

EQUITY 2000 Becomes A More Integrated School Services Model Under New Leadership

The College Board would like to announce a change in leadership in the EQUITY 2000 program, and to explain how the College Board plans to move quickly to institutionalize this major education reform initiative. The director of EQUITY 2000, Dr. Vinetta Jones, has announced her resignation from the College Board in order to assume the position of Dean of the School of Education at Howard University. Dr. R. Stephen Green, the director of the Pacesetter program, a position he has held for four years, assumed leadership of EQUITY 2000 on August 3, 1999.

The College Board will continue to support the academic development of traditionally underserved students at the six pilot sites, and at the 16 new school districts that have joined the EQUITY 2000 network since dissemination efforts began. Over the last eight years, EQUITY 2000 has led the national school reform movement in many ways, and many valuable lessons have been learned from this experience. These include policies to eliminate dead-end tracking and other policies and practices that level the playing field for all students; the importance of sustained professional development for teachers, counselors and principals that focuses on high achievement for *all students*; the need for supplementary educational experiences for students beyond their regular courses; the significant role of parent and community involvement in the reform effort; and benefits of using disaggregated student enrollment and achievement data to drive reform.

The question now is how best to build on these important lessons in the years ahead and apply them in all the work at the College Board and influence the academic achievement of millions of students in schools and districts across the nation—not just students at EQUITY 2000 sites. EQUITY 2000 is being transformed from a separate, stand-alone project to an activity that is fully integrated into all that the Board does as a nonprofit service organization.

In EQUITY 2000, Advanced Placement, Pacesetter, and various assessments, the College Board possesses many resources that can arm teachers, counselors, and parents with the experiences and skills necessary to set high academic standards and then assist all students in meeting those standards. The focus during the next 12 months is to construct a model for delivering school-level services that draws on the full range of these resources, including EQUITY 2000 workshops and institutes, AP teacher training, the use of the highly regarded Pacesetter curricula, and the strategic use of the PSAT/NMSQT to build college-going aspirations. If these efforts to craft this model are successful, the outcome will be a suite of services that the College Board can offer to the 50 states, the nation's 15,000 school districts, and individual schools that provides teaching/learning/assessment/guidance tools that can help all students prepare for college.

How will this affect plans for sustaining EQUITY 2000? The College Board will continue to offer EQUITY 2000 services to schools and districts that have been beneficial to teachers, counselors, principals and students at the EQUITY 2000 sites. The EQUITY 2000 staff and their national faculty will continue to offer mathematics and school counseling workshops as they have done over the past eight years—but starting now they will make those workshops available (and publicize them broadly) to *all* school districts, not just to EQUITY 2000 sites. They will continue to provide technical assistance to districts—but again, will also take deliberate steps to offer that technical assistance to all districts.

The intention is to incorporate the programmatic elements of EQUITY 2000 into many of the other outreach and program delivery efforts, part of the work in constructing and testing the new service delivery model. Some examples of how this new approach will work in the field are efforts to expand minority and low-income student participation in AP courses, a Pacesetter program that includes courses for middle/junior high students, the use of the PSAT/NMSQT as both a diagnostic tool and a tool for building college-going aspirations, and new internet-based services.

The research agenda for EQUITY 2000 continues unabated. The College Board has just received a grant of \$650,000 from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to support a longitudinal study of students at the EQUITY 2000 sites. The goal is to determine the impact of EQUITY 2000 on the enrollment and achievement patterns, and college-going rates, of students at the EQUITY 2000 pilot sites. This information will be extremely valuable to the development of school-based services based on the lessons learned from EQUITY 2000.