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EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

ECS e-CLIPS
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Giving you the day's top education news, as well as a link to EDUCATION WEEK's extensive daily news roundup.

Read these news stories:
<http://www.ecs.org/ecs/e-clips>

CNN.COM

"Supreme Court Takes on Church-state Fight Over Pledge of Allegiance"
The Supreme Court said it will decide whether the Pledge of Allegiance recited by generations of American schoolchildren is an unconstitutional blending of church and state. The case sets up an emotional showdown over God in the public schools and in public life. It will settle whether the phrase "one nation under God" will remain a part of the patriotic oath as it is recited in most classrooms. The court will hear the case sometime next year.

DETROIT NEWS

"Online Degrees Grow in Stature, Popularity"
Online degrees, once looked at skeptically by academics and employers, are today as common as McDonald's. They are big moneymakers for some of the institutions that offer them and are a hit among working adults who want to complete advanced degrees. While most of these programs are accredited, skeptics still exist and their acceptability among employers is largely unproven.

EDUCATION WEEK (free registration required)
"States Facing Staffing Cuts, Heavier Load"
Faced with huge cuts in their administrative budgets, many state education departments are struggling to complete the complicated new tasks required by No Child Left Behind, and they see little relief ahead. While officials have tried to make cuts only in dispensable jobs, many states have had to curtail spending on data collection and assistance to struggling schools -- two tasks that lie at the heart of the No Child Left Behind law.

LOS ANGELES TIMES (free registration required)
"Program's Demise Leaves Teacher Trainees Jobless"
Last November, Los Angeles schools Superintendent Roy Romer enthusiastically called on professionals, including lawyers, bankers, engineers and accountants, to switch careers to teaching under the Los Angeles Teaching Fellows Program. Now, that

teacher training program has been killed amid budget cuts and a surplus of better-qualified teachers, some laid off from other districts around the state.

MIAMI HERALD

"State Money for Religious Pupils Soars"

The use of tax money at religious schools in Florida has mushroomed in the past year while an appeals court considers a ruling that giving tax dollars to religious schools violates the state's Constitution. Two-thirds of all private schools are religious, but about three-quarters of all schools using vouchers in Florida are religious. One newspaper reported that 869 of the 1,158 private schools that accept vouchers are religious schools.

NEW YORK TIMES (free registration required)

"Fewer Students Are Enrolling for Tutoring"

For the second year in a row, tens of thousands of New York City public school students who qualify for free tutoring under No Child Left Behind will not get the extra help, according to companies that provide the tutoring. The companies and some advocates said information about the program was poorly disseminated and parents once again were not given enough time to enroll, despite stepped-up efforts by the city to publicize the tutoring program this year.

ROANOKE TIMES

"Warner Touts Lofty Goals for State's Public Universities"

Governor Mark Warner called on Virginia's public colleges and universities to improve student graduation rates and dramatically increase research spending by 2010 as part of a campaign to broaden public support for greater investment in higher education. But while Warner made no promises of additional money for higher education, the governor said Virginia must "start on the path" toward fully funding its public colleges in order to absorb the tens of thousands of additional students in the pipeline.

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