

Dropout Prevention Update
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National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

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Top Stories

Once President Bush issued his 48-hour ultimatum to Saddam Hussein, school administrators here at home prepared for the worst—all while trying to have school days like any others. <http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=28war.h22>

The U.S. Department of Education has a new web site to help school officials prepare for emergencies such as natural disasters, violent crimes, and terrorist acts. <http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan/> <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/03-2003/03072003.html>

The federal government's proposed fiscal 2004 budget cuts or eliminates 45 education programs. <http://www.edweek.com/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=25budget-s1.h22>

Funding Sources

The Department of Education is now inviting applications under the Early Reading First (ERF) program. ERF is designed to transform existing early education programs into centers of excellence that provide high-quality, early education to young children, especially those from low-income homes. Deadline: April 11, 2003. <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/earlyreading/>

The BellSouth Foundation is currently accepting online concept papers for its 2003 Opportunity Grants program within one of four areas of priority: leadership, teacher quality, college-going minorities, and technology. Requests should not exceed \$75,000. Deadline: April 25, 2003. <http://www.bellsouthfoundation.org/grants/og/index.html>

The American Honda Foundation makes grants of \$10,000 to \$100,000 to K-12 schools, colleges, universities, trade schools, and others for programs that benefit youth and scientific education. Deadline: May 1, 2003. <http://www.hondacorporate.com/community/>

Policy Updates

Currently, 20 states are being challenged in court for failing to provide adequate funding to all schools. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0310/p02s02-ussc.html>

Education Secretary Rod Paige has joined a rebellion against sole reliance on traditional teacher certification. <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20030319-85270588.htm>

International Notes

On Wednesday, April 9th, as part of Global Action Week, in over 50 countries, thousands of people will be teaching and learning about "Girls Education: The Biggest Lesson." http://www.netaid.org/campaigns/actionweek/qce_home.pt

The Board on International Comparative Studies in Education calls for better research studies. http://www.edweek.org/ew/ew_printstory.cfm?slug=26compare.h22

Effective Strategies

Early Childhood

An evaluation of North Carolina's early childhood initiative, Smart Start, found that it had a significant positive impact on preschool quality and child development regardless of the racial or economic background of the students. <http://www.ncsmartstart.org/overview/releases/quality.pdf>

Early childhood development programs are rarely portrayed as economic development initiatives. Studies find that well-focused investments in early childhood development yield high public as well as private returns. <http://minneapolisfed.org/pubs/fedgaz/03-03/earlychild.cfm>

Family Involvement

NCES has just released *The Nation's Report Card: Parents' Guide to NAEP*.
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003480>

A new 30-page guide from Parent Leadership Associates takes a closer look at how the new federal law requires schools and districts to involve parents in the hard work of school improvement. <http://www.plassociates.org/publications.html#nclb>

Instructional Technologies

Welcome to the new face of public education. Called virtual or cyber charter schools, the programs combine public education, home schooling, virtual education and big business.
<http://www.jsonline.com/news/state/mar03/122550.asp>

Connected to the Future, reveals shifts in the digital divide for students.
<http://www.cpb.org/ed/resources/connected/>

With America on high alert for possible terrorist activity at the outset of war with Iraq, schools are being asked to do their part to help secure the nation's critical computer infrastructure from cyber attacks that could cripple the country's central nervous system.
<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStoryalert.cfm?ArticleID=4308>

Reading/Writing

This report finds that failure to properly diagnose and treat early reading difficulties has a disproportionately harmful effect on poor and minority students.
http://www.abell.org/pubsitems/ed_invisible_dyslexics.pdf

Sebastian Wren details ten common myths of reading instruction.
<http://www.sedl.org/reading/topics/myths.html>

Secretary Paige was in Atlanta to kick off the No Child Left Behind Summer Reading Achievers program. <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/03-2003/03202003.html>

Resources & Tools

A new Louisiana report suggests a self-perpetuating link between failing public school students and teachers with weak professional test scores. <http://www.nolalive.com/frontpage/t-p/index.ssf?base/news-0/1046069704177802.xml>

Twenty years after the landmark 1983 report *A Nation at Risk*, student achievement has barely budged, in part because the report's diagnosis failed to confront "essential issues of power and control" in U.S. schools. http://www.edweek.org/ew/ew_printstory.cfm?slug=25koret.h22

Helping At-Risk Students Meet Standards: A Synthesis of Evidence-Based Classroom Practices is a synthesis of research findings on effective strategies to assist low-achieving students in meeting standards. http://www.mcrel.org/PDF/Synthesis/5022RR_RS_HelpingAtRisk.pdf

Making the Case: A fact sheet on children and youth in out of school time.
http://www.niost.org/Factsheet_2003.PDF

Feedback

We appreciate comments from our readers. Please contact us at ndpc@clermson.edu Sources: Charity News, ECS, ENC, eSn, Education News/Commentaries & Reports, MCREL, NCES, PEN Weekly, SMHP

