






Cross Currents



NCBE CrossCurrents Volume 1 No. 3 Spring 1997

In This Issue:

-  [Education Priorities for the Transition to a New Century](#)
-  [Charter Schools and the Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Student](#)
-  [America's Reading Challenge: Issues for Language Minority Students](#)
-  [U.S. Department of Education's 1997 Regional Conferences](#)
-  [What's New on NCBE's Web Site](#)

Education Priorities for the Transition to a New Century

by Carol Snyder

"As we move toward the 21st century, nothing should be more important to us as a nation than the actions we take now to help our young people prepare for the future."

Richard W. Riley, U.S. Secretary of Education
Fourth Annual State of American Education Address,
February 18, 1997

In emphasizing education as a top national priority in his Fourth Annual State of American Education Address, U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley reaffirmed the Department's mission of ensuring equal access to education and promoting education excellence throughout the nation. Noting both the increasing cultural diversity and the computer technologies that are transforming American classrooms Riley stated, "we need teachers skilled in using computers as a powerful teaching tool and many more teachers well-versed in teaching English as a second language. Our teachers need to teach to a higher level of achievement and be prepared to teach all of America's children..."

U.S. Department of Education's Goals for American students

The Department's priorities, reflecting the vision of *Goals 2000*, the *Improving America's Schools Act*, and

President Clinton's "Call to Action", have been translated into seven goals for American students:

- To read independently by the end of the 3rd grade.
- To be competent in algebra by the end of the 8th grade.
- By age 18, to be prepared for and able to afford at least two years of college, and to pursue lifelong learning.
- To have a talented, dedicated and well-prepared teacher in their classroom.
- To have their classroom connected to the Internet by the year 2000 and to be technologically literate.
- To learn in strong, safe, and drug-free schools.
- To learn according to challenging and clear standards of achievement and accountability.

The OBEMLA Agenda

Linguistically and culturally diverse (LCD) children must be provided with an equal opportunity to reach the goals that the Department's agenda sets out for all America's students. To realize these goals, the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) provides national leadership in promoting high quality education for the nation's population of LCD students. OBEMLA embraces the various elements of the school reform agenda, such as commitment to professional development, emphasis on high academic standards, expansion of school choice, promotion of family literacy and the importance of early reading, and the establishment of parent and community partnerships.

OBEMLA's Goals: Building a Bridge to the 21st Century

Goal 1: Help limited English proficient students reach challenging academic standards.

Goal 2: Ensure that schools serving LEP students have access to high-quality research, information, and technical assistance.

Goal 3: Ensure that LEP students are taught by well-trained teachers.

Goal 4: Coordinate services to LEP students across the Department of Education.

Source: The U.S. Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs: Providing National Leadership in High Quality Education for Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students.

References

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (1997). "The U.S. Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs: Providing National Leadership in High Quality Education for Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students. *Discover*, No.1. Author: Washington, DC.

Riley, Richard W. (1997). Fourth Annual State of American Education Address: Putting Standards of Excellence into Action. Atlanta, GA: February 18, 1997. URL: <http://www.ed.gov/Speeches/02-1997/StateofEd.html>

U.S. Department of Education (1997). "President Clinton's Call to Action for American Education in the 21st Century. U.S. Department of Education: Washington, D.C. URL: <http://www.ed.gov/updates/PresEDPlan/>

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Charter Schools and the Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Student

by Kris Anstrom

In his 1997 State of the Union address, President Clinton detailed his priorities for education in the 21st century. Among these priorities is the expansion of school choice and accountability in public education. Charter schools exemplify the movement toward parent and student choice in public schooling. Despite opponents' predictions that charter schools would serve only affluent students, a 1995 survey of 110 charter schools found that a majority of these schools were created, at least in part, to serve at-risk students (Nathan, 1996). Since 1991, 25 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have passed charter school legislation. Given this momentum, educators need to be informed about charter schools as well as about the potential impact the charter school movement may have on linguistically and culturally diverse (LCD) students.

Charter schools are publicly financed schools, and as such must offer a free education to all students and abide by the same health, safety, and civil rights laws as other public schools. Generally the per-pupil allotment for each student follows that student to the charter school. A charter school differs from a traditional public school in its degree of autonomy, with teachers often given complete control of the school. In return for this autonomy, charter schools must account for student performance. Charter schools are not usually run by their local school district and are not subject to many district, state, and union regulations or requirements, including those relating to curriculum, teaching methods, contracting for services and facilities, and the hiring of personnel. A charter school operates on the basis of a charter or contract from the state or other agency, (e.g., a public university, community college, the state board of education, city council or county commission) authorized by the state to grant charters. Agencies authorized to grant charters vary from state to state. The charter outlines the school's educational plan, student outcomes, and how these outcomes will be measured.

The *Improving America's Schools Act of 1994* authorizes federal funding to support the design and initial implementation of charter schools and the evaluation of the effects of charter schools on students, student achievement, staff, and parents. The

Charter School Resources on the Internet

[About Charter Schools](#)

Reviews charter school activities across the U.S. and provides a comprehensive list of resources and contacts.

[American Association of School Administrators](#)

Includes AASA's recommendations concerning charter schools, the U.S. Department of Education's budget for charter schools, other pertinent articles, and links to sites of interest.

[Charter School Research](#)

Provides a comprehensive catalog of charter-school related materials on the Net.

[Education Week on the Web](#)

Education Week maintains an archive of articles pertaining to charter schools. From the home page, select "The Archives," which you can then search using the term "charter schools."

[National Charter School Study](#)

Under contract to the U. S. Department of Education, three national research institutes are sponsoring a national four-year study of Charter Schools. This site provides information related to this study as well as links to other charter school sites.

[US Charter Schools](#)

This site offers charter school developers information on such issues as starting and running a charter school; fund raising; standards, assessment and accountability, profiles of charter schools, and examples of actual "charters" for some schools.

"Charter Schools Demonstration Program" provided 6 million dollars in 1995 through competitive grants to states with charter school legislation; in 1996 that amount was increased to 18 million dollars, and to 51 million in FY 1997. For FY 1998, the President is requesting 100 million. Clearly, the federal government's interest in charter schools is increasing. States receiving federal startup money must pass on at least 95 percent of their money to fund charter schools.

Charter Schools Serving LCD Students

The charter schools listed below explicitly focus on the education of LCD students. Though these schools may differ in the specifics of their instructional approaches, all apply instructional methodology and curricula that are in line with what we know about effective practices for LCD students. These schools represent examples of the potential of the charter school concept for the education of students who are linguistically and culturally diverse.

Charter Schools Serving LCD Students

A.G.B.U. Alex and Marie Manoogian School,

Southfield, Michigan

Nadya Sarafian, Principal (810) 569-2988

A charter school for students in grades K-8, Manoogian serves the children and grandchildren of Armenian immigrants as well as children who themselves are recent immigrants.

Instruction in the Armenian language Armenian history, and Armenian music and dance form a core part of this school's curriculum.

Benito Juarez Academy,

Saginaw, Michigan

Lois Schaffer, Principal (517) 752-4242

The Benito Juarez Academy is a secondary school that primarily enrolls Latino students. A primary educational goal of the Academy is to serve as a laboratory school engaged in longitudinal research. The research focuses on investigating instructional methods that reinforce learning among local Latino students considered to be at high risk and in danger of dropping out of school.

Clear View Elementary Charter School,

Chula Vista, California

Ginger Hovenic, Principal (619) 498-3000

Located five miles north of the Mexican border, Clear View Elementary serves students in grades K-6 and operates as both a neighborhood school and a cluster site for Spanish language instruction.

Discovery Charter School,

Chula Vista, California

Fred Elliott, Principal (619) 656-0797

The Discovery Charter Elementary School serves a diverse K-6 population. The school's curriculum emphasizes literature and language arts. Biliteracy in both English and Spanish is stressed in all grades through a dual language program where English speakers learn Spanish and Spanish speakers learn English.

References and Resources

American Association of School Administrators (1997). Charter Schools High on Education Department Agenda. *AASA Legislative Alerts*. URL: <http://www.aasa.org/legis/legis88.htm>

Massachusetts Department of Education.

Mauhs-Pugh, T. (1995). *Charter Schools 1995: A Survey and Analysis of the Laws and Practices of the States*, Education Policy Analysis Archives.

Nathan, J. (1996). Possibilities, problems, and progress: Early lessons from the charter movement. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 78(1), 18-23.

San Diego Chamber of Commerce Business Roundtable for Education (1996). *A Profile of California's Charter Schools, 1994-95*, Author: San Diego, CA.

U.S. Department of Education (1995). *Charter Schools: An Option to Encourage Innovation and Promote Success in Teaching and Learning*, Author: Washington, D.C.

U.S. Department of Education (1996). *Charter Schools-- Briefing*.



For more information:

The full text of this article, including additional information on charter schools serving LCD students, can be found on the NCBE Web site at

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/success/charter.htm>

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/success/charter.htm>

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



America Reads Challenge: Issues for Language Minority Students

by Anneka Kindler

In response to evidence that 40 percent of fourth grade students are scoring below the basic level on national reading assessments, President Clinton has challenged all

America Reads Challenge recommendations...

For Parents

Parents should be encouraged to:

Americans to be a part of a nation-wide effort to make sure that every child can read independently and well by the end of third grade. The President's challenge highlights the importance of reading as the foundation of learning, self sufficiency, and productive employment. As we move into the 21st century all children will need to read better than ever in order to participate in America's high-skill workplaces.

America Reads Challenge (ARC) emphasizes the critical role of parents as children's first teachers, and invites schools, libraries, religious institutions, community and national organizations, the media, universities, businesses and senior citizens to collaborate to help students become successful readers by the end of the third grade. ARC supports family literacy programs as well as school- and community-based reading programs serving disadvantaged students (U.S. Department of Education, 1997).

- Read to their children 30 minutes each day from infancy onward.
- Limit television viewing and tune in to educational programs.
- Get a library card for their child and use it regularly.
- Reach out to community resources to improve their literacy and parenting skills.

For Tutoring programs

Whether based in a school, library, community center, religious organization, or business, tutoring programs should:

- Utilize trained specialists and volunteers.
- Encourage active participation of parents.
- Extend learning time: tutoring should take place before and after school, on weekends, and during the summer.
- Coordinate with regular classroom reading programs.

Sources: U.S. House of Representatives(1997) and U.S. Senate (1997)

Special Challenges for Language Minority Students: Family Literacy

According to the U.S. Department of Education's *Prospects Report*, many of the 3 million limited English proficient (LEP) students in America's schools are having particular difficulty mastering reading skills by the third grade (Moss and Puma, 1995).

When a language other than English is spoken in the home, it takes more time and effort for children to become literate in English. Some parents are able to read to their children and promote literacy in the home language. In addition to helping maintain the native language skills, this is excellent preparation for literacy in English. Other parents of LEP students may have little or no reading skills in any language, and require family literacy programs in order to participate in teaching their children to read.

Although outreach to LEP parents can often be difficult due to linguistic and cultural barriers, it is important to recognize that immigrant families bring with them many positive attributes that educators can take advantage of to help foster learning at home. They have a strong desire for themselves and their children to succeed in America and are determined to learn to speak, read, and write English. Most immigrant parents realize that education is the key to success, and will be eager to learn about how they can help their children succeed (McCollum and Russo, 1993).

Networking to Promote Literacy

In addition to networking with local libraries, universities, churches, and volunteer and parent organizations to

meet the reading challenge, educators can also obtain valuable information from national resources dedicated to promoting reading and family literacy. The U.S. Department of Education and over 50 organizations nationwide are collaborating this summer to sponsor the READ*WRITE*NOW! Summer Reading Initiative, which encourages young readers to read and write for 30 minutes each day and provides participating children with volunteer reading partners once or twice a week. For more information on the READ*WRITE*NOW! program, phone 800-USA-LEARN (800-872-5327). Several national organizations providing literacy-related services for beginning readers are listed below:

American Library Association

50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611 Phone: (312) 280-2162

International Reading Association

800 Barksdale Road, P.O. Box 8139
Newark, DE 19714 Phone: (302) 731-1600 x 293

Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)

600 Maryland Avenue, SW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20024 Phone: (202) 287-3220

National Center for Family Literacy

Waterfront Plaza, Suite 200
325 W. Main Street
Louisville, KY 40202 Phone: (502) 584-1133

Boys and Girls Clubs of America

1230 West Peachtree Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30309 Phone: (404) 815-5765

Literacy Resources on the Web

A wealth of information on reading and family literacy for LEP students is available on the World Wide Web. A listing of sites can be found on the ncsla's web site at: <http://www.ncsla.gwu.edu/links/literacy.html>
<http://www.ncsla.gwu.edu/links/literacy.html> This page will be updated as new web resources are located.

References

- McCollum, H. and Russo, A.W.W. (1993). *Model Strategies in Bilingual Education: Family Literacy and Parent Involvement*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- Mulhern, M.; Rodriguez-Brown, F.V.; and Shanahan, T. (1994) *Family Literacy for Language Minority Families: Issues for Program Implementation*. Washington, DC: NCBE.
- Moss, M. and Puma, M. (1995) *Prospects: The Congressionally Mandated Study of Educational Growth and Opportunity Language Minority and Limited English Proficient Students*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- U.S. Department of Education (1997) "America Reads Challenge" URL: <http://www.ed.gov/updates/reading/>
- U.S. House of Representatives (1997) H.R.1516 *America Reads Challenge Act of 1997 (Introduced in the House)* Washington, DC: U.S. House of Representatives.
- U.S. Senate (1997) "Title III--America Reads Challenge" S.12 *Education for the 21st Century Act (Introduced in the Senate)* Washington, DC: U.S. Senate.



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Improving America's Schools: U.S. Department of Education's 1997 Regional Conferences

IAS Conference

The U.S. Department of Education has announced the dates and locations for the three regional conferences on Improving America's Schools (IAS). This year's Conference theme is "**A Call to Action: Working Together for Excellence and Equity.**" Grantees in programs administered by the Department's Offices of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA), Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), and Educational Technology are encouraged to attend. For more detailed information, you can call the IAS Conferences Hotline at (800) 203-5494 or visit the conferences web site at: <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/iasconferences/>

Improving America's Schools (IAS) 1997 Regional Conferences

Western Region October 16-18, 1997

Town and Country Resort &
Convention Center
500 Hotel Circle North
San Diego, CA
(619) 291-7131

Central Region November 16-18, 1997

Hyatt Regency Reunion
300 Reunion Boulevard
Dallas, TX
(214) 651-1234

Eastern Region December 14-16, 1997

Sheraton Washington Hotel
2660 Woodley Road NW
Washington, DC
(202) 328-2000

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

General Assembly Sessions: daily sessions will feature a variety of speakers, including officials from the U.S. Department of Education and educational leaders from across the nation.

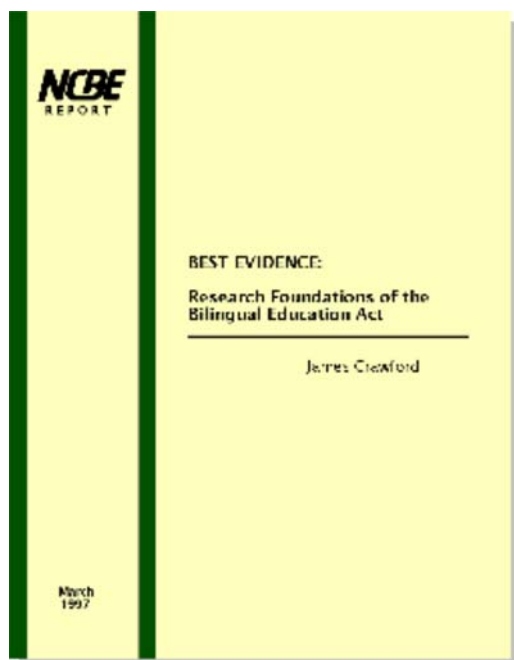
Technical Assistance Workshops: full day of technical assistance workshops will give participants the opportunity to meet with officials from specific Department of Education program offices and learn more about how federal, state and local resources can be integrated to support education reform.

Education Reform Institutes: these half-day institutes will focus on key topics in education reform. Participants will have the opportunity to attend two institutes. The format and content of the institutes focus on three major elements: research, collaborative demonstration models, and implementation strategies.

- Setting and Reaching High Standards
- Creating a Better School Environment
- Assessing Student Achievement
- Mastering Reading
- Mastering the Foundations of Mathematics
- Promoting and Managing Change in Schools and Communities
- Recruiting, Preparing and Retaining Excellent Teachers
- Involving Families and Communities in Education
- Using Technology for Education Reform
- Facilitating Higher Education, Work Transitions for Lifelong

Technology and Media Resource Center will feature a variety of hands-on computer demonstrations, a video review area and other innovative exhibits reflecting topics covered in the general sessions, institutes and workshops.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



What's New At NCBE's Web Site ?

NCBE is pleased to announce the recent release of "Best Evidence: Research Foundations of the Bilingual Education Act" by James Crawford. This publication discusses the current research findings relating to the education of linguistically and culturally diverse students in the U.S. and the basic premises upon which the U.S. Congress formulated the foundations of the 1994 Bilingual Education Act.

The entire publication is available on our web site at:

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/reports/bestavid.html>

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/reports/bestavid.html>

Print copies are also available from NCBE for \$10 per copy.



The [National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education](#) is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) and is operated under Contract No. T295005001 by the George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Center for the Study of Language and Education.

Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. *CrossCurrents* is not copyrighted. Readers are free to reproduce the material contained in this publication with proper credit given to NCBE and the author(s).

Please address correspondence to *CrossCurrents*, 1118 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037 2121 K Street NW, Suite 260, Washington, DC 20037, or by e-mail to:

~~askncela@ncela.gwu.edu~~ askncela@ncela.gwu.edu; Tel. (202) 467-0867; Fax: (800) 531-9347.



Director: Joel Gomez
Associate Director: Minerva Gorena
Assistant Director: Barbara Silcox
Production Editor: Anneka Kindler
Contributing Writers: NCBE Staff

