

The Education Report

A weekly report of public policy issues in American Education from

Dean Blakey & Moskowitz

April 26th, 2002

Testimony Before Labor HHS, Education Appropriations Subcommittee by Senior Department Officials

Assistant Secretaries Susan Neuman (OESE), Robert Pasternack (OSERS), and Grover Whitehurst (OERI) testified for the Department on "Foundations for Learning" before the House Subcommittee on Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations. Ms. Neuman touched on issues surrounding teacher quality and the challenges that teachers are facing. She also addressed the challenges that must be met in order to improve teacher quality. Neuman remarked, "We have an obligation to ensure that teachers are treated like the dedicated professionals they are". The No Child Left Behind Act authorizes programs to help States and school districts to promote teacher quality, such as: Teacher Quality State Grants, Troops to Teachers, Transition to Teaching programs and the Math and Science Partnerships.

Pasternack, addressed the committee regarding the budget for programs under the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services that focus on teacher development, preparation, professional development and retention. Mr. Pasternack placed emphasis on the fact that it is the State's responsibility to ensure that personnel that serve children with disabilities have the proper skills and knowledge to help them succeed. The Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPeNSE) is an example of a valuable source that is relied upon to develop and better understand personnel needs. The study found that there are critical shortages of personnel, high turnover rates, limited preservice preparation, and limited professional development. The request of \$90million for awards under the Personnel Preparation program to assist States in meeting the demands for highly qualified personnel to serve children with disabilities is a step in the right direction. Pasternack stated, "The fiscal year 2003 budget request is an important step forward in our continuing efforts to improve the education of children with disabilities so that no child is left behind".

Whitehurst discussed the importance of programs administered through the Office of Education Research and Improvement. These programs focus on

teacher recruitment, preparation and development. Some of the major research accomplishments in OERI include characteristics of effective teachers, addressing the need for more and better-qualified teachers, and applying the lessons of research in the classroom. The \$175 million requested for research and the \$95 million for statistics are true signs that there is a commitment to raising the quality and relevance of education research. It will allow for funding of several new research activities and strengthen the standards and assessments States will use to implement the goal of training high quality teachers. Whitehurst stated, "Individual differences in teachers will never go away, but powerful instructional systems and new, effective forms of professional development should reduce those differences to the point that every teacher should be good enough so that no child is left behind".

Department of Education Appoints Marina Tse as Deputy Director for Bilingual Studies and Minority Languages Affairs

Marina Tse has been appointed as the Deputy Director of the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). Ms. Tse's duties will consist of communicating information about high-quality instructional programs and services that are related to bilingual education in both state and local education groups.

Ms. Tse has a strong background as a special education instructor for the Duarte Unified School District in California. Along with teaching English to recently immigrated students and adults within the Los Angeles Unified School District, Tse is a former member of the California State Board of Education and State Rehabilitation Council. In addition, she has served as program chair for the California State Special Education Advisory Commission. She has received a Bachelor of Arts degree from California State University and a Masters of Science degree from the University of Southern California.

Department of Education Announces New Director of English Language Acquisition

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige announced Maria Hernandez Ferrier, as the new director of the Office of English Language Acquisition.

The agency was formerly known as the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) before its name was changed to the Office of English Language Acquisition, as part of the No Child Left Behind education reform legislation.

Maria Hernandez Ferrier, has served as executive director of City Year San Antonio. Ferrier helped bring together young people aged 17-24 from assorted backgrounds - dropouts to college graduates - in service to San Antonio, Texas.

Her "corps members" worked as tutors and mentors to disadvantaged children, developed after-school programs and summer camps and built playgrounds at low-income elementary schools. In addition, Ferrier holds a bachelor of arts in speech, a master's degree in guidance and counseling from Our Lady of the Lake University and a doctorate in educational administration from Texas A & M University.

As director of the Office of English Language Acquisition, she will serve as the principal adviser to Secretary Paige on all matters affecting English acquisition, language enhancement, and academic achievement for limited-English-proficient students under the No Child Left Behind Act.

Chauncey Veatch Recognized as National Teacher of the Year

House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairman John Boehner (R-OH) and 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee Chairman Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-CA) joined President George W. Bush in commending Chauncey Veatch, a 54-year old social studies teacher at Coachella Valley High School in Thermal, California, on being chosen as America's national teacher of the year.

Veatch, a former U.S. Army officer, retired from the military in 1995 and became a teacher. He currently teaches high school social studies in California's Coachella Valley Unified School District. Veatch, who is fluent in Spanish, teaches many students whose families are migrant farm workers. He was among five teachers chosen as California Teacher of the Year earlier in 2002. He competed with more than 50 other finalists for the national honor.

The *No Child Left Behind Act*, signed into law by President Bush on January 8, 2002, reauthorized the "Troops to Teachers" recruiting program. The program is designed to help eligible members of the U.S. armed forces obtain certification or licensure as elementary and secondary school teachers, and vocational or technical teachers.

DOD Schools Demonstrate Effectiveness of Parental Involvement In Education

The Department of Defense's U.S. Army school at Fort Campbell, Kentucky has the narrowest achievement gap between minorities and whites of any school in the entire country, notes the CBS program *60 Minutes*. The network reported, "Nearly half the students are black and Hispanic. And you can't tell the colonel's kid from the private's kid. Three quarters of the students are children of enlisted men and women. May of those families barely clear the poverty line."

Roughly 100,000 American K-12 children attend 200 schools run by the U.S. Department of Defense on military bases in the United States and abroad. Fort Campbell education officials disclosed that the most important component of Fort Campbell's success isn't money; it's parental involvement. At Fort Campbell, parents are free to wander into their kid's classrooms any time they like...unannounced. School officials even have the option of going to a parent's commanding officer to complain. A transcript of the *60 Minutes* story can be found online at <http://edworkforce.house.gov/issues/107th/education/nclb/nclb/htm>.

Poll Shows Americans Oppose Cuts to Education Spending

American voters continue to list education and school funding among their top priorities, even in the midst of the worst economy in a decade and well-known concerns about terrorism and war. A recent poll conducted by the Public Education Network and Education Week points out that the public is extremely concerned about education funding and will not support elected officials who cut funding for public schools. This will certainly put pressure on nearly 40 states now struggling with significant budget shortfalls that threaten to reduce state funding for schools by \$10 billion nationwide. The full report, "Accountability for All: What Voters Want From Education Candidates" and the executive summary can be accessed at <http://www.publiceducation.org/news/042402.htm>.

New Bill Provides Equal Access To Textbooks for Blind and Print-Disabled Students

Introduced on April 24th in both houses of Congress, the Instructional Materials Accessibility Act of 2002 (IMAA) will dramatically improve access to textbooks for students who are blind or who have other print disabilities in K-12 schools. The bipartisan legislation aims to ensure that instructional materials for blind or other people with print disabilities are received in an accessible medium at the same time as their non-disabled peers. To this end, the IMAA will utilize technological advances to produce an efficient system for acquiring and distributing these materials in specialized formats, which include braille, synthesized speech, digital text, digital audio, and large print.

Funding Notices

Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Initiative:

Applications for the Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA) initiative are available through the Department of Labor. The Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship initiative aims to develop formal apprenticeship programs for professional youth workers.

YDPA is funded through the Workforce Investment Act and helps to assist youth that are new to the workforce by accrediting, training and certifying new/current youth workers who provide direct services to youths.

Eligibility: Non-profit organizations that have affiliated local youth program services providers.

Funding: \$900,000 for eight awards. The grants will range from \$150,000 to \$200,000 each for new grantees. \$50,000 to \$100,000 for current grantees with a project length of 18 months. **Deadline: May 15th**

For more information contact: Mamie Williams, DoL, Room S-4203, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20210. Fax: 202-693-2879

Or visit: www.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html

Nasdaq Educational Foundation National Teaching Awards

The National Council on Economic Education and Nasdaq Educational Foundation seeks to recognize high school teachers who have developed an original lesson plan or program that promotes better understanding of finance and the economy among their students.

Eligibility: Public, Private or Charter school teachers of students in grades 9-12.

Funds: \$25,000 for one grand prize winner (including the \$0,000 regional award); \$10,000 each for five regional winners; and \$1,000 each for 20 regional semi-finalists.

For more information contact: Nasdaq Teaching Awards, NCEE, 1140 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036, 1800-338-1192 or email: ncee@eaglobal.org

For application information please visit: www.ncee.net/nasdaq/apps

National Education Association Urban Grants Program

The NEA's Urban Grants program supports local NEA affiliates in the development of education reform leadership programs. They are aiming to improve leadership for education support personnel, changes in school organization, K-12 faculty, student achievement, parental involvement, promoting safety in schools, social services and technology to promote networking among school personnel.

Eligibility: NEA local affiliates of 500 members or more, or the largest local affiliates of any state regardless of membership number.

Funds: Up to 25 grants of \$5,000 each

For more information contact: NEA Urban Initiatives, 1201 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036, 202-822-7155, or email: urbaned@nea.org

For applications, please visit: www.nea.org/grants/urban

National Education Association Improvement of Education Grants

The NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) now offers certain grants on an ongoing, year-round basis. These grants are awarded to fund classroom innovations or professional development for improved practice in public schools and higher education institutions.

Funds: Over 300 small grants of \$1,000 to \$3,000 are awarded each year.

For more information visit: <http://nfie.org/>.

Title I Regulations Regional Meetings

There will be four Education Department regional hearings on Title I Regulations. The meetings will be held in; Cincinnati, OH, Atlanta, GA, San Diego, CA, and Little Rock, AR. The meetings will include public comment as well as presentations by policymakers and experts in standards and assessments. At each gathering, those who served as negotiators will talk about that process and the use of standards and assessments in various communities.

A list of negotiators is available at <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/02-2002/02272002.html>. The meetings will include discussions about standards, their quality and connecting them to instruction, and assessments, covering various types, alignment with standards, and inclusion of all children. Locations for the meetings (all run 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) are as follows:

Monday, May 6th, 2002

The Holiday Cincinnati Airport
1717 Airport Exchange Blvd.
Erlanger, KY 41048
859-371-2233
Fax-859-371-5002
www.basshotels.com/hotels/cvgap

Tuesday May 7th, 2002

Sheraton Atlanta
165 Courtland Street
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-659-6500
Fax-404-523-9924
www.sheratonatlantahotel.com

Monday, May 13th, 2002

The Westgate Hotel
1055 Second Ave.
San Diego, CA 92101
619-238-1818
Fax-619-557-3737
www.westgatehotel.com

Thursday, May 16th, 2002

Double Tree Hotel
424 West Markham
Little Rock, AR
501-372-4371
Fax-501-372-0518
www.doubletree.com

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:

May 30-31 Washington, DC

107th CONGRESS, 2nd SESSION

TENTATIVE SENATE CALENDAR 2002/ NON-LEGISLATIVE PERIODS

Tom Daschle, Majority Leader

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**