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*****THE NEGP WEEKLY*****
A weekly news update on America's Education Goals
and school improvement efforts across America from the
NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL

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FACT OF THE WEEK

Between 1991 and 1994, 3 states (out of 51) significantly reduced the percentages of public school principals reporting that lack of parental involvement in their schools is a serious problem. These states are

STATE POLICY NEWS

1.) ***** HIGH-STAKES TESTING: STUDENTS NOT MEETING MARK IN NY
(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Five: Math And Science)

Only 40 percent of New York State's eighth-grade students met or exceeded state standards on a math exam (Goodnough, N.Y. TIMES, 10/13). More than half of the state's students also failed to meet state standards in reading.

In New York City, only 23 percent of students earned a passing score in math, causing state and local officials to express concern that these students will meet the mandatory and rigorous Regent Exams to pass high school.

Fourth graders scored better than the older students did. Statewide, fourth-grade students posted a gain of 11 percentage points from 1999.

Harold O. Levy, New York City schools chancellor, said he had appointed a commission to study how math is taught in city classrooms. The panel is expected to make recommendations in the spring. Levy added that what is taught is not aligned with what is on the test.

The paper reports on several explanations for the dip in scores from fourth to eighth grade: many middle-class and affluent parents move their children to private middle schools and many middle school math teachers are not certified to teach math.

2.) ***** HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED: WHAT STATES NEED TO DO
(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

States must do more than mandate high-stakes tests, according to some educators attending the National Association of State Boards of Education conference held last week in St. Louis, Missouri (Hacker, St. Louis POST-DISPATCH, 10/13). States must ensure that there is alignment between standards and the tests and that teachers and business leaders, not just state policymakers, design the standards and tests.

States also should provide professional development opportunities for teachers who must teach to higher standards. Missouri State officials created several regional centers to provide appropriate professional development, writes the paper. Each year, about 40 teachers are trained to help other teachers in their schools.

"In order to have success, [the schools] have to have support," explained conference participant Carol Bauer, a teacher in south central Missouri.

For more information, visit the National Association of State Boards of Education's web site at <http://www.nasbe.org>

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS

3.) ***** REDUCING CLASS SIZE: STUDY SHOWS IT BOOSTS READING SCORES
(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

Elementary school students in Forth Worth, Texas and Philadelphia show significant gains in reading achievement after class-size reduction was implemented at their schools, according to a report issued by the Council of the Great City Schools. Reducing Class Size: A Smart Way to Improve America's Urban Schools also found that 32 urban school districts responding to a national survey received more than \$242 million in federal class-size funds for the 2000-2001 school year, with the bulk of the funds going toward hiring new teachers. About 77 percent of those funds are being spent this year by the 32 school systems on salaries and benefits for new teachers, primarily in grades one through three. The rest of the funds are targeted to professional development, recruiting of teachers and administration.

For more information and a copy of the report visit the Council of the Great City Schools at <http://www.cgcs.org>.

4.) ***** PREPARING URBAN TEACHERS: NEW PROGRAM AT UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
(Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

With the goal of ending a shortage of teachers in Denver public schools, the University of Northern Colorado launched its Center for Urban Education program. The "hallmark" of the program is a four-year apprenticeship in urban classrooms, writes the Denver POST (Curtin, 10/16). Students in the Center for Urban Education program enter an urban classroom on their first day of school, rather than waiting until their junior or senior year. Former Denver Schools Superintendent Irv Moskowitz, head of the Center for Urban Education, compares his program to the medical school model where young doctors serve years-long internships.

For more information visit the University of Northern Colorado at <http://www.univnorthco.edu>.

FEDERAL POLICY NEWS

5.) ***** TECHNOLOGY GRANTS: NEW WAYS TO TEACH MATH AND SCIENCE
(Goal Four: Teacher Education And Professional Development and Goal Five: Math And Science)

Two Department of Education grants are targeted to the use of cutting-edge technology to improve math and science instruction. The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) received a five-year, \$39 million grant to create a new national online service called Teacherline.

The project will link the resources of PBS, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, school districts in 16 states, state departments of education, five college of education, the International Society for Technology in Education and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Current and prospective teachers will receive a wide variety of math and technology resources, including on-line mentoring, teacher discussions and videos of effective classroom practices.

Seeing Math Telecommunications Project is the second grant recipient. The program, run by the Concord Consortium, will use its one-year \$1 million grant to study the use of the Internet to deliver professional development resources to teachers.

For more information, visit the Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov>, Public Broadcasting Corporation at <http://www.pbs.org>, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics at <http://www.nctm.org>, the International Society for Technology in Education at <http://www.iste.org>, and the Concord Consortium at <http://www.concord.org>

6.) ***** GETTING READY FOR COLLEGE: IT PAYS OFF
(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Six: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)

Students who take more challenging courses in high school, such as Advanced Placement (AP), are more likely to complete a bachelor's degree than students who do not complete such rigorous work, according to a new report, *Getting Ready for College Pays Off*, issued by the Department of Education. "This report confirms the very real advantages for students who take challenging courses early on in their education," said U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley.

Other findings from the report:

- > The average college aid package for full-time students, including federal grants and loans, has risen 68 percent since the 1989-1990 school year.
- > Women comprise nearly 50 percent of all students and disabled students make up about 5 percent of undergraduate populations.
- > College enrollments reached a record high of 15.1 million students in 2000, and that figure is expected to rise by 19 percent between 2000 and 2001.

For more information and a copy of the report, visit the Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov>.

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PRACTICES

7.) ***** MINI MOGULS: TEACHING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
(Goal Six: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning)

MiniMoguls.com is an education-based comic books series that uses several characters to introduce sixth through eighth graders to concepts of personal financial management and entrepreneurship. The series is "culturally responsive and academically sound," writes a press release from Mini Moguls, which also notes that it was selected as one of only 35 vendors to attend the U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Centers Summer Institute in August 2000.

The series introduces adolescents to the value and rewards of saving money to achieve goals and how investing in stocks can generate growth for a small business. The curriculum incorporates English, language arts, economics, math and business concepts. An activity section provides guided and individual practice to reinforce the fundamentals on money management, including establishing credit and opening a savings account that earns interest. A teacher's guide is included.

For more information, visit Mini Moguls at <http://www.minimoguls.com>.

8.) ***** LYING AND CHEATING: RAMPANT AMONG TEENS
(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Citizenship)

Seven in 10 students surveyed by the Joseph & Edna Josephson Institute of

Ethics said they cheated on a test at least once in the past year. Nearly half said they had done so more than once. "This data reveals a hole in the moral ozone," said Michael Josephson, founder and president of the Institute based in Marina Del Rey, California.

Survey results found that this year's results were not significantly worse than on a similar survey in 1998, "the first time that has happened since the group began testing in 1992," reports the DALLAS MORNING NEWS (AP, 10/16). "The good news appears that it's peaked," said Josephson. "The bad news is that it's horribly high."

For more information on The Report Card on the Ethics of American Youth, visit <http://www.charactercounts.org>.

FEATURE STORY

9.) *****PARENTS APPROVE STANDARDS: NEW PUBLIC AGENDA POLL
(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Eight: Parent Participation)

Parents nationwide generally support the way higher academic standards are being put in place in their child's school, according to a new poll released by the New York-based group Public Agenda. Findings from additional interviews in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles and New York - five cities with highly visible efforts to raise standards - basically mirror the national results.

Only 2 percent of parents who know their school district is implementing higher academic standards want to stop and go back to the way things were before the standards were put in place. Fifty-three percent want to continue with the effort as planned and one in three want to continue but with some adjustments.

"Based on this research - and surveys by other organizations - reports of the 'death' of the standards movement have been wildly exaggerated," said Deborah Wadsworth, president of Public Agenda. "Parents with children in schools where these reforms have been instituted say their districts have been "careful and reasonable." They give their schools remarkably good notices on the changes they have made."

The survey also found that 82 percent of parents who know their school district is implementing higher standards believe their schools have been "careful and reasonable" in putting the new standards in place. Even among parents surveyed from the large urban school districts, substantial majorities reported that their schools' efforts were carefully and reasonably conducted.

Other findings from the survey:

- > Nine percent of parents said teachers are putting too much academic pressure on their child.
- > Ten percent said their child is getting too much homework.
- > Ten percent said their child's school fails to provide extra help to students who are struggling.
- > Eleven percent said their child's school requires them to take too many standardized tests.
- > Eighteen percent said the teachers in their child's school "focus so much on preparing for standardized tests that real learning is neglected."
- > Eighty-one percent approve of having a policy in their child's school that would require summer school for students who can't meet the standards.
- > Fifty-five percent think that because standardized tests measure important skills and knowledge, "there is nothing wrong" with spending a significant portion of class time preparing students for these tests, compared to 38 percent who think this is a problem.

While "few parents discount the usefulness of some standardized testing," Wadsworth cautioned that "parents strongly object to basing promotion and graduation on the results of one single test, and there is some feeling that there is perhaps too much emphasis on testing nationwide."

For more information and a copy of the report, visit Public Agenda at <http://www.publicagenda.org>.

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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 the National Education Goals.

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.

WHAT ARE THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS?

There are eight National Education Goals set for the year 2000. They are:

- 1) All children will start school ready to learn.
- 2) The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90%.
- 3) All students will become competent in challenging subject matter.
- 4) Teachers will have the knowledge and skills they need.
- 5) U.S. students will be first in the world in math and science achievement.
- 6) Every adult American will be literate.
- 7) Schools will be safe, disciplined, and free of drugs, guns and alcohol.
- 8) Schools will promote parental involvement and participation.

WHO SERVES ON THE 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. The number of Republicans and Democrats are made even by appointing five governors from the party that does not control the White House.

The current Panel Members are Governors Tommy G. Thompson, WI (Chair, 2000);

John Engler, MI; Jim Geringer, WY; James B. Hunt, Jr., NC; Frank Keating, OK; Frank O'Bannon, IN; Paul E. Patton, KY; Cecil H. Underwood, WV; Secretary of Education Richard Riley; Michael Cohen, U.S. Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education; U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman, NM; U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords, VT; U.S. Representative William F. Goodling, PA; U.S. Representative Matthew G. Martinez, CA; Representative G. Spencer Coggs, WI; Representative Mary Lou Cowlshaw, IL; Representative Douglas R. Jones, ID; Senator Stephen Stoll, MO.

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 <http://www.negp.gov>. Requests can be made by mail, fax, e-mail, or Internet.