



OVER THE BACK FENCE

April 2005 Issue number 10

Robert G. Rogers, Executive Director
219 North Branch, Bluffs, IL 62621

E-mail rrogers@adams.net

Phone: 217 754-3726

Web address: www.airssedu.com

Fax: 217 754-9966

Please duplicate and send to members in your district.

"Pursuing Excellence in Small and Rural Schools"

"It sounds odd, doesn't it, for the President to stand up and say, that we need to focus on reading in high school. But that's the state of affairs. Someday, when No Child Left Behind is fully implemented and kicked in, there are not going to need to be early intervention programs or intervention reading programs in high school. But, today, we need them."

President George W. Bush
January 12, 2005

FY06 FEDERAL EDUCATION BUDGET SUMMARY

Three years ago, President Bush signed into law the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The new law reflected a commitment to ensuring that all students, regardless of background, have the opportunity to obtain a quality education and reach proficiency in core academic subjects.

States, school districts and schools are still doing the hard work of implementing NCLB, but, according to the federal government, results are promising. Most of this progress, however, has been at the elementary level, where No Child Left Behind programs target most of their resources. Again, according to the Feds, in too many school districts across the nation, the **longer students stay in school, the more they fall behind**, with too many students dropping out altogether.

For this reason, President Bush begins his second term of office determined to *finish the job with American High Schools*. (Quote)

The budget has \$56.0 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Education. (This is a decrease of \$529.6 million or about .9 percent from the 2005 level)

The 2006 request includes \$1.24 billion for a new High School Initiative that would hold high schools accountable for teaching all students and provide timely intervention for those who are not learning at grade level. (See the March AIRSS issue)

The 2006 discretionary budget has additional priorities: a \$603 million increase for Title I Grants to Local Education Agencies; a \$508 million increase for the reauthorized Special Education Grants to state programs; an \$830 million increase for Pell Grants; and \$500 million for a new Teacher Incentive Fund. This Fund would provide formula grants to reward effective teachers and create incentives to attract qualified teachers to high-need schools, as well as competitive grants to design and implement performance-based compensation systems that change the way school districts pay teachers.

In addition to the \$1.24 billion for a High School Initiative, the President's proposal includes \$250 million to help States develop and implement new High School Assessments (more testing?). Funding is also proposed for Striving Readers Program at \$175 million; \$120 million for a new Secondary Education Mathematics Initiative; \$22 million increase for the Advanced Placement Programs; and a \$12 million increase for a State Scholars Capacity Building Program to encourage more states to implement State Scholars Programs.

Here is a synopsis of the FY06 Budget:

\$13.3 billion	Title I
2.92 billion	Improving Teacher Quality (State)
1.0 billion	Reading First (State)
11.1 billion	Special Education (States)
412 million	State Assessment Grants
104 million	Early Reading First (Pre-school)
676 million	English Language Acquisition (LEP)
164 million	Research Development
50 million	Choice Incentive Fund (Competitive)
27 million	Voluntary Public School Choice
219 million	Charter School Grants
37 million	Charter Schools Facilities Program

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

In 2006, the Department of Education will administer over \$78 billion in grants, loans, and work-study assistance to help students pay for postsecondary education, including \$62 billion in guaranteed and direct student loans and over \$13 billion in Pell Grants.