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M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: March 31, 2004
TO: TechMIS Subscribers
FROM: Charles Blaschke
SUBJ: Numerous NCLB Policy Changes and Highlights of Relating Conferences and Meetings

During March, major changes were made in No Child Left Behind guidance and regulations in four general areas with other policy changes expected shortly. All of these changes have implications, not only for school districts, but also for vendors and how they approach districts. TechMIS subscribers should ensure that discussions about these changes with district officials are prefaced with caution because subsequent changes or refinements are likely to occur. We will attempt to keep you on top of such changes and their implications.

The Washington Update items include:

- Findings from a new report which describes how Title II D Enhancing Education Through Technology state grants were used during the first year of implementation;
- Recent regulatory changes allowed under newly-found flexibility in NCLB provisions which suggest other policy changes in the future; the changes focus on assessment and reporting on limited-English-proficient students, alternative tests for certain special education students, deferring rural districts from meeting highly-qualified teacher requirements in certain areas, and allowing averages to determine the participation rates in state assessments;

- Recent statements by What Works Clearinghouse officials which suggest the primary WWC mission is to rate the quality of research and evaluation studies rather than to identify the most effective interventions; however, these discussions differ from those held by IES Director Whitehurst during the SIIA Fly-In;
- Related to the TechMIS March Special Reports on district Title I allocations, an update is provided on how the adjustment process works; sales staff should be familiar with this process in discussing preliminary estimates in the March Special Reports with districts;
- A new study which found small high school career academies increase earnings of participants;
- A new study conducted by NetDay which highlights the needs of the most intensive technology-using student and the findings from a new study which shows the negative impact of No Child Left Behind on liberal art subjects being taught in schools;
- Advice provided to exhibitors at NSBA annual conference by school board members and superintendents clearly indicates the need for firms to form “partnerships” with districts in solving challenges created by No Child Left Behind;
- Numerous implementation issues identified by USED officials and NCLB advocates during the education industry investment group at the IIR annual conference;
- Highlights of the SIIA Washington Fly-In which have implications for TechMIS subscribers.

Shortly after receipt of this TechMIS mailing, you will be receiving other information on Title I policy changes that were addressed during the annual National Association of Federal Education Program Administrators conference to be held in early April. If you have any questions please contact me directly.