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Register today for the 23rd Annual At-Risk Youth National Forum, "Expanding, Improving and Enhancing School and Community Relationships to Increase the Graduation Rate" February 20-23, 2011, in Myrtle Beach, SC.
http://www.cvent.com/EVENTS/Info/Summary.aspx?e=42434b6f-68fa-44bc-b0a9-2b1a183f0ae8

Top Stories
A Call for Change: The Social and Educational Factors Contributing to the Outcomes of Black Males in Urban Schools.
http://dl.dropbox.com/u/3273936/A%20Call%20For%20Change%20FINAL%20COPY.pdf

Crystal Star Awards
See the winners of the 2010 Crystal Star Awards and read about their accomplishments.
http://www.dropoutprevention.org/crystal-star-awards/2010-crystal-star-award-recipients

Sound Connections
Hear the interview with Michael Carter after he received the Crystal Star Award for Distinguished Leadership and Service.
http://cufan.clemson.edu/psaradiopod/ndpc/1011NDPCCarter.mp3

A conversation with Dr. Sue Limber, an expert on bullying, from the Clemson Institute of Family and Neighborhood Life.
http://cufan.clemson.edu/psaradiopod/ndpc/YD101122Limber.mp3

Free Webinar – The blending of traditional classroom instruction with online learning presented by Aventa Learning/K12 December 9 at 2:00 pm EST.   http://k12aventa-blast1.eventbrite.com/

Videos
Rick Wormeli's Free Grading and Assessment Resources. Log in at this site, hear Rick Wormeli, and access free materials on assessment and grading practices that support differentiated instruction. http://bit.ly/wormeli-sten-microsite

Policy Updates
Feds release new national Ed-Tech Plan: Transforming American Education Learning Powered by Technology.
http://www.ed.gov/sites/default/files/netp2010.pdf

Funding Sources
General Mills Champions for Healthy Kids Grants – 50 grants at $10,000 each - December 15.
www.generalmills.com/en/responsibility/community_engagement/grants/champions_for_healthy_kids.aspx

Siemens' We Can Change the World Challenge encourages students K-12 to create replicable solutions to environmental issues in their schools, community and world. March 15 – various awards. http://www.wecanchange.com/

Captain Planet Foundation: Grants for the Environment - $2500 – Dec. 31. – http://www.captainplanetfdn.org/grants.html

Special Olympics Get Into It Grants – $500 - $1000 - January 19. – http://www.ysa.org/getintoit

Do Something Seed & Growth Grants - $500 – Ongoing deadline. – http://www.dosomething.org/grants/seedgrants

National Inclusion Project for Special Needs Children - $20,000. - http://www.inclusionproject.org/level_2.php?id=1

NEA Youth Leaders for Literacy Grants - $500 – January 5. – http://www.ysa.org/grants/nea-youth-leaders-literacy

International Notes
Interactive Webcast: World-Class Education for Global Competitiveness 2009 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results will be released by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development on December 7 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm in Paris. Register and submit questions at:

http://www.newmediamill.com/webcasts/all4ed/registerdec72010/

Effective Strategies

Systemic Renewal
A paper by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning: *When Failure Is Not an Option: Designing Competency-Based Pathways for Next Generation Learning.*
http://www.inacol.org/research/docs/iNACOL_FailureNotOption_ExecSumm_final.pdf

Evaluating Teachers: The Important Role of Value-Added.
http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/rc/reports/2010/1117_evaluating_teachers/1117_evaluating_teachers.pdf

Safe Learning Environments
Feds and organizations share resources to curb bullying and keep kids safe.
http://www.americaspromise.org/News-and-Events/News-and-Features/APB-2010/Vol-40/Bullying-Prevention.aspx

Family Engagement
Annenberg Report – Parent leadership training provides parents with powerful tools.
http://www.annenberginstitute.org/pdf/HendersonRpt.pdf

Alternative Schooling
A consortium of 12 states, including six Mississippi districts will participate in a pilot program designed to give students options other than the traditional four-year track to a diploma.
http://www.hattiesburgamerican.com/article/20101113/NEWS01/11130315/1002/Pilot-program-could-change-traditional-high-school-model

A new report from Jobs for the Future details how the Hidalgo Independent School District—in one of the most economically depressed metropolitan areas in Texas and with low numbers of college-educated adults—is preparing all of its students to earn college credits while in high school.
http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/college_success_for_all.pdf

After-School Opportunities
Hours of Opportunity: Lessons from Five Cities on Building Systems to Improve After School, Summer School, and Other Out-of-School Time Programs.
http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/Out-Of-SchoolLearning/Documents/Hours-of-Opportunity-1-Lessons-After-School-Summer-OST.pdf

Professional Development
Special Report - Professional Development: Sorting Through the Jumble to Achieve Success.
http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/pdreport/digital/education_week_professional_development_special_report.pdf?intc=PD101PD?intc=PD101PDF

Opportunity at the Top: How America's Best Teachers Could Close the Gaps, Raise the Bar, and Keep Our Nation Great. http://opportunityculture.org/images/stories/opportunity_report_web.pdf

Educational Technology

New Milford, NJ, teachers using social media sites to engage students.
http://www.northjersey.com/news/111909_New_Milford_teachers_using_Twitter_social_media_sites_to_engage_students.html

Indiana's 16 New Technology high schools embrace classroom technology and operate more like businesses than traditional schools. Is it the model of the future? http://heraldbulletin.com/education/x970731151/Education-State-buys-into-New-Tech-approach

Individualized Instruction
Formative Assessment and Next-Generation Assessment Systems: Are We Losing an Opportunity? Margaret Heritage http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2010/Formative_Assessment_Next_Generation_2010.pdf

Students with Disabilities
Senate bill causes disability-rights groups to spar over special ed restraints

http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=s111-3895

2010 *State Longitudinal Data Systems for Tracking Outcomes for Students with Disabilities through Postsecondary Activities* by NASDSE can be downloaded at:
http://www.projectforum.org/docs/StateLongitudinalDataSystemsforTrackingOutcomesforSwDthroughPostsecondaryActivities-final.pdf

Resources and Tools
The What Works Clearinghouse publishes intervention reports that evaluate research on school and community-based dropout prevention curricula and instructional strategies for middle and/or high schools.
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/Topic.aspx?tid=06#&&DomainSelected=&SortExpressionRat=ImprovementIndex&SortExpression=InterventionTitle&IntStat=0&SortDirection=Ascending&SortDirectionRat=Descending&AvSExpanded=no&SearchString=&CurCharFilter=&CurCharLabel

Reading Fun: Unique lessons and ideas for teachers of reading at all levels.
http://www.educationworld.com/a_special/reading.shtml

The 2010 edition of the annual *Guide to U.S. Department of Education Programs* is now available in hard copy and CD. To order your FREE copy, call 1-877-4ED-PUBS toll-free.

Reminder: **The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network now has a Facebook page! Become a fan today and find out about the latest resources and tools in dropout prevention! Begin or join discussion groups to discuss issues related to your dropout prevention efforts. Search for us in "Pages."   http://www.facebook.com**

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: Joyce Foundation, PISA, Jobs for the Future, *Hattiesburg American*, ASCD, YSA, PEN, MiddleWeb, IES, RAND, Education World, eSchool News, Education Week, ECS eClips, NASDSE