

EDUCATION DAILY

The education community's independent daily news service

Budget 2006

Education comes up short in House budget allocations

Labor-HHS subcommittee one of only three panels to receive a decrease

Education didn't take the biggest hit in the **House Appropriations Committee's** spending limits, but its 0.1 percent drop is likely to attract the most controversy this budget season.

Committee Chairman Jerry Lewis, R-Calif., last week divvied up the \$843 billion allotted for discretionary spending in the fiscal 2006 budget resolution (ED, April 28) among 10 subcommittees.

For a full list of subcommittee allocations, see p. 6

Under the parceling-out process, known as 302(b) allocations, the **Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies** will receive less money than it would have under the **White House** proposal.

It was allocated \$142.5 billion, a decrease of \$163 million, from fiscal 2005. **President Bush** had sought to add \$924 million (ED, Feb. 8).

The subcommittee was one of only three to see a decrease. Even the **Foreign Operations and Science, State, Justice and Commerce subcommittees**, which had faced cuts of between 5 percent and 11 percent under Bush's request, received increases. **Senate** appropriators are expected to release their allocations by Friday.

Hanging in the balance

Though federal environmental programs will take the biggest hit in the **House** version — a \$595 million, or 2.2 percent, decrease — the battle over education funding is likely to be the bloodiest, according to budget advocates.

Education initiatives will have to vie with health and labor projects for funding. Moreover, Medicaid and Social Security, which diverted attention during the budget resolution debate, are mandated benefits that will not be a part of the allocations process.

Not only does education have the most items on the chopping block — 48, a third of the total

(See **BUDGET** on page 6)

Today's Highlights

Vol. 38, No. 88 • Tuesday, May 10, 2005

IN THE CLASSROOM

Coalition of groups launches campaign to promote better acoustics in schoolrooms across the nation **Page 3**

Researcher says teachers should give students time and independence to work through math problems themselves **Page 6**

Daily Briefing **Pages 4-5**
12 items, including:

- Maine gearing up to join NCLB rebellion
- Atkinson cleared to be N.C. superintendent
- Georgia teacher fired for not changing grade
- Black-white student 'skill gap' steady, study finds

Survey: Lack of study time leaves students ill-prepared

High school students graduate with minimum work, false expectations

More than half of America's high school students devote three hours a week or less to homework, required reading or other assignments, leaving them poorly prepared for the more demanding requirements of college, a new survey concludes.

The special report, released yesterday by **Indiana University at Bloomington**, looks at specific data on teens' work and attitudes in high school and their expectations of college, taken from IU's 2004 *High School Survey of Student Engagement* (HSSSE).

IU researchers questioned more than 90,000 students from 103 high schools in 26 states.

The findings support the national call for high school reform, said **Martha McCarthy**, HSSSE director and author of the special report.

"What it provides is somewhat of a wake-up call to high school educators," she said, because students believe they're coming to

(See **STUDY** on page 2)

STUDY (continued from page 1)

school prepared to pass their classes without having to work too hard, only to find themselves ill-prepared later at the postsecondary level.

By way of proof, McCarthy noted that only about 27 percent of 9th-graders make it through their sophomore year of college.

“By the way,” McCarthy said, “our data supported that all these students [surveyed] say they’re going to college ... over 82 percent said they were going to college.”

Not enough to succeed in college

The bottom line, McCarthy added, is students think they’re working hard enough for college. “But if you compare this [thinking] with data from college, it isn’t enough. It’s not enough for them to succeed in college.”

While 84 percent of high school students acknowledged the importance of making good grades, only 56 percent said they put forth a good deal of effort to achieve them, the report found.

In addition, it concluded that teens spend more time scanning Internet sites than they do reading assigned material for class.

McCarthy said the IU study differs from others in that it also includes methods educators can employ immediately and without much cost to change their students’ attitudes and better prepare them for the more rigorous college requirements.

For example, when one high school learned how little time its students were spending on their homework, teachers instituted daily quizzes on the assignments the following day and they organized a homework hotline for **National Honor Society** students to help others.

The data did not indicate students felt they needed more time to prepare for class. On the contrary, the report found part-time jobs, exercise, video games and television accounted for a good deal of teens’ spare time.

Most seniors work after school

The HSSSE data showed 70 percent of seniors spent more than 10 hours a week

Other findings

Data from **Indiana University at Bloomington’s 2004 High School Survey of Student Engagement** reveal that:

- While 58 percent of high school students reported feeling safe in school, only 46 percent of special education students said they felt safe.
- Only 44 percent of African American students said they felt safe in school, compared to 64 percent of white students.
- Only 47 percent of students said they cared about their school, and 48 percent said they would choose the same school again if they could.
- While only 51 percent of students indicated they have a voice in classroom decisions, 59 percent believed their school placed significant emphasis on treating students fairly and with respect.
- About 80 percent of students said they expected to continue their education after high school, with 71 percent planning on obtaining a four-year college degree.

working for pay, compared to 11 percent for 9th-graders.

Male students were more likely than females to spend more than seven hours a week exercising, by a margin of 40 percent to 28 percent; playing video games, 25 percent to 5 percent; and watching television, 37 percent to 25 percent.

McCarthy said all the data tend to add weight to current calls — including those outlined in the president’s proposed \$1.5 billion High School Initiative (ED, Jan. 13) and by many of the nation’s governors (ED, March 1) — to toughen secondary school standards and testing requirements.

“It’s not only President Bush, but foundations, all the governors, too — there is a national movement to overhaul high school education and to focus on high school reforms. I’d say our data support that,” McCarthy said.

For more information on Getting Students Ready for College: What Student Engagement Data Can Tell Us and The High School Survey of Student Engagement, go to <http://newsinfo.iu.edu/news/page/print/1608.html>.

—David Hubler



Published every business day by LRP Publications, Inc. (ISSN: 0013-1261), 360 Hiatt Drive, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418, Editorial: (703) 516-7002, extension 530; Customer Service: (800) 341-7874; New Subscriptions: (800) 341-7874. Publisher: Kenneth F. Kahn, Esq.; V.P., Editorial: Claude J. Werder; Managing Editor: Michael Cardman; Editorial Staff: Kara Arundel, Steve Brown, Katie Chase, David Hubler, Stew Magnuson, Pamela Moore, Katherine Shek, Sarah Sparks, Jason Wermers. LRP Washington Bureau Chief: Patrick Harden. Annual subscription rate: \$1,200. Single issues: \$6. Copyright 2005 by LRP Publications, Inc. Federal law restricts reproduction of material in this newsletter without written permission. Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients, is granted by LRP

Publications, for libraries or other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) for a \$3-per-document fee and a \$1.50-per-page fee to be paid directly to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923. Fee Code: (508) 750-8400/05/\$3 + \$1.50. Requests for permission to reproduce content should be directed to LRP customer service at (800)341-7874, fax (561) 622-2423, e-mail custserve@lrp.com. For editorial suggestions, e-mail pharden@lrp.com. www.educationdaily.net.

Coalition campaigns for better acoustics in schools

Arguing that poor classroom acoustics and inadequate noise control defeat the purpose of the No Child Left Behind Act by interfering with students' ability to learn and teachers' effectiveness, a group that promotes acoustically improved schools plans to pressure the government to require acoustical standards in school building.

Led by the **Classroom Acoustics Special Interest Group**, the coalition of organizations with interests ranging from audiology and speech therapy to acoustical engineering, will urge the government to adopt standards for schools recommended by the **American National Standards Institute** and the **Acoustical Society of America**.

"If students cannot understand clearly what is being spoken, they cannot learn to their full potential and that alone puts the [NCLB] in jeopardy," wrote **Michael Nixon**, president of the Plymouth, Minn., classroom acoustics group in an article sent to **Education Secretary Margaret Spellings**. "Teachers are five times as likely to suffer vocal fatigue, frustration and burnout as a result of having to raise their voices above the background noise."

'Shrouded in mystery'

The problem is exacerbated because "acoustics has always been shrouded in mystery and uncertainty ... and receives little or no attention by the architectural profession or their education clients," Nixon wrote.

Studies show that 35 percent to 40 percent of students miss 30 percent to 40 percent of all classroom verbal communications, according to Nixon. "It is not so much a matter that the students cannot hear, but rather a matter that they cannot distinguish clearly and accurately what is being spoken. The problem is one of inadequate acoustical and noise control in the classroom," he wrote to Spellings.

Students particularly at risk include those with hearing impairments, those for whom English is a second language, children with attention deficit disorders or middle-ear infections, and "all early grade children just learning to acquire the basic cognitive skills," he wrote.

Nixon told *Education Daily* the coalition's campaign will be centered on revised guidelines for public buildings that accommodate people with disabilities, issued last July by the **Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board**, better known as the **Access Board**, which is the regulatory agency for the Americans with Disabilities Act. Comments may be sent to the **Justice Depart-**

Where other states stand

The **New Hampshire State Board of Education** and the **New Jersey School Construction Board** have adopted the standards the **American National Standards Institute** and the **Acoustical Society of America** recommended. Legal or legislative proposals also are under consideration in Minnesota, Connecticut and Ohio.

Other acoustics standards or directives are in use or development in New York state, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Washington state, Washington, D.C., Maryland and the **California Collaborative for High-Performance Schools**.

ment, which issues a rule to implement the guidelines, through May 31.

No more 'Mr. Nice Guy'

"We're gearing up to send as many letters and [as much] information as we can," Nixon said, complaining he got short shrift from the White House on two earlier approaches. The coalition opted for the campaign of letter-writing because "being Mr. Nice Guy is no longer an option."

The Access Board already supports adoption of the standards, known as ANSI/ASA S12.60-2002, but they were finalized too late for inclusion in the rulemaking, said **Lois E.L. Thibault**, coordinator of research. However, while the standard currently is voluntary, "a number of jurisdictions have taken action on their own," she said (*see sidebar above*).

The board calls acoustical performance "an important consideration in the design of classrooms."

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the ADA, students who are hearing impaired must be provided appropriate accommodations to ensure that classroom communications are as effective for them as for non-impaired students.

An **Education Department** spokesman said that while there are no specific policies for acoustical standards for classrooms, the agency's **Office for Civil Rights** "would investigate each individual case to determine if those [legal] requirements were followed."

Members of the coalition include the **Acoustical Society of America**, the **Educational Audiology Association**, **SHHH** (Self Help for Hard of Hearing People), the Access Board and members of the **ANSI Standards Committee**.

For more information, contact Michael Nixon at mtnixon@aol.com.

—Patrick Harden

Daily Briefing

Education Department

Federal Register

Comment sought on voc-rehab report form

Notice inviting public comment: The Education Department's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services requests public comment on the paperwork burden that will result from collecting data for an Office of Management and Budget review of Annual Progress Reporting Form for the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitative Services Program.

Comments from the public or other federal agencies can address, in part, whether the collection is necessary, if the information will be used in a timely manner, and how the burden of this collection on the respondents might be minimized.

Deadline: Comments are due June 8.

Web: Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request may be accessed from <http://edicsweb.ed.gov>. Select "Browse Pending Collections" and look for number 2694. For more information, go to <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/pdf/05-9152.pdf>.

E-mail: Sheila.Carey@ed.gov.

ED seeks input for final report on GEAR UP

Notice inviting public comment: The Education Department's Office of Postsecondary Education requests public comment on the paperwork burden that will result from collecting data for an OMB review of the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) financial status and Program Performance Closeout Report/Final Report.

Comments from the public or other federal agencies can address, in part, whether the collection is necessary, if the information will be used in a timely manner, and how the burden of this collection on the respondents might be minimized.

Deadline: Comments are due June 8.

Contact: Carolyn Lovett, Desk Officer, Department of Education, Office of Management and Budget, 715 17th St., N.W., Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20503.

Web: Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request may be accessed from <http://edicsweb.ed.gov>. Select "Browse Pending Collections" and look for No. 2687. For more information, go to <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/pdf/05-9152.pdf>.

Contact: Joseph.Schubart@ed.gov.

Program Performance Update

Advanced certification or credentialing

The Education Department's target has been set at an increase of 5,000 board-certified teachers each year. Currently, 49 states and approximately 490 localities offer

incentives for teachers to apply for National Board certification. However, budget shortfalls in states are affecting the incentives offered — including fee support, salary supplements and license portability — and, thus, the number of candidates.

The cumulative number of teachers certified in 2002: Actual total was 23,936, before ED targets were set.

The cumulative number of teachers certified in 2003: Actual total was 32,142, before ED targets were set.

The performance target for 2004: 35,000; ED's actual performance numbers are not yet available.

The performance target for 2005: 40,000.

The performance target for 2006: 45,000.

The performance target for 2007: 50,000.

Budget 2006

Appropriators give boost to BIA schools

The House Appropriations Committee has allocated funding for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools at higher levels than the Bush administration proposed (*see story, p. 1*).

The Bush administration budget called for reductions in the education budget and the slowing of the school construction budget (ED, Feb. 8).

The Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Subcommittee will enjoy \$52 million above the administration's proposal to fix or replace crumbling BIA schools, and \$19 million more in the general education fund, for a total of \$654 million.

NCLB Implementation

Maine could be latest to join NCLB revolt

Maine's legislature is poised to pass a bill authorizing a state lawsuit over the No Child Left Behind Act.

The state Senate Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs unanimously endorsed the legislation, which authorizes the suit on the grounds that the federal government has not adequately funded the expansive education law, according to the *Portland Press Herald*.

If Maine lawmakers follow through on this tough talk, they would join Connecticut, which has threatened a lawsuit, and the National Education Association, which recently filed a legal challenge over the law.

Other challenges have come in the form of Utah's recently signed law giving the state permission to follow its own provisions when they conflict with NCLB, and Texas' defiance of the U.S. Education Department's cap on the number of special education students who can be exempted from regular standardized testing.

Across the Nation

New York

Custodians cleaned up more than schools

A joint investigation involving the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Attorney's Office and New

Daily Briefing

York City education officials has resulted in the arrest of 16 school custodians on felony charges of bribery and misappropriation of funds.

The investigators allege the 16 stole several hundred thousand dollars between 2001 and April 2005 by taking kickbacks from at least nine janitorial supply companies owned by the same person, which were paid for products they never delivered.

City schools **Chancellor Joel Klein** in a statement said he hoped those arrested would be prosecuted aggressively.

North Carolina

Impasse at end in state superintendent race

The **U.S. Justice Department** has approved two new North Carolina state laws that may end the impasse on selecting the state's new school superintendent (ED, March 23).

In the November election, Democrat **June Atkinson** finished 8,535 votes ahead of Republican **Bill Fletcher**, who contested the results claiming 11,310 provisional ballots were illegal, according to the *Asheville Citizen-Times*.

The state legislature, controlled by Democrats, then crafted legislation allowing it sole authority to declare winners. The Justice Department approved the new laws last week, paving the way for lawmakers to declare Atkinson the winner.

State board mandates graduation exit exams

Beginning in 2010, North Carolina high school seniors will be required to pass exit exams in five subject areas to earn their diplomas.

The **State Board of Education** approved the new rules last week requiring passing scores in English 1, Algebra 1, biology, U.S. history, and civics and economics.

Seniors failing the exams could still have two opportunities to make the grades. Students who do not earn passing scores by the third attempt would have a panel, not associated with their school, review their course performance. The school principal would make the ultimate decision based on the panel's recommendation.

Georgia

Teacher fired for refusing to change grade

The **Gwinnett County School Board** voted 4-1, early Friday, to fire a 23-year veteran high school physics teacher for refusing to alter a student's grade.

Larry Neace declined to reverse his decision to fail a perfect homework assignment from a football player who'd fallen asleep in class the day the assignment was given, according to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

Dacula High School officials said school policy prohibited using grades as a disciplinary measure.

Neace's attorneys said that for some 10 years the science teacher's syllabus had warned students their grades could suffer if they wasted time or slept in class. They also argued this was a case of a student athlete being pampered by school authorities.

Indiana

State changes kindergarten entrance age

Indiana has passed a law changing the age when 5-year-olds qualify for kindergarten.

The House Enrolled Act 1001 will allow parents to enroll five-year-olds born on or before Aug. 1 in kindergarten. The previous enrollment date was July 1. The new date takes effect beginning with the 2006-2007 school year.

"Changing the age requirement is another step toward alignment with other state's enrollment policies," said **Suellen Reed**, state superintendent of public instruction.

Reed said her office would push to have the enrollment age ultimately moved to Sept. 1.

Study Hall

Black-white student 'skill gap' unchanged

A new study of the achievement gap between white and black students finds no change in the educational disparity since 1990, after two decades of a significant narrowing. Moreover, the **University of Chicago** study warns the gulf could last well into the 21st century.

According to the study, black schoolchildren in urban areas lost significant ground in test score comparisons with their white counterparts.

Among the possible factors for the failure to narrow the gap, author **Derek Neal** suggested, were declining employment rates, growing prison rates for black males and differences in black and white parenting.

Why Has Black-White Skill Convergence Stopped *is available at* <http://economics.uchicago.edu/dneal/handbook-econ-edu.pdf>.

Finance program found to teach self-control

A regular allowance can be used to teach children the value of long-term goals — and schools can pick up the slack when parents are unable to teach these values — according to a study by the **Education Policy Analysis Archives**.

Researchers at the **State University of New York** found that economically disadvantaged children often have a present, rather than future, time orientation, which has been linked to low educational investments, teenage pregnancy, criminality, poverty and low self-control.

They proposed a school-based allowance program, not to teach students how to save, but to turn their focus toward future, rather than present, orientation.

To access the article, see <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v13n28>.

Students need time to solve math problems themselves

Researcher exhorts teachers to give children freedom to wrestle with new concepts

U.S. teachers need to move away from simply showing students how to solve a problem and then letting them practice it repeatedly, says one researcher, who stresses that students benefit from wrestling with important mathematical ideas.

A common thread in five nations whose students excel at mathematics — the Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Japan, the Netherlands and Switzerland — was the willingness of teachers to step aside and let students work out how to solve problems themselves, according to **University of Delaware** education professor **James Hiebert**.

U.S. teachers tend to step in and give answers as soon as their students showed signs of struggling because they believe that's their job, said Hiebert, who examined teaching methods in a video survey.

"It's not as if high-achieving countries went off and discovered how to teach math and we didn't get the memo," he said last week at a forum hosted by the **Albert Shanker Institute** to bring math teaching researchers together with policymakers.

Root of the problem

U.S. students have chronically low math scores compared to other industrialized countries (ED, Dec. 14, 2004).

But policymakers are failing to address the root of the problem, according to **American Federation of Teachers** executive vice president **Antonia Cortese**.

"When we look at the mediocre performance of our students, we have to ask ourselves why that is," she said.

Content knowledge not enough

Deborah Loewenberg Ball, an education professor at the **University of Michigan**, said this points to the fact that content knowledge, while important, is not enough to teach math effectively.

Bringing in stopgap teachers from outside the profession to address teaching shortages, such as economists, engineers or physicists, may not be successful if they don't know how to explain math concepts to others, she said.

—**Stew Magnuson**

BUDGET (continued from page 1)

programs — but members of both parties have sworn to protect high-profile items (ED Feb. 8).

"I think it's going to come down to how strongly [appropriators] feel about individual programs," said **Edward Kealy**, executive director of the **Committee for Education Funding**. "Some are going to be positioned well in the first stages, but it will be a long process ... we'll have to wait and see which programs are most vulnerable."

Programs under pressure

That puts even more pressure on smaller and less well-known programs.

Joseph Renzulli, director of the **National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented**, said he is totally dependent on the \$11 million Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Program (ED Feb. 8), which President Bush has proposed eliminating.

"My center will be out of business if **Congress** doesn't get it back in the budget," he said. "We're keeping our fingers crossed."

Some threatened programs may be slightly more secure, given the apparent lack of support for the White House's proposed High School Initiative (ED, May 5).

The \$1.5 billion initiative would have absorbed Perkins along with several other

House 302(b) allocations

This chart compares 302(b) budget allocations for the 10 **House** appropriations subcommittees, with the enacted budget for fiscal 2005. Budget authority is in millions of dollars.

Department	Proposed allocation	Compared to FY 05
Agriculture	\$ 16,832	Unchanged
Defense	363,440	+3.1%
Energy	29,746	-0.3%
Foreign operations	20,270	+3.7%
Homeland security	30,846	+4.7%
Interior/Environment	26,107	-2.2%
Labor, HHS, Education	142,514	-0.1%
Veterans Affairs	85,158	+7.4%
Science, State, etc.	57,453	+2.1%
Transportation, Treasury, HUD	66,935	+5.9%

Source: House Appropriations Committee.

popular projects: the \$306.5 million GEAR UP college preparatory grants; TRIO Talent Search and Upward Bound, worth \$457.5 million; \$110.7 million Tech-Prep demonstration and state grants; and \$2.5 million in recreational programs.

—**Sarah Sparks**