Dropout Prevention Update
April 1, 2006- Volume 5, Number 10
National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

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Crystal Star Award nominations are now open http://www.dropoutprevention.org

Top Stories
Education reports released by private think tanks are now being scrutinized by the Think Tank Review Project. http://www.asu.edu/educ/epsl/EPRU/thinktankreview.htm

Four regional educational laboratories will be run by different contractors, and all of them will have a revised mission. http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2006/03/29/29labs.h25.html

This report from ECS shows the targets each state has set for improving--and the method it uses to calculate–high school graduation rates. http://mb2.ecs.org/reports/Report.aspx?id=865

Funding Sources
CDW-G and Discovery Education's "Win a Wireless Lab Sweepstakes" gives schools the chance to win technology for their classrooms. Deadline: May 1, 2006. http://school.discovery.com/cdwg/

The Funding Factory offers free technology, sports and recreation equipment in exchange for empty inkjet and laser cartridges and used cell phones. http://tinyurl.com/mizf

The Newspaper Association of America Foundation awards grants to student newspapers that are in danger of closing or have stopped publishing and to create newspapers where none exist. Deadline: April 30, 2006. http://www.naafoundation.org/Awards-and-Grants.aspx

Policy Updates
Indiana and New Hampshire, have introduced new laws that limit the circumstances under which students under eighteen can leave school without graduating. http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2006/03/19/national/a111251S39.DTL

Schools across the nation are responding to the reading and math testing requirements by reducing class time spent on other subjects. http://www.ctredpol.org/nclb/Year4/Press/

International Notes
The number of teenagers dropping out of full-time education is soaring despite record pass rates in GCSE exams. http://education.independent.co.uk/news/article352629.ece

Parental income is a bigger factor in a child's academic achievement than the school the child attends.
http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/common/story_page/0,5744,18571007%5E13881,00.html

Students With Disabilities
The Advocacy Institute has a new Webinar service designed to meet the training needs of special education advocates nationwide. http://www.advocacyinstitute.org/academy/

The vast majority of states reported that they had the same content standards for students with and without an individualized education program under IDEA in the four core subjects.
http://www.abt.sliidea.org/index.htm

Effective Strategies

Alternative Schooling

SEED, the nation's only public boarding school which takes poor students out of unstable homes and puts them in a rigorous, round-the-clock college-preparatory setting, is trying to replicate its program in several states. http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2006/03/22/28seed.h25.html

Charter schools are serving considerably more "at-risk" children and doing so with less per pupil than conventional public schools, according to a report by the Center for Education Reform. http://www.edreform.com/index.cfm?fuseAction=document&documentID=2355&sectionID=5&NEWSYEAR=2006

NASS "Street Schools" are private and faith-based schools which enroll students ages 14 through 20, who struggled with, dropped out of, or were expelled from the public school system. http://www.streetschools.com/index.html

Educational Technology

Web users now have free access to 1940s newsreels and more through Google. http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=6137

Tim Magner, newly appointed head of the federal Office of Educational Technology, explains his vision for the future of technology in the nation's schools. http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=6185

Are search engines making today's students dumber? http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/26/opinion/26tenner.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

Systemic Renewal

Breaking Ranks in the Middle: Strategies for Leading Middle School Reform offers nine "cornerstone" strategies and 30 recommendations "grounded in the middle school philosophy. http://snipurl.com/MSbreakingranks

Success in Sight is a school improvement process that helps schools apply seven key principles for improvement. http://www.mcrel.org/successinsight/

The High School Center works to identify research-supported programs and tools that can improve high school teaching and administration to better help all students learn. http://www.betterhighschools.org/

Resources & Tools

The *American School Board Journal* presents state-by-state figures on student enrollment, teacher salaries, per-pupil expenditures, assessment scores, and other gauges of the health and well-being of our nation's schools. http://www.asbj.com/evs/index.html

Beyond the Tunnel Problem states that zero tolerance policies, get-tough justice policies, and limited school resources for students struggling to meet high-stakes testing standards push vulnerable young people out of school and into incarceration. http://www.ytfg.org/documents/BeyondtheTunnelProblemBriefingPaper2Nov2005fin.pdf

Whatever It Takes: How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-of-School Youth describes what twelve communities are doing to reconnect dropouts to education and employment training. http://www.aypf.org/publications/WhateverItTakes/WITfull.pdf

We appreciate comments from our readers. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu Sources: ECS, Education Innovator, EducationNews, Edutopia, EdWeek, eSn, JFF Newswire, JuvJus, PEN Weekly, School Grants, WCER Today