Dropout Prevention Update
August 1, 2006- Volume 6, Number 2
National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

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Registration for the 18th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference in San Antonio, Texas is now open http://www.dropoutprevention.org/ndpcdefault.htm

Top Stories
A panel of high-profile academics, activists and political leaders gathered to tackle the plight of the Black male. http://www.diverseeducation.com/artman/publish/article_6122.shtml

Help set the world record for the number of children being read the same book - *The Little Engine That Could* - in a single day on August 24, 2006 as part of Jumpstart's Read for the Record campaign! http://www.readfortherecord.org/get-involved

Funding Sources
The Big Read for community-wide reading programs grants range from $10,000 to $20,000 and require a match of at least one-to-one with non-federal funds. Schools must partner with a community organization, and the organization submits the proposal. Deadline: September 12, 2006. http://www.neabigread.org/application_process.php

The Dollar General Back-to-School grant program will award $5,000 grants to assist schools in meeting some of the financial challenges they face in implementing new programs or purchasing new equipment, materials, or software for their school library or literacy program. Deadline: August 11, 2006. http://www.dollargeneral.com/community/communityinvestmen

The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy seeks to develop or expand projects that are designed to support the development of literacy skills for adult primary care givers and their children. Deadline: September 8, 2006. http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com

Policy Updates
Half of the more than 800 high-stakes state tests given to satisfy the No Child Left Behind Act do not appear to line up with the states' academic standards.
http://www.aft.org/presscenter/releases/2006/smarttesting/Testingbrief.pdf

The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University (CRP) has released a new study that reports the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) hasn't improved reading and mathematical achievement or reduced achievement gaps. http://news.publiceducation.org/t/4602/75542/60/0/

International Notes
A survey of pupils suggests employers must do more to enthuse teenagers about work opportunities. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/5202756.stm

In a strong rebuke of zero-tolerance discipline, a blue-ribbon panel has called on Ontario schools to stop expelling and suspending so many students and consider all factors.
http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_Type1&c=Article&cid=1151445022237&call_pageid=968332188492&col=968793972154&t=TS_Home

Students With Disabilities
The National Association of State Directors of Special Education has launched a new web site that features the most recent documents from Project Forum. http://www.projectforum.org

New data displayed on the NIUSI website indicates that students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are more likely to be placed in more restrictive special education settings than their White peers. http://niusi.eddata.net/

Effective Strategies
Early Literacy
Reading and Writing in the Academic Content Areas examines struggling middle and high school students and how to improve their reading and writing ability.
http://www.all4ed.org/publications/ReadingWritingAcadContent.pdf

By routinely applying the lessons learned from the scientific findings to the classroom, most reading failure could be avoided.
http://www.nctq.org/nctq/images/nctq_reading_study_exec_summ.pdf

This brief provides a comparison of the investments being made in the Reading First program for students in grades 1-3 and the Striving Readers program for middle and high school students, and offers recommendations to policymakers about how to address the crisis in adolescent literacy. http://www.all4ed.org/publications/StrivingBrief3_numbers_02.pdf

Educational Technology
Forum Guide to Elementary/Secondary Virtual Education provides recommendations for collecting accurate, comparable, and useful data about virtual education.
http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2006803

The key to the effective use of classroom technology, educators report, is adequate professional development. http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStory.cfm?ArticleID=6450

New rubric offers first functional standards for school web sites.
http://www.eschoolnews.com/schoolspanwebsiterubric.pdf

Safe School Environments
The Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool can be used to track and manage information on environmental conditions school by school. http://www.epa.gov/schools/

Stevenson reports on school size and its relationship to student outcomes and school climate.
http://www.edfacilities.org/pubs/size_outcomes.pdf

Resources & Tools
This policy brief focuses on what works for building a re-entry system for incarcerated youth returning to communities and schools.
http://www.collab4youth.org/ncy/documents/ReentryBrief.pdf

Recent research has established that the quality of the teacher has a profound Influence on pupil learning. http://www.teachersforanewera.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.home

A Public Education Primer: Basic (and Sometimes Surprising) Facts about the U.S. Education System provides a comprehensive picture of the nation's public schools. http://www.cep-dc.org/pubs/publiceducationprimer/

We appreciate comments from our readers. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu Sources: EducationNews.org, EDWeek, eSn, NCES, PEN Weekly, RFP Bulletin, rtcUpdates, SMHP, Straight As