

Dropout Prevention Update
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National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

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Submit your proposal today for the 19th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference to be held in Louisville, KY, October 27-31, 2007. Call for Presenters Deadline: April 27, 2007.
http://www.dropoutprevention.org/conferen/2007_NDPN_Conf/Call_for_Presenters.pdf

Top Stories

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has issued a state-by-state report card on educational effectiveness. Leaders and Laggards, that shows America's K-12 schools are failing their students and putting America's future competitiveness at risk.

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/02/education_scorecard.html

A majority of U.S. high school students say they get bored in class every day, and more than one out of five has considered dropping out, according to the *2006 High School Survey of Student Engagement*.

http://ceep.indiana.edu/hssse/pdf/HSSSE_2006_Report.pdf

Video

Watch a young filmmaker's high school documentary that left audiences across the country stunned and has reignited a powerful debate over race. Kiri Davis, the filmmaker, decided to do a social experiment to see what has changed in the past 50 years.

<http://www.komotv.com/home/video/5001856.html?video=YHI&t=a>

To watch the 8-minute long documentary, follow this link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjy9q8VekmE>

Funding Sources

The 2007 Butler-Cooley Excellence in Teaching Awards honor classroom teachers who have changed the outcome of students, lives and the communities in which they live. Maximum Award: \$5,000. Deadline: May 1, 2007.

<http://www.turnaround.org/cmaextras/ButlerCooleyEntryPackage2007.doc>

State Farm and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) are pleased to offer ten Good Decisions Service-Learning Grants. The \$1000 grants, which can be used to develop local service-learning projects for the 2007-08 school year and it must address one of the following: prevention of underage alcohol use, vehicle safety or adult impaired driving. Deadline: May 1, 2007.

<http://www.ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=/clearinghouse/73/63/7363.pdf>

NEA Foundation Learning & Leadership Grants support professional development. Maximum Award: \$5,000. Eligibility: public school teachers grades K¹²; public school education support professionals; or faculty and staff at public higher education institutions. Deadline: June 1, 2007.

http://www.neafoundation.org/programs/Learning&Leadership_Guidelines.htm

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recently announced an expansion of its Reclaiming Futures initiative, which assists youth involved with the juvenile justice system who are struggling with drugs and alcohol. Applications will be posted on the Reclaiming Futures Web site in late spring.

<http://www.reclaimingfutures.org>

Policy Updates

Nearly a quarter century ago, "A Nation at Risk" hit our schools like a brick dropped from a penthouse window. One problem: The landmark document that still shapes our national debate on education was misquoted, misinterpreted, and often dead wrong.

http://www.edutopia.org/magazine/ed1article.php?id=Art_1798&issue=mar_07#

America's governors are facing up to some harsh realities: Their states' schoolchildren are not ready for the 21st century, their workers are not trained for the new jobs created every day, and their businesses are not competing as strongly as they must to keep ahead.

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showstoryts.cfm?ArticleID=6881&page=1>

International Notes

Keeping the Promise: Five Benefits of Girls' Secondary Education, clearly and succinctly presents data and analysis on the importance of educating girls in developing countries.

<http://www.aed.org/upload/Girls%20Ed%20Final.pdf>

In England in 2006, 73% of 14-year-olds met a literacy standard on national exams, down one percentage point from 2005. Results showed a pronounced gender gap, with 80% of girls reaching national curriculum Level 5, compared with 65% of boys.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6406121.stm?ls>

South Korean fifth- and sixth-graders will soon carry just one textbook: a digital tablet that contains textbooks, workbooks and dictionaries for every class in the elementary curriculum. About 20 elementary schools will start with the digital tablet in 2008; by 2011, 100 elementary, middle and high schools nationwide will use the new format.

<http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/200703/kt2007030718001410230.htm>

Students With Disabilities

A new study refutes claims that rising special education costs drain resources from public education. Less than 1.5% of students with disabilities are placed in private schools under IDEA at a cost of about 0.24% of annual U.S. school spending.

<http://www.hoover.org/publications/ednext/6018321.html>

The traditional model of determining whether children have disabilities is often based on ambiguous criteria and has resulted in the over-representation of black and Hispanic children in special education classes. Now, a more progressive model of identifying specific instructional needs at early ages is beginning to emerge.

<http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/gmzscWwHCastbsfCcWgxWMda>

More school districts are closely monitoring their special education referral programs because experts say extensive pre-referral strategies that assess students on multiple levels play a crucial role in preventing students without special needs from being placed on the wrong track.

<http://www.asbj.com/2007/01/0107research.html>

Effective Strategies

Early Childhood Education

Language and literacy skills are critical to success in school. New research shows that an intentional curriculum, professional development, and supports for teachers are important components of effective preschool classrooms and programs.

http://www.nccp.org/media/pes07a_text.pdf

The National Task Force on Early Childhood Education for Hispanics urges that Hispanic children be enrolled in high quality education programs as early as possible in order to make more rapid progress in closing the Hispanic-White achievement gap.

<http://www.ecehispanic.org/>

Educational Technology

Simulation is not just another in the long line of passing fads (or short-term opportunities) in educational technology. It is, rather, a real key to helping our students understand the world.
http://www.edutopia.org/magazine/ed1article.php?id=Art_1794&issue=mar_07

A national educational technology survey of 270,000 students, 21,000 teachers and 15,000 parents revealed for the second year in a row that most want schools to focus more on technology integration.

<http://www.eschoolnews.org/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=6951&page=1>

Lessons loaded onto a PDA or laptop aim to close the gap between paper-based teaching and digital-based students. One Texas district increased attendance and had fewer discipline problems just a few weeks after launching the system.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/17716357/>

Resources & Tools

Hitting Home: Quality, Cost and Access Challenges Confronting Higher Education Today is a new study aims to quantify the number of degrees the U.S. needs to keep up with international competitors and to spur the development of plans to educate millions more students between now and 2025.

http://www.makingopportunityaffordable.org/wp-content/file_uploads/Hitting_Home_030107.pdf

Why We Still Need Public Schools focuses on how and why the U.S. system of public education came into being; the six core public missions that public schools have been expected to fulfill; and why these missions are relevant today.

<http://www.cep-dc.org/PublicSchoolFacts/why/whywestillneedpublicschools.pdf>

A new study, *Returns to the Public from Investing in an Excellent Education for All America's Children: A Focus on Black Males*, has undertaken a cost-benefit analysis of five leading interventions that have been shown to significantly boost the high school graduation rates for young black males, who are educationally and economically the nation's most at-risk population.

<http://www.publiceducation.org/pdf/returnstothepublic.pdf>

A new report, *The Learning Compact Redefined: A Call to Action* provides the impetus for educators, policymakers, parents, community leaders, and other stakeholders to change the conversation about learning and schooling from reforming its structures to transforming its conditions so that each child can develop their strengths and restore their unique capacities.

<http://www.ascd.org/learningcompact>

A new report predicts rapid growth in online education. The new study estimates that 700,000 K-12 students were engaged in online courses in the 2005-2006 academic year.

http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/survey/pdf/Making_the_Grade_Midwest.pdf

We appreciate comments from our readers. We invite new subscribers to receive the Dropout Prevention Update. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu.

Sources: ASCD SmartBrief, AYPF e-Bulletin, CEC SmartBrief, ECS, Edutopia, eNews, e-School News, PEN Weekly