

Dropout Prevention Update
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National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

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Join us in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, for the 21st Annual At-Risk Youth National FORUM, February 15-18, 2009.

<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/ndpcdefault.htm>

Top Stories

In Fall 2008, in response to the recent economic downturn, as evidenced in state budget shortfalls, federal buy-outs and interventions, and a series of additional events characterizing a slowing, stagnant economy, AASA examined the impact on school districts across the nation. The publication is *Impact of the Economic Downturn on Schools*.

<http://www.aasa.org/files/PDFs/Publications/AASAEconomicImpactSurvey2008.pdf>

Far too many teachers have neither an academic major nor state certification in the subjects they teach. The problem of out-of-field teaching is especially prevalent in middle grades (grades 5-8) and in mathematics classes. What's worse, the highest rates of out-of-field teaching appear in high-poverty and high-minority schools, where students desperately need good teachers.

<http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/0D6EB5F1-2A49-4A4D-A01B881CD2134357/0/SASSreportCoreProblems.pdf>

Sound Connections

The next *Solutions to the Dropout Crisis* webcast will be Tuesday, January 13, 2009, at 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time and will focus on how schools and the community can plan their dropout prevention strategy and achieve success. Listen to Deb Dillon of Fargo, ND, give you a preview and then call in with questions for Deb on the 13th.

<http://cufan.clemson.edu/psaradio/ndpcatldillon.aspx>

The American Youth Policy Forum invited NASSP to showcase a few high-poverty, high-achieving schools at a panel discussion October 24, 2008. Click each presentation for full audio and PowerPoint.

http://www.principals.org/s_nassp/sec.asp?CID=66&DID=58618

Videos

It's National Mentoring Month! Shaun Alexander encourages men to volunteer as mentors - *Become a Mentor: Be a Hero*.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95p9nvzXAX4>

New video on 21st Century Learning

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vc1hgMI3uUk>

Funding Sources

Best Buy® @15™ Challenge with Youth Venture is awarding fifteen \$10,000 grants to "social venture" teams of youth age 12 to 18 for their community-improvement proposals, and they want your help in selecting the winners.

<http://www.GenV.net/bestbuy>

The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities Coming Up Taller Awards recognize and reward outstanding after-school and out-of-school arts and humanities programs for underserved children and youth. Maximum Award: \$10,000. Eligibility: programs initiated by

museums, libraries, performing arts organizations, universities, colleges, arts centers, community service organizations, schools, businesses, and eligible government entities.

Deadline: January 30, 2009.

<http://www.pcah.gov/cut.htm>

Policy Updates

The Rural Trust has identified 15 principles to guide its policy work. Each principle is expressed as a contrast between the conditions they seek to achieve in rural public schools and the conditions they seek to avoid.

http://www.ruraledu.org/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=beJMIZOCIrH&b=4809273&content_id={E72E55E8-07C3-4C8A-9520-8AD2B4DCB9CF}¬oc=1

Public school finance systems around the United States are outmoded, failing to support the effective education of America's children. *Facing the Future: Financing Productive Schools* criticizes school finance systems because they are so burdened by rules and narrow policies that they commit dollars "with little regard for results, holding adults accountable for compliance but not results."

http://www.crpe.org/cs/crpe/download/csr_files/pub_sfrp_finalrep_nov08.pdf

International Notes

The U.S Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) launched the interactive Video Contest "My Culture + Your Culture=? Share your Story". People all over the world ages 14 and older are invited to submit videos. Contest closes January 26, 2009.

<http://exchanges.state.gov/news/ovc.html>

UNESCO has released its annual Education for All Monitoring report, titled "Overcoming inequality: why governance matters." In it, UNESCO warns that "unacceptable" national and global education disparities are undermining efforts to achieve international development goals.

<http://www.unesco.org/en/education/efareport>

Students With Disabilities

The Heartspring Award for Innovation and Creativity in Special Education honors professionals who get results for children with special needs using creative measures. New ideas create results that matter and educators who are outstanding innovators are the right applicants for this award -- only explorers, pioneers, risk-takers, and innovators need apply. Maximum award: \$1,000.

Eligibility: professionals who work with children with special needs. Deadline: April 20, 2009.

<http://www.heartspring.org/award/>

Effective Strategies

Safe Learning Environments

Crime Prevention Matters, a brief white paper that NCPC released in the run-up to the presidential election, argues that people's perceptions of crime—perhaps even more than reality—influence their behavior in ways that can have negative consequences for themselves, their families, their neighborhoods, and their communities.

<http://www.ncpc.org/publications/available-online/making-the-case-for-crime-prevention/crime-prevention-matters.pdf>

Mentoring

January marks the eighth annual National Mentoring Month, a large-scale public service campaign held each year to recruit volunteer mentors to help young people achieve their full potential. The theme for National Mentoring Month 2009 is "Expand Your Universe: Mentor a Child."

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

Career and Technical Education

Students who leave eighth grade without the essential skills they need to be on target for college and career readiness too often leave high school not ready for any kind of meaningful future.
<http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/ForgottenMiddle.pdf>

This Issue Brief from the Association for Career and Technical Education explores the leading role that career and technical education plays in the field of career guidance and in improving student success through career development services.
http://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Publications_and_Online_Media/files/Guidance_issuebrief.pdf

Resources and Tools

Says educator Steven Levy in *Educational Leadership*, "The most effective way to engage these students in learning is to create an authentic audience, giving them a sense that someone else (besides teachers and parents) cares about their work."
<http://snipurl.com/el-powerofaudience>

New York City children who live in public housing perform worse in school than students who live in other types of housing, according to a study by New York University researchers.
http://furmancenter.nyu.edu/documents/FurmanCenterandIESPPolicyBriefPublicHousingandPublicSchools_000.pdf

A new study finds that certain brain functions of some low-income 9- and 10-year-olds pale in comparison with those of wealthy children and that the difference is almost equivalent to the damage from a stroke.
http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2008-12-07-childrens-brains_N.htm

Feedback

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

Sources: QED News Alert, NCPC Catalyst, YSA National Service Briefing, YouTube, MiddleWeb, PEN Weekly NewsBlast, Rural Policy Matters, AYPF, Straight A's, Service-Learning E-Letter