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A weekly news update on America's Education Goals  
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STATE POLICY NEWS  
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1) \*\*\*\*\* FLEXIBILITY AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: HALLMARK OF COLORADO  
BUDGET  
(All Goals)

Colorado Governor Bill Owens signed into law school finance legislation that includes funding to help improve low-performing schools (Ednalino, Denver POST, 4/17). Owens' prize proposal is a \$2.9 million grant program to help improve schools performing at low levels.

He also signed into law a bill that grants individual school districts the flexibility to use a portion of Amendment 23 funds as they decide meets their schools' needs. Ron Brady, president of the Colorado Education Association, said reducing class size might be the most popular plan to use the discretionary funds.

For more information, visit the state of Colorado at <http://www.state.co.us>.

2.) \*\*\*\*\* ON-LINE IN FLORIDA: A NEW APPROACH TO HIGH SCHOOL  
(Goal Three: Student Achievement)

Florida is leading the technology race by teaching students via a statewide Internet high school (Ferrechio, MIAMI HERALD, 4/15). Florida's computer-based curriculum, called the Florida Online High School, is free-of-charge to high school residents. According to the paper, educators who run the Orlando-based school "work with a \$6.1 million budget provided by the state, not universities or private companies."

Nearly 6,000 courses are offered online, and almost 4,000 students are enrolled this year. Officials expect that close to 6,000 students will be enrolled in the 8,000 courses to be offered during the 2001-2002 school year.

For more information, visit the Florida Online High School at <http://fhs.net>.

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COMMUNITY AND LOCAL NEWS  
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3.) \*\*\*\*\* "EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS": DETROIT'S PLAN TO IMPROVE  
SCHOOLS  
(All Goals)

Kenneth Burnley, the chief executive officer of Detroit's school system, unveiled his plan to improve public education in the Motor City (Johnston, EDUCATION WEEK, 4/18). His plan, which does not require school board approval, covers issues from school safety to school maintenance.

For example, the "Efficiency and Effectiveness Plan" recommends creating 76 public-safety-officer positions and 54 other new posts for staff members to monitor security cameras. While the plan calls for 13 new positions for

people to develop ways to use performance data to improve student achievement, it also calls for the elimination of nearly 500 current positions and the closing of five schools.

Burnley is the first permanent CEO of the Detroit schools since the Michigan legislature disbanded the city's school board in 1999 and gave Mayor Dennis Archer the authority to pick most of its new members. His plan has met with approval from the Detroit Urban League and the Detroit Federation of Teachers.

For more information, visit the Detroit FREE PRESS (<http://www.freep.com>, see 4/6 edition) to read an article published by Detroit school CEO Kenneth Burnley.

4.) \*\*\*\*\* SATURDAY CLASSES: UNDERWAY IN NYC  
(Goal Two: School Completion and Goal Three: Student Achievement)

New York City 2nd-12th-grade students needing remedial or enrichment classes may attend Saturday classes offered at public schools (Hartocollis, N.Y. TIMES, 3/27). The program, though smaller than anticipated, is offered to 34,000 students. It is expected to expand to its full size in September, at a cost of \$34 million, reports the paper.

Three types of classes are provided: intensive intervention for children who are far behind state and city standards, accelerated classes for children doing advanced work and tutorials for high school students who need help to pass the state Regents exam, now a requirement for graduation.

Board of Education teachers teach the courses, with certified teachers receiving a hiring priority.

For more information, visit the New York City Board of Education at <http://www.nycenet.edu>

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FEDERAL POLICY NEWS  
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5.) \*\*\*\*\* BUSH BUDGET: EDUCATION RECEIVES LARGEST INCREASE OF ANY DOMESTIC CABINET AGENCY  
(All Goals)

President Bush's first budget request calls for an increase in federal funding for the Department of Education that is greater than any other domestic federal department, according to a Department of Education press release. The 11.5 percent increase would give an additional \$4.6 billion to the Department of Education for fiscal year 2002.

The budget request includes increases in several Department of Education programs, including:

- > \$1 billion more for special education grants to states
- > \$1 billion more for Pell Grants
- > \$614 more for Reading First State Grants
- > \$459 more for Title I grants to local education agencies to assist low-performing schools and disadvantaged students
- > \$320 million to help states develop and implement annual state reading and math assessments to measure the performance of all students every year in grades 3-8

However, many Democrats are not impressed with Bush's budget levels. The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee has requested a \$50 billion increase in elementary and secondary education funding over five years, while the White House has proposed a \$4.5 billion increase for next

year, with almost half of that going toward higher education. "It's nonsense to think that we reform our schools on the cheap," said Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Massachusetts), the ranking Democrat on the education panel.

American Federation of Teachers (AFT) President Sandra Feldman also expressed "disappoint[ment] by the only modest increases in some areas of education funding and by the failure to support other initiatives, such as programs to reduce class size."

For more information, visit the Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov>. For a copy of Sandra Feldman's statement, visit the AFT at <http://www.aft.org>, click on press releases.

6.) \*\*\*\*\* TEXAS: GRANTED FLEXIBILITY  
(Goal Three: Student Achievement and Goal Four: Teacher Education and Professional Development)

Texas has been granted the Education Flexibility partnership authority, better known as Ed-Flex, from the U.S. Department of Education. Ed-Flex authority allows states to grant statewide waivers to allow more flexible use of federal teacher training funds so districts can better direct professional development dollars to areas most in need.

Currently, seven states have been awarded Ed-Flex (Delaware, Kansas, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Oregon and Texas).

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov>.

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RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PRACTICES  
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7.) \*\*\*\*\* ANTI-BULLYING: POLICIES TO MAKE SCHOOLS SAFE  
(Goal Seven: Safe Schools)

Costa Mesa, California, educators call their anti-bullying proposal the "toughest" in the nation (Bowles, USA TODAY, 4/17). Students caught bullying other students, which may include not only taunting and teasing but even glaring threateningly at classmates, could face expulsion under the program that Newport-Mesa Unified School District leaders hope will become effective next fall.

USA TODAY: "But they find themselves grappling with the same issues facing schools nationwide that are considering similar measures: how to define bullying, then stop a practice as old as the playground."

According to the paper, anti-bullying legislation is being considered in Texas, New York and Massachusetts.

For more information on bullying, visit the National Association of School Psychologists at <http://www.naspweb.org>.

8.) \*\*\*\*\* COLLEGE ADMISSION: NEW THINKING  
(Goal Seven: Safe Schools)

College officials are re-thinking the admission process, particularly along the lines of the SAT and affirmative action (Healy, Boston GLOBE, 4/15). Many college leaders point to the intense pressure from the National Urban League and a group of business executives to change how SAT scores and diversity are "factored in judging and choosing students," writes the paper.

A Michigan court case, where a federal judge ruled that the University of Michigan Law School could no longer give preference to minority applicants, also has fueled the fire of change. An appeal is expected

The paper also notes that the University of California system may not require the SAT because college officials see the scores as "so determinative, yet mean so little once students enroll."

For more information, visit the National Urban League at <http://www.nul.org>.

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FEATURE STORY

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9.) \*\*\*\*\* NEW AMERICAN SCHOOLS: HOW ARE THEY DOING?

(All Goals)

About half of New American Schools (NAS) made student achievement gains relative to their district, according to a new report issued by the Rand Corporation. The Rand study, "Implementation and Performance in New American Schools: Three Years into Scale-Up" examined NAS schools for the past five years.

In 1991, NAS launched a whole-school reform initiative, with the goal to significantly improve the achievement of large numbers of students using "design teams." NAS intends to "foster school improvement models that resulted in dramatic improvements in student achievement," reports EDUCATION WEEK (Viadero, 4/18). In 1992, NAS awarded start-up grants to 11 design teams. However, the group "settled" on seven models when it began to expand its program in 1995.

The design models examined in the Rand report are: Purpose-Centered Education, formally known as Audrey Cohen College; Authentic Teaching, Learning and Assessment for All Students (ATLAS); Co-Nect Schools; Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound; Modern Red Schoolhouse; America's Choice Design Network; and Roots & Wings. The number of schools using one of these comprehensive reform models stands at 3,000.

Rand researchers note that the schools in the original 10 school districts were more disadvantaged than the national average and had higher-than-average concentrations of minority students. Of the 163 schools reviewed in the Rand report, about half (81) have made greater improvements in student achievement in math compared to students in their overall districts. In reading, about 46 percent (76 schools) made similar gains.

The biggest math improvements were found in Memphis, Tennessee, and several districts in Kentucky. Cincinnati and several districts in Washington state have the largest reading gains. Roots & Wings was the most consistently successful reform model, while the Modern Red Schoolhouse tended to lag behind other design models in implementation.

Rand researchers also identified factors that influence schools and districts trying to implement the reform models. These include:

> Teachers' perceptions: "Not surprisingly, teachers' perceptions of students and their readiness to learn were all significantly related to the level of implementation."

> School characteristics: "Reported levels of implementation were higher in elementary than in secondary schools and in small schools relative to large schools."

> Designs and design team assistance: "High reported levels of implementation were related to clear communication by design teams and higher levels of teacher support for the designs."

> District support: "In general, levels of implementation were higher in those districts that were more supportive of the NAS designs and

characterized by stability of district leadership (e.g. Memphis)."

For more information and a copy of the report, visit the Rand Corporation at <http://www.rand.org>.

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WHAT IS THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS PANEL?

The National Education Goals Panel is a unique bipartisan body of state and federal officials created in 1990 by President Bush and the nation's Governors to report state and national progress and urge education improvement efforts to reach the National Education Goals.

WHAT DOES THE GOALS PANEL DO?

The Goals Panel has been charged to:

- \* Report state and national progress toward the National Education Goals.
- \* Work to establish a system of high academic standards and assessments.
- \* Identify promising and effective reform strategies.
- \* Recommend actions for state, federal, and local governments to take.
- \* Build a nationwide, bipartisan consensus to achieve the Goals.

WHAT ARE THE NATIONAL EDUCATION GOALS?

There are eight National Education Goals set for the year 2000. They are:

- 1) All children will start school ready to learn.
- 2) The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90%.
- 3) All students will become competent in challenging subject matter.
- 4) Teachers will have the knowledge and skills they need.
- 5) U.S. students will be first in the world in math and science achievement.
- 6) Every adult American will be literate.
- 7) Schools will be safe, disciplined, and free of drugs, guns and alcohol.
- 8) Schools will promote parental involvement and participation.

WHO SERVES ON THE GOALS PANEL AND HOW ARE THEY CHOSEN?

Eight governors, four state legislators, four members of the U.S. Congress, and two members appointed by the President serve on the Goals Panel. Members are appointed by the leadership of the National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the U.S. Senate and House, and the President. The number of Republicans and Democrats are made even by appointing five governors from the party that does not control the White House.

The current Panel Members are Governors Frank O'Bannon, IN (Chair, 2001); Jim Geringer, WY (Chair-elect); John Engler, MI; Jim Hodges, SC; Frank Keating, OK; Paul E. Patton, KY; Jeanne Shaheen, NH; Tom Vilsack, IA;

U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman, NM; U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords, VT; U.S. Representative George Miller, CA; Representative G. Spencer Coggs,

WI; Representative Mary Lou Cowlshaw, IL; Representative Douglas R. Jones, ID; Senator Stephen Stoll, MO.

The annual Goals Report and other publications of the Panel are available without charge upon request from the Goals Panel or at its web site <http://www.negp.gov>. Requests can be made by mail, fax, e-mail, or Internet.

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