



# Great Lakes West Comprehensive Assistance Center

## Your **ACCESS** to the Region

A quarterly e-newsletter for educators in Illinois and Wisconsin

July 2007

### WELCOME

#### Making a Difference in Districts

Welcome to the fourth-quarter (April–June) issue of the Great Lakes West Comprehensive Assistance Center e-newsletter, *Your Access to the Region*. We hope this newsletter provides you with timely information about the Great Lakes West work in Illinois and Wisconsin as well as a glimpse of what is happening on the national front regarding No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

The feature article is on Statewide Systems of Support (SSOS). Both Illinois and Wisconsin are actively developing new strategies as well as refining some of the support they currently are providing to districts. Like many states, Illinois and Wisconsin are anticipating that more districts and schools will be identified as needing improvement under NCLB, causing an increased demand for state help. Naturally, the states are interested in meeting that demand by providing timely, systematic help to their districts and schools. In doing so, states face a difficult but important task. At Great Lakes West, we believe that this work is important and the impact can be significant. For that reason, we will be working with both states on SSOS in Year 3 and coordinating with the national Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) to provide additional support. In September 2007, CII will host a national SSOS conference for comprehensive centers and state teams. This event will provide an opportunity for state staff to meet with SSOS experts and other states—just one example of the necessary and vital ways in which we can work with our states.

In this issue you also will find a special report with a national focus from Learning Point Associates senior advisor Paul Kimmelman, Ed.D., *Reauthorizing NCLB: Beyond Compliance and Toward Innovation for a 21st Century Education System*. Reauthorization is a topic of conversation in most educational circles. We believe you will find this article informative and thought provoking.

You can read more about these topics and get additional information through links to the Great Lakes West [website](#).

Linda Miller, Director  
Great Lakes West Comprehensive Assistance Center  
and Great Lakes West staff members

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This quarterly e-newsletter delivers useful, relevant, and timely information related to the NCLB Act to educators in the two states of the Great Lakes West region—Illinois and Wisconsin.

## Highlights of the Quarter

### Coalition for Illinois High Schools Second Annual Conference

The “Rigor + Relevance + Relationships = Results” High School Challenge conference was held June 14–15, 2007. This second annual meeting of the Coalition for Illinois High Schools was held in Bloomington, Illinois, at the Doubletree Hotel. The goal of the conference was to bring Illinois educators together to focus on identifying and sharing effective practices and to provide a forum for discussion on student achievement and ground-breaking ideas for continuous improvement for Illinois high schools.

Great Lakes West assisted the coalition with the design of the end-of-conference evaluation and needs-sensing data collection tool. The center will provide a conference evaluation report to the coalition to assist them with future planning activities.

Keynote speakers included Willard Daggett, Ed.D., president of the International Center for Leadership in Education, who spoke on seven suggested procedures that Illinois schools should take to provide all students with a rigorous and relevant curriculum, along with an in-depth overview of common components and characteristics of successful schools that he has created through his analysis of the center’s growing research base and personal experience with successful high-performing schools.

The second keynote speaker was Pedro Noguera, Ph.D., professor of the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University, executive director of the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, and codirector for the Institute for the Study of Globalization and Education in Metropolitan Settings. Dr. Noguera, whose focus is working with children in poverty and the importance of cultivating relationships, discussed successful and effective strategies that support teaching and learning. He went on to discuss how Illinois schools can develop valuable partnerships with parents to increase student achievement and how the use of data is important in helping schools in restructuring that ultimately will lead to change in the culture and structure of schools.

Great Lakes West Illinois State Manager Monique Chism, Ph.D., was present and appreciated the schools’ presentations related to Illinois success stories. The examples illustrated practices in a range of schools, including large, small, rural, and urban high schools in Illinois. Dr. Chism commented, “It really showed that you can make changes with focused and collaborative participation.”

### Dr. Chism Invited to Participate on Illinois PIRC Board

The Parental Information and Resource Center’s (PIRC’s) work with districts and schools to promote parental involvement issues related to the NCLB Act. The newly appointed [Illinois PIRC](#) at Columbia University extended an invitation to Great Lakes West Illinois State Manager Dr. Monique Chism to participate as a member of its advisory board.

The advisory board is made up of representatives from all areas of education across various sectors of the state and is charged with assisting the resource center in the implementation of its goals and leveraging resources to meet its objectives. The Illinois PIRC asked Dr. Chism to serve on its advisory board to help build collaborative efforts between the comprehensive and resource centers to better serve the state.

Illinois PIRC has developed an aggressive model to address the needs of schools in Illinois. By taking a community schools approach, looking at the importance of integration of the arts, finding ways to bring

parents and community members into schools, and working with the Columbia College Chicago's Department of Early Childhood Education, PIRC hopes to improve parental and community involvement in Illinois schools. Dr. Chism noted, "The approach they have chosen to engage this issue is unique, and it presents an opportunity to do really good work in this area."

Dr. Chism and Great Lakes West look forward to this opportunity to work with other centers in the region and to continue collaborating and leveraging resources that will help increase ISBE's capacity to serve its districts and enhance partnerships with other technical assistance providers.

### **Wisconsin Initial Educator Seminar**

On June 25 and 26, 2007, Great Lakes West and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality staff met in the Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, with representatives from numerous educational organizations from across Wisconsin. Stakeholders represented included the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI); Wisconsin Education Association Council; Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators; and several cooperative educational service agencies, universities, and school districts.



The purpose of the two-day meeting was to provide the Wisconsin DPI with needs-sensing information and next steps to carry out more effectively initial educator and mentor programs throughout the state. The seminar had a research-rich and ambitious agenda throughout which participants tackled their charge without hesitation and accomplished a great deal in a short time. The seminar used research and data from the initial educator and mentor surveys conducted earlier in June to identify key benefits to initial educator and mentor programs, to help form messages to communicate these benefits with various audiences in Wisconsin, and to create actionable plans for their represented stakeholder groups to help them move this issue forward.

By the end of the second day, participants were ready to return to their organizations with the message of improved teacher induction in Wisconsin. The event seemed to be an overall success for all parties involved. The Wisconsin DPI Teacher Education, Professional Development, and Licensing team, which cohosted the event with Great Lakes West, was excited to begin planning and implementing the work and already has started talking about plans for a similar event next year.

### **American Diploma Project and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills Come Together in Wisconsin**

The American Diploma Project (ADP) and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills came together for the first time to begin making changes in the Wisconsin high school mathematics and English language arts standards. The summit—the Initial Alignment Institute—was held May 30–June 1 in Madison, Wisconsin.

The conference was made up of two teams. The leadership team, comprising key stakeholders in ADP and Partnership for 21st Century Skills met at the beginning to discuss both organizations' work in Wisconsin. The design team was made up of representatives from two-year colleges, four-year universities, and technical colleges. The design teams did a side-by-side comparison of Wisconsin standards and ADP standards for mathematics and English language arts.

Great Lakes West supported the Wisconsin DPI by hosting the Institute. Great Lakes West Director Linda Miller and Wisconsin state manager Al Hovey attended the summit.

This conference marked the first of many reviews of the mathematics and English language arts standards. Anticipated completion of the project is May 2008 with recommendations or revised standards being made to the Wisconsin state superintendent. The plan is for this process to become the model for future changes in Wisconsin academic standards.

### **Wisconsin Adolescent Literacy Task Force**

Last year the Wisconsin High School Task force set forth an aggressive agenda to better serve Wisconsin high schools. As the Wisconsin DPI began looking at implementing the recommendations of that task force, the benefit of having a group look specifically at some of the areas within high school reform became apparent. The result was the newly appointed Adolescent Literacy Task Force.

The task force held its inaugural meeting on May 7, 2007, in Madison, Wisconsin, at a summit on adolescent literacy. The summit, “Reading and Writing are More than Elementary: A Summit on Adolescent Literacy Instruction,” was sponsored by the Wisconsin DPI, Great Lakes West, the Carnegie Foundation, and the Alliance for Excellent Education. In addition to kicking off the work of the task force, the one-day summit involved education stakeholders from across Wisconsin—including State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster and Wisconsin’s first lady, Jessica Doyle—and sought to build the connections between groups and individuals working to improve literacy in the middle and high schools of Wisconsin and neighboring states.

Great Lakes West became involved in adolescent literacy work in Wisconsin through its ongoing work in high school and its support of the Wisconsin High School Summit last winter. As the work of the task force gets under way and continues into next year, Great Lakes West will be represented by Danielle Carnahan, a senior literacy associate at Learning Point Associates, who was asked to serve on the task force.

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## **Featured Article: Meeting the Challenge of Statewide Systems of Support**

**By Mary Diaz, Wisconsin Center for Education Research**



### **Statewide Systems of Support and No Child Left Behind**

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act has charged the state education agencies (SEAs) with providing technical assistance to schools identified as in need of improvement. Each state must create and sustain a statewide system of support (SSOS) to assist local districts and schools in providing the necessary technical assistance to improve student performance. Upon review of the revised July 21, 2006, [LEA and School Improvement: Non-Regulatory Guidance](#), it becomes clear that the SEAs’ duties and responsibilities in providing assistance and support to local education agencies (LEAs) have multiple facets and that coordinating and sustaining those state efforts is no small task. To establish the SSOS, according to the guidance, the SEAs must do the following:

- Establish school support teams to work in schools throughout the state that are in corrective action status, school improvement status, or otherwise in need of support and assistance. The SEA must provide these teams with all of the support they deem necessary to ensure their effectiveness.
- Designate and use distinguished teachers and principals from Title I schools that have been especially successful in improving academic achievement.
- Devise additional approaches to provide technical assistance by drawing on the expertise of other entities, such as institutions of higher education, educational service agencies or other local consortia, private providers of scientifically based technical assistance, and the regional comprehensive assistance centers and regional educational laboratories.

[To read more...](#)

## Focus on States

In this section, our state managers provide updates on current plans undertaken by each state to focus efforts on NCLB implementation. The e-mail addresses of state managers are included.



### ILLINOIS

**State Manager:** Monique Chism, Ph.D.

**E-Mail:** [monique.chism@learningpt.org](mailto:monique.chism@learningpt.org)

On April 19, 2007, Illinois Governor Rod R. Blagojevich announced that Christopher Koch, Ed.D., would serve as the state superintendent of education in Illinois. Dr. Koch already had been serving as interim in this capacity for several months; however, the finalization of his position as chief state school officer has elated educators throughout the state.

### Integrated Management Systems

On May 9, 2007, Great Lakes West Director Linda Miller and Illinois State Manager Monique Chism, Ph.D., attended the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) division administrator's meeting in Springfield, Illinois. Invited by Dr. Koch, Miller and Dr. Chism took this opportunity to introduce ISBE staff to Great Lakes West and review the current projects the center is focusing on this year. The bulk of the conversation focused on integrated performance-based monitoring systems. Shortly after this kickoff meeting, a project team was identified to continue the work and map out long- and short-term goals and objectives for the project. Sheryl Poggi, a former ISBE employee, has joined the Great Lakes West team to help lead this initiative and currently is reviewing the structures and practices of other state departments of education, such as New York and Texas. After conducting these reviews, Great Lakes West will take them back to the state to inform their consideration of possible system structures and will continue to work with ISBE as these plans develop.

## High School Renewal

At the request of Dr. Koch, the Illinois state superintendent of education, Great Lakes West is working with members of the Coalition for Illinois High Schools on several projects. Specifically, after talking with coalition members John Ourth and Susie Morrison about pressing research needs for Illinois educators around high school initiatives, Great Lakes West shared with the coalition two new policy briefs from the National High School Center—[State and District-Level Support for Successful Transitions Into High School](#) and [Toward Ensuring a Smooth Transition Into High School](#). In addition, Great Lakes West worked with a subcommittee of the coalition headed by Don Kachur to support the coalition’s conference evaluation needs for the second annual statewide conference, which was held June 14–15, 2007, in Bloomington, Illinois. Through these efforts, Great Lakes West hopes to assist ISBE with its efforts to identify resources, structures, and policies that will improve Illinois high schools and meet the growing academic demands of NCLB, higher education, and the work force for today’s high school students.

## Parent Involvement

For students to succeed in school and at home it is important for districts and schools to communicate with parents. Federal law, such as supplemental educational services (SES) and the school choice provisions of NCLB, emphasize this importance. Parent involvement is an emerging area for the Great Lakes West team. In recent weeks, center staff have been engaged in several conversations with Ron Lawless, Title I parent involvement coordinator at ISBE, and have become involved with the Illinois Parental Information and Resource Center. As this work has evolved, Great Lakes West and Ron Lawless have discussed a number of potential projects on which to collaborate that will advance ISBE’s efforts to help districts work and communicate effectively with Illinois parents.



## WISCONSIN

**State Manager:** Al Hovey

**E-Mail:** [al.hovey@learningpt.org](mailto:al.hovey@learningpt.org)

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) work teams and the Great Lakes West team have stepped up the work around high school redesign and teacher quality while continuing identified tasks in the areas of supplemental educational services (SES) and the Statewide System of Support.

## High School Redesign

The recommendations of two years of work by the 75 member High School Task Force that were “rolled out” last November at the High School Summit are beginning to be implemented on several fronts. An adolescent literacy summit was held in May 2007 that inaugurated the Adolescent Literacy Task Force. Danielle Carnahan will represent Great Lakes West on the task force in the next year. The three-day meeting at the end of May brought together a leadership and design team around the Wisconsin mathematics and English language arts standards. The American Diploma Project (ADP) did a side-by-side look of the Wisconsin and ADP standards. Soon the Partnership for 21st Century Skills will be incorporated. This ADP and Partnership for 21st Century Skills project is the first in the country to tie both groups together in looking at standards. Anticipated

completion of this work is May 2008. It is expected that the same model will be used to update the other curricular standards. Wisconsin DPI and Great Lakes West staff have participated in several national high school events including the National High School Center Summer Institute, Council of Chief State School Officers Secondary Redesign meeting, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Partnership transition community of practice on High School Redesign.

### **Teacher Quality**

Great Lakes West reviewed and conducted an online survey on teacher induction and mentoring for the Wisconsin DPI Teacher Education, Professional Development, and Licensing team. Phase I surveyed initial educators and mentors in the areas of teaching, pupil services, and administration that had been part of an incentive project. Phase II surveyed only initial educators in the three areas without the mentors. These were not part of the incentive project. The results, along with other data gathered by the Wisconsin DPI and Great Lakes West were used at an Initial Teacher Educator Support Seminar with key stakeholders to assess what currently is being done and what can be done around implementing PI 34—the Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative—and teacher induction. Currently Great Lakes West is completing an analysis and synthesis of the survey results for the Wisconsin DPI, working on creating a website for the results and materials from the seminar, and continuing with the work of the group.

### **Supplemental Educational Services**

As Great Lakes West continues to work with the Wisconsin DPI on SES issues in Wisconsin, Great Lakes West has conducted a preliminary program evaluation of six of the state's SES provider assessments. The evaluation was intended to assess the current methodologies and efficacies of multiple providers that might influence future SES policy decisions. The focus of this particular evaluation was on the student pre-post test assessment instruments used by those organizations. Next steps will be to complete a final evaluation and work with the state to determine necessary changes to current SES policies.

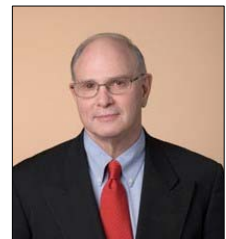
### **Looking Forward—Year 3**

As Great Lakes West finishes up the current year and looks forward—in addition to the areas already discussed—Wisconsin has identified Wisconsin Model Academic Standards and Response to Intervention as priority areas. It promises to be a busy and exciting year.

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## **National Perspective: Reauthorizing NCLB: Beyond Compliance and Toward Innovation for a 21st Century Education System**

**By Paul Kimmelman, Ed.D., Learning Point Associates**



Some political observers were surprised when a flurry of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reauthorization activity began this year. The U.S. Congress has held numerous hearings in both the Senate and House and members have conducted their own hearings and town meetings in their districts. On behalf of Learning Point Associates and the comprehensive centers, I have testified at a House Education Committee hearing in Chicago, participated in a district meeting for a member of Congress, assisted a member with a NCLB

Advisory Committee, helped write a NCLB bill for a member, and was invited to a panel of experts meeting of the Democrats' Senate Outreach Committee.

Most prognosticators were looking at 2009 as the "best guess" for reauthorizing the law. So what has changed? The most obvious change was that the Democrats became the majority party in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. That change alone set in motion a new legislative agenda. Both Representative George Miller (D-CA) and Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA), who were key participants in the original NCLB negotiations, are now the chairmen of their respective education committees. This time, however, they are in the majority and will be able to exert more influence on what will be in the law. Because there will be a presidential election in 2008, there is a sense of urgency to get things done quickly. Most of 2008 will focus on that campaign and congressional elections, and it will be more difficult to pass a major bill like NCLB during the year.

[To read more...](#)

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## Profiles

The Profiles section will focus on people, organizations, and issues that are important to the work we are doing in the Great Lakes West region. In this issue, we have highlighted the newly appointed state superintendent of education for Illinois.



**Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.**, is the Illinois state superintendent of education. He was appointed to this position by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), effective May 1, 2007, after serving as interim superintendent. He also has held the positions of assistant superintendent for special education and chief education officer since joining ISBE in 1994.

Previously, Dr. Koch was a program administrator in correctional education and school-to-work transition for the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education. He also taught special education in various settings, including a youth detention center, an Outward Bound program, and a college prep school.

Dr. Koch is a native of Illinois. He graduated from Brown County High School in Mt. Sterling, Illinois, and received an undergraduate degree from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. His master's and doctoral degrees are in educational policy and leadership from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Koch has been very involved with the Great Lakes West work in Illinois. Illinois State Manager Monique Chism, Ph.D., works closely with Dr. Koch in developing the priority areas for the center's work. This level of involvement has allowed Great Lakes West to quickly develop deep and comprehensive work plans for Year 3 activities.

## In the News

The following articles were selected to provide you with easy access to news and resources addressing the key NCLB-related topics within each Great Lakes West state and across the nation in the last quarter.



### ILLINOIS

#### **City Test Scores Rise Again**—*Chicago Tribune*, June 27, 2007

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/content/education/chi-isatjun27,0,7210574.story?coll=chi-education-hed>

“Most Chicago public school pupils met or exceeded state tests in reading, math and science for the second consecutive year, according to preliminary results released Tuesday. Increases were highest in math, with a slight drop-off in science.”

#### **Gov. Blagojevich Announces Dr. Christopher Koch as New State School Superintendent**—*Illinois Government News Network*, April 19, 2007

<http://www.illinois.gov/PressReleases/ShowPressRelease.cfm?SubjectID=2&RecNum=5873>

“Governor Rod R. Blagojevich announced today that the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) named Dr. Christopher Koch to serve as the State Superintendent of Education.”

#### **National Group Names Blagojevich “Standout Pre-K Champion”**—*Illinois State Board of Education*, April 18, 2007

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/news/2007/apr18.htm>

“Governor Rod Blagojevich leads the nation in pre-k investment, according to *Leadership Matters: Governors’ Pre-K Proposals Fiscal Year 2008*, a report released today by Pre-K Now. The report finds that of the record-breaking 29 state executives proposing funding increases in FY08, Gov. Blagojevich is leading the way by following through on his commitment to provide high-quality pre-k to every three and four year old.”

#### **Governor Blagojevich Announces New Partnership with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to Better Prepare Students for College and Workplace**—*Illinois Government News Network*, April 13, 2007

<http://www.illinois.gov/PressReleases/ShowPressRelease.cfm?SubjectID=2&RecNum=5851>

“Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced the Illinois College and Work Readiness Partnership, which will focus on developing policies and programs to better prepare Illinois students for success in the workforce and in continuing their education after high school. Partners include the Office of the Governor, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.”



### WISCONSIN

#### **Burmester Announces Increased ‘Keeping the Promise’ Aid**—*Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction*, June 21, 2007

[http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2007\\_61.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2007_61.pdf)

“State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmester announced distribution of aid totaling \$5.4 million to 126 local educational agencies this week for services they provided to students with disabilities.”

**More State Schools Fall Short of Benchmark**—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, June 12, 2007

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=619122>

“The list of Wisconsin schools that fell short of benchmarks tied to the federal No Child Left Behind law grew from 87 last year to 95 this year, but the number of Milwaukee Public Schools in two key categories shrank, according to preliminary data released Tuesday by the state Department of Public Instruction.”

**State Testing Doesn't Measure Up, Report Says**—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, June 7, 2007

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=616724>

“A fourth-grader who meets Wisconsin's standard of proficiency in reading wouldn't even be close to meeting the standard used in a national assessment, according to a report released Thursday by the U.S. Department of Education.”

**State's Global Literacy Initiative Receives National Recognition**—*Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction*, June 5, 2007

[http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2007\\_57.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2007_57.pdf)

“Wisconsin's global literacy initiative received a 21st Century Skills Practice of the Year award today during the Partnership for 21st Century Skills annual best practices meeting in West Virginia.”

**Can MPS Close the Gap?**—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, May 22, 2007

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=609415>

“Three years ago, the gap between white and black high school sophomores in Milwaukee Public Schools in reading proficiency was 33 percentage points. This year, it was 35 points.”

**MPS Sets Ambitious Agenda**—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, April 24, 2007

<http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=596031>

“Much higher test scores and graduation rates, greatly improved attendance, reduced discipline problems and stronger parent involvement—the draft version of a grand plan for Milwaukee Public Schools sets specific, ambitious goals for major improvements over the next several years.”

**ELSEWHERE IN THE NATION****Justices Limit the Use of Race in School Plans for Integration**—*The New York Times*, June 28, 2007

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/29/washington/29scotus.html?ex=1340769600&en=6db746c138ff9893&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>

“With competing blocs of justices claiming the mantle of *Brown v. Board of Education*, a bitterly divided Supreme Court declared Thursday that public school systems cannot seek to achieve or maintain integration through measures that take explicit account of a student's race.”

## Assessment and Accountability

### Statement by Secretary Spellings on Report Comparing State Proficiency Standards Using NAEP—

*U.S. Department of Education Press Release, June 7, 2007*

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/06/06072007.html>

“This report offers sobering news that serious work remains to ensure that our schools are teaching students to the highest possible standards.”

### Scores Up Since ‘No Child’ Was Signed, *The Washington Post*, June 6, 2007

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/05/AR2007060502684.html>

“The nation’s students have performed significantly better on state reading and math tests since President Bush signed his landmark education initiative into law five years ago, according to a major independent study released yesterday.”

## Instruction

### Do Longer Hours Equal More Learning?—*The Christian Science Monitor*, June 14, 2007

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0614/p13s01-legn.html>

“The pressure for schools to boost student achievement has prompted increasing numbers of education reformers to eye longer school days or years.”

### Senate and House Pass Major Science Math/Innovation Bills—*NSTA Legislative Update*, April 27, 2007

[http://science.nsta.org/nstaexpress/nstaexpress\\_2007\\_04\\_30\\_legupdate.htm](http://science.nsta.org/nstaexpress/nstaexpress_2007_04_30_legupdate.htm)

“The America COMPETES Act (S. 761), or the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, is the Senate’s large innovation and competitiveness proposal. The bill is based largely on last year’s ‘Protecting America’s Competitive Edge,’ or PACE legislation.”

### Reading First Achievement Data Demonstrate Dramatic Improvements in Reading Proficiency of America’s Neediest Children—*U.S. Department of Education Press Releases*, April 19, 2007

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/04/04192007.html>

“The U.S. Department of Education today released new state-by-state data on the effectiveness of Reading First, indicating that students who receive instruction through the program achieve strong gains in reading proficiency.”

**For Full Report:** <http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/performance.html>

### 9 States Give Common Math Tests—*USA Today*, April 10, 2007

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2007-04-10-common-math-test\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2007-04-10-common-math-test_N.htm)

“Nine states have come together for the first time to develop a common high school math test, a move described by some as a step toward national educational standards.”

## Innovation and Improvement

### Study: Publicly Funded Tutoring Under NCLB Pays Off—*The Associated Press*, June 29, 2007

[http://www.cnn.com/2007/EDUCATION/06/28/nochild.tutoring.ap/index.html?eref=rss\\_education](http://www.cnn.com/2007/EDUCATION/06/28/nochild.tutoring.ap/index.html?eref=rss_education)

“Taxpayer-funded tutoring for poor children is paying off in some city schools, a federal study has found. Students who received the tutoring under the federal No Child Left Behind law improved on reading and math tests, according to the study conducted by independent researchers for the Department of Education and released Wednesday.”

**For Full Report:** <http://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/RP1265/>

**Ten States Awarded Grants to Help Expand School Choice**—*U.S. Department of Education Press Releases*, June 5, 2007

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/06/06052007a.html>

“U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced today that ten states have been awarded a total of \$284 million to help create new charter schools and increase the school choices that parents have to provide to their children.”

**Secretary Spellings Approves Additional Growth Model Pilots for 2006–2007 School Year**—*U.S. Department of Education*, May 24, 2007

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/05/05242007.html>

“U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings today announced approval of two high-quality growth models, which follow the bright-line principles of No Child Left Behind.”

**Maryland Tutoring Program Serves as Model**—*Capital News Service*, April 18, 2007

[http://www.journalism.umd.edu/cns/wire/2007-editions/04-April-editions/070418-Wednesday/EducationTestimony\\_CNS-UMCP.html](http://www.journalism.umd.edu/cns/wire/2007-editions/04-April-editions/070418-Wednesday/EducationTestimony_CNS-UMCP.html)

“Maryland students benefit significantly more than most students nationwide from No Child Left Behind tutoring programs, a state school administrator testified on Capitol Hill Wednesday.”

## High Schools

**Policy Push Redefining High School**—*Education Week*, April 18, 2007

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/04/18/33achieve.h26.html> (free subscription required)

“State activities to better prepare high school students for the demands of work and college spiked noticeably in the past year, according to a 50-state survey by Achieve Inc.”

**High School, College Standards Out of Sync, Survey Finds**—*Education Week*, April 10, 2007

[http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/04/10/32act\\_web.h26.html](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/04/10/32act_web.h26.html) (free subscription required)

“A study by ACT Inc., the producer of the ACT college-admissions tests, highlights the gap between what high schools are teaching in their college-preparatory courses and what colleges want incoming students to know.”

## NCLB

**Statement by Secretary Spellings on NCLB Recommendations by the Forum on Educational Accountability**—*U.S. Department of Education Press Releases*, June 14, 2007

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/06/06142007.html>

“As we work with Congress to reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act, we must keep our eye on the ball: ensuring that all students achieve grade level proficiency in reading and math by 2014. Unfortunately, the report released today by the Forum on Educational Accountability (FEA) shifts the focus from results to excuses.”

**For Full Letter:** <http://www.edaccountability.org/FEA%20Letter%20to%20CongressRebuttingSpellings.pdf>

**Time to Foster Innovation**—*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 31, 2007

[http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/20070531\\_Time\\_to\\_foster\\_innovation.html](http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/20070531_Time_to_foster_innovation.html)

“The parade of witnesses testifying at Education Committee hearings in the House and Senate on the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is a red flag, warning that Congress may be lulling itself into the belief that simply tweaking NCLB will raise the quality of U.S. schools.”

**Govs Call for More Control over NCLB**—*Stateline.org*, April 6, 2007

<http://www.stateline.org/live/details/story?contentId=196302>

“Renewal of the oft-criticized No Child Left Behind law is supported by the nation’s governors, but they want far more authority to carry out its mandates. That’s the crux of recommendations the National Governors Association (NGA) sent to Congress Thursday as that body considers what the second iteration of the five-year-old law should look like.”

**For Recommendations:** <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0704NCLBstatement.pdf>

## Student Subgroups

**U.S. Data Show Rapid Minority Growth in School Rolls**—*The New York Times*, June 1, 2007

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/01/education/01educ.html?ex=1338350400&en=b77cb1f6934eda16&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>

“The nation’s population of minority students has surged to 42 percent of public school enrollment, up from 22 percent three decades ago, according to an annual report issued yesterday by the government.”

**Secretary Spellings Announces New Regulations to More Accurately Assess Students With Disabilities**—

*U.S. Department of Education Press Releases*, April 4, 2007

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/04/04042007.html>

“U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings today announced new regulations under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) allowing states to test certain students with disabilities using an alternate assessment that more appropriately aligns with students’ needs and yields more meaningful results for schools and parents. The new regulations provide states and schools with greater flexibility by allowing them to more accurately evaluate these students’ academic progress and tailor instruction based on individual needs.”

**Non-Regulatory Guidance Draft:** <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/nclb/twopercent.doc>

**Regulations:** <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2007-2/040907a.pdf>

## Teacher Quality

**Report: States Urged to Improve Teacher Qualifications**—*The Associated Press*, June 27, 2007

[http://www.cnn.com/2007/EDUCATION/06/27/teacher.qualifications.ap/index.html?eref=rss\\_education](http://www.cnn.com/2007/EDUCATION/06/27/teacher.qualifications.ap/index.html?eref=rss_education)

“Just as the federal No Child Left Behind education law is being rewritten on Capitol Hill, state laws nationwide need reworking, the nonpartisan group says.”

**Teacher Turnover Costs Systems Millions, Study Projects**—*The Washington Post*, June 21, 2007

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/20/AR2007062002300.html?nav=rss\\_education](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/20/AR2007062002300.html?nav=rss_education)

“An independent report released yesterday estimates that the high rate of teacher turnover in U.S. school systems costs more than \$7 billion a year, with systems including the District and Prince George’s and Fairfax counties hardest hit.”

**‘Teach For America’ Strives for Educational Equality**—*CNN*, June 20, 2007

<http://www.cnn.com/2007/US/06/19/pysk.kopp/index.html>

“This year, 18,000 of America’s top college graduates competed for spots teaching in some of the poorest areas of the United States. Only one in six will be picked for the Teach For America program, which is trying to bring educational equality to struggling school districts.”

**Secretary Spellings Announces \$38.2 Million for 18 Grants to Reward Effective Teaching and Leadership**—*U.S. Department of Education Press Releases*, June 13, 2007

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/06/06132007.html>

“Teacher Incentive Fund for teachers, principals, seeks to improve student achievement in high-poverty schools.”

## Recent Issues and Developments

This section emphasizes current topics at regional comprehensive assistance centers, national content centers, and other technical assistance providers.

**Assessment & Accountability Comprehensive Center Resource Guide**—*Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center*, June 2007

[http://www.aacompcenter.org/pdf/AACC\\_resource\\_guide\\_June07.pdf](http://www.aacompcenter.org/pdf/AACC_resource_guide_June07.pdf)

“Resource Guide is a summary of resources analyzed by the AACC Resource review committee using a set of rigorous criteria. The purpose of this Guide is to enhance state, district, and school assessment systems supporting the goals of No Child Left Behind.”

**Dropout Prevention for Students With Disabilities: A Critical Issue for State Education Agencies**—*National High School Center*, May 2007

[http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC\\_DropoutPrevention\\_052507.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_DropoutPrevention_052507.pdf)

“The purpose of this issue brief is to provide information and guidance to state education agencies (SEAs) regarding their accountability for IDEA 2004 legislative mandates in the area of dropout prevention for students with disabilities.”

**State and District-Level Support for Successful Transition Into High School**—*National High School Center*, May 2007

[http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC\\_PolicyBrief\\_TransitionsIntoHighSchool.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_PolicyBrief_TransitionsIntoHighSchool.pdf)

“This policy brief focuses on five key challenges that states, districts and schools should address to support a successful transition into high school, particularly for students who are at high risk of failure.”

**Toward Ensuring a Smooth Transition Into High School**—*National High School Center*, May 2007

[http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC\\_TowardEnsuring\\_051607\\_000.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_TowardEnsuring_051607_000.pdf)

“This issue brief draws on two studies of high school reform models conducted by MDRC, a nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization, which shed light on promising strategies to support ninth-grade students.”

**Managing the Transition to Ninth Grade in a Comprehensive Urban High School**—*National High School Center*, May 2007

[http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC\\_Snapshot\\_EdisonAcademy.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_Snapshot_EdisonAcademy.pdf)

“One high school in particular has, for the past seven years, been following a model program addressing many of the transition issues identified in the research.”

**The First Year of High School: A Quick Stats Fact Sheet**—*National High School Center*, May 2007

[http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC\\_FirstYearofHighSchool\\_032807\\_000.pdf](http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_FirstYearofHighSchool_032807_000.pdf)

“Students’ experiences in their first year of high school often determine their success throughout high school and beyond. However, more students fail ninth grade than any other grade.”

**Academic Literacy Instruction for Adolescents [PowerPoint Presentation]**—*Center on Instruction*, April 30, 2007

<http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Videoconf%20Adolescent%20Lit%20Apr%2030%202007.pdf>

The Center on Instruction created this presentation to discuss the current issue of literacy in American schools. Used for a video conference, the content addressed the issue that literacy has not declined; rather there is a greater demand.

**Data Use for Continuous Quality Improvement**—*Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center*, n.d.

<http://datause.cse.ucla.edu>

“The Data Use for Continuous Quality Improvement website is part of the Assessment and Accountability Comprehensive Center and provides resources for states to help them reach No Child Left Behind goals.”

**Beyond NCLB: Fulfilling the Promise to Our Nation’s Children**—*Commission on No Child Left Behind*, Aspen Institute, 2007

[http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/NCLB\\_Book.pdf](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/atf/cf/%7BDEB6F227-659B-4EC8-8F84-8DF23CA704F5%7D/NCLB_Book.pdf)

“America today faces a stark choice: do we take bold steps to accelerate progress in education and fulfill our promise to our nation’s children? Or do we risk jeopardizing the future of our nation’s children and our competitiveness in the global economy by maintaining the status quo?”

## Upcoming Events

For additional listings, check the Great Lakes West website for the [Calendar of Events](#).

### JULY 2007

<b>Dates:</b> July 18	<b>Topic:</b> <a href="#">Standards-Based Instruction: Is it Possible for Students With Disabilities?</a>
<b>Location:</b> Online	<b>Audience:</b> Interested educators
<b>Format:</b> Presentation	<b>Sponsors:</b> Schools MovingUp
<hr/>	
<b>Dates:</b> July 19–20	<b>Topic:</b> <a href="#">Teacher-to-Teacher Workshop: Focus on Reading, Foreign Language, Arts and Early Childhood</a>
<b>Location:</b> Louisville, KY	<b>Audience:</b> Reading, foreign language, arts, early childhood educators (Full)
<b>Format:</b> Workshop	<b>Sponsors:</b> U.S. Department of Education
<hr/>	
<b>Dates:</b> July 25–26	<b>Topic:</b> <a href="#">Teacher-to-Teacher Workshop: Focus on Math and Science</a>
<b>Location:</b> Waltham, MA	<b>Audience:</b> Math and science educators (Full)
<b>Format:</b> Workshop	<b>Sponsors:</b> U.S. Department of Education
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<b>Dates:</b> July 26–27	<b>Topic:</b> <a href="#">Teacher-to-Teacher Workshop: Focus on Foreign Languages</a>
<b>Location:</b> San Diego, CA	<b>Audience:</b> Foreign language educators
<b>Format:</b> Workshop	<b>Sponsors:</b> U.S. Department of Education

**Dates:** July 28–31  
**Location:** Portland, MA  
**Format:** Institute  
**Topic:** CCSSO Summer Institute  
**Audience:** By invitation only  
**Sponsors:** Council Chief State School Officers

**Dates:** July 31–August 1  
**Location:** Warren, MI  
**Format:** Workshop  
**Topic:** [Teacher-to-Teacher Workshop: Focus on Math and Science](#)  
**Audience:** Math and science educators  
**Sponsors:** U.S. Department of Education

## AUGUST 2007

**Dates:** August 6–7  
**Location:** Palatine, IL  
**Format:** Workshop  
**Topic:** [Teacher-to-Teacher Workshop: Focus on Math and Science](#)  
**Audience:** Math and science educators  
**Sponsors:** U.S. Department of Education

**Dates:** August 6–7  
**Location:** Lowell, MA  
**Format:** Workshop  
**Topic:** [Teacher-to-Teacher Workshop: Focus on History, Science, and Arts](#)  
**Audience:** History, science, and arts educators  
**Sponsors:** U.S. Department of Education

**Dates:** August 9–10  
**Location:** Anchorage, AK  
**Format:** Workshop  
**Topic:** [Teacher-to-Teacher Workshop: Focus on Reading, Math, Science, History, and Art](#)  
**Audience:** Reading, mathematics, science, history, and art educators  
**Sponsors:** U.S. Department of Education

## SEPTEMBER 2007

**Dates:** September 12–14  
**Location:** St. Louis, MO  
**Format:** Workshop  
**Topic:** [CCSSO Education Leaders Conference—Using Data to Improve Instruction: Building on Models That Work](#)  
**Audience:** Education leaders  
**Sponsors:** Council of Chief State School Officers

**Dates:** September 24–25  
**Location:** Chicago, IL  
**Format:** Conference  
**Topic:** Center on Innovation & Improvement Restructuring Conference  
**Audience:** Regional comprehensive assistance center staff and state education agency teams  
**Sponsor:** Center on Innovation & Improvement

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