

The Education Report

A weekly report of public policy issues in American Education from

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Bush Unveils Community Service Proposal

On April 9, President Bush sent Congress his community service overhaul proposal entitled “Principles and Reforms for a Citizen Service Act.” The proposal comes four months after the President’s State of the Union address where he asked Americans to pledge two years, or 4,000 hours, to community service over the course of their lives. The Bush plan restructures many volunteer agencies to create more opportunities for the general public. He proposes to strengthen the AmeriCorps, enhance the Senior Corps, and promote student service and effective service learning.

The specific proposal to promote student service and service learning, is to amend the Higher Education Act to require every college and university to increase, over several years, the percentage of Federal Work-Study funds devoted to community service to 50 percent. This proposal has angered many institutes of higher education that do not want to be told how to implement their work-study programs.

The House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Select Education held a hearing on April 11th to discuss Bush’s plan, where Corporation for National and Community Service CEO Leslie Lenkowsky testified in support of the Bush proposal. With regard to increasing the Federal Work-Study funds to 50 percent, he stated that a large portion of students participating in this program want to give something back to the community while participating in activities that they may later explore as a career. Right now, the percentage of college students who participate in community service is far below the national average. The changes that the Bush proposal makes will encourage more students to participate in community service, thus these habits will be developed early on in life and hopefully carried on throughout.

Paige Defends Bush Education Budget

At a House education appropriations subcommittee hearing on Wednesday, Education Secretary Rod Paige said that President Bush's FY2003 education budget was sufficient overall to carry out new federal requirements and even over-funded in one area. He was joined by Deputy Secretary Bill Hansen and the Department of Education's Budget Director Thomas Skelly.

Paige told the House panel that the "No Child Left Behind Act" was not only adequately funded for FY2003, but was over-funded in the case of test development. Paige declared that the \$387 million appropriated for test development next year is more than what is needed to develop the assessments. He reminded the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education that the money was allocated for development of the assessments and not for implementation on a year-to-year basis.

When asked by Congresswoman Anne Northup (R-KY) if he would grant states exemptions for the new testing requirements of the "No Child Left Behind Act," Paige responded that he "intended to carry out Congress' intentions" and he would be "very reluctant to grant exemptions."

Title I Requirements Not Being Met

According to a report recently published by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), many states are not in position to meet federal requirements for Title I funds. Even though the new law states that student assessments are of the utmost importance, states struggle to ensure that "complete and accurate" assessments are performed. To reach this goal, states hire contractors to score Title I assessments. However, these contractors may need to be assessed, a suggestion made by the GAO and agreed upon by the Department of Education. It seems, that the contractors have been making serious errors that have led to serious consequences. In one state, contractor errors led to thousands of children attending summer school who did not need to go. Other states have found incorrect identification of schools in need of improvement. Title I, the largest source of federal funding for K-12 education, provides \$10.3 billion this fiscal year to improve educational achievement. "Education Needs to Monitor States' Scoring of Assessments" can be found at <http://www.gao.gov/new/items/d02393.pdf>.

Paige Travels for No Child Left Behind Tour

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige has reached out to parents and asked for their committed participation to improve America's schools through a 25-city tour across America. So far, Paige has visited Albuquerque, New Mexico and Atlanta, Georgia. Paige wants to educate parents, about the importance and increased, positive results that the "No Child Left Behind Act" will have on young children. According to Paige, "Congress and the President have made an historic commitment that every child will be able to read by the time they finish the Third Grade—every child, no exceptions. Yet, for no child to be left behind, it means every American must take a stand to get involved and change the culture and expectations we have for every school."

In addition to the 25-city tour, the Department of Education has released an interactive CD and tool kit, "What to Know and Where to Go," for parents that provides guidance on finding resources for local information. Please visit: www.NoChildLeftBehind.gov for more details.

ED Will Hold Regional Meetings to Discuss No Child Left Behind Act

On Wednesday April 17th, Education Secretary Rod Paige will travel to Las Vegas, Nevada for a Town Hall meeting to discuss the *No Child Left Behind Act*. This is one of several meetings Paige will hold to encourage public comment and engage people outside of Washington with respect to various standards and assessment provisions. This event will be held at Rancho High School at 6:30 pm. Spanish translators will be available. No additional sites or dates have been announced yet.

President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education

The 24-member President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education is holding a series of meetings that will culminate with a report recommending reforms for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The site for the first meeting was Houston, TX and it held a March 20th meeting in San Diego and a March 21st meeting in Los Angeles. The schedule for the remaining meetings around the country is as follows:

April 16	NYC, NY
April 16	Nashville, TN
May 30-31	Washington, DC

**House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-ED
Hearing Schedule on Education**

Thursday April 18, 2002

9:45am-12:00pm - Members of Congress

Tuesday April 30, 2002

2:00pm-4:00pm - Public Witnesses

Thursday May 2, 2002

9:45am-12:00pm - Public Witnesses

Tuesday May 7, 2002

2:00pm-4:00pm - Public Witnesses

Thursday May 9, 2002

9:45am-12:00pm - Public Witnesses

Tuesday May 14, 2002

2:00pm-4:00pm - Public Witnesses

107th CONGRESS, 2nd SESSION

TENTATIVE SENATE CALENDAR 2002/ NON-LEGISLATIVE PERIODS

Tom Daschle, Majority Leader

April 8 (Mon.) **Senate reconvenes**

May 27 - 31 **Senate not in session**
May 27 *Memorial Day (observed)*

June 3 (Mon.) **Senate reconvenes**

July 1 - 5 **Senate not in session**
July 4 *Independence Day*
July 8 (Mon.) **Senate reconvenes**

August 5 - September 2 **Senate not in session (August Recess)**
September 2 *Labor Day*
September 3 (Tues.) **Senate reconvenes**

September 16 (Mon.) **Yom Kippur (NO VOTES)**

October 4 **Target adjournment**