

FEDERAL NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



- In 1991, the gap in adult education participation rates between adults who had a high school diploma or less and those with additional postsecondary education or technical training was 27 percentage points. In 1995, the gap had increased to 32 percentage points.

- Disparities in college enrollment between White and minority students did not improve between 1990 and 1994.

- Disparities in college completion between White and Black students did not improve between 1992 and 1995, and worsened between White and Hispanic students.

GOAL 7: Safe, Disciplined, and Alcohol and Drug-Free Schools — Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

- Between 1991 and 1995, the percentage of 10th graders who reported that they had used an illicit drug during the previous year increased significantly, from 24 percent to 36 percent.

- Between 1993 and 1995, there was no change in the percentage of 10th graders who reported that they had used alcohol during the previous year.

- Attempted drug sales at school increased significantly between 1992 and 1995, according to student reports.

- In 1991, four out of ten 10th graders reported that they had been threatened or injured at school during the previous year. By 1995, the percentage had been significantly reduced.

- One out of every ten public school teachers reported in 1991 that he or she had been threatened or physically attacked by a student from his or her school during the previous year. By 1994, that proportion had increased to about one out of every seven.

- In 1992, 17 percent of 10th graders reported that other students interfered with their own learning at least six times a week. No reduction in class disruptions was seen over the next three years

- In 1991, over one-third of all secondary school teachers felt that student misbehavior interfered with their teaching. This percentage had risen to 46 percent by 1994.

GOAL 8: Parental Participation — Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

- In 1996, 78 percent of public elementary and middle schools reported that more than half of their parents attended regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences during the school year.

- In 1996, 41 percent of public elementary and middle schools reported that parent input is considered when making policy decisions in three or more areas.

- In 1993, 63 percent of parents of students in Grades 3-12 reported that they participated in two or more activities in their child's school. By 1996, the percentage of participating parents had not increased.

—U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION
11/20/96

McCORMICK NAMED CHAIR OF DIRECT LOAN TASK FORCE

■(WASHINGTON) U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley has selected Joe L. McCormick to serve as chairperson of the Education Department's Direct Loan Task Force.

In his new duties, McCormick will oversee the activities of the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program, under which the federal government issues loans directly to students through schools rather than through private lenders. More than 1,600 postsecondary institutions are now signed up to issue direct loans for nearly two million students. In the program's first two years, more than \$10 billion in direct loans were issued, and another \$12 billion will be made in this, its third year.

McCormick brings more than 29 years of experience in student financial aid management to his new post. He will replace the current chair, Diane Sedicum Voigt, who retires in December. The task force is under the Office of Student Financial Assistance in the Office of Postsecondary Education.

—U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION
11/21/96

"Scholars are men of peace, they bear no arms, but their tongues are sharper than Actius his razor; their pens carry farther and give a louder report than thunder; I had rather stand in the shock of a basilico [a large cannon] than in the fury of a merciless pen."

Sir Thomas Browne
Religio Medici, 1643

ENERGY

NEW ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES GIVEN COMMERCIAL BOOST

■(WASHINGTON) Eight projects utilizing renewable energy technologies have been selected for negotiation by the Department of Energy to receive up to \$14 million in grants or cooperative agreements. These projects, which include support for a "green pricing" utility project, commercialization of a new type of thin-film solar cell and ethanol production from potato wastes, will leverage an additional \$37 million from companies in California, Massachusetts, Colorado, Pennsylvania, New York, Florida, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

In announcing the selections, DOE's Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Christine A. Ervin said, "The winning projects have high potential for commercial success and environmental benefit. They also demonstrate that financial barriers to commercializing renewable energy technologies can be overcome with appropriate partnerships and leadership."

DOE's Commercialization Ventures Program was started in 1989 to help viable, emerging renewable energy technologies enter the marketplace by reducing financial barriers to commercialization and by leveraging private sector funding. The eight winning projects were selected out of 76 applications submitted by state energy offices.

—U.S. DEPT. OF ENERGY
11/18/96

DOE AGREES TO SETTLEMENT IN RADIATION EXPERIMENT CASES

■(WASHINGTON) In New York this week at the American Public Health Association annual meeting, Secretary of Energy Hazel R. O'Leary announced the final settlement in 12 of 18 human radiation experiment cases involving the injection of plutonium and uranium. Family members of 11 persons injected with plutonium and as well as one woman injected with uranium as part of Cold War-era research experiments will share a total of \$4.8 million as part of a settlement agreed to by the Department of Energy and the Department of Justice.

In addition to providing financial compensation, as part of the settlement Secretary O'Leary plans to personally meet with

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