

# Congressional report: N.C. emerges as national leader in education

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STAFF WRITER

North Carolina's achievement in education recently jumped ahead of other states, according to a report released by the National Education Goals Panel.

Congress created eight educational goals in 1990 to improve learning and teaching in school systems across the country.

According to the report, North Carolina became a leader in education

through the realization of these goals and the subsequent improvement of its school system.

Gov. Jim Hunt, chairman of the panel, said the state's progress pleased him. "This report from the NEGP shows that we're on the right track," he said.

Hunt said his Smart Start program and the Excellent Schools Act, which raised teacher pay, helped North Carolina reach its educational goals.

"We're doing so many good things,

and we're making progress because we're doing it together," he said.

Weaver Rogers, executive director for the state board of education, said a big factor in reaching state educational goals proved to be parental involvement.

"North Carolina schools are doing something called sight-based decision making, which is when parents and teachers come together and discuss issues," Rogers said.

"Education is a focus for the whole community, not just the schools."

Joyce Elliott, president of the N.C. Association of Educators, said North Carolina's high rank in the report did not surprise her.

"In the past few years we have implemented many new educational programs, and now we are finally seeing the result," she said.

Elliott said she did not believe North Carolina should add anything else to the programs already in place.

"Now I think we need to focus on working out any problems that may

already exist and not worry about implementing anything else."

She said teachers found different learning styles helpful, because it was almost impossible to teach all children in the same way.

"The most important thing we can do is subscribe to the philosophy that all children can learn," she said.

Weaver said he believed North Carolina was improving in education because of qualified and experienced teachers.

He said he supported state universities' efforts in educating future teachers.

"One thing colleges are doing in their education programs is encouraging students to go out and acquire hands-on experience," he said.

Libby Vesilind, coordinator of middle grades and UNC's School of Education, said UNC established a collaboration between five professional schools.

"Our students are out there in the schools learning how to become better teachers."



## IN THE NEWS

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### Secret Service arrests intruder in White House

WASHINGTON — The Secret Service detained a woman wandering through the West Wing of the White House asking for President Clinton on Saturday and said they would charge her with unlawful entry.

Clinton was taping an interview at television studios across town at the time. "There were no weapons and no threat or danger that we have determined at this time," Secret Service Public Affairs Officer Jim Mackin said late Saturday.

The woman, smartly dressed in a long brown cape with a matching hat and handbag, was not being publicly identified until formal charges were filed, Mackin said. Agents were still trying to determine how she gained access to the West Wing area, which is off-limits to the general public, he added.

At the time she was detained in the White House driveway, just before 5 p.m., several special tour groups were milling about the area with their White House staff escorts and special-access passes.

Just before uniformed agents calmly restrained her by the wrist and searched her handbag, she was seen — without any visible access pass — in the basement of the press briefing room. There, she nonchalantly approached two reporters, asked "Where's the president?" and made a reference to having to meet him "in the Oval."

The Oval Office is about 30 paces from the entrance to the briefing room.

### Hussein statement brings threat of confrontation

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein declared Sunday that his country had "to choose between sacrifice or slavery," suggesting that a confrontation with the United States might be inevitable.

His strident comments came as Iraq barred U.N. weapon inspection teams that included Americans for a seventh day and sent its deputy prime minister to argue its case before the U.N. Security Council.

More ominously, the statement came as Iraq has threatened to shoot down an American U-2 spy plane scheduled to resume flights over the country Monday.

Hussein said Iraq has "been put in a position where it has to choose either to live honorably and with dignity or to face all the possibilities."

Films of the U.N. inspection teams' activities in Iraq showed "how much material and psychological harm people of Iraq have endured," according to the statement on Iraqi television, carried also by the British Broadcasting Corp.

"This path, however, has not led us to any result, and there is not the least hope that it will lead us to any result," he added. "We have to choose between sacrifice or slavery."

### Scientists consider genes to grow heart bypasses

ORLANDO, Fla. — Scientists tinkering with gene therapy think they have found a way to make bad hearts grow their own bypasses.

The idea is to inject extra genes directly into the heart that will trigger it to sprout new blood vessels within two to three weeks. If all goes well, these will work at least as well as the ones surgeons stitch into place during coronary bypass surgery.


So far, doctors from Boston have tried the gene therapy on people with dangerously clogged arteries in the legs, where it seemed to have spared some from threatened amputations.

For several years, scientists have talked about manipulating genes to cure a variety of human ills. But until now, there has been little firm evidence that it will do any good.


"This is the first time that any gene therapy has been shown to be clinically successful," said Dr. Jeffrey Isner of St. Elizabeth's Medical Center in Boston.

"This is opening a door to genetic therapy in cardiovascular disease," said Dr. Valentin Fuster of Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City, incoming president of the heart association.


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