Dropout Prevention Update  
September 1, 2004- Volume 4- Number 3  
National Dropout Prevention Center/Network  

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Online registration is available for the 16th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference,  
http://www.dropoutprevention.org/conferen/conferen.htm  

Top Stories  
An increasing number of urban districts are scrapping traditional high school grade structures and devising more flexible routes toward graduation to address high dropout rates.  
http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=44Courses.h23  

In some states, minority students are far more likely to fail high school exit exams than their white peers.  
http://www.ctredpol.org/  

On October 14, more than 6,000 communities will rally for afterschool programs by participating in the fifth anniversary of Lights On Afterschool! A variety of free materials are available.  

Funding Sources  
The Toshiba America Foundation is giving grants of up to $1,000 each for projects that improve science and mathematics teaching. Any K-6 teacher in a public or private school is eligible. Deadline, October 1, 2004.  
http://www.toshiba.com/taf/apply.html  

The Innovation Fund of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation requests proposals from non-remedial, out-of-school programs in critical reading and/or writing for low-to-moderate income elementary and/or middle school students. Deadline: October 15, 2004.  
http://jackkentcookefoundation.org/jkcf_web/content.aspx?page=2414227  

The Best Buy Children's Foundation will award $3 million in Best Buy gift cards to 1,200 schools whose educators use technology to make learning fun. Each selected school must be located within 25 miles of a Best Buy store. Deadline: October 1, 2004.  
http://communications.bestbuy.com/communityrelations/teach.asp  

Policy Updates  
At least 17 states have laws requiring students to stay in school or maintain a certain grade point average to earn or keep their driver's license.  
http://www.stateline.org/stateline/?pa=story&sa=showStoryInfo&print=1&id=393472  

A new identification system will track the academic progress of each public-school student in Rhode Island from elementary school through high school—even if they move from district to district.  
http://www.projo.com/news/content/projo_20040821_id21.1e4c75.html  

International Notes  
Yemen is one of the least developed countries in the Arab world, yet 24 Yemeni high schools will be wired to the Internet for the first time.  
http://main.edc.org/newsroom/Features/yemen.asp  

The German, time-honored system of teaching job skills through lengthy apprenticeships may be finished.  

Students With Disabilities  
The U.S. Department of Education (ED) has formally endorsed a voluntary national publishing paradigm known as the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NiMAS).  
The popular transition curriculum. *My Future My Plan*, developed by State of the Art, Inc. in collaboration with NCSET, is now available in Spanish.  
http://www.ncset.org/publications/mfmp.asp

**Effective Strategies**  
**Career and Technical Education**  
Across the country, high schools are turning to career academies as a way to reshape large schools into small learning communities.  
http://www.asbj.com/current/research.html

The growth and popularity of Newport Harbor's (CA) culinary arts program reflects a nationwide trend.  
http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=44Culinary.h23

**Educational Technology**  
Can computers help student learning? Learn what happened when one school mixed information technology with teaching and learning.  
http://www.rand.org/publications/TR/TR126/

High-tech gadgets increase the chances for cheating as educators struggle to update rules to prevent scholastic theft.  
http://www.detnews.com/2004/schools/0408/04/d06-231968.htm

Leading high-tech companies have opened a new, for-profit school called Northface University.  

**Family Engagement**  
A relationship between parents and their children's school helps parents feel comfortable contributing to the school and their children's academic success.  
http://www.ascd.org/cms/index.cfm?TheViewID=2541&reid=sb

EPIC is a national organization with the mission of helping parents, teachers and community members raise children to become responsible adults.  
http://www.epicforchildren.org/

Parental information and resource centers (PIRCs) provide training, information, and support to parents, school districts, and other organizations that carry out parent education and family involvement programs.  
http://www.pirc-info.net/

**Resources & Tools**  
Take a look at some ideas for what a school might do at the beginning of the year to support staff so that they will be able to do their best for their students.  
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/rhythms.pdf

Tom Slater gives readers strategies for promoting positive achievement in public schools.  

With dropout rates exceeding 50% in some inner-city schools and no shortage of disengaged students in suburban and rural systems, Rick Allen examines strategies for creating a more coherent high school structure.  

**36th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward Public Schools.**  
http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/k0409pol.htm

We appreciate comments from our readers. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu  
Sources: Afterschool Alliance, ECS, Education News Reports, & Commentaries, EDWeek, eSn, PEN Weekly, rtcUpdates, SMHP