



ED REVIEW

November 23, 2001

...a bi-weekly update on Education Department activities relevant to the Intergovernmental and Corporate community



NAEP 2000: SCIENCE ASSESSMENT

The latest results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) science assessment show the average scores of fourth- and eighth-graders were essentially unchanged from 1996, while the twelfth-grade score declined three points -- a statistically significant drop. On a 300-point scale, the fourth-grade science score remained at 150, the eighth-grade score edged up one point to 151, and the twelfth-grade score fell from 150 to 147. Moreover, the percentages of fourth-grade students attaining "Advanced," "Proficient," and "Basic" achievement levels showed no changes from 1996 to 2000. But, the percentage of eighth-graders at the "Basic" level decreased (producing a related increase in the percentage "At or Above Proficient") and the percentage of twelfth-graders "Below Basic" increased (producing a related decrease in the percentage "At or Above Basic"). Meanwhile, males had higher scores than females at both the fourth- and eighth-grade level and scores disaggregated by race and ethnicity illuminated only one significant change: a decline for twelfth-grade whites. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/science/results/>.

Note: 20 of the 44 states and jurisdictions that participated in the 2000 assessment for fourth-grade scored higher than the national average score of 150 (13 scored below it). Additionally, 18 of the 42 states and jurisdictions that participated in the eighth-grade assessment scored higher than the national average score of 151 (13 scored below it). Of the jurisdictions that participated in both 1996 and 2000, only eighth-graders in Kentucky, Missouri, Vermont, and Department of Defense domestic and overseas schools showed an increase in performance. NAEP did not assess state fourth-graders in 1996.



FREEDOM TIMELINE

As part of its popular <http://whitehousekids.gov> web site, the White House has unveiled a Freedom Timeline, highlighting important features of America's history as a beacon of liberty and freedom. The Freedom Timeline (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/timeline/>) consists of five stories, a vocabulary list, a quiz, and a teacher's guide. It spans 1777 to 1948 and includes the following anecdotes:

- **Unlikely Spy** is a story of a Quaker woman from Philadelphia who learned of a surprise attack at Valley Forge in 1777 and warned General Washington's troops;
- **Underground Railroad** explains how Harriet Tubman liberated 300 slaves through the Underground Railroad;
- **Statue of Liberty** is the history of France's gift to the United States;
- **March of Dimes** tells how, through funding from the March of Dimes, a cure for polio liberated Americans from the fear of this disease; and
- **Berlin Airlift-Candy Bombers** is the story of America's effort to provide humanitarian aid to the people of war-torn Berlin in 1948 by dropping food from airplanes as part of Operation Vittles.

The timeline is related to the "Lessons of Liberty" (<http://www.va.gov/Veteranedu/>) effort initiated by the President during Veterans Awareness Week (November 11-17).



DROPOUT RATES

According to a new report from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), "Dropout Rates in the United States: 2000," while progress was made during the 1970s and 1980s in reducing high school dropout rates and increasing high school completion rates, these rates have remained comparatively stable during the 1990s. As evidence, the report presents statistics for three different measures. Event dropout rates describe the proportion of 15- to 24-year-olds who dropped out of grades 10 through 12 in the 12 months preceding October 2000 (4.8 percent overall, higher for blacks and Hispanics and lower for Asians and whites). Status dropout rates track the proportion of 16- to 24-year-olds who are out of school and who have not earned a high school credential (10.9 percent overall, similar racial breakdown). High school completion rates represent the proportion of 18- to 24-year-olds who have earned a high school diploma or an equivalent credential, including a GED (85.6 percent overall, 94.6 percent for

Asians, 91.8 percent for whites, 83.7 percent for blacks, 64.1 percent for Hispanics). The report also provides state and regional data and examines the characteristics of high school dropouts and high school completers in 2000. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002114>.



RECENT GRANTS

On November 14, Secretary Paige announced \$16.1 billion in grants to states and local school districts to strengthen educational programs for America's children and adults. The grants, awarded between September 1 and October 18, will be used for a variety of programs, including efforts to:

- boost the performance of disadvantaged students (Title I, migrant education, and TRIO);
- help special needs students (special education);
- promote innovative educational strategies (Innovative Education Strategies -- <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SIP/programs/ieps.html>);
- strengthen students' reading skills;
- offer vocational programs (vocational education, Community Technology Centers); and
- keep students and teachers safe (Safe & Drug Free Schools and Communities).

A state-by-state list of awards is available at <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/11-2001/11142001.html>. You may also wish to utilize the grant award databases housed at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCFO/grants/grntawd.html>.

Also: While many of the Department's discretionary grant competitions have yet to be initiated, a number of competitions actually close in the next couple of months, such as the Charter Schools Facilities Financing Demonstration Program (1/4/02) and several Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) programs. Questions? <http://www.ed.gov/GrantApps/> lists the grant competitions that are currently open and provides links to application packages, forms, and other information.



CAMPUS CRIME DATA

The most recent crime statistics for the nation's 6,269 colleges, universities, and career schools are now available on the Education Department's web site: <http://ope.ed.gov/security/>. The data is categorized under one of four locations where the crime occurred: residence halls, other on-campus locations, non-campus buildings or properties, or nearby public property. "In the weeks ahead, students and parents around the country will be making important decisions about postsecondary education," Secretary Paige said, introducing the site. "The security and safety on and around our college campuses is one of several factors they will consider." Institutions are required to collect such statistics and distribute an annual security report to current students and employees under the Jeanne Clery Act (originally enacted in 1990). The law was amended in 1998 to require the Department to collect the data from schools and make it widely available. This marks the second year that the Department has made the data accessible via the Internet.



COLLEGE QUALITY

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), co-sponsored by the Pew Forum on Undergraduate Learning and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, challenges the view of college quality popularized by national news magazines that rate institutions on the basis of their institutional resources and public reputation. Instead, NSSE's 2001 report, "Improving the College Experience: National Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice," summarizes the views of 155,000 first-year and senior students at 470 four-year colleges and universities on five benchmarks: (1) level of academic challenge, (2) active and collaborative learning, (3) student-faculty interaction, (4) enriching educational experiences, and (5) supportive campus environment. Among the survey findings? A gap exists between the amount of time students spend on key educational activities and what faculty members say is optimum. For example, students spend only about half as much time preparing for class as their teachers recommend is necessary, and 20 percent of all students often come to class unprepared. The report also contains numerous examples of how colleges and universities are using their results to improve undergraduate education. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.iub.edu/~nsse/>.



QUOTE TO NOTE

"This year, American servicemen and women are spending the holiday season fighting for our freedom and liberty abroad, as well as at home, as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. I hope that all of us can all take time during the Thanksgiving holiday to reflect upon the values and principles that they are protecting and that make our nation great. Thanksgiving also offers us the opportunity to think about our own mission and our efforts to offer every student in this country access to a quality education. Thank you for your contribution to our country. I wish you a happy and healthy holiday."

-- Education Secretary Rod Paige (11/20/01)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Don't forget to register for the last remaining Improving America's Schools (IAS) conference in San Antonio, TX (December 17-19). The conference represents an ideal opportunity for members of the community, including businesses, to learn more about the Department's programs and priorities and explore ideas to better promote equity and excellence in schools. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/iasconferences/>. (Curious? The Secretary's plenary address in Mobile is available for viewing at the same site.)

The conference is also the final, scheduled public forum to provide comments and suggestions regarding the Department's reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/New/>.

Please feel free to contact the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs with any questions:

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