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## Goals 2000: Underachieving Program to Be Expelled in September

### What is Goals 2000?

In 1989, a coalition of state governors concerned about the ailing state of America's public schools proposed a solution: "Goals 2000." This program would set educational goals for the nation's public schools to be achieved by the year 2000, create a framework for implementing the goals, and provide incentives for the states to cooperate in meeting the goals.

By 1994, the eight national goals were in place and Goals 2000 was an official federal program.

On the surface, these goals to improve America's schools were unobjectionable. But many conservatives, including home schoolers, identified dangerous pitfalls in Goals 2000.

First, although Goals 2000 was presented to the states as a program in which they could "voluntarily" participate, opting out meant passing up significant federal funds as well. However, the states found quite a few mandates hidden in the small print, requiring them to:

- submit grant proposals;
- submit "improvement plans" for the U.S. Secretary of Education's approval;
- receive penalties for failure to comply with their own improvement plans;
- form "partnerships" between local schools, businesses, and institutions of higher education; and
- coordinate their Goals 2000 efforts with School-to-Work and other social reform programs.

### The Eight National Goals

1. *By the year 2000, all children will start school ready to learn.*
2. *By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.*
3. *By the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation's modern economy.*
4. *By the year 2000, the Nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.*
5. *By the year 2000, United States students will be the first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.*
6. *By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.*
7. *By the year 2000, 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.*
8. *By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.*

**From:** <http://www.negp.gov/page3-1.htm>

## '89 Education Summit's Goals Still Unmet

By Kenneth J. Cooper  
*Washington Post*  
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The nation has not met any of the eight educational goals for the year 2000 set a decade ago by President Bush and the governors of all 50 states, although measurable progress has been made toward the goals pertaining to preschoolers and student achievement in math and reading, a national panel announced yesterday.

The National Education Goals Panel's final report before the 2000 deadline showed that more children were "ready to learn"—healthier and better prepared through preschool or parental reading—when they entered kindergarten. Students also demonstrated higher math proficiency, particularly in elementary and middle school, and a slight improvement in reading proficiency in middle school.

In the case of two goals, teacher quality and school safety, the panel reported the nation has actually gone backward. The percentage of teachers holding a college degree in the main subject they teach dropped from 66 percent to 63 percent, and there was a significant increase in student use of illicit drugs, from 24 percent to 37 percent in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. . . .

Second, the program followed the unconstitutional pattern of shifting control of education from parents and local school officials to Washington, D.C. Conservatives also criticized Goals 2000 for establishing public schools as the coordinators and monitors of various social and welfare services for children.

Although the legislation did not directly address home education, home schoolers recognized that public school policies—especially at the national level—often end up as private and home education regulations.

## The Opposition

The National Center of Home Education, the federal lobbying division of Home School Legal Defense Association, has been keeping a wary eye on Goals 2000 since its inception. In late 1993 when Congress prepared to vote to authorize Goals 2000, the National Center alerted home schoolers around the nation asking them to oppose the measure.

In 1997 and 1998, the National Center lobbied House and Senate leadership and orchestrated nationwide alerts to urge passage of the Gorton Amendment—legislation that would defund Goals 2000 and block grant the money to the states instead. Due to the diligent efforts of home school moms and dads, the Gorton Amendment was passed by the Senate, but was removed in conference committee.

Following HSLDA's Home School Freedom Works Rally at the Capitol on September 23, 1999, the National Center organized lobbying appointments for 1800 home schoolers with 250 congressional offices. Later that fall, these visits paid off as congressmen and their staff demonstrated that they recognized and understood the opposition against Goals 2000.

## What Happened?

In early November 1999, the National Center received a tip that although the House had refused to fund or reauthorize it, Goals 2000 funding was being put back into the 1999 Education/Labor/HHS Appropriations bill. Other contacts on Capitol Hill confirmed this discouraging report. Several congressional offices told the National Center that "Clinton wants Goals 2000. It is his pet project. There is no way we can repeal Goals 2000."

National Center staff contacted Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott's office and other Senate and House leaders. They persistently explained home schoolers' opposition to Goals 2000, again asking for its repeal. House Education and Workforce Committee Chairman Bill Goodling (R-PA) responded encouragingly, promising not to settle for anything less than repeal of Goals 2000. Meanwhile, the National Center's Congressional Action Program (CAP) orchestrated a national alert, generating hundreds of calls from home schoolers to key leadership offices.

The citizens' message got through to negotiators. On November 17, Congressman Goodling, House and Senate leadership, and President Clinton reached an agreement on the 1999 appropriations bill. An amendment was added ending all Goals 2000 funding to the states and officially repealing key sections of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, effective September 30, 2000. The president signed the bill into law on November 30, 1999. With federal "seed" money cut off, the National Center expects state-level Goals 2000 programs to wither away.

While many conservative, pro-family groups have opposed Goals 2000 over the years, a staffer of the Educational and Workforce Committee involved in the final negotiations remarked, "If HSLDA had not brought up the Goals 2000 issue, it would have never seen the light of day." The fight against Goals 2000 has been a long battle, but "the home schoolers kept up a constant drumbeat," said another staffer.

*Note: HSLDA congratulates all of you who faithfully and repeatedly called your congressmen over the years, urging repeal of Goals 2000. Congressman Bill Goodling also deserves a great deal of credit for his role in congressional and White House negotiations. And we thank God for graciously blessing our human efforts.*

## **Status Report on Goals 2000: Educate America Act**

### **What's Gone (after September 2000):**

#### **Title III**

- Over \$458,000,000 of U.S. Department of Education meddling in local education.
- All state mandates for Goals 2000 programs.
- All requirements to "coordinate Goals 2000 with School-to-Work programs"
- All state progress reports demonstrating compliance with Goals 2000.
- All direct Goals 2000 grants to local education agencies (which had created an end run around governors).
- All requirements for the state to submit "improvement plans" for achieving the federal Goals 2000 to the Secretary of Education.
- All requirements for "partnerships" between state educational systems, business and higher education to implement Goals 2000.
- All state compliance with federal Goals 2000 "content and performance standards."
- All requirements to implement training programs for parents.

- All Secretary of Education approval of innovative educational programs using Goals 2000 funds.
- All Goals 2000 progress reports to Congress by the Secretary of Education.
- All data gathering and database creation to monitor implementation of Goals 2000 standards.
- All funds for “restructuring” elementary and secondary education according to Goals 2000 standards.

#### **Title IV**

- All funds to instruct parents in child rearing and to “strengthen partnerships between parents and professionals in meeting the educational needs of children from birth to 5.”
- All mandates to use funds for “parental assistance programs” including “Parents as Teachers” programs and “Home Instruction for Preschool Youngsters.”

#### **What’s Left (after September 2000):**

##### **Title I**

- The description of the eight National Goals which all start with “By the year 2000.” (For example one of the Goals is “By the year 2000, every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence and the unauthorized use of firearms and alcohol. . .”)

##### **Title II**

- The National Goals Panel made up of approximately 18 governors, congressmen, and state legislators. Although the panel continues to promote the national goals, it has no authority to do anything except hold hearings and meetings and annually report to Congress the progress of the nation in achieving those goals. Nor does the panel have authority to require progress reports from the states.

##### **Title V**

- The National Skills Standards Board, created by Goals 2000: Educate America Act, had a “sunset” clause written into the original law. In language that should have left no room for misunderstanding, it was “terminated,” “repealed,” and “sunsetting” as of September 30, 1999. However, the National Center discovered that the board was funded for \$7,000,000 in the FY2000 budget agreements. HSLDA has brought this discrepancy to the attention of education committee and leadership staff. We exploring ways to rescind this funding.

##### **Title VI through X**

- Separate federal grants to the states and organizations, not tied to Goals 2000, for fighting drugs, educating international students and minority students, and for educational research. All these programs are slated for improvement, consolidation, or termination by Congress during the 2000 session.

*by Chris Klicka, Senior Counsel for  
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