

Education News & Notes

No Child Left Behind: One Year Later

(NAPSA)—It has been just over a year since President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), answering the question: Does the federal government have a significant role to play in K-12 education?

In enacting this landmark legislation, Congress and the President answered it with passion and pragmatism. There has been bipartisan support to make the law a reality in every classroom in every county in America, based upon standards and accountability. Real progress is being made: five states have had their accountability plans approved and all 50 states have submitted their accountability plans on time. The U.S. Department of Education is conducting informal meetings with state representatives to consult with them.

So what can the rest of us do?

Quite a lot, actually, says Kurt Landgraf, president and CEO of Educational Testing Service (ETS).

Just recently, the New Jersey Department of Education awarded ETS a four-year, \$35 million contract to oversee the development and administration of reading and math tests for more than 200,000 third- and fourth-grade students. The New Jersey contract is the third testing program ETS will manage to help states and territories comply with their requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act, after those in California and Puerto Rico. In addition, ETS is a test development subcontractor for K-12 testing programs in Georgia and Florida. ETS reports that it looks forward to working with all of them to provide these assessments so that their children may continue to demonstrate their educational progress.

But the testing service has done more than just win major testing contracts. With all the



“Parents give standardized testing good grades when they learn more about it,” says Kurt Landgraf, president and CEO of Educational Testing Service.

emphasis on testing in NCLB, many people have questions and concerns about the proper role of assessment in their schools. In the face of the very real need for information about standardized testing, it is clear that those who support standards-based reform, education accountability, and the use of standardized testing as one key element to achieve those objectives have to take their case to voters, taxpayers, opinion leaders, and public policymakers.

Landgraf says the organization believes it has to make an extra effort to reach out to teachers and parents, to answer their questions and listen to their concerns. The overarching goal is to increase people’s understanding of testing and how it supports teaching and learning—to help the public make informed judgments about what is happening in the nation’s schools.

With that in mind, the testing service has initiated a special effort called “Log On, Let’s Talk.” Its purpose is to stress appropriate assessment use and to provide facts and insights.

For more information, visit www.ets.org/testing.