



NEGP MONTHLY

A monthly in-depth look at states and communities and their efforts to reach the National Education Goals
Published by the NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

In This Issue:

Goal 8: Parental Participation

Page 1 Overview

Page 2 PTA Standards for Parent and Family Involvement

Page 3 Title 1 and Family Involvement

Page 4 Colorado

Page 6 California

Page 7 Kentucky

Page 8: Upcoming Goals Panel Events and Products

States Highlighted in this Issue:

**Colorado
California
Kentucky**

The NEGP MONTHLY is a publication of the National Education Goals Panel .

1255 22nd Street NW, Suite 502
Washington, DC 20010;
202-724-0015
www.negp.gov

The NEGP hereby authorizes further reproduction and distribution with proper acknowledgment.

*NEGP Executive Director: Ken Nelson
Publisher: Barbara A. Pape*

FROM COOKIE SALES TO CURRICULUM

Parent associations have undergone a metamorphosis in recent years – from organizations that organized bake sales to ones that participate in key school decisions. This Monthly looks at three states – Colorado, California and Kentucky – to see what has driven the increase in parent associations involvement in school policy decisions.

Goal 8, parent participation, is key to achieving most of the other National Goals. It says that schools will promote partnerships that increase parent involvement to promote the social, emotional and academic goals of children. The more parents are involved in their children's schools, the more likely it is that their students will achieve to higher levels at school.

Overview

Parent involvement in schools is no longer simply a punch and cookie operation. In many schools nationwide, parents participate in the selection of principals, curricula decisions and the distribution of funds for sundry activities. The nationwide movement for site-based management that began in the late 1980s and early 1990s propelled parent involvement to this policy decision-making level. Parent associations seized the opportunity to serve on local school councils. In the mid-1990s, the standards movement served as another impetus for strong parent involvement as research showed a strong home-school partnership means students are more likely to master challenging curricula.

Mary Beth Oakes, legislative director for the National Parent Teachers Association (PTA), points to her organization's parent involvement standards as another reason parent involvement is on an upswing. In 1997, the PTA established standards for parent participation and launched a nationwide campaign to implement those standards at the local level. Several years



earlier, Title 1 was amended to include criteria for parent involvement that Oakes said is similar to the PTA's standards. "We are seeing more people focused on the same goal," said Oakes. The PTA standards and Title 1 parent councils are discussed later in this Monthly.

"The National PTA believes that parent and family involvement is the foundation upon which all other education reform should be based," according to PTA material. Research clearly shows that parent involvement in schools helps improve student achievement and teacher morale. In 1994, parent participation became the eighth of the National Education Goals, adding still more importance to the role of parents in the decision-making process of schools. The eighth Goal reads: "Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children."

Joyce Epstein, director of the Johns Hopkins University Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning, also sees Goal 8 as a link to other goals. Goal 1, school readiness, requires "families to take responsibility for their infants' and toddlers' health and safety, physical growth, and social, emotional and cognitive development," she writes. Parental involvement is implicit in each of the other National Goals. Therefore, she concludes, it is critical to recognize "the importance of Goal 8 for the attainment of the other goals"

This Monthly looks at the increased influence of parent associations on school policy in the areas of establishing curricula, hiring new full-time teachers and setting discipline policy in three states: Colorado, California and Kentucky. State officials in the three states all pointed to the rise of site-based management as the impetus for an elevated role of parent associations in running schools. Colorado officials also tied an increase in parent association involvement in their state to former Governor Roy Romer's all-out campaign for academic standards.

Site-based management that includes parents, the evolution of the PTA to a more decision-making role in school governance, the rise in Title 1 parent councils and the need to bring parents aboard the standards movement are three of four threads that have heightened parent involvement in schools.

Standards for Parent and Family Involvement

For the National Parent Teacher Association, parent and family involvement in their child's schooling is the "foundation for all other education reforms." With the primary mission of encouraging effective parent and family involvement in the education of their children, the PTA in 1997 embarked on a campaign to promote national standards for parent participation. The PTA developed six national standards for parent/family involvement as one strategy to implement Goal 8, with numerous quality indicators to accompany each standard. The PTA's publication *National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs* also includes best practices for implementing the standards.

The National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement are:

1. Communicating: Communication between home and school is regular, two-way and meaningful.
2. Parenting: Parenting skills are promoted and supported.
3. Student Learning: Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.



The National Education Goals Panel

GOVERNORS

Paul E. Patton
Kentucky, Chair, 1999

John Engler
Michigan

Jim Geringer
Wyoming

James B. Hunt, Jr.
North Carolina

Frank Keating
Oklahoma

Frank O'Bannon
Indiana

Tommy G. Thompson
Wisconsin

Cecil H. Underwood
West Virginia

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION

Richard W. Riley
U.S. Secretary of Education

Michael Cohen
Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman
New Mexico

U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords
Vermont

U.S. Representative William F. Goodling
Pennsylvania

U.S. Representative Matthew G. Martínez
California

STATE LEGISLATORS

Representative G. Spencer Coggs
Wisconsin

Representative Mary Lou Cowlshaw
Illinois

Representative Douglas R. Jones
Idaho

Senator Stephen Stoll
Missouri

4. Volunteering: Parents are welcome in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.
5. School Decision-Making and Advocacy: Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.
6. Collaborating with Community: Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

One obstacle facing advocates of effective parent involvement is the lack of pre-service and in-service preparation of teachers to appropriately engage parents in the classroom, according to the PTA. The PTA notes that:

most parent involvement preparation occurs in early childhood or special education courses;

no state requires a separate course in parent involvement for teacher licensure; only a handful of states require parent involvement preparation as part of a course;

a few states include parent involvement in their competency standards for teachers/administrators or in their standards for teacher/administrator training programs;

and no state requires parent involvement coursework for recertification or renewal of a license.

The PTA applauds "promising signs" in teacher preparation for parent involvement. Both the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), the national groups that either accredit or set standards for teacher preparation programs, have recently added or strengthened indicators of parent involvement. Parent involvement competencies also are included in standards designed by the National Board for Professional Teacher Standards.

Title 1 and Family Involvement

In 1994, Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was "restructured" to help students achieve rigorous academic standards by promoting the formation of "new partnerships, particularly home-school partnerships," according to the U.S. Department of Education. The amendment was based in part on research that found children do best when parents play four key roles in their children's learning: teachers (helping children at home), supporters (contributing their skills to the school), advocates (helping children receive fair treatment), and decision-makers (par-



What is the National Education Goals Panel?

The National Education Goals Panel is a unique bipartisan body of state and federal officials created in 1990 by President Bush and the nation's Governors to report state and national progress and urge education improvement efforts to reach a set of National Education Goals.

Who serves on the National Education Goals Panel and how are they chosen?

Eight governors, four state legislators, four members of the U.S. Congress, and two members appointed by the President serve on the Goals Panel. Members are appointed by the leadership of the National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the U.S. Senate and House, and the President.

What does the Goals Panel do?

The Goals Panel has been charged to:

- Report state and national progress toward the National Education Goals.
- Work to establish a system of high academic standards and assessments.
- Identify promising and effective reform strategies.
- Recommend actions for state, federal and local governments to take.
- Build a nationwide, bipartisan consensus to achieve the Goals.

The annual Goals Report and other publications of the Panel are available without charge upon request from the Goals Panel or at its web site www.negp.gov. Publications requests can be made by mail, fax, or e-mail, or by Internet.

ticipating in joining problem-solving with the school at every level.

The Center for Law and Education explains that under Title 1, "schools are required to provide assistance to parents to help them understand the National Education Goals and the standards and assessments which will be used to determine children's progress." Most school districts are required to spend at least 1 percent of its Title 1 funds on training and education programs for parents. Parents must be involved in deciding how the funds are to be spent.

Each school that receives Title 1 funds must have a parent involvement policy as part of its Title 1 plan, which must be developed with parent input. The plan must address how the school will convene meetings for parents, provide them with timely information about Title 1 and implement a school-parent compact, among other things.

The school-parent compact provision of Title 1 requires schools to jointly develop with parents a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, school staff and students will share responsibility for ensuring improved student achievement. The compact must:

- describe the school's responsibility to provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive environment that will enable students to meet the state standards
- describe how parents will be responsible for supporting their child's learning
- address the importance of communication between teachers and parents

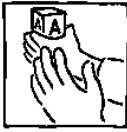
Colorado

In 1994, Colorado was both the nation's top-performing and most improved state for the increasing influence of parent associations. Half of the state's public school principals reported in 1994 that the parent associations in their schools have influence in one or more of three areas of school policy (curriculum, discipline and hiring); a 22 percent increase from 1991.

"Building accountability structures, which developed prior to school reform efforts of the 1990s, required each building, not just the district, to submit improvement plans," said Jan Silverstein, a supervisor at the Colorado Department of Education. "These plans were developed by a committee



THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS



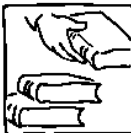
Goal 1: Ready to Learn



Goal 2: School Completion



Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship



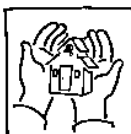
Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development



Goal 5: Mathematics and Science



Goal 6: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning



Goal 7: Safe, Disciplined and Alcohol- and Drug-free Schools



Goal 8: Parental Participation

that was required to include parent members.” Silverstein added that although the law requiring building plans was “dumped,” the effort to include parent associations and parents in local decision making has remained.

Silverstein also credits former Governor Roy Romer with increasing parent involvement and parent association involvement in the schools, particularly through his emphasis on student standards. “Romer’s goal was to make sure every Coloradan knew what children should know and be able to do at each grade level,” said Silverstein. “He held tons of meetings, conducted surveys and generally sought feedback from parents, students, teachers and the community at-large,” she added.

The confluence of the accountability law, the standards movement and Colorado’s strong ethic of local control served as catalysts for increasing the strong influence of parent associations in the state’s schools, according to Jane Urschel, executive director of the Colorado School Board Association. She explained that the 1988 School Finance Act, besides providing for school finances, also established several accountability provisions. One provision called for the creation of school and district committees that were to include parents, as mentioned above by Silverstein. “These were the precursors to site-based management,” explained Urschel, and were strongly supported by the PTA. Urschel also noted that the PTA was “strong in the late 1980s and 1990s.”

Urschel concurs with Silverstein over the role of former Governor Roy Romer in the standards movement. Romer “made strong appeals to the communities for the National Education Goals,” said Urschel. “He wanted to be the first state in the nation to adopt them and his pitch to the education community was ‘let’s get community-wide involvement because the Goals go beyond academics,’” explained Urschel. This push for community involvement caused parent associations to get more involved in school policy.

But underlying the site-based management and standards policies is, what Urschel calls, “the western ethic of rugged individualism.” Unique to Colorado, notes Urschel, is a constitutional provision that calls for local control of the schools “because we associate the local level with the government closest to the people.” Even with the in-migration of people that has escalated in recent years, the state culture of local control has been maintained, partly because “people move here because they like the ethic,” said Urschel. This attitude helps sustain a strong role for parents and parent associations in the schools.

CONTACTS: Jan Silverstein



From The Library

Evidence: The Family Is Critical to Student Achievement. Washington, D.C. Center for Law and Education.

Henderson, Anne T. (1987) *The Evidence Continues to Grow.* Columbia, Maryland. National Committee for Citizens in Education.

Epstein, Joyce. (May 1995) "School, Family, Community Partnerships: Caring for the Children We Share". *Phi Delta Kappan*. vol. 77, no. 9.

Henderson, Anne T. and Nancy Berla. (1995) *A New Generation of National Parent-Teacher Association.* (1997) *National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs.* Chicago. Illinois.

Powell, Douglas. (1998) *Promoting Parent-School Partnerships: Progress in Meeting National Education Goal 8.* National Education Goals Panel. Washington, D.C.

Public Education Network. (1999) *Helping Families Improve Local Schools.* Washington, D.C.

U.S. Department of Education. (1994) *Strong Families, Strong Schools: Building Community Partnerships for Learning.* Washington, D.C.

Supervisor
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax
Denver, Colorado
(303)866-6806

Jane Urschel
Associate Executive Director
Colorado Association of School Boards
1200 Grant Street
Denver, Colorado 80203
(303)832-1000

California

California was among the nation's top-performing states in 1994, with 36 percent of public school principals reporting that the parent associations in their schools have influence in one or more of three areas of school policy.

In 1989, the State Board of Education adopted, and later revised in 1994, a policy on parent involvement that encourages school boards to establish comprehensive, long-term efforts to involve families in the education of their children. California also passed the first law in the nation in 1990 to require local school boards to adopt parent involvement policies," said Ann Bancroft, a supervisor at the California Department of Education.

Bancroft explains that school-site councils were established during the early 1980s at each school to coordinate school-based programs, paving the way for intense parent association involvement in schools. The legislation required parent participation on the councils.

Maryanne Hudz, director of public relations for the California PTA, points to the rise in site-based management during the early 1990s as a primary reason for the stronger influence of parent associations in school policy. "A changing school culture that views parents as partners also helped to increase the role of the parent association in the schools," she added.

Hudz noted that parent associations continue to have a "tremendous impact because school administrators need a way to reach all parents, including those from different countries." As a national, state and local organization, the PTA offers a structure that can support sundry advisory councils to reach parents from different cultures and bring them into the schools.



RESOURCES

Center on School, Family and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University. 3505 North Charles Street. Baltimore, Maryland. 21218 (410)516-8800. www.csos.jhu.edu

Family Education Network. Statler Building. Suite 1215. 20 Park Plaza. Boston, Massachusetts. 02116. (617)542-6500. www.fen.org.

National Education Goals Panel. 1255 22nd Street NW. Suite 502. Washington, D.C. 20037. (202)724-0015. www.negp.gov.

National Head Start Association. 1651 Prince Street. Alexandria, Virginia 22314. (703)739-0875)

National Parent-Teacher Association. 330 North Wabash Avenue. Suite 2100. Chicago, Illinois 60611-3690. (312)670-6782. www.pta.org.

Parents As Teachers National Center, Inc. 1001 76 Corporate Square Drive. Suite 230. St. Louis, Missouri 63132. (314)432-8963.

Public Education Network. 601 13th Street NW. Suite 900 North. Washington, D.C. 20005 (202)628-7460. www.PublicEducation.org

In California, the PTA also provides parents with education and information to enable them to become effective partners on the school councils and elsewhere. Many school schools offer space for “parent centers,” which serve as a lounge for parent volunteers, a place for parent training sessions and other activities. Hudz cited the “wonderful” parent center at Tarzana Elementary School (Tarzana, California), where parents could enroll in ESL classes. “The PTA used to be seen as a group of parents who help, now we are viewed as parents who know,” she explained.

Bancroft also points to current efforts to sustain parent involvement in California. For example, Governor Gray Davis in 1999 signed into law a series of bills designed to enhance parent involvement through grants for family outreach efforts and training courses for parents, for example.

CONTACT: Anne Bancroft
California Department of Education
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, California 95814
(916)657-2451
www.cde.ca.gov

Maryann Hudz
Director of PR
California PTA
930 Georgia Street
Los Angeles 90015
(213)620-1100
www.capta.org

Kentucky

Kentucky was both a top-performing state and one of the nation’s most improved states in 1994 regarding the influence of parent associations. In 1991, 17 percent of public school principals reported that the parent associations in their schools have influence in one or more of three areas of schools (establishing curricula, hiring new full-time teachers and setting discipline policy). By 1994, that figure jumped to 37 percent.

“The biggest change during that period was the enactment of the Kentucky Education Reform Act in 1990,” said Judi Conrad, president of the Kentucky PTA. She underscored the importance of the school-based decision councils established in KERA and the



state mandate to raise the level of parent and parent association involvement in the schools. "It brought parents to the table," said Conrad. KERA also paved the way for a more active parent association – one that went beyond "punch and cookies."

The school-based decision councils are made up primarily of the principal and teachers, but the law also requires that two parents be elected to the council.

The Kentucky PTA takes its role in the councils seriously and has organized school-based decision making forums that take place in the schools. The goal is to sustain interest in school-based decision making and help prepare parents for the roles they assume on the council. Parent associations have become an integral part of the education dialogue that continues in Kentucky. The PTA is responsible for conducting the election of parents to the councils, although other groups and unaffiliated parents are encouraged to seek positions on the council. The Kentucky PTA and the Kentucky Department of Education published a handbook on how to conduct parent elections and how parents can get involved in the councils.

CONTACT: Judi Conrad
President Kentucky PTA
P.O. Box 654
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
(502)564-4378

Upcoming Goals Panel Events and Products

April 13, 2000:

Teleconference – *Creating High Achieving Schools: Aligning Education Rhetoric, Resolve and Results* – Goals Panel and National Alliance of Business discussion of applying Baldrige quality processes to schools.

Prior to the broadcast, people who have registered to host the downlink sites will receive copies of a new Goals Panel report that looks at how educators are using Total Quality Principles and the Malcolm Baldrige Award criteria to improve the performance of educational systems and increase student achievement. The Goals Panel has commissioned four case studies of state policy actions to facilitate the use of the Quality Principles in education (North Carolina, Minnesota, New York and New Jersey). In addition the Goals Panel has commissioned four school districts to do case studies to examine their implementation of the Quality processes and the results they have realized (Pinellas, California; Brazosport, Texas; Hunterdon Central, New Jersey; Pittsford, New York). Visit the Goals Panel Web site at www.negp.gov to find out more information.

May 22, 2000

The National Education Goals Panel will launch the first of a series of four public hearings throughout the nation. Through the hearings, the Goals Panel will identify best practices to ensure that all children achieve to higher standards.

The first hearing will be held on May 22 in Los Angeles, hosted by Congressman Matthew Martinez (D-California) and Goals Panel Chairman Governor Tommy Thompson (R-Wisconsin). It will take place at the Alhambra City Council Chambers.

June 1, 2000

The second Goals Panel field hearing will be held in Burlington, Vermont, hosted by U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords (R-Vermont) and Goals Panel Chairman Governor Tommy Thompson (R-Wisconsin).