

(703) 536-2310
Fax (703) 536-3225

Education **TURNKEY** Electronic Distribution, Inc.

256 North Washington Street
Falls Church, Virginia 22046-4549

MEMORANDUM

O May 29, 2003
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TechMIS Subscribers

FROM: Charles Blaschke

SUBJECT: Title I Districts to Target, Washington Update, and State Profile Updates

On May 23, 2003, we e-mailed you a report identifying those districts which received an absolute Title I funding increase of \$500,000 or more for next year, which included many large urban districts. While there is some overlap, we have also included in this mailing a Special Report identifying those districts which received a 30 percent or more funding increase which was at least \$100,000 in size. This latter group of slightly over 1,000 districts could be more appropriate for firms with lower ticket products and services and are easier to reach through traditional direct approaches. The Special Report attempts to identify what types of products and services would appear to be in high demand in certain types of districts.

The Washington Update includes the following items:

- A report by the Government Accounting Office (GAO) that estimates the cost over the next six years of implementing state assessment mandates in No Child Left Behind could be as high as \$5.3 billion, which is higher than the projected Federal funding to states to cover the cost of assessments; as a result, better opportunities may be generated for firms with online assessments used to inform decision-making and for remediation;
- The state-by-state approval process regarding AYP accountability and assessment will become the most critical portion of that state's legal framework which in many cases will override NCLB provisions and regulations, which in turn will result in different Title I programs across the states;

- Highlights of a recent article by the minority voting member of the 1999 National Reading Panel report which faults policymakers for misinterpreting and misusing findings and recommendations to advance political agendas; another Education Week article faults the Panel for not including three other studies whose findings support “whole language with tutoring” and phonics as producing larger “effect sizes”;
- Highly respectable technical advisors to the Mathematica After-school study and advocates argue that the proposed \$400 million budget cut for 21st Century Programs was based on politics not scientifically-based research as the study design was “flawed”;
- Several scenarios on directions which computer-based assessment could go taking several important factors into account; currently it appears to be at a critical crossroad;
- A new policy statement from the Council for Exceptional Children calling for accountability and assessment to apply to all students with exceptionalities and that they be included in state assessments, which almost ensures current House provisions relating to these areas will be supported by the Senate in the reauthorization of IDEA.

Information gathered for State Profile Updates came from a variety of sources, including Stateline.org, Education Week, Education Daily, Title I Reports, and Ed Technology News. Over the last month and a half numerous telephone conversations were held with SEA and other knowledgeable state staff to confirm the status of legislation and K-12 budgets, provisions that were approved by USED in state accountability and other plans submitted to USED for peer review; and related items.

If anyone has any questions regarding or suggestions on how to take advantage of items in the Special Report or other matters, please contact Charles Blaschke directly.