

### **American education by ukrainian educator's eyes**

Americans have shown a great concern for education since early colonial times. The first settlers, in fact, included an unusually high proportion of educated people. In the Massachusetts Bay colony in the early 1600s, as the British historian Rowse has pointed out, 'there was an average of one university man to every 40 or 50 families – much higher than in Old England'. From 1640s on, Massachusetts required all towns with more than 50 families to provide a schoolmaster at public expense.

Americans pay much attention to education nowadays and I saw it everywhere visiting the USA as a finalist of 'Open World' – 2008 program. Our group visited educational establishments of different levels in a small town of Roseburg (State of Oregon). A lot of things impressed me in this trip but there are two significant features of American education which give it its present character: its size, and its great variety at all levels.

The United States does not have a national system of education. Education is considered to be a matter for the people of each state. Although there is a federal Department of Education, but its function is merely to gather information, to advise, and to help finance certain educational programs but not to control. Very often we heard such saying that in America 'education is a national concern, a state responsibility, and a local function'. As a result, each of the 50 states is free to determine its own system for its public schools.

In January 2002, the 'No Child Left Behind' Act was signed by G. Bush. The act contains the four basic education reforms principles: 1 – stronger accountability for results; 2 – local control and flexibility; 3 – expanded options for parents; 4 – an emphasis on effective and proven teaching methods. In sum, this law – in partnership with parents, communities, school leadership and classroom teachers seeks to ensure that every child in America receives a great education and that no child is left behind.