

# *The Education Report*

*A weekly report of public policy issues in American Education from*

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## **House Budget Committee Marks Up Budget Resolution**

This week, the House Budget Committee marked up the FY 03 Budget Resolution, which focused on several war-related endeavors. Representatives Michael Honda (D-CA), Darlene Hooley (D-OR), and several other Democrats proposed an amendment to increase funding for Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) programs, but it was rejected by a vote of 16-20. If successful, this amendment would have provided for Title I an additional \$2.15 billion above the Administration's budget request. The amendment also would have provided the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program with an additional \$250 million, the Teacher Quality program in Title II with an additional \$350 million, with another \$275 million of unallocated funds provided for additional ESEA programs.

Representatives Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), David Price (D-NC), and other Democrats proposed an amendment to increase funding for Head Start and the maximum Pell Grant award. The amendment was rejected without a roll-call vote. If successful, this amendment would have provided the required funding to enable Head Start to serve one million children and to increase the maximum Pell Grant award to \$4,500. Both currently are frozen at their FY 02 levels.

Furthermore, Hooley, Representative Ken Bentsen (D-TX), and other Democrats proposed an amendment to ensure that the federal share of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act funding moves towards 40 percent, the full share of what Congress previously promised to provide. In FY 02, states received only 16.5 percent of the national average cost for each disabled child. Unfortunately, the amendment was shot down without a roll-call vote.

Among the things the budget resolution does include is a provision of a \$4 billion private school tax credit. Education programs included in the balanced budget are as follows:

- **Special Education:** Provides \$8.53 billion—a **\$1 billion increase**—for the IDEA. This also accommodates for future years a 12 percent annual increase in IDEA spending—a rate of increase that would allow for **full funding of IDEA within ten years.**
- **Low-Income School Districts:** Provides **\$1 billion increase in Title I** grants to low-income schools—on top of last year's \$2.7 billion increase—focusing resources on the highest-poverty school districts.
- **Reading First:** Provides \$1 billion—a **\$100 million increase**—for the President's plan to improve reading instruction by addressing reading difficulties at an early age, and ensuring that teachers use proven teaching methods.
- **Head Start: Increases funding by \$130 million** to increase children's preparedness for learning when they enter school.
- **New Elementary and Secondary Education Programs:** Supports the President's request for the following initiatives: \$100 million for charter schools; \$50 million for research encouraging both private and public school-choice options; and \$25 million for a voluntary public school choice program, particularly for parents of children attending low-performing schools.
- **Expanding Parental Options:** Funds new tax relief measures, such as education tax credits, to assist parents transferring their children from chronically failing or dangerous schools.
- **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs):** Provides a **3.6 percent increase** for assisting historically black colleges, universities and graduate institutions, as well as Hispanic-serving institutions.
- **Pell Grants:** Maintains the maximum Pell Grant award of \$4,000.

### **Secretary Paige Testifies Before Senate Appropriations Labor-HHS-ED Subcommittee**

On March 14<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of Education Roderick Paige was called before the Senate Appropriations Labor-HHS-ED Subcommittee to defend the President's FY 03 budget proposal. The task was a difficult one given the proposed cuts to education programs and the stern disapproval from Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA), Patty Murray (D-WA), Ted Stevens (R-AK), and Arlen Specter (R-PA). Only Senator Judd Gregg (R-VT) offered his support.

In light of the President's commitment to leave no child left behind, he has proposed a \$.9 billion cut to the legislation that would enable him to keep that commitment, specifically the "No Child Left Behind" (HR.1) bill that was signed into law in January of this year. Subcommittee Chairman Harkin talked at length about the funding cuts to Teacher Quality mandates that are required under H.R. 1. Currently the proposal drops funding for these mandates \$155 million to \$3.077 billion in FY 03.

Paige, and his team of Deputy Secretary William Hansen and Budget Service Director Thomas Skelly, stated that although many small programs have seen funding cuts, substantial investments were made in high profile programs such as Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Paige stated that Title I funding is structured in such a way that each state is required to use a minimum of 5 percent to a maximum of 10 percent to improve teacher quality. Paige stated that Washington is in no position to make decisions for individual school districts, and an aggregate funding such as this allows each individual school district to deploy funds as it sees fit.

Further disapproval was raised regarding the failure to increase the Pell Grant maximum award from \$4,000 to \$4,500, but Paige defended the President's difficult situation. He said that the state of affairs in the world today has created a list of priorities that need to be addressed. Unfortunately, the Pell Grant program is not on the top of that list and will not receive an increase to the maximum award. Paige stated that the President has honored his commitment to that program by increasing the total funding by \$549 million in FY 03.

### **U.S. Secretary of Education Joins South Dakota Residents For Education Pep Rally**

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige joined Rep. John Thune (R-SD), students, parents and teachers for an education pep rally at Washington High School, where he discussed President Bush's commitment to leaving no child behind and his proposed investments in education for South Dakota's students.

Secretary Paige also discussed how South Dakota's children would benefit from President Bush's proposed budget. South Dakota would receive \$196 million under the President's fiscal year 2003 budget request of \$56.5 billion for the Department of Education, including for the department a record high \$50.3 billion for discretionary programs, continuing his commitment to improve student achievement and to leave no child behind.

The \$196 million for South Dakota would represent a boost of \$9 million from the current level of federal education grants to the state. Under President Bush's proposed investments in new and existing programs that support the principles of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, South Dakota would receive:

- **\$30,866,602 for Title I grants** to local education agencies to give state and school districts additional resources to turn around low-performing schools, improve teacher quality, and ensure that no child is trapped in a failing school;
- **\$13,567,163 for Improving Teacher Quality State Grants**, to give state and school districts the flexibility to adopt research-based strategies that will work best to meet their need for improving the quality of teaching and raising student achievement in the core academic subjects;
- **\$2,445,469 for Reading First** to support comprehensive reading instruction for children in grades K-3;
- **\$500,000 for English Language Acquisition** through a redesigned program that offers grants to help English language learners make progress in learning English and meeting the same high standards as all other students;
- **\$2,307,865 under the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities** program to help keep South Dakota's students and teachers safe in school; and
- **\$3,626,749 to help the state create standards** for what a child should know and learn in reading and math in grades 3-8 and develop annual assessments that are aligned to those standards.

In addition, President Bush's proposal includes investments that support children and adults with disabilities, such as:

- **\$22,589,648 for special education grants** to South Dakota; and
- **\$8,631,737 for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** state grant program to help individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain and retain employment.

More information about President Bush's proposed budget is available on the Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/Budget03/index.html>.

### **Title I Negotiated Rulemaking Begins**

The negotiated rulemaking process for certain sections of Title I of the "No Child Left Behind Act" began this week in Tysons Corner, VA. Proposed regulations for the Title I sections related to various standards and assessments provisions. The 24-person committee chosen to review and discuss these provisions represented State administrators, State boards of education, local administrators, local school boards, principals, teachers, parents, students, business interests and the Department of Education. The facilitator for the process is Christopher Cross, a senior research fellow at the Center on Education Policy and former

Education Department research chief. Two assessment experts were also included in the committee.

The primary goals for the sessions are to improve the substance, enhance understanding and deter litigation of the “No Child Left Behind Act.” The committee may not, however, compromise core elements of the law in any way. If sections cannot be agreed upon in negotiations, the Secretary of Education must simply provide a written explanation for the final regulations.

The committee is scheduled to resume rulemaking for two days next week—Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. The Department of Education will encourage public comment before finalizing the regulations.

### **Department Releases Transcripts From Scientifically Based Research Seminar**

The Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education has released transcripts from its February 6<sup>th</sup> seminar on "scientifically based research" and its status across various disciplines. To view the transcripts, visit: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/esea/research/>.

### **Department Plans to Implement Early Reading Competition**

The Department of Education is finalizing plans for a \$75 million grant competition to provide science-based early education programs that prepare low income, young children to read. The Department plans to award 175 grants from \$250,000 to \$1.5 million each in fiscal year 2002. Early Reading First is the competitive segment of the Reading First Program created under the “No Child Left Behind Act” by Congress. The program in its entirety will provide \$900 million to states for K-3 science-based reading instruction, assessment, and professional development.

The Reading First state grant application package will be available approximately April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002. More information on Reading First can be found at: [www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/readingfirst](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/readingfirst).

## **Town Meeting Focuses on Teacher Quality**

The Department of Education will be holding a Satellite Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2002. (8:00pm-9:00pm). This meeting will explore how communities around the country provide teachers the tools they need to improve instruction and know their subject areas well in order to help students succeed. For more details about this Town Meeting visit: <http://registerevent.ed.gov/downlink/event-flyer.asp?intEventID=153>. To view live or archived webcasts of the *Satellite Town Meeting* and to submit a question instantly on-line please visit <http://www.connectlive.com/events/edtowntownmeetings/>

## **NCES Releases Report on Kindergarteners Progress**

The National Center of Education Statistics (NCES) recently released a report titled "Children's Reading and Mathematics Achievement in Kindergarten and First Grade," the third in a series of NCES reports. The study shows that children begin kindergarten with different sets of knowledge and skills, depending on child, family, and school characteristics. Not surprisingly, the report finds that the ones who know their letters, numbers, and shapes, are read to frequently, who demonstrate a positive approach to learning, and who are in very good to excellent health perform better in school. Further, it says that by the spring of the first-grade, females are more likely to be reading and males are more likely to be proficient in math. Future reports will continue to follow the educational progress of this sample of children through fifth-grade. For further information, visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/kindergarten/>.

## **President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education**

The 24-member President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education began a series of meetings this week that will culminate with a report recommending reforms for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The site for the first meeting was Houston, TX. The schedule for subsequent meetings around the country is as follows:

March 20	San Diego, CA
March 21	Los Angeles, CA
April 9-10	Miami, FL
April 16	NYC, NY
April 16	Nashville, TN
May 30-31	Washington, DC

## **Rehabilitation Services Administration Announces Public Forum**

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) recently announced that it will hold a public forum regarding the Federal Rehabilitation Act, which authorizes the funding of vocational rehabilitation programs serving people with disabilities, independent living programs, projects with industry, client assistant programs, rehabilitation training programs, protection and advocacy, recreation and other demonstration and research programs. If you are interested in providing public testimony or would like more information, please call: 718-933-5650. For those who cannot attend, it is recommended that you provide a written copy of your testimony for the public record. For more information on the act please visit:

[www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/RSA/Policy](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/RSA/Policy).

Date: March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2002  
Time: 1:00 pm-6:00 pm  
Place: Metropolitan Hotel (Ballroom), Lexington Ave & 51<sup>st</sup> Street,  
Featured Guest: Joanne Wilson, Commissioner, RSA

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

**Wednesday April 10, 2002**

**10:15am-12:15pm** - Secretary of Education - President's  
FY03 Budget

**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**

