Dropout Prevention Update
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National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

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Top Stories
Teachers on average spend about $400 of their own money each year on supplies, the National Education Association estimates. But this year, under the economic-stimulus package they will be able to recoup some of those expenses.
http://www.you-click.net/GoNow/a15864a54911a92915319a13

San Francisco is attempting a bold new experiment in desegregation, where socioeconomic criteria, and not race, are used to segregate schools.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A42355-2002Mar17.html

Kentucky schools are changing starting times to allow high school students to get more sleep.
http://www.kentucky.com/mld/heraldleader/news/local/2911269.htm

Funding Sources
Grantmakers are eager to fund teachers' ideas for creative, hands-on learning. Eight tips for turning creative ideas into convincing grant proposals are provided.
http://www.publiceducation.org/cgi-bin/downloadmanager/publications/p98.asp

The Gateway Olympic Sponsorship PC Donation Program will donate up to 4,500 computers to nonprofits, with priority given to schools and community centers that assist underserved areas. Deadline: April 26, 2002. http://www.gateway.com/olympics/donations.shtml

3COM is offering several $100,000 Urban Challenge Grants. It's a chance to provide needed technology for your education system. Grantees may also be eligible for assistance from AmeriCorps*VISTA members at a reduced cost-share amount. Deadline: April 19, 2002.
http://lists.eschoolnews.com/cgi-bin/nph-t.pl?U=14&M=753738&MS=100601

The Coming Up Taller Awards annually recognize and reward excellence in community arts and humanities programs for underserved children and youth. Ten awardees will receive $10,000 each and an individualized plaque. http://www.cominguptaller.org/

Policy Updates
Hidden away in Section 9525 of the "No Child Left Behind" Act is a provision mandating equal access to the Boy Scouts for before or after school meetings. The penalty for denying access to the Boy Scouts or any other Title 36 youth group is that the US Department of Education will rescind any funding provided to that school.
http://www.principals.org/services/legal_lowdown.html

A negotiating committee reached consensus on proposed federal rules for state standards and assessment systems under the revised Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
http://www.you-click.net/GoNow/a15864a55321a92915319a13

Effective Strategies
Family Involvement
This report addresses two major questions: Do children's parents acknowledge the efforts that schools reportedly are making? Do schools report the same level of parent participation in school programs as parents do? http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2001076

Increasingly, parent teacher organizations are funding items that schools say they need but can't afford. This article includes six guidelines for building school support. http://www.ptotoday.com/0302ptogroups.html

Instructional Technology
Becoming a laptop middle school requires a comprehensive plan. This important story is for anyone considering a project- and standards-based laptop program.
(Go to this page and scroll down until you find the "Laptops for All" link.) http://glef.org/pbl.html

The eSN Special Report, *Assessment and Accountability* is free just by filling out the form on their web site. http://www.eschoolnews.com/resources/reports/assessment/

Professional Development
Harvard's *Project on the Next Generation of Teachers* reveals the importance of site-based, ongoing, rich teacher collaboration across experience levels for effective new teacher induction. http://www.ascd.org/readingroom/edlead/0203/johnson.html The full report is available at http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/

The best and most reliable methods for realizing improvements in schools with demographic disadvantages and a history of low achievement are largely simple and direct, says school improvement consultant Mike Schmoker. Staff developers can promote and facilitate standards-based activities at the ground level. http://www.nsdc.org/library/jsd/schmoker232.html

Systemic Renewal
The Baltimore City Public School System will transform nine neighborhood high schools into small learning communities and create six to eight new smaller Innovation High Schools. http://www.pnnonline.org/education/baltimore030602.asp

A new study outlines key obstacles that influence educational achievement that are often overlooked during education reform including: absenteeism, tardiness, low expectations, school finance disparities, lack of strong messages that learning is important, lack of quality technology, and inadequate attention to the developmental needs of preschool children. http://www.ets.org/news/02011701.html

Resources & Tools
Only 15 states currently have testing programs that meet the new requirements of ESEA. This new ECS report summarizes the law, includes information about timelines and funding levels, looks at states' readiness to implement provisions of the new law and provides key questions for policymakers to consider. http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/32/37/3237.doc

Southwest Educational Development Lab has a free report on the latest research on family and community connections with schools: *Emerging Issues in School, Family, & Community Connections*. The Lab has also developed a searchable database containing short summaries of over 140 publications. http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources

Dorothy Rich outlines the eight important categories that need to be included in report cards to parents. http://www.nsba.org/sbn/02-mar/030502-7.htm

May 7, 2002 will be National Teacher Day, a time for honoring teachers and recognizing the lasting contributions they make to our lives. http://www.pta.org/programs/tchappwk.htm

Feedback
We appreciate comments from our readers. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu Sources: ED Week, ESN School Technology Alert, Direct, Middle Web, PEN Weekly NewsBlast, RFP Bulletin, School Administrator News