

# EDUCATION DAILY®

The education community's independent daily news service

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW — 2008

### States get new 'interpretation' of provisions for ELLs

ED overhauls administration, monitoring of LEP accountability

By Sarah D. Sparks

Accountability for limited-English-proficient students has remained one of the more confusing and muddled provisions of NCLB for states and districts to implement.

Yet in the past year, the Education Department has made major overhauls of its own administration and monitoring of LEP accountability under Title I and Title III. ED also released the most detailed new programmatic and fiscal guidance on the program since NCLB first passed.

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## THE YEAR IN REVIEW — 2008

### ED overhauls ELL accountability systems

States and districts have struggled to calculate and report accountability for limited-English-proficient students under NCLB, but the Education Department in 2008 made major overhauls to the administration and monitoring of LEP accountability that were intended to create a more uniform system.

This week, *Education Daily*® offers the Year in Review, a retrospective of major education-related issues and events in 2008.

In Tuesday's issue, we examined how ED made regulatory and administrative changes to NCLB, despite congressional inaction on reauthorization in 2008.

In today's issue, we review how ED altered Title III administration and guidance to serve the increasing number of English-language-learner students.

In Thursday's issue, we will recap the comings and goings of ED officials in 2008 and explore how Education Secretary Margaret Spellings advanced the Bush administration's education priorities during her final year in office.

## Today's Highlights

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## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

### Obama picks Duncan to be next education secretary

Chicago schools CEO would be second urban superintendent to assume reins

President-elect Barack Obama on Tuesday selected Chicago Public Schools Chief Executive Officer Arne Duncan to become the nation's ninth education secretary.

Obama made the announcement at Dodge Renaissance Academy in Chicago — a school with more than 400 students in pre-K through grade 8 that serves as a teacher training site in partnership with the Academy for Urban School Leadership.

*Obama makes pick at teacher training academy, see p. 3*

"We need a new vision for a 21st century education system — one where we aren't just supporting existing schools but spurring innovation; where we're not just investing more money but demanding more reform; where parents take responsibility for their children's success; where we're recruiting, retaining and rewarding an army of new teachers; where we hold our schools, teachers and government accountable for results; and where we expect all our children not only to graduate high school but to graduate college and get a good-paying job," Obama said.

"These are precisely the goals to which Arne Duncan has devoted his life."

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**DUNCAN** (continued from page 1)**Duncan's background**

A Chicago native, the 44-year-old Duncan is a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard University who has headed the nation's third-largest school system since 2001. After a stint playing professional basketball in Australia, Duncan returned to Chicago in 1992 to direct the Ariel Education Initiative to improve the education of inner-city children in Chicago's South Side.

Duncan joined CPS in 1998 and served as deputy chief of staff to then-CPS CEO Paul Vallas, who began his tenure in 1995 when Mayor Richard Daley assumed control of city schools.

A personal friend of the Obamas and a basketball companion of the president-elect, Duncan embraces accountability and the need to provide professional development for teachers. He has also pushed for community and corporate support for schools and has backed "whole child" education reforms.

In addition, Duncan has been a key supporter of Daley's Renaissance 2010 effort to increase the number of quality charter schools in the city.

Duncan's nomination is "an excellent choice, given the controversy over who was going to be education secretary — an entrepreneur or a traditionalist," said Robert Peterkin, a former urban superintendent in Milwaukee and the director of the Urban Superintendents Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Duncan's participation in a forum at the school early in his Chicago tenure showed that he was "very much a contributor but much more a learner," Peterkin said.

Thomas Payzant, the former superintendent of Boston Public Schools and a professor of practice at HGSE, said Duncan represented a "terrific selection" and would use his experience in urban schools on the national stage.

The experience Duncan brings will help "in the development of federal policy," said Payzant, who served as an assistant secretary for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education during the Clinton administration. Duncan will be able to "talk to people on the Hill who are making the policy about the impact it will have on local school districts," Payzant said.

"From my own experience as assistant secretary, that was something people on the Hill come to appreciate."

**Urban education reformer**

If confirmed by the Senate, Duncan would become the second urban superintendent to assume the nation's top education job. Roderick Paige, the former superintendent of the Houston Inde-

pendent School District, was the first and served as President George W. Bush's first education secretary from 2001 to 2005.

Duncan told *Education Daily*® in a recent interview that Obama could make an impact early in his administration on education through simultaneously increasing the quality of early childhood education, improving K-12 education, and boosting college access and affordability.

"Honestly, I think we've lost our way on education as a country," Duncan said. "America used to lead the industrialized world in the number of high school graduates and the number of college graduates."

Duncan is likely to push significant innovations in the U.S. school system, including extended learning time, a doubling of charter schools, and pay-for-performance plans developed in concert with teachers.

"We desperately need more time with our students," he told *Education Daily*®. "Our school year and school day are dramatically too short."

He added that schools open 12 to 14 hours a day, six to seven days a week have the potential to boost student achievement significantly and can serve as community beacons in which schools become the "heart of the community" and "parents and students learn together."

Duncan said 150 such community schools in CPS — 25 percent of the district total — have reduced student mobility from school to school, a major problem in urban school districts. CPS has entered into partnerships with 400 nonprofits, such as the YMCA and the Polk Bros. Foundation, for the provision of a variety of services, such as health and after-school care, and the management of the schools.

**Education reform, economic recovery**

Obama said Tuesday that in the long run, education would make the most impact on boosting the economy, and educators should make "no excuses and [expect] high achievement from every child."

Obama said he and Duncan agree that schools in Chicago "aren't as good as they need to be." But Obama said he was impressed by Duncan's dedication to "continuous, steady improvement."

"That's what we're looking for" in an education secretary, Obama said. "We're not going to transform every school overnight."

Duncan's task, and a propensity he has shown as the head of CPS, is to find "new, innovative ways to make schools better," Obama said, adding that he and Duncan shared a "deep pragmatism in how we go about this."

"Let's not be clouded by ideology when it comes to our kids," Obama said.