goal 2, Goal <sup>1</sup>~~5 (adult literacy/workforce)~~, Federal role

Governor Romer -- Goal <sup>5</sup>~~4~~, NESAC

Secretary Riley -- NESAC, Federal role

Second Administration Representative -- Goal 5 (adult literacy/workforce), Goal 6

Senator Bingaman -- Goal 1, education technology

Senator Cochran -- Goal 5 (adult literacy/workforce), Federal role

Representative Goodling -- Goal 1, NESAC

Representative Kildec -- Goals 3 & 4 (challenging subject matter ...), Federal role

## Mystery Graphs

Used by Gov. Romer w/ his legislators to look at the issue of what standards are all about.

### Suggested time allotment

Less than one class period

### Student social organization

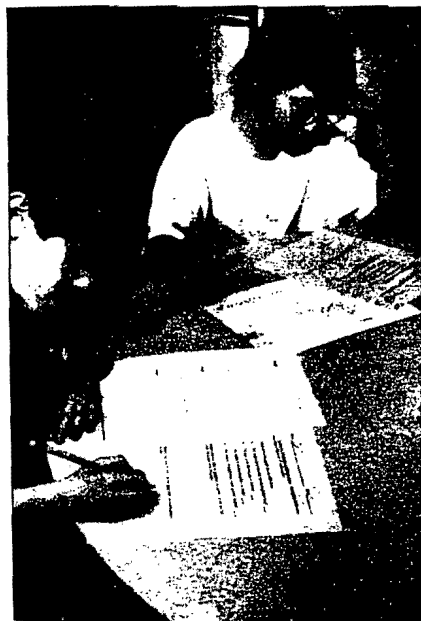
Students working alone

### Task

#### *Assumed background:*

This task assumes that the children have had extensive experience in dealing with sets of data, and, in particular, are familiar with interpreting data that are represented in line plots.

**Explore sets rather than individual pieces of data**  
**Broaden the view of mathematics appropriate for the 4th grade**  
**Apply mathematics to real life experience**



*Presenting the task:* The teacher should distribute the student materials and read enough of it to be sure that the children understand the task. It is also important to stress that the "classroom of fourth graders" is some other classroom — not theirs. In the pilot, it was necessary to clarify that "cavities" in question 1a refers to both filled and unfilled cavities.

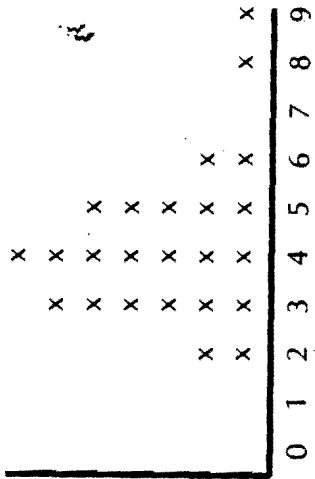
*Student assessment activity:*  
See the following pages.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

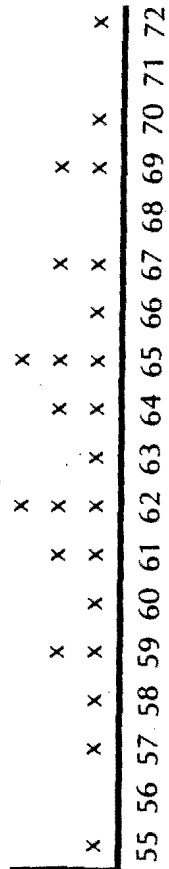
Look at the five graphs on the next pages. Each graph shows something about a classroom of fourth graders.

1. Which of the five graphs do you think shows:
  - a. The number of cavities that the fourth graders have? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. The ages of the fourth graders' mothers? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. The heights of the fourth graders, in inches? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. The number of people in the fourth graders' families? \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Explain why you think the graph you picked for c is the one that shows the heights of fourth graders.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Why do you think the other graphs don't show the fourth graders' heights?

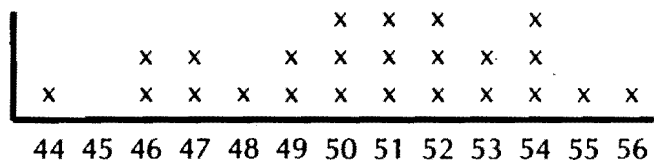
Graph 1



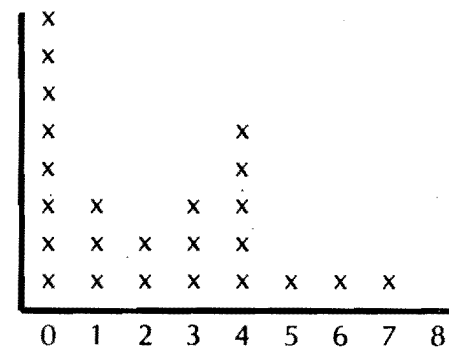
Graph 2



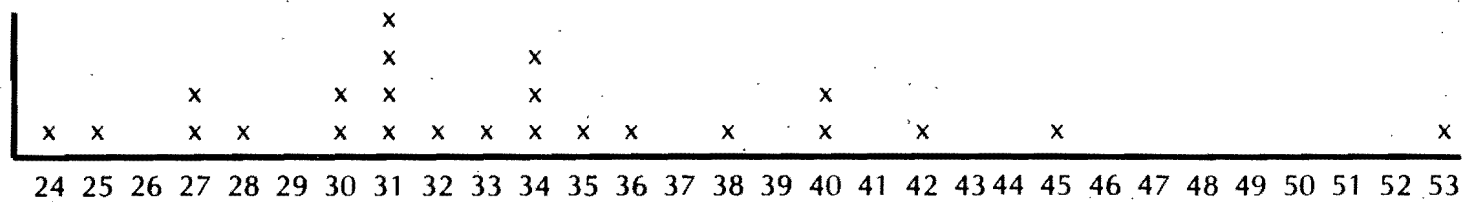
Graph 3



Graph 4



Graph 5





### Rationale for the mathematics education community

This task puts a premium on looking at data sets, as opposed to individual pieces of information. This is a fundamental notion that should take an increasing role in the elementary mathematics curriculum. The task also gives children the opportunity to relate the graphical representations to their own experiences as fourth graders.

Ordinarily, of course, one would want children to have plenty of chances to collect, display, and analyze their own data, as the NCTM *Standards* suggest. If the task is going to fit within a single class period, however, there is not enough time to create five graphs for comparison. As a result, this task uses data that have already been collected from some hypothetical fourth grade. Clearly other assessment tasks (like the Hog Game and Buttons tasks in this collection) must include the collection, display, and analysis of data.

*Task design considerations:* Children seem naturally interested in data about people, particularly people of their own ages; this is one reason for choosing a hypothetical fourth-grade class as the basis of these data. The children will naturally bring their *own* experiences with heights, ages, family size, and dental health with them to the task. When using such situations for assessment purposes, one must be careful to use values of the data to which all the students can relate equally well. There may be cultural variations in family sizes or in the ages of fourth-graders' mothers, for example. To take this into account, the ranges of Graphs 1 and 5 are large enough to encompass every student's own family size and mother's age.

Questions similar to the one about heights could be asked about mothers' ages, family sizes, or cavities. The only reason such questions are not included is to save assessment time; the intent was to give an example of a task that could be done in less than one class period.

To some extent, this is a task that measures children's prior knowledge about the real world — about how many inches tall they are, how old their mothers are, and so on. If one is concerned with children's abilities to connect mathematics with their world of experience, this is a reasonable expectation.

The style of drawing line plots should be the same as the style to which the student is accustomed.

Ideally, the five graphs should be displayed so that the student can see them all at once.

*Variants and extensions:* A natural instructional follow-up to this task is to ask the students to compile data on heights, cavities, etc., from their own class, to compare with the data given.

Using just the data presented here, one could pose problems like: "Suppose Graph 2 really did show heights in inches. Whose heights could they be?" "Suppose Graph 3 showed the ages of the mothers of students in some grade level in our school. Which grade could that be?" "What other kinds of data could Graph 1 be showing?"

### Protorubric

*Characteristics of the high response:*

High

I chose 3 for the heights because were about 4 or 5 feet tall and thats the number of inches from 44 to 56 would make sense

Question 2

The other ones dont show hights in 1 its too short only 2 inches tall! And 2 is someone is 72 inches thats 6 feet tall. 4 wouldnt be right because nobody can be 0 anything tall and 5 is too short too -- like someone is 2 feet

Question 3

The high response shows a full understanding of the relationship between the graphs and the data they represent.

## Mystery Graphs

The responses for question 1 are all correct (a. 4; b. 5; c. 3; d. 1). Questions 2 and 3, taken together, should explain that Graph 3 shows a reasonable range of fourth graders' heights, and that ranges of data in the other graphs are not as reasonable. The only real alternative candidate for the heights is Graph 2, but that would imply that there are fourth graders who are six feet tall.

*Characteristics of the medium response:*

Graph 1 and Graph 4 are interchanged (number of cavities and number of family members); or Graph 2 is used in place of Graph 3 or Graph 5; or Graphs 3 and 5 are interchanged. Nonetheless, graphs showing the correct general orders of magnitude are selected. Some portions of the student's justifications are reasonable.

Medium
Graph 2 is for the heights - a fourth grader could be 55 inches tall
Question 2
Graphs 1 and 4 are much too short
Question 3

*Characteristics of the low response:*

At most one graph is chosen that shows totally unrealistic data (e.g., Graph 5, with a range from 24 to 53, is selected for the number of people in the families). Responses to questions 2 and 3 are missing or indicate that the student cannot interpret the graphs, or they do not show any reasonable sense of the magnitudes of more than one of the items.

Low
#1 could be heights - there are lots of Xs and that's the heights -
Question 2
The others can't be heights because #1 is the heights
Question 3

**Reference**

An earlier version of this task was developed by TERC (Cambridge, MA) for Education Development Center (Newton, MA).

**NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL**

Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill  
400 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001

**AGENDA**

**March 3, 1993**

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Capitol Room

TAB

10:00 - 10:15

**Welcome and Introductory Remarks**

Approval of Meeting Summary, December 18, 1992

A

10:15 - 10:45

**Draft NEGP Agenda for 1993**

B

For Consideration: Suggestions from Panel members expressed during and since the last meeting have been incorporated into the draft.

10:45 - 11:45

**Communicating the Goals Panel Message: Feedback and Outreach Proposals**

For Consideration: How can the Goals Panel more effectively reach the general public and specific groups on the importance of the Goals and the status of national and state progress? What ideas and proposals do the Panel members have?

a) Written reactions to the 1992 Goals Report

C

b) Report on Focus Groups

D

Phyllis Blaunstein - The Widmeyer Group  
Scott Widmeyer - The Widmeyer Group

c) Review and Discussion of Proposed new NEGP Outreach Activities

E

**NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL**

Wednesday, March 3, 1993  
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**BRIEFING MATERIALS**

11:45 – 12:30

**Developing Standards for Citizenship:  
Areas of Consensus and Controversy**

For Information and Discussion: What should be the scope and content of Civics education in American schools? The Panel's Technical Planning Subgroup on Citizenship recommended that in developing standards for citizenship, an action component -- community service learning (which typically includes both in-school study and community service) -- should be included.

David Hornbeck – Chair, NEGP Goal 3 Technical Planning Subgroup on Citizenship

F

Charles Quigley – Executive Director, Center for Civic Education

G

John Buchanan – Member, NEGP Goal 3 Technical Planning Subgroup on Citizenship, and Co-Director, CIVITAS Project

12:30 – 1:00

**Status Report on the Commission on Time and Learning**

H

For Information and Discussion: The belief that higher expectations and high standards for all students can result in higher achievement is based, in part, on the principle that achievement is as much a function of time devoted to studying particular knowledge and skills as it is a function of individual differences in ability. The Commission on Time and Learning, created by Congress, is preparing a report on that relationship.

Milt Goldberg – Executive Director,  
Commission on Time and Learning

1:00 – 1:15

**Press Availability**

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Divider Title: \_\_\_\_\_

A

**MEETING SUMMARY****NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL****December 18, 1992**

The first meeting of the National Education Goals Panel for the 1993 goal reporting year convened on December 18, 1992, in Washington, D.C., at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, the Honorable E. Benjamin Nelson, presiding. The Goals Panel is charged with monitoring and assessing progress toward achievement of the National Education Goals; issuing an annual report to the President, the Governors and the Nation; and overseeing the development of the National Education Standards and Assessments Council (NESAC) to ensure the development of nationally agreed upon standards and a voluntary system of assessments.

**ATTENDANCE****Members in Attendance**

Governors: E. Benjamin Nelson, Governor of Nebraska and Goals Panel Chairman; Evan Bayh, Governor of Indiana; Howard Dean, Governor of Vermont; John McKernan, Jr., Governor of Maine; Barbara Roberts, Governor of Oregon; and Roy Romer, Governor of Colorado.

Administration Officials: Lamar Alexander, U.S. Secretary of Education and Roger B. Porter, Assistant to the President for Economic and Domestic Policy.

Congressional Representatives: Jeff Bingaman, U.S. Senator, New Mexico; Thad Cochran, U.S. Senator, Mississippi.

With Wilmer S. Cody, Executive Director, National Education Goals Panel.

**Members Absent**

Terry E. Branstad, Governor of Iowa; Carroll A. Campbell Jr., Governor of South Carolina and Immediate Past Goals Panel Chairman; William Goodling, U.S. Representative, Pennsylvania; and Dale Kildee, U.S. Representative, Michigan.

**Guest Speakers**

Eva Baker, Co-Director, Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Testing;  
Nancy Cole, Executive Vice-President, Educational Testing Service;  
Charlotte Crabtree, Director, National History Standards Project;  
Roberts Jones, Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor;  
Michael Kean, Chair, Test Committee, Association of American Publishers, Inc.;  
Richard Mills, Commissioner of Education, Vermont;

Diane Ravitch, Assistant Secretary, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education;  
Edward Reidy, Associate Commissioner of Education, Kentucky;  
Warren Simmons, Director, Equity Initiatives for the New Standards Project; and  
Anthony de Souza, Director, The Geography Standards Project.

## PANEL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Lamar Alexander, U.S. Secretary of Education, will be leaving the Panel due to the change in the Administration.
- Roger B. Porter, Assistant to the President for Education and Domestic Policy, will be leaving the Panel due to the change in the Administration.
- Two representatives of the new Administration will be joining the Panel membership after the inauguration.
- Governors Roy Romer and Carroll Campbell will select two new governors to serve on the Panel to maintain its bipartisan composition.
- Governor John McKernan, Jr. of Maine is replacing Governor John Ashcroft of Missouri whose term as governor expired. Governor McKernan was welcomed to the Panel.

## PANEL ACTIONS

The Panel:

- Approved the July 31, 1992 Goals Panel Meeting Summary.

## PANEL DISCUSSION

### *Governor E. Ben Nelson*

Governor Nelson welcomed everyone and commented on the transition in the Administration. He announced that prior to the next Panel meeting on February 19, Panel membership will change to include two new representatives of the Administration and two new governors. Governors Campbell and Romer will select the new governors to serve on the Panel to maintain the bipartisan composition.

*Carroll  
Campbell  
Romer*



Governor Nelson said the attendance of Panel members in "good numbers" speaks to the critical importance of the Panel's work and called upon the members to introduce themselves to the audience.

Governor Nelson set a context for the Panel's discussion on standards and assessment by commenting on the Omaha 2000's Progress Report. The local leadership in Omaha took out a full-page ad in the "Omaha World Herald" to tell people how Omaha was progressing toward achievement of our National Education Goals. He said passages from Omaha's Report and comments from local leaders like Craig Christensen, President of the Nebraska Education Association, address the issue of what standards should we use to evaluate whether or not a community and its school districts are doing a good job. According to Mr. Christensen, there is a danger that the grades in the Report might be interpreted to mean that we are not doing a good job. The fallacy of the judgment that Omaha may not be doing a good job is that these National Goals really were identified fairly recently and are not the goals that have driven our schools.

Governor Nelson concluded that the challenge is to connect our schools with a vision of success and make sure schools are driven by worthy and measurable goals. The vision must be for high performance learning for all students with accountability for results. He said this is what the National Education Goals process is about.

Governor Nelson called upon Panel members for comment on the last Goals Panel Meeting Summary. Hearing no comments, he said the July 31, 1992 Meeting Summary stands approved.

### *Executive Director Bill Cody*

Dr. Cody set the context for the Panel's discussion by highlighting the Panel's early work on standards and assessments under Goal 3. He described the Panel as instrumental, since its inception, in promoting the "national idea" of having content standards in our schools as well as the "national idea" of creating assessments linked to the standards.

Dr. Cody referred to the Goal 3 Resource Group which advised the Panel on what measures to use to report progress toward Goal 3. This Resource Group pointed out that one of the problems in measuring progress toward Goal 3 is that there is no national consensus regarding what students should learn and be able to do in the content areas at various grade levels. This Resource Group also characterized the state of assessment methodology in this country as needing considerable attention to create more authentic and valid measures of student progress.

Dr. Cody elaborated on the work of the National Council on Education Standards and Testing which considered the desirability and feasibility of national standards and assessments. The Council produced a report to Congress and the Panel in January 1992 which concluded that national standards and assessments were desirable and feasible: 1) if they were national and not federal; 2) if they were adopted across the country voluntarily and not mandated; and 3) if they

were developed by consensus. The Council also identified the need to develop criteria for evaluating the degree to which various student assessments were authentic and validly related to the standards.

Dr. Cody mentioned that the Council recommended the establishment of a permanent National Education Standards and Assessments Council (NESAC) to oversee efforts by organizations to develop standards, certify or adopt standards as "world-class," and approve criteria for evaluating assessments. He anticipated that over the next couple of months the Panel will create a National Education Standards and Assessments Council.

Dr. Cody informed the audience that the afternoon session is divided into two sections: 1) a symposium on critical issues and future directions in national standards-setting; and 2) a symposium on critical issues and future directions in the development of assessments.

Dr. Cody recognized Associate Commissioner Edward Reidy from Kentucky as the chair of the first symposia on standards and called upon him to introduce the invited discussants.

### *Edward Reidy*

Dr. Reidy commended the Panel for "breaking the mold" by changing the meeting format, from calling upon a group of experts to talk to non-experts, to inviting discussants to engage in a conversation with Panel members. He said the discussants will respond to the concerns of Panel members, rather than make presentations.

Dr. Reidy introduced the discussants: Richard Mills, Vermont Commissioner of Education; Charlotte Crabtree, Director of the National History Standards Project; Tony de Souza, Executive Director of the Geography Standards Project; Roberts Jones, Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training, U.S. Department of Labor; and Diane Ravitch, Assistant Secretary, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education.

Dr. Reidy said his introductory remarks were intended to call attention to the significant changes the states are dealing with as they approach the development of standards. He recalled that the common schools in the country were established on the belief that some students would learn very well; some would learn; some would get by; and some would fail. He pointed out that this is no longer the belief. The states are now saying and are trying to believe that all students can learn at high levels and that effort, not innate ability, is the main contribution each of us makes to our own learning. He has observed a tendency among groups engaged in a discussion of standards and assessments to by-pass this change in belief about what the goals of schooling are and the students they are attempting to reach. Instead of dealing with this change, he has found that people carry on a debate assuming that the standards and assessments we have today are fair and any proposed changes are unfair.

Dr. Reidy alerted the audience that the discussion on standards will involve three different sets of standards that have the potential to be confusing: 1) content standards, 2) performance standards, and 3) delivery standards or "opportunity to learn standards."

Dr. Reidy commented on public commitment in Kentucky to standards. This commitment has been demonstrated through the citizens' passage of a 1.3 billion dollar increase in taxes devoted to education which was sustained through a subsequent legislative session.

Dr. Reidy elaborated on a standards implementation problem Kentucky is confronting which he believes all states will encounter. The problem concerns dealing with the short-term impact of standards on individuals vs. the long-term impact on the system. In Kentucky, we set standards to reflect valued outcomes. We recognized it will take the schools in the state years to effectively teach to the standards. They set standards for the future in terms of "what should be," knowing that the students in the system today have not had the opportunity to learn them. In other words, a twelfth grader this year did not have eleven years of education focused on valued outcomes.

Dr. Reidy elaborated on this implementation problem in the following terms: If the standards were lowered to reflect the distinguished progress students are making in the current system of education, the incentive for the system to change is taken away. But, if a youngster who has a scholarship to a prestigious college is described as performing at the second lowest level on our new standards, will that standard be sustained?

### *Governor E. Ben Nelson*

Governor Nelson requested that Diane Ravitch provide the Panel with an update on the standards development projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education through the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI).

### *Diane Ravitch*

Before briefing the Panel, Dr. Ravitch commented on the Department's commitment to funding development work on standards through grant awards. She recalled, prior to her appointment to the position of Assistant Secretary, Secretary Alexander telling her the mandate for OERI would be to support the development of voluntary, national standards by independent organizations to which OERI awarded grants. Secretary Alexander also indicated to her that as the work proposed by the National Council on Education Standards and Testing proceeded, supporting a new Council would also become the work of OERI.

Dr. Ravitch referred the Panel to the brochure in their briefing materials which identified the standards development projects underway through OERI grants. She provided the Panel with an overview of the guidance for the development of standards OERI provided project directors. She emphasized with the project directors that the Department has no interest in controlling what the projects do, but is interested in making sure they all do three things: 1) look at national

standards in other countries to make sure that ours are benchmarked to the very best standards in the world; 2) look at the best work going on in the states; and, 3) make sure that the development process is as inclusive as possible.

Dr. Ravitch said she also provided the project directors with a sense of what standards and the projects are not about. First, the standards are not partisan in any way. They are to reflect a broad consensus of what is the best practice in the field. Second, the standards are not about shaping a national curriculum. All the people working on these projects should see themselves as working on setting goals for what our children need to know and be able to do in a content area. Third, the projects are not about settling the debates that have riddled the various content fields for generations. She has warned the projects not to engage in "pedagogical imperialism." Fourth, these projects are not about standardization. She pointed out that people think that when we say standards we are trying to standardize American education. We have a standardized system, without standards. What we are looking for is standards, without standardization. What we have now is standardization of tests and standardization of textbooks, but very low standards.

In concert with the recommendations of the National Council on Education Standards and Testing, Dr. Ravitch said the directors of the standards development projects have been told to bear in mind that the standards are to be voluntary not mandatory, national not federal, and there is to be no control by the U.S. Department of Education.

Dr. Ravitch further described standards as the vision -- the goals you set, the educational outcomes you want for children. She said standards give American education a way to pull together our disparate system. The standards are a way to make sure we are educating teachers to teach to high standards, certifying teachers who know the standards, and certifying that we have assessments that are geared to the standards. She reflected that for many years we have a system of education in which things have worked all by themselves in a very disconnected way.

Dr. Ravitch quoted a memorandum of understanding and joint statement of principles between her Department and the National Science Foundation (NSF) which states, "The U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation agree that all children should receive a challenging education in mathematics and science based on world-class standards, beginning in kindergarten and continuing every year through grade 12."

Dr. Ravitch also updated the Panel on OERI grants to support the development of state curriculum frameworks. Over the past year, grants have been awarded to 5 states and the District of Columbia to develop curriculum frameworks in math and science. Over the next couple of months, similar grants will be awarded to another 10 states. She described state curriculum frameworks as a state strategic plan for change.

Dr. Ravitch concluded that everything her Office (OERI) and the Department are doing is directed toward supporting work on the development of standards. She described the movement toward standards as a very important and historic change for the better in American education and as a key to promoting both equity and excellence.

### *Senator Jeff Bingaman*

Senator Bingaman inquired about the timetable for the development work on standards. When will the nation have national standards in each of the content areas?

### *Diane Ravitch*

Dr. Ravitch replied that she expects all of the standards "will be in place" by 1994-95.

### *Richard Mills*

Dr. Mills observed that it is one thing to have standards written and quite another thing to have standards "in place."

Dr. Mills complimented Governor Romer for his service to the country in promoting awareness of the standards for mathematics developed by the National Council on Teaching Mathematics (NCTM). He later expressed his hope that President-Elect Clinton will hold up the standards and ask: "Is there a school today in American that meets these standards?" He believes the answer to this question right now is: "no." He believes that until the American public is shocked into an understanding of the gap between our vision about standards on one hand, and our reality on the other hand, the standards will not drive change. He noted that while there is an effort to involve people in the development of standards, the involvement is "not nearly enough."

### *Governor Roy Romer*

Governor Romer asked the discussants to imagine they were a superintendent or principal observing a seventh grade math class. How would you determine to what extent the NCTM standards are implemented in the classroom? He offered three options: 1) look at the textbook and materials; b) observe how the teacher conducts the class; or, c) look at the assessments used for the class. He expanded the question by asking, if there were no standards and you want to get them going, where would you start? Do you start with the written materials, the training of the teacher, or with the assessment?

### *Richard Mills*

Dr. Mills said the answer to the first question is "none of the above." He would go right to the work being done by the students to see whether or not it involved problem-solving.

Dr. Mills shared with the Panel his observation that the NCTM standards have not reached teachers in the schools. When he visits schools and inquires about the NCTM standards, he is not finding many people who are familiar with them.

### *Edward Reidy*

Dr. Reidy said he would also answer "none of the above" in response to Governor Romer's question. Instead, he would ask the students about what they were doing. This inquiry would be a form of assessment through observation of what is going on in the classroom.

### *Charlotte Crabtree*

Dr. Crabtree described change efforts in schools as "a merry-go-round" in which all the components of good teaching practice have to fit together and move simultaneously. She referred to the History Standards Setting Project which she directs and said it has brought in people from all levels for input at the outset and feedback through a continuous iterative process. This project has reached out to the national teacher associations and has teachers represented through their state and local affiliate councils.

### *Governor Evan Bayh*

Governor Bayh asked the discussants to consider this question: Should states "tread lightly" over the next couple of years waiting for some consensus at the federal level on standards, or should states be laboratories for experiments? He wondered how states could avoid running the risk of "getting it wrong?"

### *Diane Ravitch*

Dr. Ravitch responded, "I have come to have a mystical faith in the principle of federalism." There are some people who say you should do things logically. First, we should do the national standards; then we should do the state curriculum frameworks. But, if we followed this logical sequence, it would take us up to about the year 2002 and we would still be waiting for implementation of the standards.

Dr. Ravitch observed that what is happening is that people at the federal and state level are working in conversation with each other, not in isolation of each other. She anticipated that we will not end up with 50 state curriculum frameworks in mathematics that will be identical, but they will look a lot alike because they will all draw upon the NCTM standards. She further anticipated that the NCTM standards will change to reflect better practices developed in the states.

*Governor Evan Bayh*

Governor Bayh inquired if ultimately there will be some way to certify state standards and say they meet the general parameters established at the national level.

*Diane Ravitch*

In response, Dr. Ravitch referred to the Panel's previous discussions regarding the purpose of the National Education Standards and Assessments Council. NESAC would create criteria for certifying standards. She expressed her hope that there will be a great deal of flexibility during this development period.

*Governor Evan Bayh*

Governor Bayh expressed his interest in Kentucky's experience in building consensus to support the adoption of high standards. He referred to Dr. Reidy's example of the student in Kentucky who received a grant to attend one of the finest institutions of higher education in the country, while at the same time the results of the Kentucky assessment ranked this student at a low level of achievement in relation to the new state standards.

Governor Bayh suggested that the incongruity between a student's acceptance at a prestigious institution of higher education and identification by the state as performing below the new standards set by the state was a good illustration of the need for consensus building to sustain commitment in a state to new standards, even when people do not like the data. He noted that "buy-in" at the outset limits people's ability to deny the results later. He inquired about how Kentucky went about building the consensus and sustaining it through the session of the legislature?

*Edward Reidy*

Before responding to Governor Bayh, Dr. Reidy commented that he believes the development of standards is an evolving process which will not be complete in 1995 or in any other year. It is one thing to have a set of standards, but when you start saying a standard means a student should be able to do this kind of a task, people start to say they were not part of the development process.

*Governor Evan Bayh*

Governor Bayh asked Dr. Reidy, "In the face of reporting to the public that 90% of the students need to improve, were you able to keep people 'on board' or did they start attacking the process?"

## *Edward Reidy*

Dr. Reidy replied that he anticipated spending this year defending the first year results, but this has not been the case. His Department prepared the public for the poor results by making public statements five months in advance that the numbers were going to be low. The public responded by saying we would not have passed a 1.3 billion dollar tax increase if we believed the system was "O.K."

## *Governor Evan Bayh*

Governor Bayh offered a scenario for how current work on standards development at the national and state levels would converge over time. He projected that after the national standards are adopted in 1995 or 1996 or 1997, a national body would review the standards developed by individual states, inform the states that they have it 95% right. This body could then say, if you really want to be in-line with the national standards, you ought to do a few things. This scenario suggested to him that states ought to go ahead and give the development of standards "their best shot," understanding that there will be an opportunities to improve on the standards.

## *Diane Ravitch*

Dr. Ravitch said she expects states like Indiana, Kentucky and California and a few others are going to influence the development of the national standards, and that the national standards in turn will influence development work in the states.

## *Secretary Lamar Alexander*

Secretary Alexander advised the Panel to stay focused on the establishment of national standards by the middle of the decade. He stated, "This Panel, working with the President, is about the only group I know that could cause this country to actually establish national education standards." He advised, "If you do this, you will have done something that nobody else can do."

Secretary Alexander said another thing the Panel can do is "help raise the question." One way would be to approach the test and textbook publishers as Governor Romer suggested earlier. Another way would be through the America 2000 Satellite Town Meetings.

Secretary Alexander informed the group that he was recently reminded of the fact that the nation's accrediting organizations make hundreds and thousands of site visits to elementary and secondary schools all the time. He thought the nation's accrediting organizations need to be engaged in the dialogue about standards and that a discussion between representatives of the accrediting organizations and Panel members might be helpful.



Secretary Alexander further suggested that it might be interesting at some point to visit the school in Portland, Michigan which has implemented the NCTM standards. Such a visit would accomplish two things: 1) put the discussion of standards out of the abstract and into practice; and, 2) provide a concrete example of what all the discussion has started to produce.

*Governor Barbara Roberts*

Governor Roberts offered the following observation: "If you set standards in place, you are really talking about that event being the launching, not the arrival." She said what would move us from the launch to arriving some place would be to bring something to the standards that would cause people to have to deal with them.

Governor Roberts commented on the massive education reform act passed in Oregon two years ago and the Oregon Benchmarks set across agencies. She found that although the Benchmarks were in place for three years, the public did not know they existed; nor did most people in the agencies, until she took the Benchmarks and attached the state budget to them. What Oregon essentially said was: If you wanted money from a state agency, you had to prove that what you are doing is focused on the Benchmarks. She noted that it is amazing how many people now know the Benchmarks.

Governor Roberts concluded that the significance of a reform effort depends on what we attach to it. What we attach to it brings importance to it. She suggested there are likely to be other things besides money the Panel could attach to standards to give them significance. She suggested that part of the learning experience for the Panel will be to find out what significance to attach to the standards.

*Roberts Jones*

Mr. Jones expressed his view that the ultimate influence or significance attached to standards comes from the employment community which is out there discriminating today in terms of who is hired. He noted that while the public is not easily educated in this discussion of standards, they become very quickly educated when they find out they are being excluded from part of the process. He characterized standards as "a living communication device," elements of which are going to change constantly in response to the demand in the labor market.

Mr. Jones stated that standards are a management tool, not an outcome in the sense that it is a good thing to meet standards and a poor thing to fail. If you want to manage a school with the intent of bringing 100% of the product to a certain level, then you have to have a way to measure that outcome.

Mr. Jones stated, "The only thing I care about is assessment because it is there that everything else occurs." What management then means is the willingness to politically move money to those parts of the system that do not measure up to the standards.

***Governor Howard Dean***

Governor Dean asked Richard Mills to comment on why Vermont chose the portfolio approach to assessment.

***Richard Mills***

Dr. Mills replied that the portfolio approach was part of an investment decision the state of Vermont made back in 1988. The state decided to develop an assessment with three parts: 1) standardized tests with open-ended type questions, 2) the "best piece" which represented a student's performance "at the top of his game," and 3) portfolios. He acknowledged that the business community has been most interested in the portfolios.

***Charlotte Crabtree***

Dr. Crabtree described the amount of assessment in schools as "excessive" and said we have been assessing youngsters to the point where teachers say, "Give us some time to teach!"

***Governor John McKernan, Jr.***

Governor McKernan said he is confident that state and national efforts related to standards will come together and all the work that is being done will basically arrive at a common point. Regarding assessment, Governor McKernan observed that while everyone is worrying about the way we *used to* assess, everyone generally now understands how we *ought to* assess for the future and that we are all moving in the same direction.

Governor McKernan expressed an interest in hearing from Diane Ravitch about the school in Portland, Michigan which adopted the NCTM standards and in hearing from Edward Reidy and Richard Mills about how to implement standards.

***Diane Ravitch***

In response to the Governor's request, Dr. Ravitch reviewed for the Panel how the teachers in Portland, Michigan used Eisenhower State Funds for staff development to change the way they taught mathematics in the middle school, so that *how* students get the right answer becomes as important as the right answer. She called the Panel's attention to the fact that there is substantial money available every year for staff development in math and science from the Department of Education (250 million) and from NSF (about 400 million); however, these funds are not available to support staff development in other content areas.

In response to Governor Roberts, Dr. Ravitch defined standards as the description of what we are trying to accomplish. As in anything you do, you have to know where you are trying to go. Where you are trying to go becomes both your starting point and your destination.

***Richard Mills***

In response to Governor McKernan's question about how to implement standards in all the schools, Dr. Mills said, "In Vermont, we borrowed from you." He held up the common core of learning developed in Maine to the people in Vermont and said, "We can't let Maine get ahead of us!" To date, Vermont has engaged 2,000 people in the process of defining a common core of learning.

***Edward Reidy***

Dr. Reidy said Kentucky has added accountability to the assessment. There are consequences for schools which succeed with children and for those which do not. The consequences begin with supporting those schools which do not succeed. He said people in his state are making an effort to internalize the standards and make them real because they are concerned about the sanctions or consequences that might ensue.

Dr. Reidy expressed his belief that a linear approach to the development of standards and assessments will not work. He said we just don't know enough to take a linear approach. He advised the Panel not to think that if you do step A, then step B, then step C we will reach the target. We need to think of the target as a bulls-eye. If we have people approaching the target from different places, somebody will hit it.

Dr. Reidy said one thing he learned from Horace Mann about educational reform is that if we want a reform effort to take hold in public schools we have to respect what we know; but what is equally important is that we have respect for what we have yet to learn. We do not know how to enable every student to reach our standards. Our tasks as educators is to figure out how to make it happen.

***Anthony de Souza***

Dr. de Souza offered the Panel a criteria for the development of standards. He said if standards are to be used, they must be compelling at the local level. In the area of Geography, his group is considering the following to support the implementation of standards: 1) using technologies to help guide teachers through the standards, 2) possible partnerships with publishers, 3) materials for parents, and 4) workshops for pre- and in-service teachers.

***Governor E. Ben Nelson***

Governor Nelson thanked all the discussants for bringing the Panel members up-to-date on critical issues related to setting standards. He called upon the discussants prepared to address critical issues related to creating a national system of assessments to assemble at the speakers' table and asked Dr. Mills to introduce them.

## *Richard Mills*

Dr. Mills introduced Eva Baker, Co-Director of the Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Testing; Nancy Cole, Executive Vice-President, Educational Testing Service; Michael Kean, Chair, Test Committee, Association of American Publishers, Inc.; and Warren Simmons, Director, Equity Initiatives, The New Standards Project. He requested a moment to make a brief opening statement to the Panel.

Dr. Mills said he would like to start the discussion by throwing out the most irritating question he could think of. He proceeded to say, the most irritating question I ever got as a teacher was: "Will this be on the test?" If the answer was "no," then the students turned-off the lesson. If the answer was "yes," then the students started to learn the lesson, but perhaps for the wrong reason. The related question students asked him was: "What will the test be like (i.e., is it multiple-choice, open-book)?"

Dr. Mills acknowledged that no one thinks assessment is the one thing that is going to drive reform, but stressed that he believes it is one thing we need to "get right." He identified three things every single community and state has to "get right." First, what are the expectations? The expectations are the standards. They have to be made clear to our students. Second, we have to measure results and talk about them. Third, we need to build the capacity of everyone involved in the partnership including teachers, parents and children. In his opinion, we do not do any of these things well.

Dr. Mills inquired, "What would it take to get beyond the one-shot presentation of assessment results and have a serious discussion about performance in every community?" The typical scenario is as follows: the Goals Report comes out or the State Report comes out and hits the news once. If the news is good, we cheer and forget about it. If the news is bad, we forget about it. He wondered how we could get a continuing discussion going about our educational performance.

## *Eva Baker*

In response to Dr. Mills, Dr. Baker said, "That's easy, no problem. You just stop using numbers and start looking at what people do!" She explained that the numbers we are so used to reporting allow people "short cut understandings" about what is happening (i.e., this many are good, this many are not good). We have to move beyond numbers, and get people engaged in looking at portfolios.

***Warren Simmons***

Dr. Simmons said we have to ensure that the same conversation about educational performance reverberates across the country. As the conversation proceeds from the national level to the local level, the proportion of minorities engaged in the debate needs to increase significantly. For example, we have to engage people in our urban school districts where traditional assessments continue to guide initiatives.

***Governor Barbara Roberts***

Governor Roberts concurred with Dr. Baker that we need to get past the numbers when reporting test results to the public. She commented on her recent experience reporting the results of the Oregon state-wide adult literacy test. Rather than just publishing scores in the newspaper, Oregon provided the public with information about what literacy really meant. For example, they informed the public that literacy meant you had to be able to read a bus schedule. People found out they could not read it, and they then started talking about the broader meaning of literacy. She concluded that one strategy to engage the public in a discussion of educational performance would be to let the public see what we actually asked on the test.

***Nancy Cole***

Dr. Cole referred to the booklet called Measuring Up which provides examples of the kinds of activities fourth grade students would be called upon to do in response to the NCTM standards. She suggested that the examples help engage the public in the discussion.

***Governor E. Ben Nelson***

Governor Nelson informed the group that Governor Romer challenged the mathematical community to come up with a publication like Measuring Up.

***Edward Reidy***

Dr. Reidy identified the practice of keeping test questions a secret as an historical problem in assessment. What we need to do is: 1) show people what the questions are; 2) show people what the standards are for scoring the tests; and, 3) face up to where we are right now. He suggested that more cognitive dissonance about testing might also help keep the conversation going.

***Governor E. Ben Nelson***

Governor Nelson agreed with Dr. Reidy that it would be good for the general public to know what questions are on the test and have a better sense of what tests actually contain.

## *Michael Kean*

Dr. Kean proposed that we get away from the notion of a single test and move toward a multiple-measures approach to assessment. He observed that the country has a "box-score" mentality when it comes to tests. We always want to know who won. This mentality supports the use of a single score which may be useful, but it tells only a small portion of the story.

## *Governor E. Ben Nelson*

Governor Nelson referred to Governor Romer's inquiry during the morning session about the possibility of working with the private sector to accelerate the development of tests and called upon Governor Romer to elaborate on what he had in mind.

## *Governor Roy Romer*

Governor Romer proposed that the Panel which works on policy in the public sector consider linking up with firms in the private sector which develop tests and using the free market system to expedite the development of authentic assessments aligned to the standards.

Governor Romer identified the ACT and SAT tests as two tests the public is aware of because they have real consequences. These tests effect whether or not a person gets into an institution of higher education. He proposed that if the Panel worked with the private sector it might be possible to get authentic assessment into the system a lot quicker than it ever will through legislation.

## *Michael Kean*

Speaking for the Association of American Publishers Test Committee, Dr. Kean said the Committee would be delighted to work with the Panel as rapidly as possible on the development of authentic assessments aligned with the standards.

Dr. Kean indicated that the Committee is concerned that the standards be made "fairly explicit" so that test publishers can work constructively on the challenge. He suggested that Nancy Cole may also want to respond to this proposal since she represents the Educational Testing Service (ETS) which publishes the SAT.

## *Nancy Cole*

Dr. Cole stated that with or without explicit efforts to engage the various sectors, the various sectors will be involved and will move in similar directions. For example, the College Board has a program underway in conjunction with leading subject matter associations to develop advanced courses in subject matter fields and authentic assessments tied to those courses. In her opinion, any efforts by the Panel would accelerate development, but many things are going on in a very constructive direction.

***Governor Roy Romer***

Governor Romer questioned the extent to which the NCTM standards have penetrated public education in the country. He does not believe the NCTM content standards drafted in 1986 and published in 1989 have had a substantial impact on the classrooms in America. He asked, "What percent of the classrooms in America reflect the NCTM standards in Math?" His guess was less than 20%. He proposed that we may need to "force feed" the implementation of standards.

Governor Romer asked the Panel to consider other ways, besides working with the private sector, to accelerate the use of standards in classroom. He asked if a teacher certification test might be the most expeditious way to leverage the action on the use of the standards?

***Executive Director Bill Cody***

Dr. Cody called upon Iris Carl, former President of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, to join the discussants at the speakers' table and update the Panel on the implementation of the NCTM standards.

***Iris Carl***

Dr. Carl said she would be happy to share NCTM's most recent data on the use of the standards. She stated that between 30-40% of the classroom teachers in America are in the process of implementing the standards. She pointed out that this figure primarily represents secondary teachers. She noted that at the elementary and middle school levels we do not find teachers as ready or prepared to implement the standards.

***Governor Barbara Roberts***

Governor Roberts asked, what does "ready and prepared" mean?

***Iris Carl***

Dr. Carl elaborated that "ready and prepared" refers to teachers being knowledgeable about the mathematics involved in implementing the standards and to schools where a conscious effort has been made to provide the resources necessary for children to have hands-on experiences in learning mathematics.

***Governor John McKernan, Jr.***

Governor McKernan said he would be interested in knowing how many teachers have just heard about the NCTM standards and are reviewing them vs. how many teachers are actually in the process of implementing them.

***Iris Carl***

Dr. Carl replied that NCTM data indicate that about two-thirds of the teachers in the country have heard about the standards.

***Edward Reidy***

Dr. Reidy referred to Governor Romer's question about the best leverage point(s) to accelerate implementation of standards. He said this is probably not the most important question to address. In his opinion, we have to leverage at multiple points in the system and deal with the difficulty educators have in believing that all kids can learn.

***Governor Roy Romer***

Governor Romer asked the representatives of the testing community, "Why don't you devise a test that would tell us whether or not college students ready to graduate know the content called for in the standards and have the skills and abilities to implement the standards?"

***Nancy Cole***

Dr. Cole informed the Panel that ETS has developed a new teacher licensing assessment system. She believes substantial strides have been made in assessing teaching skills in ways that can move the teacher education process as well as the learning process during the first year of teaching.

Dr. Cole agreed that teacher licensing assessment is one arena that needs to get in-line with the standards and our goals for education.

***Warren Simmons***

Dr. Simmons identified the requirements for federal grant programs, such as Chapter I and Bilingual Education, as another leverage point to influence the implementation of standards. He said that as long as federal requirements allow the use of norm-referenced tests and allow aggregate indicators of performance, urban school districts will continue to use these assessments that do not embody the standards.

Dr. Simmons elaborated on how the results from different types of assessment instruments give the public different signals about the standards we are shooting for. He noted that while Maryland has an exemplary performance assessment system, it "lives alongside" Maryland's functional competency test and district standardized achievement tests. The public is left wondering which indicator to listen to when they all give different signals about the quality of education.



Commenting on what needs to be done, Dr. Simmons said the states need to work on the alignment of their own assessments and the federal government needs to require the assessments of large scale programs like Chapter One to mirror the national standards.

*Secretary Lamar Alexander*

Secretary Alexander said the example provided by Warren Simmons is one of a huge list of reasons why Congress needs to give the U.S. Secretary of Education the same authority a state like Ohio has given its Commissioner of Education to waive rules and regulations. If the state and local superintendent recommends a waiver, and the U.S. Secretary of Education approves, waivers should be possible. If the U.S. Secretary had this authority, Maryland could use Chapter 1 money, state money and other money to create a single set of indicators. Otherwise, all the changes that are necessary become much more difficult to accomplish.

Secretary Alexander referred to the Time for Results Report issued by the National Governors' Association under his chairmanship. He pointed out one sentence in this Report written by the former Governor of Arkansas which proposed to the education community: you give us the results, we'll engage in a horse-trade with you and give you more flexibility. He believes the

President-Elect will be receptive to this idea. He knows almost every governor agrees with this idea. The only people who don't agree are members of Congress and the 541 education associations which have offices in Washington, D.C.

*Richard Mills*

Dr. Mills offered an example of "horse-trading" for results in Vermont. The state board of education offered to set aside the regulations for two years, if the colleges and universities agreed to reform their system for evaluating teacher education programs from a process-oriented to a performance-oriented approach. The college and university presidents accepted the challenge, the regulations were waived, and the state now has a new performance assessment system.

Dr. Mills asked the Panel to keep in mind that much of the cost for all the development work they are talking about is being born by teachers and will require an investment in massive professional development. He mentioned that the New Standards Project has a 32 million dollar plan for assessment which will demand a tremendous amount of effort from teachers.

*Nancy Cole*

Dr. Cole referred to Roberts Jones' earlier comments. She said, if you agree that standards and assessments are a management tool, then they have to be used toward that end and we have to be sure they are shaped toward that end. This kind of purpose also makes figures like 32 million dollars a little less overwhelming because we can say the funds are not just for assessment, but will serve the larger purpose of improving the quality of public education and teacher education.

*Eva Baker*

Dr. Baker pointed out that all kinds of assessments are not equally good for all kinds of purposes. For example, when we first learned about portfolio assessment, we were enamored with this kind of assessment and planned to do everything possible with it. She expects to read any day that portfolios lower cholesterol levels!

Dr. Baker referred to the workforce readiness portfolio project in Michigan and said the real issue is whether or not an employer uses the portfolio. She assured the Panel that the assessment community has shortened its learning curve and has made enormous technical strides in the last couple of years. We said: we need to think differentially about assessments, who they are good for, and where we should spend money on them. Experiments are going on that are leading us to some interesting findings on these issues.

*Michael Kean*

Dr. Kean followed up on Eva Baker's comments and advised the Panel not to assume that a single form of assessment can be used for a variety of different purposes. He pointed out that performance-assessment is typically used for instructional purposes. When we try to aggregate the results of performance-assessment and use the results for accountability purposes, it does not always "fit the bill."

*Edward Reidy*

Dr. Reidy disagreed with Dr. Kean's belief that one form of assessment cannot be used for multiple purposes. He characterized Dr. Kean's belief as a cannon in the field of education, but said he was not sure it was true. He would like to challenge the statement rather than take it as an article of faith.

Dr. Reidy suggested that other fields find multiple uses for the same data and that it might be possible in Education. He told the Panel we cannot afford to say to teachers: We have to have 15 different types of assessment in order to accomplish our purposes.

*Nancy Cole*

Dr. Cole replied, "I have not given up on this issue either." She does not like to envision a future where we have 15 different kinds of tests for every kind of use.

Dr. Cole cautioned the Panel not to build assessments from a "one-use perspective" such as getting numbers to help us monitor a national trend line on student achievement. If you do this, you will almost ensure that the assessment will not work very well for instructional assessment.

Dr. Cole referred to a new report by Bob Mislevy at ETS on linking educational assessments and described it as a very sobering analysis of the pitfalls in thinking that we can link things together and draw all kinds of meaningful conclusions. According to Bob Mislevy, you will need to know what conclusion you are trying to make and design the system to do so.

*Richard Mills*

Dr. Mills identified two issues not addressed in the discussion: 1) the timetable for the development and implementation, and on what grounds the pace is being set; and, 2) minority issues including non-English speaking students and students with special needs.

*Governor Barbara Roberts*

Governor Roberts shared with the group that she has a son who is autistic and who is now in his thirties. She initially became involved in government as a citizen advocate for disabled children.

Governor Roberts expressed her fear that in the process of looking for quality and a well-educated workforce, we could lose sight of people with disabilities and special needs. In the process of trying to bring everybody up to a standard, we could again leave some people behind. This is a possibility because it is a known fact that the current tools of measurement do leave some people behind.

*Eva Baker*

In response to Governor Roberts, Dr. Baker commented that equity and technical issues are linked in assessment. To the extent that one becomes concerned with individual equity, then the quality that we demand of the assessment instrument must be much higher.

Dr. Baker commented that it may not just be the tests alone that are discriminatory. It may be the kind of experiences that children have in school that are also discriminatory. She said don't just think of the tests as being the instrument of discrimination and bias.

*Warren Simmons*

Dr. Simmons characterized the movement toward a single set of standards and assessments that mirror those standards as potentially very liberating because the tools of measurement have been discriminatory. He went on to point out that different assessment tools representing different standards are applied to different groups of students. For example, an SAT or ACT is used as an assessment tool for college-bound students, while minimum-competency tests are used as an assessment tool for students who are not college-bound.

Dr. Simmons added that the movement away from multiple-choice exams to assessments of problem-solving and decision-making skills will enable students to display their competency in ways they were unable to on traditional standardized tests. Such assessments will also allow teachers to see student competencies that they have not seen before or did not think their students possessed.

### *Governor Roy Romer*

Governor Romer inquired about the availability of information regarding the best tests and textbooks in each subject area. In the absence of a National Education Standards and Assessment Council (NESAC), he asked if an annual consumer report could be produced on the best textbooks and tests? He speculated that there must be some common knowledge in the field or cumulative point of view about which set of tests for fourth grade math are better than another set of tests.

### *Michael Kean*

Dr. Kean responded to Governor Romer by mentioning two annual reports on testing: The Buros Mental Measurement Yearbook and Tests In Print. He added that these reports do not reflect the standards because the only area in which there are accepted standards is mathematics.

Regarding tests, Dr. Kean said that in a free market economy, any new tests which come along which do not reflect the standards will not exist very long. Regarding textbooks, he said there is a group in New York City called EPPY that rates instructional materials. He was not sure who rates textbooks other than state textbook adoption committees.

### *Iris Carl*

Dr. Carl observed that when we look at textbooks today, we find that they represent the de facto curriculum for schools because teachers follow them "to the letter." Her organization has found that an insufficient number of textbook publishers have been brave enough to change their textbooks to align them with the NCTM standards.

Dr. Carl identified the publication Measuring Up as an example of NCTM's current work in the direction of influencing the content of textbooks. She commented on her experience with the process of textbook adoption in Texas. Although the state mandate for textbook adoption called for the content of the recommended mathematics textbooks to be aligned with the NCTM standards, Texas took what was closest, rather than the standards.

### *Edward Reidy*

Dr. Reidy elaborated that the incentives to continue to use traditional, standardized tests far outweigh any kind of consumer report on the best tests that could be produced. He asked the Panel to consider two things that impede implementation: 1) federal legislation that requires the use

of traditional, standardized tests; and, 2) the huge community of influential citizens who like and have an interest in the fact that the standardized tests we use label their kids as smart and successful.

*Governor Roy Romer*

Governor Romer put forth the proposition that if the Panel's purpose is to measure progress toward the Goals, the Panel ought to get to the pressure points or conditions that are really driving practice. He proposed that a future Panel agenda item could be to identify what really are the motivations that drive actions.

Governor Romer asked Dr. Reidy what he would consider to be the single most important strategic action anybody could take, in or out of government, to change the forces impacting on the system to maintain the current standardized tests?

*Edward Reidy*

Dr. Reidy singled out the need for public debate about who might be the potential losers in the reformation of the education system. He has noticed that when the subject comes up, some say "keep that quiet" we do not want people to know about the economic side of the reform. He believes we have to raise to a national level the discussion that the best school for every kid is a good school for all kids.

Dr. Reidy commented on current activities at the state level to reform teacher certification. In Kentucky, the state board of education has passed the authority for teacher licensure on to a professional teaching standards board.

Dr. Reidy supported Secretary Alexander's earlier proposal that the U.S. Secretary of Education be given the authority to allow states to waive rules and regulations and exercise some flexibility in the kinds of assessment devices they use to report on federal programs.

Dr. Reidy observed that everyone talks about all the technical problems that need to be solved. He acknowledged that while it is true that technical problems exist today, the fact that there are technical problems to be dealt with will probably be true 15 or 20 years from now. He advised the Panel to move ahead and use the best technical knowledge we have today, with the realization that it is going to hurt some people. But, he added, let's not pretend that what we have today is not hurting many people.

*Governor E. Ben Nelson*

Governor Nelson thanked all the discussants for their comments on the critical issues that need to be addressed to align assessments with national standards.

Governor Nelson recognized and thanked Lamar Alexander and Roger Porter for their leadership, dedication and service to the Goals Panel as representatives of the Administration. He assured them that their continued interest in the Panel's work will be appreciated and sought.

*Governor Roy Romer*

Governor Romer added his special thanks to Lamar Alexander for making the U.S. Department of Education accessible to the Panel. He appreciated the Secretary's active participation in a very fruitful dialogue that included differences of opinion which were dealt with in a very constructive and productive manner. He recognized America 2000 as a major contributor to public awareness of the Goals and grass-roots discussion of the issues.

*Secretary Lamar Alexander*

Secretary Alexander accepted the compliments of the governors and expressed a special affinity with them. He recalled back in 1985-86 when all the governors worked with him on one subject for one year -- education. They developed a way for Republicans and Democrats to work together which the Panel continues through its work.

Secretary Alexander said he wanted to leave the Panel with a solution to a little problem they encountered with the arts community which thought they were left out of the Goals process, although this was never the intent. He referred to Goal 3 and reminded the audience that the content areas listed under this Goal were always intended to be examples of the core curriculum.

Secretary Alexander called the Panel's attention to a report on the power of the arts to transform education put together by the America 2000 Arts Working Group headed by James Wolfensohn, Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the John F. Kennedy Center. He identified the report as a good example for states interested in working with the arts as one of the core curriculum areas.

In his closing remarks, Secretary Alexander told the Panel that after he leaves the Administration he might not watch every single minute of the Goals Panel Meetings on C-SPAN, but he will tune in whenever he can.

*Governor E. Ben Nelson*

Governor Nelson asked Secretary Alexander if he would like to comment on the next Satellite Town Meeting.

*Secretary Lamar Alexander*

Secretary Alexander thought people would be intrigued to know that 2700 communities in the country now participate in the America 2000 Satellite Town Meetings. The next meeting is January 12, 1993 at 8:30 p.m. It will feature the Phoenix Project in Miami which is rebuilding the school system after Hurricane Andrew. He added, all you need is a down-link to watch it.

DRAFT

*Governor E. Ben Nelson*

Governor Nelson invited everyone to also watch the American 2000 Satellite Town Meeting on February 9th from Omaha, Nebraska.

Governor Nelson asked Panel members if they had would like to make any closing remarks. He then thanked the participants and the audience for their attendance, declared the meeting adjourned, and invited the media to come forward for the scheduled press availability.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m., EST.

**DRAFT**

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**The Honorable E. Benjamin Nelson**  
Governor of Nebraska  
Chairman, National Education Goals Panel  
1993 Goal Reporting Year

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**Date**



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B 7

March 3, 1993

## NEGP AGENDA FOR 1993

## I. REPORTING PROGRESS

- Oversee the publication of the 1993 Goals Report. Determine the format and data to be included. Attend to special data issues, such as the appropriateness of NAEP achievement levels as performance standards and whether service learning should be an indicator of citizenship.
- Sponsor activities and produce and disseminate supplementary publications and media material that will enhance an understanding of the importance of the Goals as well as inform special audiences and the general public about significant findings reported in the Goals Report.
- Sponsor several state conferences for community leaders on how to develop their own local Goals Reports.
- Secure the full partnership of Congress by the passage of legislation endorsing the Goals, authorizing and supporting the Goals Panel.

## II. DEVELOPING A NATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRESS REPORTING SYSTEM

## Goal 1

- Consider recommendations for the establishment of a National Commission on Early Childhood Assessment to monitor the development, implementation, and evaluation of an early childhood assessment system.
- Consider a more extensive definition of the five dimensions of learning and development previously endorsed by the Panel to guide the creation of a national early childhood assessment system.

## Goal 2

- Consider endorsing a core set of definitions related to dropouts and school completion and other Goal-related indicators, recommending their adoption for use by all of the states, in conjunction with the development of a voluntary national student record system.

Goals 3 & 4

- Establish a National Education Standards and Assessment Council (NESAC) to provide leadership and oversight to the development of national content and performance standards and an assessment system. Secure the authorization and support of Congress.
- Consider the criteria that the Panel would use in adopting national content and performance standards.
- Continue to support the expansion of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) by Congress for monitoring progress in the nation and the states in core subjects.
- Consider whether to endorse U.S. participation in international assessments of math and science intended to produce data comparable across participating nations.

Goal 5

- Consider recommendations for the establishment of a national collegiate assessment system in the United States.
- Consider recommendations for improving direct measures of international workforce skills.
- Consider adopting multiple or alternative definitions of adult literacy as indicators for monitoring Goal 5.

Goal 6

- Consider recommendations for an operational definition of "disciplined environment conducive to learning" and related new indicators for measuring progress in Goal 6.

## III. RELATED ACTIVITIES

## Goal 1

- Commission the Goal 1 Resource Group to provide a report on the implications of the five dimensions of learning and development for policy, program and practice.
- Conduct a National Conference on the implications of the five dimensions of learning and development.

## Goals 3 &amp; 4

- Commission the Goal 3 Resource Group to prepare a report on the implications of national content and performance standards and an aligned assessment system on the policies and programs of various national, state and local agencies and organizations, in the private as well as public sectors. The report should identify the "pressure points" that influence practice.
- Schedule Panel Meeting presentations/discussions on the current status of private sector response to the creation of new standards and assessment systems: the testing industry, textbook publishers, school accreditation organizations, etc.

## General

- Commission a special resource or technical planning group to provide a report on the ways in which technology might be used to help reach the Goals.
- Sponsor or co-sponsor with other organizations a national conference/symposium for state leaders on the implications of national goals and content and performance standards. Showcase the reform work currently underway in a number of states.
- Review various recommendations for new or revised Federal legislation that may relate to the National Education Goals, standards or student assessment (such as ESEA Chapter 1) and, as appropriate, comment.

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Divider Title: \_\_\_\_\_

*WJC*

March 3, 1993

TO: National Education Goals Panel Members

FROM: Edward J. Fuentes  
Carol Jay Stratoudakis

SUBJECT: Summary of Public Response to the 1992 Goals Report

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## PROCEDURES

As with the 1991 Goals Report, reader feedback on the 1992 Report was sought. Beginning on September 30, numerous Report copies were forwarded to Governors and State Departments of Education as well as education organizations and associations. Copies were also distributed directly to individuals upon request through the Panel office.

During the first week of November, letters soliciting feedback were sent to the 55 Chief State School Officers and 97 education organizations and associations. The Chiefs and the organization leaders were asked to record their reactions to the Report on a response form enclosed in their letters. A month later, follow-up telephone calls were made to every non-respondent. Response Forms were again supplied if needed.

Other individuals who received the Report responded voluntarily through a form printed on the last two pages of every Report copy.

Finally, four focus groups were conducted in two states in mid-December. The groups were made up of parents, teachers, and policymakers. These individuals were asked to review the Report and its executive summary and to express their opinions in an open forum. Their responses were recorded by Panel staff.

From these efforts, Panel staff received 27 written replies from the Chiefs and 22 from education associations and organizations. There were also 25 responses from individuals.

## RESULTS

Based on the reported public response, the Goals Report seems well-suited for policymakers at the state and national levels and for those in policymaking positions within educational associations and organizations. It is a valuable reference for these groups. However, its current structure appears much less well-suited for teachers, school-level administrators, and especially, parents. There were too many graphs, and the two-part format was confusing.

The consensus is that there is too much information for the "average" person to absorb, some of it of little apparent relevance.

What this means in practical terms was best expressed by one of the respondents: the Panel must produce a document that "reaches conclusions." Simply put, what do the data mean for school administrators, teachers, and parents? What should they be looking for in their own policies, attitudes, behavior, and the behavior and attitudes of their students and children that will enhance progress toward the National Education Goals? In short, make the findings as meaningful for individuals as it is for the nation.

No single document can be all things to all people. Therefore, to better meet the needs of general audiences, at least two versions of the *National Education Goals Report* are required. One document, similar to what is currently produced, would serve primarily as a "reference" text to education policymakers. This report's narrative would be minimal with a first chapter perhaps devoted to an executive summary. Another more narrative, "user-friendly," substantially shorter document could be written for school personnel and parents, and other designated audiences. It would highlight key relevant findings across the Goals and their importance and implications for future behavior.

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NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE  
1992 GOALS REPORT

Outreach Report to the  
National Education Goals Panel

Edward J. Fuentes  
Senior Research Associate

Carol Jay Stratoudakis, Ph.D.  
Staff Consultant

March 3, 1993

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93-02



# NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL MEMBERS

## GOVERNORS

E. Benjamin Nelson, Nebraska, Chair

Carroll A. Campbell, Jr., South Carolina (Chair 1991–1992)

Evan Bayh, Indiana

Terry Branstad, Iowa

Arne Carlson, Minnesota

John Engler, Michigan

John McKernan, Jr., Maine

Roy Romer, Colorado (Chair 1990–1991)

## MEMBER OF THE ADMINISTRATION

Richard W. Riley, Secretary of Education

## MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman, New Mexico

U.S. Senator Thad Cochran, Mississippi

U.S. Representative Dale Kildee, Michigan

U.S. Representative William Goodling, Pennsylvania

**Public Response to the 1992 Goals Report**

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PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE  
1992 NATIONAL GOALS REPORT:  
BUILDING A NATION OF LEARNERS

## INTRODUCTION

The second annual *National Education Goals Report* was issued on September 30, 1992. Like the 1991 Report, it is an account of the nation's progress toward the National Goals. Unlike its predecessor, however, the Report benefitted from reader feedback on the 1991 Report (Fuentes & Stratoudakis, 1992). Based on this input, many reader suggestions were incorporated into the 1992 Report. The objective was to produce a document that was clearly written, factually accurate, attractively designed, and appealing to a broad audience. These qualities continued to be of paramount importance even as the Report grew from 246 pages to 336 as another data year was added and new data became available.

Beginning on September 30, boxes of Reports were sent to Governors and State Departments of Education as well as educational organizations and associations. Moreover, copies were distributed upon direct request through the Panel offices. Thus far, over 24,000 copies of the *1992 National Education Goals Report* have been disseminated.

Like last year, reader feedback on the 1992 Report was sought. During the first week of November, letters soliciting feedback were sent to the 55 Chief State School Officers (this includes territories, commonwealths, and the District of Columbia) and nearly 100 selected education organizations. The Chiefs and organization leaders were asked to record their opinions on a Response Form (see Appendix A) enclosed in their letter. A month after this initial mail out, follow-up telephone calls were made to every Chief and organization leader who had failed to respond. These individuals were urged to complete and send in their Response Form. In cases in which an individual had misplaced the Response Form, a duplicate copy was forwarded immediately.

Other individuals who received a 1992 Report responded on a form included on the last two pages of the document (see Appendix A). This form sought information from individuals who either requested copies directly from the Panel office or obtained one through their state, school, or professional organization or in some other manner.

Finally, four focus groups were conducted in two states in mid-December. The groups were made up of parents, teachers, and policymakers. These individuals were asked to

review the 1992 Report and its executive summary and to express their opinions in an open forum. Their responses were recorded and summarized by Panel staff.

This document summarizes the public response to the Panel's call for feedback on its work. The result of this effort will be used by Goals Panel staff to improve future Reports to meet better the educational information needs of the nation. We also include a summary of press coverage of the release of the 1992 Goals Report (see Appendix B).

## TARGETED OUTREACH

### Chief State School Officers

Copies of the Report were sent to the Chief State School Officer in each state, commonwealth and territory. Out of a total of 55 Chiefs, 27 replied to a request for their opinions. Each Chief was provided a Response Form (see Appendix A) that invited comments on the Report's content, format/design, text, and data. Respondents were also encouraged to provide any other comments they felt were appropriate or helpful. All respondents were asked to take special note of the Report's usefulness and readability for a wide range of audiences.

### *Content*

The consensus was that the content was useful and informative for those involved in improving education. The Report has been used, for example, by the states in their own reports. The first and last chapters were especially appreciated. All-in-all, the Chiefs considered the 1992 Report a handy reference for tracking the Goals.

On the negative side, the content was considered a bit dense for the average reader. One respondent believed that the amount of data contained in the Report would "overwhelm" the lay person. Interestingly, some of the respondents called for the ranking or direct comparison of states on the reported data.

### *Format/Design*

On the whole, for their own use, the respondents thought the sections of the Report were clear. The graphs were understandable and the summary statements that accompanied them were especially helpful. The two page state format was especially convenient for reviewing state progress toward the Goals.

When considering the usability of the Report for the average reader, however, the respondents were less kind. Again, the sheer volume of information was considered daunting. There were other comments dealing with the look of the Report: the print size in the state pages was too small; the green and red type and graphs were too hard to read; the scales used on the graphs were too tight to read data trends; and, the footnotes were not referenced clearly enough. Finally, there were those who called for a format that directly allowed for state-by-state comparisons.

### *Text*

Here, there was less consensus on the readability of the text than there had been on the appropriateness of the content or the appeal of the Report format. In general, the respondents believed that, for them, the text was readable and the references to charts and graphs provided further clarity.

On the other hand, if the "average reader" was taken to be a lay person, then the text was considered "intimidating" and "laborious" and of "little interest." The Panel was admonished to make a better effort to keep the technical jargon to a minimum.

### *Data*

There was not much overall criticism of the manner in which the data were reported. There were, however, numerous specific comments, for example:

- not enough space was devoted to the state section;
- item 3 under Goal 1 was unclear;
- the SASS sample sizes are insufficient for state-by-state indicators; and,
- some explanation must be given why a given state data element is missing.

Although most of these and other criticisms may be corrected through judicious editing, there was one general weakness mentioned that is not as easily remedied. Many of the respondents believe that there were not enough direct measures of outcomes. This was expressed in a number of ways, but the message was always the same: the Report sorely lacks direct measures of the stated goals.

### *Other*

While some of these comments result from the keen editorial skills of the respondents (e.g., footnotes 1–6 on pages 144–255 need to be referenced to pages 293–294), most were suggestions for improving the usefulness of the Report. These suggestions were:

- include a prologue describing the Goals Panel's charge, the Panel's administrative and management structure (including advisory groups) and its budget;
- include an appendix of the names, addresses, and positions of key staff and committee chairs;
- include an appendix of key meetings, their dates and locations;
- include a summary of each state's Goal-related actions for the reporting year;
- include a chapter on the state role: how the state might improve data quality and actions that states might take to support the initiatives of the Goals Panel;
- include an executive summary in the *body* of the Report; and,
- include a section on *how* to address problem areas.

### Associations and Organizations

Copies of the Report were sent to 97 representatives of education organizations and associations. These representatives were provided the same form sent to the Chief State School Officers (see Appendix A). Of these 97 organizations and associations, 22 forwarded written comments to Goals Panel staff (see Appendix C).

### *Content*

The respondents found the content to be informative, comprehensive, and useful. In their opinion, the Report provided a good mix of text and charts. They believed that the Report focuses national attention on the nation's progress toward the National Education Goals.

The weaknesses identified by the respondents were fairly specific. One person stated that the Report should have made mention of the ongoing geography assessment and future availability of the data while another felt that Goal 5 should have been given more attention.

### *Format/Design*

The format was characterized as "excellent" by this group. It was deemed both understandable and helpful for practitioners. It was easy to follow with self-explanatory, simple graphs.

If there was a weakness, some respondents thought it was the overabundance of information. Others, however, believed that graphs should have been added to the state section as well. This would more clearly link state and national data.

### *Text*

Like their state counterparts, the organization and association representatives also were in disagreement on this factor. Some stated that the text was clear, concise, consistent, understandable and generally appropriate for the "average" reader. Others, while acknowledging the quality, found the Report's text ill-suited for the lay person's thinking. The average reader would probably be overwhelmed by the technical jargon and find the number of charts daunting.

Other critiques were more specific. One person called for more prominence of text and footnotes that qualify the reported findings; another wished for bigger type in the executive summary.

### *Data*

The comments here can be characterized as praise for data clarity as presented in well-explained charts and graphs.

### *Other*

The few comments under this category ranged from suggestions specific to a Goal or the format, to calls for changes that would alter the tenor of the document.

The specific suggestions were:

- increase the emphasis on higher education; and
- add minority group data to every graph.

The general comments were:

- increase minority involvement in Goals Panel activities, from minority representation on the Panel to soliciting minority feedback on Panel initiatives; and
- draw conclusions. That is, the Report should discuss the implications of the data for America's children. In short, some analysis and interpretation is required beyond reporting data without comment.

### **Focus Groups**

The National Education Goals Panel conducted four focus groups in mid-December involving 39 education policymakers, parents, and teachers in West Virginia and Delaware. The purpose of the groups was to learn more from key education stakeholders about how best to convey the message of the National Education Goals Panel, and how to increase understanding and support of the National Education Goals and standards-setting efforts. As part of the focus groups' task, they reviewed the 1992 Report and its executive summary. They were asked specifically about the Report's style, readability, and usefulness. These participants' remarks were collected and compiled in a report, portions of which are summarized below.

Policymakers, in particular, responded positively. They thought the documents were concise, well organized around the Goals, put key information up front, and attractively printed and designed. They also said that the documents would be far more useful for school board members, administrators, teachers and state officials than for parents.

Teachers said that they sensed the documents were not written either by teachers or with teachers in mind. They said the documents added to their feelings that they are outside the Goals process.

Parents echoed the concern of teachers who felt the Goals documents were not written for them. West Virginia parents stated that they needed baseline data to chart a course and check progress, but they thought that the material in the Report would not be understandable to the average parent. These parents believed that it would be more useful to reach parents through a one-page flyer, a face-to-face meeting explaining the Goals, or a newsletter, rather than a full-blown Report or its executive summary.

Delaware parents said the Report's strength was twofold: it presented national information they otherwise would not see and it kept important educational issues in the



forefront. They appreciated knowing that they have the same information that parents in California and Texas have about the nation's schools. Equally important, the Report gives parents greater leverage in challenging "business as usual" in the school.

### **Individual Respondents**

As stated, thousands of copies of the 1992 Report have been disseminated to education organizations, associations, state and local governments, etc., and to individuals who directly contact the Panel offices. Many of the copies undoubtedly find their way into the hands of educators, parents, and other interested citizens. The number of Reports going to individuals in this manner, while unknown, must be sizable since approximately 24,000 copies have been forwarded to various state and local governments, education associations and organizations, and other entities. To date, about 1,200 copies have been disseminated through Panel offices by direct request.

Each copy of the 1992 Report contains a public response form (see Appendix A) on its back page. It is this form that individuals are requested to fill out and forward to Goals Panel staff. Given the thousands of copies that have been distributed to individuals, it is disconcerting to report that only 25 have responded. This number is such a small fraction of the total dissemination effort that it has no value in gauging readers' opinion. However, it says something about the need to revamp the Panel's efforts to collect feedback from its audience.

The Panel staff is currently reviewing the following options to secure more direct citizen feedback in the future:

- 1) Displaying the Response Form more prominently and perforating it along its edge to allow ready separation from the Report.
- 2) Designing the Response Form so that as it is folded it becomes its own self-addressed, franked envelope. Or alternatively, using a simple franked postcard.
- 3) Informing anyone who requests a Report that, in exchange for a free copy, they agree to fill out and send in the Response Form. This commitment may be reiterated by enclosing a written reminder with every Report copy. This, of course, is not binding, but people generally honor their commitments and this procedure will highlight the importance of receiving their opinions.
- 4) Reworking the Response Form content so that it fits on a single page (or postcard), is clearly stated, and easily responded to.

- 5) Sending reminder letters to a sample of nonrespondents.
- 6) Telephoning a sample of respondents to gather more in-depth opinions.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the reported public response, the Goals Report seems well-suited for policymakers at the state and national levels and for those in policymaking positions within educational associations and organizations. It is a valuable reference for these groups. However, its current structure appears much less well-suited for teachers, school-level administrators, and, especially, parents. There were too many graphs and the two-part format was confusing. The consensus is that there is too much information for the "average" person to absorb, some of it of little apparent relevance.

What this means in practical terms was best expressed by one of the respondents: the Panel must produce a document that "reaches conclusions." Simply put, what do the data mean for school administrators, teachers, and parents? What should they be looking for in their own policies, attitudes, behavior, and the behavior and attitudes of their students and children that will enhance progress toward the National Education Goals? In short, make the findings as meaningful for individuals as it is for the nation.

No single document can be all things to all people. Therefore, to better meet the needs of general audiences, at least two versions of the *National Education Goals Report* are required. One document, similar to what is currently produced, would serve primarily as a "reference" text to education policymakers. This report's narrative would be minimal with a first chapter perhaps devoted to an executive summary. Another more narrative, "user-friendly," substantially shorter document could be written for school personnel and parents, and other designated audiences. It would highlight key relevant findings across the Goals and their importance and implications for future behavior.

**APPENDIX A****Response Forms**

1. Response Form for Chief State School Officers and Education Organizations / Associations
2. Response Form for the General Public

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**NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL  
FEEDBACK FORM  
1992 NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS REPORT**

PLEASE FAX TO LAURA LANCASTER, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER,  
NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL AT (202) 632-0957

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) CONTENT  
Is the content of the report informative? useful?
  
- 2) FORMAT/DESIGN  
Was it clear? Were the different sections divided in a clear way?  
Were the graphs understandable?
  
- 3) TEXT  
Was the text "readable" to the average reader? Was it consistent, concise?
  
- 4) DATA -- (Please keep in mind state data reported in the Goals Report was limited to what the Panel considered quality data on a state-by-state comparable basis.)  
Were the data reported in a clear way? Any changes to the way the data were presented?
  
- 5) OTHER  
Does your department have other comments or suggestions on the Goals Report or on communication between the states and the Panel?

PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE 1992 GOALS REPORT

As part of our continuing effort to maximize the effectiveness of the annual progress report in communicating information about our educational performance to all Americans, your comments are requested. We welcome your observations, suggestions, and responses to the following questions.

1. READABILITY: Is the report written in a way that you can easily read and understand?  
Please circle your choice on a scale from 1 to 5.

Not Readable		Somewhat Readable		Very Readable
1	2	3	4	5

2. INTEREST: Please check the part(s) of the report that are of primary interest to you.

- Introductions
- Chapter 1: U.S. Performance in An International Context
- Chapter 2, Part I: Goal Indicators
- Chapter 2, Part II: Additional Information Related to the Goals
- Chapter 2, Part III: State Indicators on the Goals and Objectives
- Chapter 3: Progress Summary on Future Indicators
- Chapter 4: The Federal Role in Meeting the Goals
- Information about a Goal(s); please circle: 1 2 3 4 5 6
- Appendices
- Other; please identify:

3. USEFULNESS: How helpful is the report to you? Please circle your choice on a scale of 1 to 5.

Not Helpful		Somewhat Helpful		Very Helpful
1	2	3	4	5

4. PURPOSE: Please check the primary purpose(s) the report can serve for you.

- find out the past year's progress toward achieving the Goals
- answer a question about progress in a particular Goal area
- look up information about a state
- obtain data to support implementation of a reform effort
- as a guide to determine what new measures and data are needed to track progress toward the Goals
- as a reference to help develop a state- or local-level "Report Card" to measure progress
- as a reference to help develop high standards and assessment systems
- other; please identify:

5. ATTENTION: Please identify any particular data in the report that captured your attention.

page \_\_\_\_\_ exhibit title \_\_\_\_\_

page \_\_\_\_\_ exhibit title \_\_\_\_\_

page \_\_\_\_\_ exhibit title \_\_\_\_\_

page \_\_\_\_\_ exhibit title \_\_\_\_\_

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**PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE 1992 GOALS REPORT****COMMENTS**

Your reactions to the 1992 Goals Report and insights into how we can improve future reports are requested on this form. Please consider commenting on such issues as the organization of the document, the clarity of the data reported, and the value of the information to students, parents, teachers, policymakers, and others concerned about our progress toward the National Education Goals. Use additional sheets, if necessary.

Thank you for your comments.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle one:

STUDENT / PARENT / EDUCATOR / PUBLIC OFFICIAL / BUSINESS OR COMMUNITY LEADER  
POLICYMAKER / CONCERNED CITIZEN

Please return to: National Education Goals Panel, 1850 M Street, N.W., Suite 270, Washington, D.C. 20036.  
Attention: Laura Lancaster, Public Information Officer, fax (202) 632-0957.

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National Education Goals Panel, 93-02

**APPENDIX B****Press Response to The 1992 Goals Report**

"COMPLACENCY REIGNS"  
"COMPLACENCY BLAMED FOR EDUCATIONAL LAG"  
"AMERICANS TOO COMPLACENT ABOUT SCHOOLS"  
"COMPLACENCY SLOWS ACADEMIC PROGRESS"

These article titles accompanied the 1992 Report's release and successfully captured one of its primary messages – "We are too complacent about our educational shortcomings." Articles noted slow progress and described public tolerance toward academic mediocrity. Overall, the press conveyed a sense of inertia and discouragement. Behind the headlines was the message that our current status is due to lack of effort, not lack of ability. Low expectations were cited repeatedly as a central cause of the nation's poor student performance.

The following is a list of the newspaper articles and newswire items that followed the Report release. Press coverage of the 1992 Report was down from that experienced with the 1991 Report release, 50 articles for 1992 verses 65 articles for 1991.

**Akron Beacon Journal – October 1, 1992**

LITTLE PROGRESS MADE BETWEEN GRADES 8 AND 10, NATIONAL GOALS REPORT SAYS PANEL CHAIRMAN WARNS AGAINST BEING SATISFIED WITH MEDIOCRE RESULTS

By: Associated Press

**Associated Press – September 30, 1992**

STUDY SHOWS ONLY MODEST ACADEMIC GAINS BETWEEN GRADES 8 – 10

By: Tamara Henry

**Atlanta Constitution – October 1, 1992**

AMERICANS TOO 'COMPLACENT' ABOUT SCHOOLS, REPORT SAYS

By: Betsy White

**Atlanta Journal – September 30, 1992**

NATIONAL GOALS STILL NOT MET, REPORT CARD ON SCHOOLS SAYS PARENTS CALLED 'CONTENT WITH MEDIOCRITY'

By: Betsy White

**Atlanta Journal Constitution – October 4, 1992**

PARENTS DENY COMPLACENCY ALLEGED IN EDUCATION REPORT

By: Laura Wisniewski



**Baltimore Morning Sun – October 1, 1992**

PROGRESS OF U.S. STUDENTS 'DISCOURAGING,' PANEL SAYS EDUCATION  
SUMMIT SET GOALS IN '89

By: Newswire

**Central News Agency – October 1, 1992**

AMERICAN EDUCATION STILL BEHIND

**Chicago Tribune – October 1, 1992**

COMPLACENCY BLAMED FOR EDUCATIONAL LAG

By: Chicago Tribune Wires

**Christian Science Monitor – October 1, 1992**

REPORT CARD SHOWS U.S. SCHOOLS LAGGING

By: Laurel Shaper Walters

**Columbus Dispatch – October 1, 1992**

PROGRESS LACKING IN REPORT CARD ON EDUCATION

By: George Embrey

**Daily News of Los Angeles – October 1, 1992**

U.S. MAKES SLOW PROGRESS TOWARD EDUCATIONAL GOALS

By: Karen Dewitt, The New York Times

**Daily Report Card – October 1, 1992**

NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL REPORT: COMPLACENCY REIGNS

By: Staff

**Education Reports – October 5, 1992**

GOALS PANEL RELEASES SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

By: Staff

**Education Week – October 7, 1992**

PANEL FINDS 'MODEST PROGRESS' TOWARD NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS

By: Robert Rothman

**Fort Worth Star – Telegram**

EDUCATION PANEL FINDS TOO MUCH APATHY

By: Staff

**Gannett News Service – September 30, 1992****DANGEROUS SCHOOLS, UNPREPARED STUDENTS STALL EDUCATION PROGRESS**

By: Lacrisha Butler

**Governors' Bulletin – October 12, 1992****INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS POINT TO NEED FOR REFORM**

By: Staff

**Houston Post – October 1, 1992****UNPREPARED KIDS, VIOLENCE SABOTAGE SCHOOLS' PROGRESS; REPORT  
PAINTS BLEAK FUTURE FOR EDUCATION**

By: Lacrisha Butler

**Lexington Herald-Leader – October 1, 1992****SLIGHT PROGRESS FOUND ON EDUCATION GOALS**

By: Staff

**National Journal – October 10, 1992****GOALPOSTS**

By: Staff

**New Orleans Times Picayune – October 1, 1992****EDUCATION GOALS NOT BEING REACHED**

By: Associated Press

**NSPRA Fax News Service – September 30, 1992****INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT GAP WIDENS**

By: Staff

**Newsday – October 1, 1992****TEEN STUDENTS AT RISK; THREATS, THEFT JEOPARDIZE PROGRESS, REPORT  
SAYS**

By: John Hildebrand

**Oregonian – October 1, 1992****EDUCATION PANEL REPORTS 'DISCOURAGING' FINDINGS**

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PROGRESS REPORT CITES MAINE EFFORT TOWARD NATIONAL  
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By: Michael Norton

**PR Newswire Association, Inc. – September 30, 1992**  
EDUCATION GOALS PANEL ISSUES SECOND ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT;  
ENCOURAGES GREATER EXPECTATIONS FROM AMERICA  
By: Staff

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By: Staff

**PR Newswire in Washington – September 30, 1992**  
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION CHARGES ADMINISTRATION  
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By: Staff

**Reuters, Limited – September 30, 1992**

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By: Phillip Burgess

**St. Paul Pioneer Press – October 1, 1992**

STUDENTS INCHING TOWARD GOAL

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MATH AND SCIENCE; PANEL CALLS FOR NATIONAL TESTING, STANDARDS

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SCHOOL SCORES SHOW LITTLE IMPROVEMENT

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By: Staff

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By: Staff

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**COMPLACENCY SLOWS ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

By: Dennis Kelly

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**THE 91 PERCENT SOLUTION**

By: Editorial

**The Washington Times – October 1, 1992**

**SCHOOLS RESIST MAJOR REFORMS, PANELISTS SAY**

By: Carol Innerst

**APPENDIX C**  
**Acknowledgments**

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# NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

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D

February 19, 1993

TO: National Education Goals Panel

FROM: Laura Lancaster  
NEGP Public Information Officer

RE: Summary of NEGP Focus Group Reactions

The National Education Goals Panel conducted four focus groups involving 39 education policymakers, parents, and teachers in Martinsburg, WV, and Wilmington, DE, in mid-December. The purpose of the groups was to learn more from key stakeholders in education about how to best convey the message of the Goals Panel and to increase understanding and support for the national goals process and its standards setting effort. The Widmeyer Group was contracted -- a public relations firm known in DC for its special ties to the field of education -- to conduct the groups and to issue a report to the Panel.

The selection of Focus Group participants was supervised by The Widmeyer Group and assisted by: (1) local contacts in the Martinsburg, WV, area and; (2) the Delaware State Department of Education. Participants were selected randomly, with attention given to geographical distribution around the sites.

Reactions from the focus groups are divided into six sections in the report. They are: World Competition; Need for National Agenda in Education; Need for National Standards; Awareness of the National Goals; Response to Goals Panel Documents; and Use of Data. All of these sections have implications for the Panel.

The major findings of the focus group report and my own observations include:

- Focus Group participants that knew about the National Goals were aware of them largely as a result of their local America 2000 initiative. There is still a great deal of misconception about how and why the Goals were created. The Goals are seen as part of a political agenda not a bipartisan campaign to focus the nation's attention on the need for education reform.
- Members of the focus groups who were policymakers reported making policy decisions as a direct result of the goals.



- Policymakers, parents, and educators believe that the six goals focus on key problems in education and communities today. Although participants had positive attitudes toward the goals and national standards, some had misinterpreted what individual goals meant. Policymakers, but not parents, could accurately identify the six goals from a list.
- Participants felt that the Goals Report and its executive summary are informative and valuable documents, but neither speak directly to parents (teachers, school board members) nor lead to resolution of their most important concerns; the Reports don't tell audiences why the data are important or what to do with the information. Policymakers, however, responded positively to the Reports' value for their own needs. They said the documents are concise, well organized around the goals, put key information up front, and are attractively printed and designed.
- All focus group participants agreed that improvement in education requires a continuous measure of how well we are progressing as a nation, state-by-state, and community-by-community, yet few individuals said they trust the comparative data they are getting from the Goals Panel or other sources, regardless of the nature of the comparison.
- These education stakeholders suggested the importance of an ongoing media campaign to make more Americans aware of the need and importance of national standards and for continued public outreach to draw attention to the national goals -- targeting students, business leaders, community groups, and the clergy.

## **REPORT ON FOCUS GROUPS**

**The National Education Goals Panel**

**December 1992**

**Prepared by:**

**The Widmeyer Group  
January 15, 1993**

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## I. HIGHLIGHTS

*The National Education Goals Panel conducted four focus groups involving 39 education policymakers, parents, and teachers in Martinsburg, W. Va. and Wilmington, Del. in mid-December. The purpose of the groups was to learn more from key stakeholders in education about how to best convey the message of the National Education Goals Panel, and, to increase understanding and support for the national goals and its standards setting effort.*

### Major Findings

- Participants in the focus groups were aware of the National Goals, largely as a result of their participation in their local America 2000 effort.
- All policymakers said they have made policy decisions as a direct result of the goals.
- Participants noted that the six national goals focus on key problems in education and communities today. Participants had positive attitudes toward the goals, but had some misconceptions about what individual goals mean, the value of individual goals, and who is responsible for implementing them. Policymakers, but not parents, could accurately recognize the six goals from a list.
- Participants felt that written documents prepared by the National Education Goals Panel are informative and valuable, but do not speak directly to parents and do not indicate either next steps for local action or the key questions stakeholders must ask school boards, principals, and superintendents. They also cited a lack of clarity on what the data actually means to various audiences.
- Goals documents were considered far more accessible to policymakers than the general public. Parents said they need more "How To" material to keep the schools on course to meet the goals and questions to ask school administrators about progress.
- All focus group participants agreed that improvement in education requires a continuous measure of how well we are progressing as a nation, state-by-state, and community-by-community, yet few individuals said they trust the comparative data they are getting from the Goals Panel or elsewhere, regardless of the nature of the comparison.
- Stakeholders suggested the importance of an ongoing media campaign to make more Americans aware of the need and importance of national standards and for continued public affairs outreach to draw attention to the national goals and how they can be achieved. The campaign, they said, should be focused on parents and policymakers but also should target students, business leaders, community groups, and the clergy.

## II. METHODS/FORMAT

The following analysis is based on the results from four focus groups of teachers, education policymakers, and parents conducted on December 15 and December 17, 1992. It is important to keep in mind that the focus group research is qualitative not quantitative: while the opinions expressed in these groups are extremely useful in understanding the general attitudes of parents, teachers, and policymakers on a variety of issues, these results cannot be projected with any statistical confidence to an entire population.

The groups were scheduled as follows:

### Tuesday, December 15

Parents from Martinsburg, West Virginia; civic leaders

Teachers and principals from Martinsburg, West Virginia and Hagerstown, MD

### Thursday, December 17

Policymakers from Delaware (including state teacher union leader, school board presidents, former state board of education president, deans of education at state colleges, lobbyist for education issues, business leaders involved in school reform.

Parents from the Red Clay (DL) School District

A total of 39 people participated in four focus groups, each of which lasted approximately two hours. A facilitator led each focus group, asking participants questions about the following topics:

- Knowledge and perceptions of the National Education Goals and the Goals Reports
- How the goals and reports are used
- Need for additional information

The researchers designed the focus group questions to determine participants' knowledge of the goals and Goals Report, what participants value about the goals, and their ideas and suggestions for ways to promote better communication and understanding of the Goals Panel message. The questions encouraged conversation that revealed the attitudes and values underlying participants' opinions.

### III. PURPOSE

The goals of this focus group research were to learn how to:

- best convey the message of the National Education Goals Panel, and
- increase understanding and support for the national goals and standards setting effort.

The following report lays out the findings from the research and the conclusions and recommendations for action drawn from these findings.

## IV. FINDINGS

### A. World Competition

Increased global competition creates a new urgency for national education measurement and standards, focus group participants said.

Parents were keenly aware that in order for young people to get good jobs and have a standard of living comparable to the preceding generations, the United States will have to "beat the Japanese" and other societies in education and productivity.

Noted one parent, "Young people have to be able to perform. If our children [are] going to be able to compete in a world marketplace, they're going to have to compete with Japan, Germany, France, Sweden and match their accomplishments. And if we don't challenge and set goals where we want them to be... we're going to be here 20 years from now at this same table, saying what did we do wrong 20 years ago."

Many parents attributed lack of competitiveness to the "dumbing down" of the education system and the fact that students can graduate from high school while being consistently behind grade level. Too many students leave the system without being able to read and write effectively, parents charged, arguing that schools have to teach more, better, faster for a more diverse student population who will enter a world where more is demanded of them than ever before. "So much is expected of students today. They can no longer get by with a general track education. To go on to college or to enter the new workforce, we have to raise the level of skills. To be a good custodian, you have to understand chemistry, electricity..." said one parent.

Several parents and policymakers noted that the United States is behind other nations in supporting early childhood education. Educators said the Russians had the right idea to begin their children's education at 6 months. They cited other societies where national policy places as much priority on training parents as on helping prepare young children for school.

Participants noted that the need to compete in the international arena raises difficult questions for measurement. How do we compare student achievement in a diverse society with students in a more homogeneous nation or societies where schools only educate high achievers? Parents take offense at international comparisons, contending we are "comparing apples and oranges." Teachers and administrators prefer self-evaluative measures which help parents and communities compare student, school, and district progress against national standards rather than comparisons of other kinds of educational systems. Parents and educators also challenged the validity of comparisons among school districts that do not have similar funding, student populations, and community values.

## B. Need for National Agenda in Education

Participants said the United States needs a new national agenda in education. They feel the National Education Goals are a strong first step towards building support and consensus for a national education effort.

Today, there is no national agreement about what schools should accomplish or students should learn. Educators, policymakers, and parents expressed concern about creating high standards and equal outcomes among the nation's 16,000 autonomous school districts. The challenge of improving schools requires making broad-scale changes across whole systems, and this is difficult given our decentralized education system. Many parents have become skeptical about the longevity of each new "fad." Noted one parent, "For every school in the district there is a principal with a different agenda; for every district in the nation there is superintendent with a different agenda..."

At the same time, schools confront shifting dynamics every election cycle. Noted one policymaker: "Practitioners see new waves of change coming at them. After three or four waves, they figure they can wait the next one out. Teachers and administrators say to themselves, 'This too shall pass...'"

Participants perceived restructuring movement of the 1980's as being unsuccessful because it focused on only a few parts of the whole system and because policymakers and educators mistook process for productivity. They perceived the movement as strengthening the power of statehouses, but diminishing the federal role in education.

Can we afford a locally fragmented approach to education standards in a global society? Participants in the focus groups said the United States needs national direction in education backed up by timely information and more research and development. "I don't know if we need legislative mandates or a national body that will give us timely data so that school districts can see their progress. It is too difficult for each district to go through its own process of developing all these things," said one policymaker.

Parents, teachers, and policymakers uniformly agreed that strong, articulate leadership, preferably from President Clinton. They said we need a national effort on the scale of America's response to the Sputnik launch. Achieving the national goals is as important and challenging to us today as preparing for the first moonshot was for the previous generation.

The federal government also needs to coordinate cooperation among agencies and to help connect school improvement efforts at the local, state, and national levels, participants said. Policymakers expressed concern about the lack of coordination between education and social services and noted that schools will not improve until higher education gets on board. "You cannot improve K-12 unless you improve higher education, and see education as K-16," said one college dean.



### C. Need for National Standards

Participants underscored the fact that there is no national consensus on what schools should accomplish. They said we do not want a national curriculum, but we need core values and an understanding of what 3rd grade science or 7th grade mathematics ought to be. Noted one parent, "We need some kind of syllabus so we know what our children are studying in a particular grade and can ask the fundamental question: 'Is my child really learning what the teacher is working on in the classroom? What is happening in first grade, sixth grade, high school? What is supposed to be done?'"

Parents noted that classes within schools are of uneven quality and that students are not learning the same things. Some students are getting an "F" education in the same school where some students are getting an "A" education. While parents perceive the variables for achievement to include the student, the family background, the curriculum track, the teachers, the administration, and the school's goals, even siblings and cousins who attend the same school have significantly different learning experiences.

National goals establish where we want to be, but each community needs to be involved with standards by adopting national standards for their own community, participants said. Schools all over the country should offer similar opportunities and students shouldn't be penalized for going to schools in West Virginia.

Parents and policymakers noted that national standards are powerful but some questioned whether they were truly appropriate and realistic for all students. "My kid is just an average kid. I know he's not going to be the best in mathematics and science," said one West Virginia parent.

However, several parents want mandatory assessments that hold schools accountable for student progress. "We've got to build standards and hold each student accountable [for achieving them] to exit a grade level... We can't let students slide through," said one parent. "To generate a change that will affect all students, we must hold all students accountable. In that way, we can make parents the final judge of a school system. If we hold all students accountable to a certain minimum standard of performance at each grade level, that in effect holds teachers accountable to teach what's necessary. It hold administrators and parents accountable to make sure it gets done. And if it doesn't get done, our children don't pass. A lot of us will be knocking on the doors of school boards."

There was a strong consensus for establishing "consistency in education" if not a national core curriculum. Several parents suggested we consider making federal funding contingent upon demonstrated progress in meeting the National Goals.

#### D. Awareness of the National Goals

Participants in the focus groups were aware of the National Goals, largely as a result of their participation in their local America 2000 effort. When shown three reports, policymakers were equally aware of the National Goals report, NCTM Standards, SCANS reports, while parents were only aware of the goals report -- largely through their local America 2000 initiative.

All the Delaware policymakers said they have made policy decisions as a direct result of the goals. They acknowledged that they would not have done so, however, if Governor Castle and Superintendent Forgione had not been such strong advocates for the goals and worked to create broad acceptance and public buy-in.

Participants noted that the six national goals focus on key problems in education and communities today. Participants had positive attitudes toward the goals, but had some misconceptions about what individual goals mean, how realistic they are, and who is responsible for implementing them. Policymakers, but not parents, could accurately recognize the six goals from a list.

Many participants recognized that schools are being held accountable for problems outside their purview.

#### E. Response to Goals Panel Documents

Parents, teachers, and policymakers were asked to review the executive summary of the National Goals report and comment on the style, readability, and usefulness.

Policymakers, in particular, responded positively. They said the document is concise, well organized around the goals, puts key information up front, and is attractively printed and designed. "It covers in abbreviated form things I need to look at." and "I would read documents like this if I had time..." were typical comments.

Policymakers said the document would be far more useful for school board members, administrators, teachers and state officials than for parents. Following are some specific responses:

- Documentation is not designed to reach John Q. Public.
- Numbers don't work as messages to motivate people.
- There are nice charts; but they don't jump out to say, 'What does this mean to me? I need to know how I should react to the information. Is it good or bad?

## What is its relevance to my child in school?

Teachers said they sensed the documents were not written by teachers or with teachers in mind and said the documents added to a sense they are outsiders to the goals process. Noted one state teacher union leader: "Teachers are placed in charge of implementing change, but they were not involved in the process of developing programs, outcomes, or their own training. They have no ownership..."

Parents echoed the concerns of policymakers and teachers who felt the Goals documents were not written for them. West Virginia parents said they need baseline data to chart a course and check progress, but they thought the material would not be able to be digested by the average parent in their district, many of whom are not well educated and are not active in school activities. It is far more useful to reach fellow parents by providing a one-page flyer, a face-to-face meeting explaining the goals, or condensing the information in a newsletter, they said.

Delaware parents said the report's strengths are twofold: it presents of national information they otherwise would not see and that the report keeps important issues about education in the forefront. They appreciate knowing that they have the same information that parents in California and Texas have about the schools.

Equally important, the information gives parents greater leverage in challenging business as usual in the school. Parents need to know what questions to ask. Said one parent, "We can use a piece of paper with specific questions about whether my school is implementing the math standards, using calculators, training teachers. We don't have a way to measure or judge. these areas." Another said: "Someone who is upset about science in the school will turn to this page and go to the principal. They can show them this and say, "What are we doing to ensure that our kids are meeting these goals... We need ammunition. If you go unarmed, you can easily be turned away..."

Parents said they need more "How To" material to keep the schools on course to meet the goals and questions to ask school administrators about indicators of progress, and a road map that lays out the next steps to achieving the goals.

Parents and policymakers reviewed the "1992 Handbook for Local Goals Reports: Building a Community of Learners" booklet to see if this material met their criteria. Participants said the material is extremely valuable, but alone would not be enough to motivate parents who are not already involved in schools. In addition they called for more material designed for those parents who are already involved in education. They need a variety of tools they can use and trust and other efforts to build public awareness. Parents, in particular, said they need checklists and Q&A sheets to challenge local superintendents and principals on their progress in achieving the goals.

Following are some comments on the 1992 Handbook:

- This report permits parents and civic leaders to develop a nitty gritty assessment of what needs to be done....
- We may not be consistently walking at the same pace throughout the nation; but I think the bits and pieces -- the steps outlined in this book -- at the local grass roots level will help....
- It's not enough to walk into a school and say to a principal that the nation is striving to be first in science and math, and I want to ensure our schools are measuring up. I can take this back to a school -- whatever school your son or daughter is in, and say, 'Lets talk about the figures for this school right now... I want to know what percentage of this school is doing topnotch work... [Does achievement vary by race], and why is my child the only bright child in the classroom...?'
- We've taken things like this and sent them out in PTA newsletters and found out that they work; in fact, it is about the only thing parents read.

#### F. Use of Data

All focus group participants agreed that improvement in education requires a continuous measure of how well we are progressing as a nation, state-by-state, and community-by-community, yet few individuals said they trust the data they are getting. Parents and especially teachers question the validity of comparative information and want to know more about how the systems work and the variables that cause one to be more effective than another. This is not only true for international comparisons, where parents and teachers said comparisons are unfair ("other countries screen out the worst students") but in comparisons within and among the states.

There is a general ambivalence, however, about the means of reporting these comparative data. While participants were reluctant to embrace testing, they expressed a growing awareness these tests are important. Noted one participant: "There is something inherently unfair about being compared with districts that have advantages that you don't have. It's good to be compared with yourself, to see where you are this year, where you are next. But if you are going to improve, you need to know where you stand in comparison with schools across the street. Know how you measure up...."

Many participants -- particularly the teachers -- urged that we keep data on education performance confidential so those at bottom of heap are not stigmatized.

## V. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NATIONAL GOALS PANEL

Receptivity and interest of focus group participants to the National Goals Panel report and to goals setting and national standards suggest a strong need for media outreach, coalition building with national organizations that can carry the National Goals Panel's message to its members, and development of new materials that can further draw attention to the mission and message of the Panel.

Specifically, we suggest the following:

1. Instead of just one large Goals Report and Executive Summary of the full report, consider developing a number of documents based on data from the Report that is relevant to different audiences.

These materials would be responsive to the focus groups desire for materials that speak their language and give them the "ammunition" they need to advance their concerns about standards and measurement. Focus group participants said they would be particularly responsive to pamphlets, flyers, newsletters, fact sheets, checklists, short summaries, video, public service announcements, Q&A sheets, and other materials that are easy to read, reproduce, and pass along.

2. In order to inform the public and state and local policymakers, media outreach is needed to explain the Goals and measurement process and their importance to improving competitiveness. There also seems to be a need for a broad-based campaign explaining the national standards setting process and what it means to local schools, parents, business, and other stakeholders.

A well-targeted media campaign -- including dissemination of public service announcements, placement of op-ed pieces, strategic news events, and free media activities featuring Governors and members of Congress -- can help make National Goals measurement and standards kitchen table issue for policymakers and the public. This campaign would help make the connection that the National Goals affect everyone -- from the man on the street to Wall Street.

A series of public service announcements focusing on the goals and standards would be a particularly effective method of reaching millions of Americans.

3. Strategic outreach to national education associations and business groups is essential to maximize public awareness and acceptance of the standards setting and measurement process. Groups such as the National PTA, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Conference of Mayors, the National Conference of State Legislators, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Association of State Boards of Education, the National

School Boards Association -- and the state and local affiliates of such organizations -- are a broad distribution network for disseminating information about the National Education Goals.

The National Goals Panel might consider developing a speakers' bureau to place representatives of the National Education Goals Panel as speakers on conference agendas and create private meetings with the leadership of key groups to establish partnerships in the dissemination effort.

The National Goals Panel has a unique opportunity to build on the generally positive attitudes of the public and policymakers toward the National Goals and its standards setting effort. They are willing and ready to rally around a cry for standards for schools, but need a national mobilization campaign with national leaders in the forefront, and credible strategies and indicators of progress.