

cape Council for American Private Education outlook

"Voice of the Nation's Private Schools"

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Governors' Panel on National Education Goals

The National Education Goals Panel, established by the National Governors' Association, gave its first annual Progress Report on September 30 to examine our progress toward reaching the six education goals. The report presented in a National Press Club briefing highlighted progress which is meant to be a "sober and accurate diagnosis of our educational performance" as a nation.

After Charlottesville

Soon after the education summit held in Charlottesville, Virginia in the fall of 1989, President Bush and the nation's governors formally established six national goals for education to be reached by the year 2000. Their hope "was to help improve the quality of education by setting high standards and focusing attention on how well our society is able to achieve them."

In its February 25, 1990 statement, the governors also agreed to a process by which to gauge the nation's movement toward those goals. While rejecting the notion of another "data-gathering agency", the NGA did recognize the need for "a bipartisan group to oversee the process of determining and developing appropriate measurements and reporting on the progress toward meeting the goals" to the nation. They went on to state that such a panel "should stay in existence until at least the year 2000 so that we assure ten

full years of effort toward meeting the goals."

The NGA officially set up the panel at their annual meeting on July 30 of last year. The panel was to be composed of six governors - three from each party - four members of the Administration, and four ex officio members from Congress.

Some Members of Congress, frustrated by their casual relationship to this effort, introduced legislative measures to overtake the work of the governors' panel. In defense of the Bush Administration and NGA, Christopher Cross, then-Assistant Secretary for Education Research and Improvement, testified in September before the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. He stated that the NGA panel "will operate on the principle of consensus" to "determine the indicators used to measure the national goals, determine baselines and benchmarks against which progress may be evaluated, and report annually, beginning in 1991, on progress toward reaching the goals."

The efforts to legislate Congressional oversight and influence over the process died in the 101st Congress.

The Challenge

In a December 1990 meeting, panel chairman and Colorado Governor Roy Romer (D) stated his view of the difficulty the panel would face in overseeing goals which stress site-based management and more localized control, balanced against federal leadership and "national accountability".

Roger Porter, panel member and Presidential advisor on economic and domestic policy, echoed that sentiment when he stated the challenges he sees before the panel. Included in his concerns were that the panel: should not "re-invent the wheels" which exist for measuring educational progress; find student assessment systems which test not only "where we are, but that highlight how to improve"; and figure out ways to "measure progress over time."

The panel has taken inventory of existing indicators which are provided through federal and state resources. One such indicator is the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the "Nation's Report Card". This assessment, funded by the Department of Education under a grant to the Educational Testing Service, tests students in grades 4, 8 and 12 for competency in various learning areas. This resource directly relates to goal three dealing with student achievement and citizenship.

To study technical aspects of setting up measurements for each of the education goals, the panel called on various experts to serve on "resource groups". The panel asked recognized educators, business people and technical experts to help them identify what indicators would



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best measure progress towards each of the six goals. The groups were asked to fulfill two basic tasks: "to identify what data are available to report upon in the first annual Progress Report, and to suggest a vision, unconstrained by the limitations of current data, of what would be desirable and needed for Progress Reports in the future." Interim reports were prepared by each group in less than three months and transmitted to the panel at its March 25, 1991 meeting.

"Most Essential Education Goal"

The resource group on school readiness, led by Ernest L. Boyer of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, was charged with finding measurements of assessing progress toward goal number one: "By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn."

In their interim report, the panel first grappled with the definition of "ready to learn". In its search for clarity of the goal, the group first answered with the question, "Are schools ready for the children?" With a deeper understanding that learning begins "from the first breath of life", the panel restated the goal to be that every child's "capacities for learning will be enhanced, not diminished." With that principle understood, "ready to learn" is defined as "being prepared to participate successfully in formal schooling."

This resource group identified five sets of data for review on the issue of school readiness: Maternal/Child Health, Parenting, Preschool, School Entry, and In-School. While many national and state, health, census and pre-school program surveys and statistics exist, this goal more than most will require new gauges to measure progress.

On the "achievement and citizenship" goal, CAPE provided public testimony to the panel on May 3 in Annapolis, Maryland. CAPE executive director Joyce G. McCray stated that "the very factors which allow students to achieve [academically] are being overlooked" as ingredients for good citizenship by the panel. McCray went on to say that "student achievement is directly correlated with the climate of a school, the collective sense of mission, the caring and concern for each member of the school community."

The first annual progress report related that "we still need to know the competency of students ... in the five core subjects, as measured against world class standards". In the area of citizenship, the report was only able to report on student knowledge of civics, and a breakdown of voter registration.

The report included another dose of bad news in the area of mathematics. It showed less than one in five students (from 15 to 18% of all 4th, 8th and 12th graders) meet the goal of demonstrating "competency" in math.

For a copy of the National Education Goals, contact the CAPE office. For more information on the goals panel, write to the National Education Goals Panel, 1850 "M" Street, N.W., Suite 270, Washington, DC 20036.

Religious Leaders, Education and Choice

Several religious organizations joined with the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs to sponsor a Religious Leaders' Briefing on Education on September 12. Several education leaders were on hand to speak on public policy and particularly the issue of educational choice.

The audience of approximately 30 was primarily comprised of persons associated with the sponsoring church organizations. The day-long program, held in the U.S. Capitol Building, included comments from Michelle Easton, executive assistant for private education to the Secretary of Education, Representative William F. Goodling (R-Pennsylvania) and U. S. Senator Ernest F. Hollings (D-South Carolina).

After the opening morning address by Easton about the Administration's views on choice and the "America 2000" strategy, the conference heard brief comments from Goodling and Hollings. In the afternoon session, a panel discussion was held to probe particular aspects of choice in education. The panel included: John F. (Jack) Jennings, General Counsel for the House Education and Labor Committee for Chairman William Ford; Rabbi David Saperstein, Director of the Religious Action Center of

Reform Judaism; and Mike Casserly, Associate Director of the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of large, urban, public school systems.

During the panel discussion, Jennings shared his own opposition to private school choice as merely "a political gimmick". Jennings explained his belief that the political motivation of the White House in endorsing such a policy was to "bring more Catholics into the Republican party." Noting that he has served under four chairmen of the House education panel, Jennings said he has "written speeches for private education and against private education" but was not convinced their inclusion in choice plans was good public policy. The other panelists expressed similar views in opposition to choice.

James M. Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee, distributed a recent article he authored on the subject that free market education is "really a thinly veiled welfare for the well-off". Dunn, who moderated the morning session of the briefing, goes on to say that "such approaches encourage elitist educational enterprises" which are "academically picky, seldom offer costly training programs for blue-collar kids, quickly toss out 'problem' pupils, usually avoid disabled students and most often serve those children who already have a good support system."

Other papers opposing choice were supplied by the "National Coalition for Public Education". NCPE is a coalition founded in 1978 of educational, civic, civil rights, and religious organizations. NCPE materials can be obtained by writing the National Coalition for Public Education, c/o The National PTA, 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Editor's Note: CAPE was represented at this policy briefing to better understand the views of some religious leaders not associated with CAPE. We want to remind our readers of the strong statement in support of educational choice which was approved by our board of directors in October of last year. Our board is composed of officials from religiously affiliated educational associations who respect the Constitutional mandate of separation of church and state as well as the right of parents to choose the appropriate school for their child.

Education: What Americans Think

In a recently released Gallup Poll, half of the Americans surveyed support parental choice in education. By a 50 to 39 percent margin, those polled would like "the government to allot a certain amount of money for each child's education, then allow parents to send their children to any public or private school."

In polls dating back to 1970, only once before has choice received such a high level of support - 51% in 1983. The Gallup report speculated the similarity of 1983 and 1991 due to the release of the "A Nation At Risk" report and President Bush's "America 2000" education strategy, both of which aroused concerns about public schools.

On the issue of the national education goals, established by President Bush and the nation's governors in 1989, all six received high priority from respondents. Those surveyed were asked to rank in priority each of the goals on a scale of "very high", "high", "low" or "very low". The two extremes of responses to this question revolved around goals four and six. Goal four, "that the U.S. will be number 1 in the world in math and science achievement", received a 43% very high, 41% high, and 11% low. Goal six, "that all schools will be free of drugs and violence", received a 63% very high, 23% high ranking.

Correspondingly however, when asked about the prospect of reaching each of the goals by the year 2000, those surveyed were somewhat pessimistic. On Goal 3, which relates to basic competency in the core subjects, the same percentage of persons believed American students are "likely" to achieve such distinction as those who believed it "unlikely".

Another trend showed Americans supporting extension of the school year by 30 days by a 51% to 42% ratio. This is a turnaround from 1982 when the percentage was 37% in favor and 53% opposed. On the question of the school day, 46% favor extending the school day by an hour versus 48% opposed. This compares to 37% in favor and 53% opposed in 1982.

When asked about the problem of tight money in our public schools, 73% favored reducing the number of administrators while

only 15% would cut the number of teachers.

Other questions found that blacks and inner-city residents were most dissatisfied with public schools. Only 25% gave high ratings to their schools as compared with the national average of 42%. Finally, almost 9 out of 10 Americans believe that developing the world's best education system is crucial to America's future. A complete copy of the poll (in packets of 25) is available for \$10 from Gallup Poll, Phi Delta Kappa, P. O. Box 789, Bloomington, Indiana 47402-0789.

Legislative Update:

Education Funding

On September 12, the Senate passed the appropriations bill which includes funding for the Department of Education. By a vote of 78 to 22, the Senate approved H.R. 2707, which now goes to a joint conference committee to work out differences between the House- and Senate-passed versions of the bill.

The President's budget originally requested \$29.6 billion for the Department of Education. The House bill appropriates \$31.3 billion while the Senate version provides \$30.6. That figure was \$300 million more than recommended by the Senate Appropriations Committee due to the adoption of an amendment sponsored by Senators Tim Wirth (D-Colorado) and Tom Harkin (D-Iowa). That amendment would raise the Chapter 1 funding for disadvantaged students to \$5.9 billion, a program utilized by many private schools.

The Wirth-Harkin amendment was supported by the Committee on Education Funding and CAPE. In a letter to Senators, CAPE urged their support for the additional funding as "our investment in education is critical to accomplishing the national education goals." The amendment passed the Senate by a vote of 79 to 21.

House Education Bill Introduced

The Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education introduced a bill on September 12 to "raise the quality of education for all students."

The "Better Education for All Students Act", introduced by Representative Dale Kildee (D-Michigan), calls on each state to establish a panel to develop a statewide reform plan and utilize federal funds to help implement it. The bill sets out several uses for "funds for the purpose of district-wide reform" which include merit schools, enhanced site-based management, and choice programs "which permit parents to select the school their children will attend".

The bill, H.R. 3320, was co-sponsored by the ranking Republican committee member, Representative William Goodling (R-Pennsylvania) and Representative William Ford (D-Michigan), Chairman of the full committee. It is expected to serve as the vehicle on which the House will consider education legislation this year, rather than the America 2000 bill introduced on behalf of the Bush Administration several months ago.

Children's TV

The Children's Television Act of 1990 was enacted last year when Congress passed H.R. 1677. That legislation limits the minutes per hour allowed for advertisements directed at children as well as requiring broadcasters to air educational programs as a prerequisite for Federal Communications Commission (FCC) license renewal.

Regulations governing actual implementation of the law were required to be finalized by the FCC on October 1. However, the FCC voted in August to delay that deadline until January 1.

Supporters of the Act are upset at the Commission's delay of the effective date for the new rules, particularly with the traditional onslaught of pre-Christmas season toy advertising. Estimates are that \$83 million in revenue would be lost by independent television stations in the fourth quarter alone due to the restrictions of the new law.

The FCC vote to delay the new rules was 5 to 0.

Early Intervention

Legislation to reauthorize early intervention programs for developmentally delayed infants and toddlers was cleared by the Senate on September 16. It passed unanimously by voice vote.

Both the House and Senate bills (H.R.

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3053 and S. 1106) would reauthorize through 1994 the early intervention program enacted in the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1986 at a level of \$220 million annually.

President Bush is expected to sign the legislation soon.

Asbestos Funding in Conference

A Senate and House conference committee on appropriations has been named to set funding for veterans, housing and environmental programs. Included in its consideration of H.R. 2519 will be funding for the Asbestos School Hazard Abatement Reauthorization Act.

While the authorization level reflects a \$200 million annual need, the House and Senate appropriations committees will likely fall short on the final number due to budget constraints.

Capenotes:

▶ The CAPE/NDN Private School Facilitator Project of the National Diffusion Network has been awarded another four-year grant to disseminate the program to private schools nationwide.



CAPE, which first began the project under a contract from the Department of Education in 1987, re-applied for the grant to provide the service to private schools for the next four years. Despite grant application requests from nearly 200 interested parties, CAPE's application, formulated by Project Director Dr. Charles Nunley, was awarded the grant.

NDN is a body of over four hundred educational programs validated by the Education Department as educationally effective, cost-efficient and replicable.

For more information on CAPE/NDN, contact Dr. Nunley at CAPE/NDN, 1726 "M" Street, N.W., Suite 1102, Washington, DC 20036 or call (202) 659-0177.

▶ The Committee for Education Funding hosted its sixth annual Congressional Awards Dinner on September 23 to pay tribute to three champions of education.

The 1991 Distinguished Service Awards were given to Senator Tim Wirth (D-Colorado) and Representative William D. Ford (D-Michigan). Both recipients were sponsors of the "Homefront Budget Initiative" during Congressional consideration of the budget resolution earlier this year to funnel more resources into education programs. Edward Elmendorf, CEF vice president, claimed that "their work has produced tan-

gible and long-lasting results in the lives of the nation's students."

The James G. O'Hara Leadership Award was presented to John Brademas, a former Representative from Indiana and President of New York University, where he will step down next year to be President Emeritus. This award was given to Brademas for his "life-long commitment in support of education and for outstanding leadership in advocating education as a Congressional and national priority."

The Committee for Education Funding, a voluntary, non-profit, and non-partisan coalition, is made up of more than 100 educational institutions, agencies, associations and other organizations whose interests range from preschool to post-graduate in both public and private systems. CAPE is a member of the Committee and several CAPE officials attended the Washington, DC banquet.

▶ **School Health: Helping Children Learn** is an 83-page guide for developing a comprehensive school health education program. It is available for \$15 by writing the National School Boards Association, 1680 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Direct orders and inquiries to Adria Thomas, Research and Management Services or call her at (703) 838-6736.

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a coalition of 14 national associations serving private schools K-12

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