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**GOALS REPORT REVEALS STATE-BY-STATE PROGRESS TOWARD
EDUCATION GOALS AND BETTER STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN THE 1990s**
State and Local Success Stories Emerge as Promising Models

(Washington, D.C.) The release of the *1998 National Education Goals Report* shows the U.S. making significant progress in early childhood readiness for school and student achievement in math. In contrast, news is bleak regarding student drug and alcohol use.

The bottom line finding: although the nation as a whole is not likely to meet the ambitious education goals set for 2000, many states have made remarkable progress from which others can learn. In releasing the 1998 report today, the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP), for the first time, focused on the promising practices of top-performing states as models that other states and local communities might follow.

"It's often said that there's no problem in American education that is not already solved in some American school or school system," said West Virginia Governor and NEGP Chair Cecil H. Underwood. "The pressing need is to discover those practices that are working, and the lessons we can all learn as we strive to improve achievement and opportunities in our own communities."

Those lessons are offered in detail through *Promising Practices: Progress Toward the Goals, 1998*, a report that focuses on programs and policies implemented by some of the highest-performing and most-improved states. Released in conjunction with the annual *Goals Report*, *Promising Practices* reveals how educators, parents, business leaders, and others have worked together to improve progress in areas ranging from expanding childhood immunization, to strengthening parental involvement, to boosting the number of students who graduate from high school.

The Panel will also release *Talking About Tests: An Idea Book for State Leaders*. Based on successful approaches by states across the country, this report is designed to help educators and policymakers interpret the meaning of state test results to parents and the public.

"From the beginning, the National Education Goals were designed to set high expectations for every stage of a learner's life, from preschool to adulthood,"

said Michigan Governor John Engler. “We now have ample evidence that efforts to reach those expectations in some states are paying off.”

In a state-by-state and overall view of education progress, the *Goals Report* begins by reporting national progress in reaching goals that are critical to boosting student achievement.

The good news:

- The percentage of infants born with health risks has decreased, while the percentage of 2-year-olds who have been fully immunized has increased.
- The percentages of students who are proficient in math have increased in the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades.
- The proportion of college degrees awarded in math and science has increased for all students, for females, and for minorities.
- The percentage of students reporting that they have been threatened or injured at school has decreased.

The bad news:

- The percentage of secondary school teachers who hold a degree in their main teaching assignment has decreased.
- Fewer adults with a high school diploma or less are participating in adult education, compared to adults with some post-secondary education.
- The gap between the percentages of White and Black high school graduates who complete a college degree has grown larger.
- Student drug use and the availability of drugs at school have become more widespread.
- The percentages of teachers reporting threats or injuries at school and classroom disruptions have increased.

States that have improved the most:

The states that have improved their performance on most indicators of progress toward the National Education Goals since 1990 are North Carolina, which showed progress on 14 measures, followed by South Carolina with 13, and California, Colorado, and Texas with 12.

The states that were most frequently among the top performers on measures of progress toward the National Education Goals were Maine (21 times), Connecticut (20 times), and North Dakota (17 times).

Here is a breakdown of which states showed the most progress toward reaching the Goals – along with a brief description of the Promising Practices cited by the NEGP in its report. Full copies of the *1998 National Education Goals Report* and the *Promising Practices* report are available on the NEGP Web site at www.negp.gov.

GOAL 1: READY TO LEARN

Highest-Performing States

- The New England states of **Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine,** and **New Hampshire** are consistently among the highest-performing on the health and preschool measures of progress toward Goal 1, which calls for all children starting school ready-to-learn.

Examples of Gains Made in Most-Improved States

- In 1994, no state had a lower immunization rate for 2-year-olds than **Michigan**. In three years' time, Michigan increased its rate by 16 percentage points. Nearly 8 in 10 Michigan 2-year-olds are now fully immunized against preventable childhood diseases.
- In six years' time, the **District of Columbia** reduced the proportion of infants born with 1 or more of 4 health risks by 11 percentage points, from 48% to 37%.
- In 1990, the percentage of mothers in **New Mexico** who received early prenatal care was 57%, among the lowest in the nation. Now seven out of 10 New Mexican mothers receive early prenatal care.

Promising Practices for Boosting Immunization Rates for 2-Year-Olds:

- In **Connecticut**, federal funds available through the 1993 Childhood Immunization Initiative Act were targeted to high-risk communities, creating a system to make vaccines free of charge throughout the state.
- In **Maine**, the state Bureau of Health used funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to create a marketing campaign that included public service ads on daytime television dramas to reach at-home caregivers. A one-time reminder to immunize was sent with bills from several power companies.

- **Missouri** is among the states with the greatest increase in the percentage of two-year-olds immunized, from 64% in 1994, to 78% in 1997. In a public/private partnership, the Hallmark greeting card company designed and printed a card with a personal message from the Governor and his wife. The congratulatory card is sent to every parent of a newborn child with an immunization reminder. The card program reached neighborhoods where previous immunization attempts had failed.

GOAL 2: SCHOOL COMPLETION

Highest-Performing States:

- In 1996, 15 states had already met Goal 2, which calls for a 90 percent high school graduation rate or better:

Connecticut	Hawaii	Kansas	Maine	Maryland
Massachusetts	Michigan	Minnesota	Nebraska	New Hampshire
New York	Utah	Virginia	West Virginia	Wisconsin

Examples of Gains Made in One of the Most-Improved States:

- In 1990, only 77% of Tennessee's students graduated from high school. Over a six-year period, the completion rate rose to 84%.

Promising Practices for Improving Graduation Rates:

- In **Maryland**, each school and school system must report to the public and the legislature on school attendance and dropout rates, as well as test scores and other data. Maryland's Tomorrow program focuses on school-to-work transition to support more than 7,000 at-risk youth. Another program, "Tech Prep," emphasizes technical student preparation for post-secondary technical study and entry-level careers. Maryland increased its high school completion rate from 87% in 1990, to 95% in 1996.
- In **Nebraska**, schools and school districts applying for state lottery money or Goals 2000 funds must submit a school improvement plan addressing completion rates. Many high schools also offer schools-within-schools, providing at-risk students smaller classrooms and curriculum connected to the community and world-of-work. Nebraska had a 91% high school completion rate in 1990, and improved that performance to 93% in 1995.
- In **Tennessee**, local schools who meet or exceed State Department of Education standards, including a dropout rate for grades 9-12 of 10% or less, are eligible to share a monetary incentive award of \$500,000. Also, by law, students under 18 who apply for a driver's license must prove that they are students or that they have finished high school, or the equivalent; if the

student drops out of school, his or her license is revoked. Tennessee is a top-improving state that has raised high school completion from 77% in 1990, to 84% in 1996.

GOAL 3: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND CITIZENSHIP

Highest-Performing States:

- Based on the percentages of students who are proficient in reading, mathematics and science, **Iowa, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota,** and **Wisconsin** were among the highest-performing states in the 4th and 8th grades.

Examples of Gains Made in Most-Improved States:

- Over a six-year period, **North Carolina** more than doubled the proportion of its 8th graders who are proficient in mathematics, from 9% to 20%.
- **Minnesota** increased its percentage in this area by 11 points, and **Michigan** by 12 points.
- **Texas** increased its proportion of proficient 4th graders by 10 percentage points.

Promising Practices for Improving Student Achievement and Citizenship:

- In **Massachusetts**, a state grant program provides incentives to school districts to start Advanced Placement (AP) courses: \$500,000 for AP, \$440,000 for gifted and talented grants. Also, students who earn a score of “4” (out of “5”) or better on two or more AP exams are awarded a Certificate of Mastery by the State Board of Education.
- In **New Jersey**, 85% of all secondary schools in the state participate in the AP program, compared with the nation’s average of 53%. New Jersey is among the top-improving states in the percentage of AP exams receiving scores high enough to qualify students for college credit.
- In **Utah**, a 1984 law provides financial incentives to schools with the highest number of students passing AP exams with scores of 3 or better each year. Utah is among the states with the highest rates of students with scores of 3 or better on AP exams.

GOAL 4: TEACHER EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Highest-Performing States:

- In **North Dakota** and **Rhode Island**, 100 percent of the public secondary school teachers hold teaching certificates in their main teaching assignments. In **Florida** and **Oklahoma**, nearly half of all public school teachers report that they received support from a master or mentor teacher during their first year of teaching.

Examples of Gains Made in Most-Improved States:

- In 1991, only one-fifth of the public school teachers in **Pennsylvania**, **New York**, and **Virginia** had received support from a master or mentor teacher during their first year of teaching. Three years later, nearly one-third of the teachers in these states had received this support. In **North Carolina** and **Kentucky**, the proportions increased from approximately one-fourth to more than one-third.

Promising Practices for Teacher Education and Professional Development:

- In **Oklahoma** the approach to teacher training is competency-based, as opposed to one focused on credit hours and courses. Oklahoma is the first National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)/State Partnership to have a majority of its state-reviewed teacher education programs designated for “national recognition” by NCATE. A new teacher assessment includes a test of general knowledge (math, science, social studies, literature), professional education (child development and learning styles), and a subject matter test.
- In **Minnesota**, since the early 1970’s licensing regulations have stipulated that teachers must have a major in their field. Minnesota has also shifted to a new standards-driven model of training and professional development, requiring a common core of knowledge and skills for all beginning teachers. 81% of Minnesota’s teachers hold a degree in their main teaching assignment. This is the highest percentage in the nation.

GOAL 5: MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

Highest-Performing States:

- In 8th grade science, 14 states would be expected to perform as well as – or better than – 40 out of 41 nations, including Canada, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, and the Russian Federation. Only Singapore would be expected to outperform students in these states:

Colorado	Connecticut	Iowa	Maine
Massachusetts	Minnesota	Montana	Nebraska
North Dakota	Oregon	Utah	Vermont
Wisconsin	Wyoming		

Examples of Gains Made in Most-Improved States:

- Between 1991 and 1995, the proportion of college degrees earned by female students in **Connecticut** that were awarded in mathematics and science rose from 37% to 47%.

Promising Practices for Improving Math and Science Achievement:

- While many **Texas** students are immigrants, qualify for Title I, and/or live in poverty, the state's students perform well on the math portion of the National Association of Educational Progress (NAEP) exam (particularly at the fourth-grade level). High scores are attributed to a series of Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TASS) tests that students in grades three through eight, and grade ten are required to take. Ratings of schools, based on the percentage of students passing the tests, are publicly reported. Rigorous state standards are aligned with TASS, and rewards and sanctions are also associated with each school's performance.
- In **Wisconsin**, a statewide set of intensive teacher-training academies in math and science, provided with business community support, contribute to Wisconsin's high performance in math. Besides staff development programs, teachers review the state's math and science standards for students, study the curriculum, and determine ways to teach the curriculum in their subject area. The state's new performance assessment is aligned with the same student standards.

GOAL 6: ADULT LITERACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Highest-Performing States:

- Nearly six out of 10 adults in **Indiana** and nearly seven out of 10 adults in **Washington** scored at the three highest levels of proficiency on a 1992 adult literacy assessment.

Examples of Gains Made in Most-Improved States:

- In 1992, only 33% of the high school graduates in the **District of Columbia** immediately went on to attend a 2-year or 4-year college. By 1996, that figure had jumped 25 percentage points, to 58%.

Promising Practices for Improving Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning:

- In **Georgia**, the HOPE scholarship program allows Georgia high school students who have earned at least a B average to attend any one of the state's colleges or universities tuition-free. There is a second chance for

HOPE money, too. If a student keeps a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) in college, he or she qualifies for HOPE in the junior year. And if a HOPE freshman falls below a 3.0, he or she may work to bring his or her GPA back up and qualify for HOPE again in the junior year. The proportion of Georgia high school graduates enrolling in college has increased from 54% in 1992, to 59% in 1994. Community college enrollments increased by 25% alone.

- In **Florida**, the Bright Futures Scholarship Act awards the students with a 3.0 GPA eligibility for 75% of tuition and fees at any Florida public or private college or university. Students with a 3.5 GPA may receive full tuition and fees plus a book allowance of \$600. Bright Futures is funded by the state lottery. Florida has increased its post-secondary enrollment from 45% in 1992, to 49% in 1994.
- In **Mississippi**, a wide variety of tuition assistance programs award monetary help to those students with GPAs of at least a 2.5. The percentage of Mississippi students who immediately enrolled in college after high school was 69% in 1994, up from 61% in 1992.

GOAL 7: SAFE, DISCIPLINED, ALCOHOL- AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS

Highest-Performing States:

- **South Dakota** was one of the highest-performing states on measures related to school safety, discipline, and student drug and alcohol use.

Examples of Gains Made in Most-Improved States:

- During the 1990s, three states and one territory significantly reduced the percentage of public high school students reporting that they carried a weapon on school property: **North Carolina, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and American Samoa**. In 1997, no state had a lower percentage of students who reported carrying weapons on school property than Wisconsin, at 5%.

Promising Practices for Improving School Safety:

- In **North Carolina**, the Center for the Prevention of Violence at North Carolina State University provides information and solutions on school violence through a toll-free number, Web site, and library. The Center has also designed a variety of projects to address character education, safe school planning, alternative education programs for at-risk youth, and training of school officials and law enforcement officers. School Resource Officers have increasingly been assigned to provide permanent coverage to a school or set of schools. An attitude of zero tolerance and increased penalties associated with possessing firearms on school property have also contributed to safer schools. North Carolina reduced the percentage of public high school

students who reported that they carried a weapon on school property, from 14% in 1993, to 9% in 1997.

- In **Wisconsin**, a state law passed in 1995 requires mandatory expulsion for any student who carries a weapon on school grounds. School districts statewide have adopted their own zero-tolerance policies for behaviors such as possession of a firearm on school grounds. The get-tough policy is balanced with a variety of prevention efforts, including character-building education through the Wisconsin Citizenship Initiative, and conflict resolution training through the “Safe Night Wisconsin” program, which was sponsored by 100 local communities in 1997.

GOAL 8: PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

Highest-Performing States:

- **Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and Vermont** each ranked among the highest-performing states on measures related to parental involvement in the schools.

Examples of Gains Made in Most-Improved States:

- In 1991, roughly 20% of the principals in **California, Colorado, and Indiana** reported that the lack of parental involvement in their schools was a serious problem. Three years later, only one in 10 principals reported that this was a problem.

Promising Practices for Boosting Parental Involvement in Education:

- **Colorado** increasingly involved parents in the schools because of Title I requirements, the state’s Goals 2000 program, and school improvement plans that require a school district accountability committee approval. Workshops were arranged to help parents ask the right kinds of questions, and publications (some published in Spanish) have been developed and distributed for the same purpose. The percentage of schools reporting minimal parental involvement dropped significantly in Colorado from 17% in 1991, to 8% in 1994.
- In **Indiana**, The National Parent Teacher Association has advocated for mandatory school improvement plans that include efforts to increase parental involvement. Local parent initiatives continue to be the driving force. An example is a parent newsletter that explains issues to parents statewide in an informative and comprehensive manner. Indiana decreased the percentage of schools reporting minimal parent involvement from 19% in 1991, to only 9% in 1994.

- In **California**, the California Department of Education has disseminated material about launching family-school compacts at the local level. State funds provide after-school parent education programs. Programs such as Head Start and Title I have also encouraged involvement. One local PTA program had great success by sending home weekly folders containing information for parents, creating a Web site and hotline, and reformatting the monthly newsletter for families not in school, informing them of school events. The percentage of California schools with only minimal parental involvement decreased from 20% in 1991, to 11% in 1994.

About the Panel

The National Education Goals Panel is a unique bipartisan and intergovernmental body of federal and state officials created in July 1990 to assess and report on state and national progress toward achieving the National Education Goals.

Goals Panel members include **Governors**: Cecil H. Underwood, (R) of West Virginia, Chair, 1998; John Engler, (R) of Michigan; James B. Hunt, Jr., (D) of North Carolina; Bill Graves, (R) of Kansas; Paul E. Patton, (D) of Kentucky; Roy Romer, (D) of Colorado; Tommy G. Thompson, (R) of Wisconsin; and Christine Todd Whitman, (R) of New Jersey; **State Legislators**: Representatives G. Spencer Coggs, (D) of Wisconsin; Ron Cowell, (D) of Pennsylvania; Mary Lou Cowlshaw, (R) of Illinois; Douglas R. Jones, (R) of Idaho; **Members of the Administration**: Richard W. Riley, U.S. Secretary of Education; and Michael Cohen, Education Advisor to the President; and **Members of the U.S. Congress**: U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman, (D) of New Mexico; and James Jeffords, (R) of Vermont; and U.S. Representatives William F. Goodling, (R) of Pennsylvania; and Matthew G. Martinez, (D) of California.

The National Education Goals state that by the year 2000:

- All children will start school ready to learn.
- The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.
- All students will become competent in challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.
- Teachers will have access to professional development opportunities necessary for preparing all U.S. students for the next century.
- United States students will be the first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.
- Every adult American will be literate.
- Every school will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol.
- Every school will promote partnerships that increase parental involvement.

The annual *Goals Report* and other publications of the Panel are available without charge upon request from NEGP or at its web site www.negp.gov. The public is invited to submit comments on whether to continue education goals for the nation to the Panel at fax 202-632-0957, or e-mail negp@ed.org.