Top Stories

The new high school equivalency examination, which demands more analysis and has fewer multiple-choice answers, drew fewer participants in its first year, but they passed at a slightly higher rate than in the past. [http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=43GED.h23](http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=43GED.h23)

Funding Sources
The Barbara Bush Foundation will offer grants of up to $65,000 to schools and other nonprofits to fund the development and/or expansion of literacy programs designed to build families of readers. Deadline: September 10, 2004. [http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com/nga.html](http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com/nga.html)

The Classroom Technology Grant program supports the integration of media technologies throughout the K-12 school curriculum by giving the recipients $1000 to buy media technologies used for teaching. Deadline: August 15, 2004. [http://www.ismf-forum.net/grants/about.php](http://www.ismf-forum.net/grants/about.php)

The SBC Excelerator grant funds may be used to connect the nation's neediest residents--including at-risk youth and underserved urban families--to important community resources. Grants range from $2,500 to $25,000. Deadline: August 13, 2004. [http://www.sbc.com/gen/corporate-citizenship?pid=58](http://www.sbc.com/gen/corporate-citizenship?pid=58)

Policy Updates
Over half of the nation's school districts will receive fewer Title I dollars this coming school year than they did last year, even though the No Child Left Behind Act is demanding more of all school districts. [http://www.cep-dc.org/pubs/Title1_Funds_15June2004/TitleI_15June2004_Paper.htm](http://www.cep-dc.org/pubs/Title1_Funds_15June2004/TitleI_15June2004_Paper.htm)

ECS's *Report to the Nation* provides a comprehensive and up-to-date analysis of states' progress toward implementing the No Child Left Behind Act. [http://www.ecs.org/00CN2044](http://www.ecs.org/00CN2044)

International Notes

Every secondary school has been told by the Government that it should have uniforms for its pupils and introduce the "house" system in the biggest shake-up of the education system in 60 years. [http://education.independent.co.uk/news/story.jsp?story=539474](http://education.independent.co.uk/news/story.jsp?story=539474)

Students With Disabilities

*Helping Helpers* is a brochure for coaches, tutors, and other volunteers that has tips on how to work with children in their groups who may have a learning disability or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. [http://www.ldonline.org/article.php?id=0&loc=82](http://www.ldonline.org/article.php?id=0&loc=82)

Effective Strategies
After-School Opportunities
After-School Programs: Expanding Access and Ensuring Quality, examines the federal government’s role in after-school programs, surveys current research on them, and offers recommendations to expand access and improve the quality of after-school programs. http://www.ppionline.org/ppi_ci.cfm?knlgAreaID=110&subsecID=900023&contentID=252753


Experience Corps has released a resource guide designed to help community organizations develop and enhance meaningful roles for older adults in after-school programs. http://www.experiencecorps.org/news/afterschoolreport/index.html

Early Literacy
By developing a computer model that mimics how children learn to read, two researchers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Stanford University track the development of a skilled reader, ultimately showing that phonics gives readers an edge, especially early on. http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=10401


Educational Technology
A coalition of high-tech companies and nonprofit organizations has issued a series of free tools to help teachers, administrators, and lawmakers incorporate specific “21st-century skills” into the core curriculum to better prepare students for today’s technology-infused workplace. http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=5133

Short video clips that reinforce key concepts are effective in increasing student achievement, according to a second research project. An earlier study found that video can improve learning in science and social studies. http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStory.cfm?ArticleID=5134

Jeff Cooper describes the growing use of TAPPED IN and other virtual learning communities (VLCs) to expand teaching and learning opportunities for students and educators. http://www.netc.org/circuit/2004/spring/build.html

Resources & Tools
The statistics presented in Locating the Dropout Crisis are deeply troubling. In 2,000 high schools across the country, a typical freshman class shrinks by 40 % or more by the time students reach their senior year. http://www.csos.jhu.edu/tdhs/rsch/Locating_Dropouts.pdf


Almost one in 10 students is subject to sexual misconduct by school workers, according to Educator Sexual Misconduct: A Synthesis of Existing Literature. http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/misconductreview/

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