Top Stories
The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network is pleased to announce that it has been awarded a $3.5 million five-year grant by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs to establish a National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities. The new Center will open January 1, 2004. Watch for exciting developments on our web site, or contact Mary Reimer reimer@clemson.edu for additional information.

Data from both federal and state education departments on the number of high school dropouts is highly misleading, experts say. [http://www.npr.org/rundowns/segment.php?wfid=1483698](http://www.npr.org/rundowns/segment.php?wfid=1483698)


Funding Sources

TECH CORPS offers an opportunity for middle schools across the country to apply for a grant to receive a fully-funded Student TECH CORPS program. Deadline: December 15, 2003. [http://www.studenttechcorps.org/grant](http://www.studenttechcorps.org/grant)

The Best Buy's Children's Foundation is offering support to schools and educators who use technology "to make learning fun." Any K-12 public, private, or parochial school within twenty-five miles of a Best Buy store is eligible to apply. Deadline: December 31, 2003. [http://communications.bestbuy.com/communityrelations/teach.asp](http://communications.bestbuy.com/communityrelations/teach.asp)

Policy Updates
States are reporting widely varying starting points as they make public the percentage of classes taught by "highly qualified teachers," under No Child Left Behind. [http://newsobserver.com/24hour/nation/story/1033119p-7252596c.htm](http://newsobserver.com/24hour/nation/story/1033119p-7252596c.htm)

As a way to help state leaders and educators obtain a picture of highly qualified teachers in their states, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has released *Meeting NCLB Goals for Highly Qualified Teachers: Estimates by State from Survey Data*. [http://www.ccsso.org/whats_new/new_publications/index.cfm](http://www.ccsso.org/whats_new/new_publications/index.cfm)

International Notes
The Netherlands is top of the class and the United States third from last among rich nations that help educate the world's poor, according to a report by the Global Campaign for Education. [http://www.campaignforeducation.org/ html/2003-news/11-rc-rept/frameset.shtml](http://www.campaignforeducation.org/html/2003-news/11-rc-rept/frameset.shtml)

China's one-child policy may have created a generation of little emperors, but the formal education system makes them well behaved and eager to learn. [http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/main.jhtml%3B$sessionid$MURTJKLS422CVQFIOMFCFF](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/main.jhtml%3B$sessionid$MURTJKLS422CVQFIOMFCFF)
Effective Strategies
Community Collaboration
*Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools,* features 20 different community school models across the country that help improve student performance by mobilizing community resources in support of student learning.
http://www.communityschools.org/mtdhomepage.html

The Fall 2003 issue of *The Evaluation Exchange* addresses the evolving nature of evaluating community-based initiatives.

Family Involvement
Last spring, Armstrong Middle School in Starkville, Mississippi implemented a new parent program that provides a good model of how schools can involve parents in student learning.
http://www.takingaim.org/aboutaim/feature_parent_night.htm

Did you know that on average, parents and teachers spend only 15 minutes a year talking to each other?

Instructional Technologies
A growing number of school systems nationwide are tapping into voice-over-internet-protocol (VoIP) technology to reap substantial long-term savings on their telecommunications systems.

An Innovation Odyssey continually posts ways teachers are using technology to support student learning. There's something for every subject, teaching style, and grade level.
http://www97.intel.com/odyssey/index.asp

New research provides substantial evidence connecting the use of technology to academic achievement.
http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/technology/foltos.htm

Reading/Writing
The Partnership for Reading has two booklets that use findings from scientifically based research to suggest how parents can help their young children become strong readers.
http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/earlychildhood.html

Kids Are Authors is an annual competition sponsored by Scholastic, Inc. and open to students in grades K-8.
http://teacher.scholastic.com/fairs/kaa/

Resources & Tools
Between the 1985-86 and 2002-03 school years, nearly 2 million students have been lost from public school enrollment costing the state of Texas nearly $500 billion.
http://www.idra.org/Newsltr/2003/Oct/Roy.htm#Art1


This summary of research explores "the power of expectations to affect student outcomes."

Feedback
*We appreciate comments from our readers. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu* Sources: ECS, EducationNews & Reports, ENC, eSn, IDRA, Middle Web, PEN Weekly, RFP Bulletin