

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

Education TURNKEY Electronic Distribution, Inc.
256 North Washington Street
Falls Church, Virginia 22046-4549

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: January 19, 2005
TO: TechMIS Subscribers
FROM: Charles Blaschke
SUBJ: Secondary Reform Initiative, Washington Update Items, and State Profile Updates

Enclosed is a Special Report on the proposed framework for President Bush's Secondary Reform Initiative. Of the proposed \$1.5 billion, slightly over \$1 billion is planned to support the use of various types of early interventions for at-risk, struggling middle and high school students, and professional development for teachers, particularly in the areas of math and science. While some "new" funds for the initiative have been alluded to, observers agree that most of the funding will come from reallocations or rescissions of existing programs such as vocational and technology education and the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program.

The Washington Update includes:

- USED guidance to Chief State School Officers which confirms that districts identified for improvement cannot provide supplemental educational services and encourages states to exercise their responsibilities to ensure SES providers improve student performance.
- USED release of a new Toolkit for SES providers which offers useful, practical hints or how to approach critical problem areas and other factors to take into account in deciding whether to provide SES.
- USED is likely to allow schools identified for improvement for the first time to provide SES in lieu of, or in addition to, requiring parent choice options for transferring students to high-performing schools.

- The Administration's priority on early intervention strategies continues to grow, but the question of who will implement them and how they will be implemented at the district level should be a concern for education marketeers.
- New study by highly-regarded researcher Harold Wenglinski has identified instructional practices which are likely to reduce achievement gaps in math between minority and non-minority students.
- USED Office of Inspector General (OIG) will conduct an audit of the implementation of supplemental educational services and other directly-related provisions over the next year.
- New USED-funded project headed by Association of Education Service Agencies could aggregate rural school market for online instruction, staff development, and other services.
- Highlights of USED's recently-released National Education Technology Plan 2004.

Among the areas addressed in the State Profile Updates are the specific challenges faced by states regarding their implementation of NCLB and how they are attempting to cope with such problems, many of which relate directly to identifying schools for improvement. In several states, proposed K-12 FY 2005 and 2006 budgets have been announced and, in states where November 2004 elections resulted in turnovers of either SEA leadership or legislators, jockeying for power continues.

If anyone has any questions contact Charles Blaschke directly.