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Online registration is now open for the 21st Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference in San Antonio, Texas, October 25-28, 2009.
http://www.dropoutprevention.org/conferen/conferen.htm#2009_NDP_Network

Top Stories

Forty-six states have formally agreed to join forces to create common academic standards in math and English language arts through an effort led by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers.
http://www.ccsso.org/whats_new/press_releases/13359.cfm

"Late High School Dropouts: Characteristics, Experiences, and Changes Across Cohorts" from the National Center for Education Statistics presents information about selected characteristics and experiences of high school sophomores in 2002 who subsequently dropped out of school. It also presents comparative data about late high school dropouts in the years 1982, 1992, and 2004.
http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009307.pdf

Sound Connections

Solutions co-host Dr. Sam Drew interviews Kelly Tonsmeire, who directs the Alaska Staff Development Network. Learn how professional development is delivered in a variety of cost-saving ways throughout Alaska.
http://cufan.clemson.edu/psaradio/NDPCATLTonsmeire.asx

If you missed the most recent *Solutions to the Dropout Crisis* program on mentoring, you can tune in at your convenience to hear Kate Schineller of MENTOR. After a summer break, broadcasts will resume September 8th. We invite your suggestions for future programs—send to ndpc@clemson.edu.
http://www.dropoutprevention.org/webcast

Video

This film was made in collaboration with the Building Bridges Regional Consortium and Tincan and was filmed and produced by students from West Valley School Districts Contract Based Education, Spokane. The students explore the issue of why students drop out, interviewing their peers.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bmefC9rCXR0

Funding Sources

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is offering up to $150,000 for Active Living Research and Healthy Eating Research Grants. These are national programs that support research to identify promising policy and environmental strategies for increasing physical activity, promoting healthy eating, and preventing obesity.
Deadline: July 17, 2009, for letter of intent.
http://www.rwjf.org/applications/solicited/cfp.jsp?ID=20681

Open Meadows Foundation offers grants of $2000 for projects that are led by and benefit women and girls.
Deadline: August 15, 2009.

http://www.openmeadows.org/

Policy Updates
This report from the Center on Reinventing Public Education looks at the effect of the education stimulus funds on state education spending.
http://www.crpe.org/cs/crpe/download/csr_files/rr_crpe_rankingstates_may09.pdf

A new report from the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) reports the need for concerted statewide actions to improve reading instruction across the curriculum and outlines how five states approached linking literacy improvements to other educational goals and school improvement initiatives.
http://nasbe.org/index.php/file-repository/Education-Issues/School-Leadership/Policy-Update/State-Action-to-Improve-Adolescent-Literacy/

Sara Mead of the New America Foundation writes that the unprecedented federal investment in education by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act is a huge opportunity to improve PreK-3 education to make lasting reforms that yield ongoing gains in student achievement, as well as for maintaining educational services and jobs during the downturn.
http://www.newamerica.net/files/Building_A_Solid_Foundation.pdf

International Notes
Challenge 20/20 is an Internet-based program that pairs classes at any grade level (K-12) from schools in the U.S. with their counterpart classes in schools in other countries to tackle real-world problems. Deadline: August 17, 2009.
http://www.nais.org/conferences/index.cfm?ItemNumber=147262&sn.ItemNumber=148035

Students With Disabilities
The Center on Knowledge Translation for Technology Transfer (KT4TT) focuses on technology-oriented research for improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities. The KT4TT website is:
http://kt4tt.buffalo.edu

Effective Strategies
School-Community Collaboration
There is new interest in designing programs to reduce teen pregnancy, enhance outcomes for babies and children, and engage young fathers who are involved in unplanned pregnancies. A National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse brief authored by Child Trends, *Promising Teen Fatherhood Programs: Initial Evidence Lessons from Evidence-Based Research,* identifies ten common features of "model" and "promising" programs for teen fathers.
http://basis.caliber.com/cwig/ws/library/docs/fatherhd/Blob/64646.pdf?w=NATIVE%28%27TI+ph+is+%27%27Promising+Teen+Fatherhood+Programs%27%27%27%29&upp=0&rpp=-10&order=native%28%27year%2FDescend%27%29&r=1&m=1

Family Engagement
This study finds that parent and teen communication about the risks of drug use contributes to significantly reduced drug experimentation among teens.
http://www.jointogether.org/news/yourturn/announcements/2009/new-pats-study.html

Systemic Renewal
This report offers an analysis of how state education agencies frame and organize the student and learning support facets of school improvement; recommendations for state education agencies with respect to expanding school improvement policy, framing intervention, and reworking operational infrastructure; and implications for school improvement guidance.
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/seals.pdf

Resources and Tools

A new "policy and practice" brief from Johns Hopkins University and the National Middle School Association is filled with key insights that can help district leaders and middle school teachers and principals greatly strengthen students' graduation "staying power" as they pass through grades 5-8.
http://www.nmsa.org/u_rd/060309/brief.htm

Web 2.0 technologies enable a level of communication, collaboration, and connection among people that is more sophisticated and interactive than ever before. Find out more about social media and Web 2.0 strategies at the National Service Resource Center's Web 2.0 and Social Media page:
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/program-management/social-media

Feedback

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

Sources: Straight As, EdWeek, MiddleWeb, AYPF, School Mental Health Project, The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University