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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: TechMIS Subscribers January 9, 2001
FROM: Charles Blaschke Page 1 of 2
SUBJECT: Special Reports and Washington Update

This TechMIS mailing includes several special reports and Washington Update items, some of which have immediate implications for most TechMIS subscribers.

The first special report provides highlights of the FY 2001 budget which was finally passed. (The e-draft version sent by e-mail earlier has been updated.) As predicted Special Education/IDEA was a major big winner, along with 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which is also addressed in the Washington Update. The second report focuses on state welfare budget surpluses under the TANF Welfare Reform program. In some states, the surplus is relatively large and provides opportunities for service providers to purchase a variety of basic skills, work preparation and related programs, for use with former welfare recipients. The Washington Update includes:

- Announcements of recent 386 grantees of the 21st Century Community Learning Center initiative (for \$213 million) which represents immediate potential sales and a new competitive round for an additional \$200 million with proposals due March 30.
- Guidelines developed by the New American Schools and its “blue ribbon panel” on selecting vendors products and services related to Comprehensive School Reform which have direct implications for any vendor of related products and services if the selection guidelines are widely used by districts.

- Release of its Annual Report to Congress by USED on the 25th anniversary of IDEA, which includes several important trends with direct implications for many TechMIS subscribers.
- The release of Kindergarten student assessment scores under the National Early Childhood Longitudinal Study which could provide useful “benchmarks” for assessing the effectiveness of alternative programs against this “new national norm”.
- The emergence of technology training for administrators as an issue over the next year which could provide opportunities for vendors to suggest new technology standards for administrators which are being developed by ISTE.
- Release of the Web-Based Education Commission report to Congress which will likely serve as a point of reference in future debates in Congress and among policymakers.
- Release by USED of the Second Five-Year National Technology Plan which recommends a multifaceted approach for the development of quality digital content.
- The release of a final resource guide entitled “The Use of Tests When Making High Stakes Decisions for Students,” which describes both the education principles and legal principles related to the use of tests when high stakes decisions are involved, particularly with limited-English-proficient and special education students.
- An update on Title I including newly-released trends and statistics related to student participation and the positioning and posturing of various associations as the reauthorization of Title I and grant consolidation is once again on the “front burner.”
- Publication of final regulations on electronic and information technology accessibility standards which could have a direct and immediate impact on publishers which license multimedia online products to Federal and even state education agencies.

As always, please direct any questions to me.