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#### BOSTON GLOBE

##### "Charter-School Oversight Hit"

Massachusetts has not held charter schools academically accountable or carefully policed their spending of taxpayer money, according to a state auditor's report. The report criticizes the Department of Education's process for awarding charters, its one-day site visits to evaluate schools, and its failure to examine school financial records.

#### HARTFORD COURANT

##### "Teachers Union Blasts State's Mastery Testing"

Connecticut's rigorous school testing program is considered to be among the nation's best, but the state's largest teachers union sharply criticized the exam, saying it distorts teaching. The Connecticut Mastery Test has gained so much influence in many schools that it is squeezing out creativity and forcing teachers to steal time from subjects such as science and social studies, the union contends.

#### INDIANAPOLIS STAR

##### "Surge in Applicants Has Colleges Raising Bar"

High school graduating classes are growing with baby boomer offspring. More students are seeking college degrees. And they've increased their number of applications to universities, on average, to six from three. But freshman slots at many four-year colleges nationwide are stagnant or even being cut. The upshot? Colleges can be pickier about whom they select.

#### NEW YORK TIMES (free registration required)

##### "After a Surge, Limits Return to School Prayer"

In the days after the attacks, public schools joined

other civic institutions in an outpouring of prayer, saying that a nation in crisis needed healing and togetherness. The vast majority of public schools soon returned to normal routines, reinstating limits on public expressions of faith. But a number of politicians, communities and religious groups have instead moved to challenge restrictions on school prayer, hewn by courts over the last four decades.

#### PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

"Plan: Disband School Board, Install Edison"  
Edison Schools Inc. would manage the Philadelphia district and the local board of education would be abolished under a scenario outlined by Governor Schweiker to Mayor Street. School board members immediately erupted in anger, saying they were not consulted enough and questioned the rationale for such a drastic measure. State and city officials, however, cautioned that nothing final had been decided.

#### SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

"Scattered Approach to Literacy"  
Utah's 40 school districts face a multiple-choice question when it comes to training Utah educators to teach kids to read. It's a tricky question because no single option is the easiest, most affordable or efficient -- which is why some districts pick one approach, some another, and a few use several. And now, Utah's free-wheeling approach to reading education is about to be put to the test. In the last legislative session, lawmakers passed a requirement that 90% of 3rd graders must read on their grade level by 2006.

#### SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

"California Urged to Pay Teachers More"  
Outlaw the practice of dumping inexperienced teachers into the neediest classrooms and pay teachers more money, says a panel of name-brand educators in a report being released on the sorry state of teaching in California. Contributing to the problem, the report says, are fragmented teacher preparation programs, low salaries, inadequate incentives for experienced teachers to sign up at low-performing schools, and a soaring student population.

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