

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

CONTENTS

[Top Stories](#) | [Funding Sources](#) | [Policy Updates](#) | [International Notes](#) | [Students With Disabilities](#) | [Effective Strategies](#) | [Resources & Tools](#) | [Feedback](#)

There's still time to register for the Effective Strategies Institute in Clearwater, Florida, January 16-19, 2007. "Planting Seeds of Promise: Reaching, Teaching, and Engaging."

<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/conferen/conferen.htm> - efi

Top Stories

What It Takes to Make a Student

The New York Times Magazine article explores the many causes of, and promising solutions to, the racial and socioeconomic achievement gap.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/26/magazine/26tough.html?pagewanted=1& r=2>

Many Kids Still Left Behind

A new report is available from the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation. "How Well Are States Educating Our Neediest Children?" appraises each state according to thirty indicators across three major categories.

<http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/publication/publication.cfm?id=363>

The latest *Is It Good for the Kids?* editorial examines how these lawmakers must harness the bipartisan support for closing the achievement gap and fix key components of NCLB.

<http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.ef397d712ea0a4a0a89ad324d3108a0c/template.article?articleMgmtId=01511086bbcf010VgnVCM1000003d01a8c0RCRD>

Funding Sources

AAUW Community Action Grants: \$10,000 for projects that empower and promote education for women. Deadline January 15, 2007.

http://www.aauw.org/fga/fellowships_grants/community_action.cfm

NEA Foundation Learning and Leadership Grant provides opportunities for teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff to engage in high-quality professional development and lead their colleagues in professional growth. Maximum Award: \$2,000 for individuals; \$5,000 for groups engaged in collegial study. Deadline: February 1, 2007.

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

Policy Updates

States are making progress in building longitudinal data systems to support instruction, according to a new report but there is still more work to be done, according to the Data Quality Campaign (DQC).

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showstoryts.cfm?Articleid=6724>

In Kentucky, the Workgroup on Civic Literacy and Engagement has released *Rediscovering Democracy: An Agenda for Action*, listing multiple recommendations for improving civic literacy and civic engagement in the Commonwealth.

<http://www.ecs.org/00CM906>

Rationing Education in an Era of Accountability

"The push for accountability was originally cast as a way to ensure that schools would leave no child behind. Ironically, as Ms. Booher-Jennings points out, the NCLB system of requiring schools

to demonstrate adequate yearly progress through test scores has created incentives to neglect the very students who need the most help.”

http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/k_v87/k0606boo.htm

International Notes

A new British reading scheme that has raised young children's reading age by 21 months with just 16 to 20 weeks of instruction, four times faster than the traditional approach, and the literacy gains continue years after intervention took place, research indicates.

<http://education.guardian.co.uk/schools/story/0,,1940845,00.html>

In Finland, which has what some consider the best educational system in the world, teaching is an esteemed profession that attracts top talent, says Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen.

<http://www.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=89191&d=26&m=11&y=2006>

Australian researchers suggest that many boys, while more adept than girls at juggling the demands of adolescence, are floundering in school, perhaps because of cultural influences and stereotypes.

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/education-news/the-truth-about-boys/2006/11/24/1164341402288.html>

Students With Disabilities

The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD) announces the first publication in the SPP Toolkit Series entitled, *A Few Steps to Better Data*, discusses strategies states can use to improve the quality of their dropout-related data and get the greatest utility from those data.

http://www.ndpc-sd.org/assistance/docs/A_Few_Steps_to_Better_Data.pdf

Student-run program reaches out to peers in special-ed. The Friendship Circle Club began last year to connect the school's students with disabilities to the broader school population.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/california/la-me-friends8nov08,1,2383861.story?coll=la-headlines-pe-california&ctrack=1&cset=true>

The British charity Children's Society has launched a new [Web site](#) that uses a pictorial language called Symbol, along with text, to provide news and information for youth with disabilities.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6151482.stm

Effective Strategies

Educational Technology

Students lack critical thinking skills for researching online and using sources, finds an ETS information literacy test.

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=6725>

The newly released Internet Access in U.S. Public Schools and Classrooms Study presents 11 years of data providing trend analysis on the percent of public schools and instructional rooms with Internet access and on the ratio of students to instructional computers with Internet access.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/2007020.pdf>

Olympic champion Sir Steve Redgrave has said technology can transform the learning of children with dyslexia.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/6153762.stm

Systemic Renewal

Kentucky has launched a new web-based system that automatically creates Individual Learning Plans for every middle and high school student. The program will allow students to begin planning their futures as early as the sixth grade.

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStory.cfm?ArticleID=6716&page=1>

Principals' quick inspections boost academic experience "The Three-Minute Classroom Walk-Through" is an official technique created by a team of experts, but is not a substitute for the longer observations used in job reviews.

<http://www.charlotte.com/mld/charlotte/living/education/15998981.htm>

Mississippi Focusing on Dropout Prevention

The hard truth showing more people are actually failing to graduate from high school is being highlighted to show Mississippi must do more to keep students in school.

http://www.cdispatch.com/articles/2006/11/21/state_archives/state01.txt

Afterschool

State Afterschool Profiles provide key data and descriptions of the afterschool landscape, which includes a range of out-of-school time programming that can occur before and after school, on weekends, and during summer months.

<http://www.nccic.org/afterschool/statep.html>

Service-Learning in Afterschool Programs

Five easy steps to service-learning in afterschool programs, created by and for afterschool educators.

<http://www.yscal.org/resources/afterschool.html>

Resources & Tools

The 2006 Condition of Education report published by the U.S. Department of Education shows a statistical picture of U.S. schools.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/20/AR2006112000943.html>

Double the Work: Challenges and Solutions to Acquiring Language and Academic Literacy for Adolescent English Language Learners



The latest issue of *Voices in Urban Education* provides five perspectives on ways the whole community can engage in education and create demand and support for changes that will benefit all young people.

<http://www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/index.html>

The NICHD Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development.

A compendium of findings from a study funded by the National Institutes of Health reveals that a child's family life has more influence on a child's development through age four and a half than does a child's experience in child care.

<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/childcare>

The Achievement Gap: Overcoming the Income Gap: The latest Infobrief that focuses on the income gap is the fourth in a series designed to examine factors that contribute to the achievement gap.

<http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.bfaa683e7841320fb85516f762108a0c/>

We appreciate comments from our readers. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu

Sources: Alliance for Excellent Education, Annenberg Institute, ASCD SmartBrief, CEC SmartBrief, Education Commission of the States, eSchool News, IES/NCES Newsflash Service, NDPC-SD.org, Public Education Network, School Mental Health Project