

CASN NEWS March 2008

CASN News is supported by the Career Academy Support Network (CASN) at the Graduate School of Education, University of California Berkeley. CASN works with high schools and districts engaged in high school redesign, especially redesign which includes small learning communities, small schools, and/or Academies. CASN also works to build college going cultures, powerful teaching and learning, and community partnerships which expand opportunities for students and learning.

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"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.... intelligence plus character -- that is the goal of true education." --Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today." - Malcolm X

"You cannot have students as continuous learners and effective collaborators without teachers having the same characteristics."
--Michael Fullan, *Change Forces*

U.S. HOUSE & SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEES PROPOSE FUNDING INCREASE FOR EDUCATION (FY 2009 Budget)

Earlier this month, the U.S. House of Representatives & Senate passed similar versions of a budget resolution that would significantly increase spending over the amount proposed in the President's budget. The House version would set an overall discretionary spending limit of \$1.014 trillion, \$25.4 billion more than the president's \$987.6 billion, while the Senate would increase spending by \$21.8 billion. These overall discretionary spending totals are

the crucial part of the budget resolution, as they are the only numbers that are binding on the appropriations committees.

The House budget resolution would provide a \$7.1 billion increase (8.2%) for education, job training, and other programs. In addition, the resolution funds math & science education as part of America COMPETES Act. It also provides \$50 billion for Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), continuing coverage for roughly 6.7 million kids as well as providing coverage for an additional 4 million uninsured kids across the country. (Exactly how much of an increase the U.S. Department of Education would receive was not specified).

The Senate budget resolution would allocate an \$8.8 billion increase over the President's budget for education & job training. The U.S. Department of Education would receive \$5.4 billion more than the amount proposed in the president's budget. The Senate resolution, like the House resolution, also provides \$50 billion for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

STATES, POLICY GROUPS WANT MORE INTERNATIONAL & HIGH SCHOOL TESTS

For the first time, a select group of states is expected to take part in a 12th grade version of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This potentially lays the foundation for even greater state participation at 12th grade level on the heavily scrutinized test. A separate NAEP, the long-term trend, is given to 17-year-old students, as well as children ages 9 & 13. But policymakers, especially those in the volunteer states, have told federal officials they need more detailed, state-specific info about h.s. students' performance than the national trends provide.

This marks another burgeoning coalition of states that are ramping up standards & accountability. Achieve, along with the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), is also pushing states toward adopting rigorous high school course requirements AND international benchmarking as a way to better prepare students for the 21st century. It remains to be decided whether states would participate in the already established international tests or would measure their own academic standards against those of other countries. Still, education policy staff for the NGA want to put the issue before the governors this summer, while CCSSO is exploring whether states want to take part in the next round of international tests. Meanwhile, Achieve is studying standards in other countries to see how they stack up with American standards. As with any major movement, a push toward international benchmarks faces political pitfalls, as many educators and parents object to what they already perceive as an overemphasis on assessments and rankings (even agreeing on a test could be difficult). It is also possible that any comparisons based on international tests would be more reflective of a state's poverty level than education quality.

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/03/11/27naep_web.html?tmp=1210433586

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2008/03/12/27nga_ep.h27.html

ECONOMY LEADS TO NEW PUSH FOR ECONOMICS COURSES

High school personal-finance and economics courses are now more important than ever, financial-education experts say. "This matter of economic and financial literacy is not just a marginal concern, it's something that really affects us all," said Robert F. Duvall, National Council on Economic Education president and CEO. "We need to get basic, practical economics and personal financial decision-making skills into the heads and hands of our kids while they are in school ... before they have to learn these things in the school of hard knocks."

MORE COLLEGES SEE BENEFIT IN MAKING SAT TESTS OPTIONAL

After Wisconsin's Lawrence University in 2005 became one of 750 colleges nationally to make SAT or ACT scores optional, it not only saw a boost in applications but found that first-term students who didn't submit scores performed essentially no differently academically than those who did. "America is apparently throwing away some substantial portion of its future talent by relying far too heavily on its standardized tests as a screening system," said Bill Hiss, who directed the admissions office at Maine's Bates College when it pioneered the test-optional policy in 1984.

FREE LUNCH ISN'T COOL, SO SOME STUDENTS GO HUNGRY

Only 37% of eligible San Francisco high school students are taking advantage of the subsidized meal program. The stigma of accepting a government lunch has forced some students to choose between social acceptance & going hungry. Many school districts across the country face similar challenges—there are often two lines for lunch, one for government meals & one for cash-only fare—what some call a "social justice issue." To eliminate dual-lines, some schools have moved to debit card systems that don't segregate students. (source: New York Times 3/1/08)

HS STUDENT WINS \$100,000 INTEL SCHOLARSHIP

Intel Foundation sponsors an annual competition aimed at honoring the next generation of scientists and innovators. This year's 1st place winner of the Intel Science competition is Shivani Sud, 17, of Jordan High School in North Carolina. Ms. Sud won a \$100,000 Intel scholarship for developing a model to identify early-stage colon cancer patients with a high risk for recurrence, beating competition from 1500 others.

For her research project, Sud developed a model that analyzed the specific "molecular signatures" of tumors from patients with stage II colon cancer. She then used this information to identify those at higher risk for tumour recurrence and propose potentially effective drugs for treatment.

To learn more about the 2008 Intel Science Competition winners and their projects, see: <http://www.intel.com/education/sts/2008winners.htm>

OREGON TO OFFER PSAT TO EVERY 10th GRADER

Every Oregon 10th-grader will take the PSAT this fall as a means to encourage more teens to consider college, identify learners who may do well in advanced courses & help teachers determine where students are struggling. "It's much bigger than just a test. It's about leading schools and students into a whole college-going culture," said Kris Zavoli, the College Board's senior director of state government relations. "For the proactive school that really taps into what this offers, it can really make a difference in connecting kids to college success." <http://www.oregonlive.com/education/oregonian/index.ssf?/base/news/1205717105141660.xml&coll=7>

HAWAII ADOPTS AMERICAN DIPLOMA PROJECT AND CREATES NEW "SUPER" DIPLOMA FOR QUALIFIED HS GRADS

The Hawaii State Board of Education recently approved the creation of the College and Career Ready Diploma to be given to students who voluntarily take higher levels of math and English in high schools. Students who complete the current requirements will receive a regular diploma.

<http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080312/NEWS01/803120415/1001/NEWS01>

IOWA BILL WOULD EXPAND ACCESS TO COLLEGE

A new bill would make up to 30 hours of college-level credits available at no charge to high school students in Iowa. Supporters say that the \$1.4 million bill would help financially strapped high school students get a head start on college credits while critics question whether the students are adequately prepared to take college-level courses on college campuses and whether college-level courses held in the high schools are actually taught at the college level. (source: Des Moines Register)

U.S. EDUCATORS SEEK LESSONS FROM SCANDINAVIA

Educators in Finland, Sweden, & Denmark cited autonomy, project-based learning, & nationwide broadband Internet access as keys to their success— & why their students were able to score so high on a recent international test of math & science skills. When the Consortium for School Networking toured Scandinavia, they found several things missing—competitive grading, standardized testing, and top-down accountability—all fundamentals of the U.S. education system. eSchool News, (may require free registration)

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/top-news/?i=52770; hbguid=31475690-290f-4e70-8ce4-2742f7b52b83&d=top-news>

STUDIES LINK TEACHER ABSENCES TO LOWER STUDENT TEST SCORES

New research suggests that teacher absences affect the achievement of students. It comes as a host of school districts are taking a fresh look at how to reduce such absences. (source: Education Week)

MORE MICHIGAN HSs SWITCH TO TRIMESTERS

Because of new state graduation requirements, more Michigan high schools are switching their schedules to a trimester system in order to fit in more classes. <http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080308/SCHOOLS/803080370/1026>

MARYLAND STUDENTS DO ORAL HISTORY PROJECT ON BLACK LIFE

High School students in Indian Head, Maryland have developed one of Southern Maryland's most comprehensive oral history projects on black life in the region. Students created a DVD that will be shown during Charles County's anniversary celebration this summer. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/03/AR2008030302>

SOUTH DAKOTA TO PAY STUDENTS FOR PASSING AP TEST SCORES

A new program in South Dakota pays students for passing scores on Advanced Placement exams if they have taken the class online through the state's virtual high school. The program is supported by a math and science initiative backed by Exxon Mobil.

ARIZONA STATE SUPERINTENDENT WORKS TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF TEACHERS

State Superintendent Tom Horne asked teachers to email him with ways he could make their lives easier. Nearly 600 teachers accepted his offer. Many of the responses are indicative of the financial crisis Arizona faces. The state consistently ranks 49th or 50th in the nation on spending for K-12 education.

One teacher asked for and received a new pencil sharpener. Her school did not have the money to replace her crank pencil sharpener after it broke. Other teachers told Horne stories about taking second and even third jobs in order to pay monthly expenses, including health insurance. Classrooms are crowded and few districts in the state can afford classroom aides. Many teachers reported that they are considering quitting or retiring early and said they would never recommend that their own children or students pursue a career in teaching.

Superintendent Horne says the emails paint a sad picture. "We've got to do better by our teachers," he said. "We need to keep these people in the classroom." <http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/0217easier0217.html>

STRATEGY: SPRINKLE IN EMPATHY AND AWARENESS TO ADDRESS ACHIEVEMENT GAPS (a great idea from a junior high)

Kevin MacDonald, principal at T. R. Smedberg Middle School in Sacramento, CA started the Achievement Gap Club two years ago. At the first meeting, MacDonald entered the room with six binders of research and threw them on the floor. He then said to the students "these experts don't have the answers. The gap has existed for 50 years. Why don't you tell me what we need to do?" Now, every other Wednesday morning, about 30 seventh and eighth graders meet to talk about the persistent gap in test scores among whites and

Asians and African Americans and Latinos. Club members also brief teachers about what they think should be done when it comes to teaching students of color, and in so doing, help staff members understand what it's like to be a minority student. To better explain the achievement gap, Macdonald uses a parable about two fish: a seawater marlin and a freshwater pond trout. The marlin represents minority students and the trout, whites and Asians. There is a freshwater pond, i.e., the school, which has been largely based on a white cultural model. "You can't take a freshwater fish, put him in saltwater and expect him to survive," and vice versa MacDonald explains. "But if you take a little bit of salt and sprinkle it in the freshwater," then both fish can survive. In this analogy, the salt is a concerted effort to establish communication, empathy and cultural awareness between staff and students. The plan has been working, as former students, now in high school, return every Wednesday morning to tutor, encourage and solve problems with their younger counterparts.

<http://www.sacbee.com/education/story/805295.html>

MICHIGAN STUDENTS MAY BE ABLE TO TAKE 5th YEAR TO GRADUATE

Some Michigan students would be able to attend a fifth year of high school if the federal government grants a request by the State Board of Education. If approved, kids who drop out and then return to school for a fifth year will not be counted as dropouts under No Child Left Behind. The exemption would be requested by schools for each student on a case-by-case basis. (source: Detroit News)

TIME MAGAZINE EXAMINES HOW TO MAKE GREAT TEACHERS

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), we will need 2.8 million more teachers within the next eight years as current teachers retire, teachers, especially new ones, leave the field, and student enrollment increases. Research suggests that the single most important factor in boosting student achievement is not classroom size, per student spending, quality of textbooks, but rather, is the teacher.

Each of us remembers at least one or two teachers from our school years that had an enormous impact on us & on our learning. How do we capture those qualities of great teachers? How do we teach them to others? How do we keep great teachers in the classroom? These are questions for which the nation's leaders, as well as state & local authorities, want & need answers.

Time looks at what is needed to improve teaching in America - and examines strategies doomed to fail:

- We must retain quality teachers. Research shows that the most effective teachers are those with the unshakeable belief that all students have the capacity to learn. Moreover, for upper grades, it is crucial that teachers have a deep knowledge and understanding of the subject they teach. One of the primary reasons teachers choose to change careers is pay. However, some leave public education, even for a lower salary, for an improved climate

in private schools. Research has shown that most teachers need at least two years to master the basics of classroom management and up to seven years to become fully proficient. Many new teachers leave the field before they complete five years on the job.

- Today's era of accountability provides districts ability to increase pay of teachers whose students achieve at higher levels. However, there are many obstacles to overcome when turning to "pay-for-performance" systems. Value-added systems that measure student growth are typically expensive & difficult to explain or understand. Measuring success based on a single high-stakes test is seen as unfair & unreliable, besides, not all subjects are tested annually. Perhaps the biggest objection teachers make to performance-based pay incentives involves concerns about destroying collegiality.

However, performance pay systems that are designed with teacher and union support - such as Denver's ProComp system - seem to be working. Teachers view bonuses they earn through their performance as rewards for hard work they have already been doing. A pilot study done of the ProComp program found that students of participating teachers performed better on standardized assessments than other students. In addition, there has been an increase in the number of teachers applying to work in Denver's toughest schools since ProComp became available.

Making drastic changes in the way teachers in America are compensated will not be easy. It will require a serious investment by taxpayers. And, schools and districts must not rely solely on performance pay to improve student achievement. Teachers must also be given opportunities for professional development, peer mentoring, and leadership. In addition, they must be given the chance to participate in the development of any performance pay plans that will impact the amount of money they and their colleagues will earn. <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1713174,00.html>

OPINION: CALIFORNIA A CASE STUDY IN HOW NOT TO FUND SCHOOLS

Nearly 20,000 California school employees learned recently they could be out of jobs as the state gears up to cut \$4.8 billion, or 10%, from school budgets, and another 87,000 such notifications may be imminent, according to the California Teachers Association. Michael Kirst, a Stanford University professor emeritus of education and business administration, says a 1978 referendum in California that capped property taxes, making schools dependent on state funds and preventing them from asking local voters for additional monies in tough times has been disastrous. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0321/p02s01-usgn.htm>

COMMENTARY: AMERICA DOESN'T CONSIDER EDUCATION A TOP PRIORITY NOW

In recent past election years, the American public has been interested in what Presidential candidates planned to do about public education. This year, according to an Associated

Press-Yahoo poll, education is not a top issue. In fact, it is not even one of the top 18 issues that most concern Americans in 2008.

Where do the candidates stand on education? This is an important election, with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act prime for reauthorization - a feat unlikely to occur before the new President takes office in January 2009. So far, though, candidates are not talking much about their plans for educating America's youth.

Jeffrey R. Heing, a professor of political science & education at Teachers College, Columbia University, says in his op-ed column for the Boston Globe that one reason candidates have been mostly mum on education during their campaigning is that there is a lot of internal ambivalence now. According to Heing, Democrats who fought against charter schools are now seeing their value. Republicans who supported NCLB are unhappy with the results of high-stakes testing. So, there is no well-drawn and safe party line that candidates can use. Heing calls for the next administration to resist quick fixes and to give education "the treatment it deserves." That, he says, will happen only "if we, the voting public, show that we won't settle for less." http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2008/03/01/the_debate_on_education/

REPORT: A HIGH SCHOOL'S CULTURE & FILING A FAFSA KEY TO GOING TO COLLEGE

It seems which high school one goes to matters greatly, as a school's culture affects college attendance rates, according to a new report from the Consortium on Chicago School Research. The research indicates that of the 83 percent of Chicago high school seniors who said they wanted to earn a bachelor's degree or higher, only 59 percent actually applied to college. Further, just 41 percent of all Chicago high school students who said they wanted to attend a four-year institution enrolled the fall after graduation. The numbers are far worse for Latino students, as only 30 percent step foot on a college campus the semester after graduation. Another stumbling block on the path to college, besides not attending a school with a strong college-going culture, is the failure to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, more commonly known as FAFSA. The study notes that not filing a FAFSA presents a major obstacle to college enrollment. http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/CCSR_Potholes_Report.pdf

STUDY LINKS TEXAS ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM WITH HIGHER DROPOUT RATES

The public school accountability system in Texas, used as the model for NCLB, merely creates the appearance of mounting test scores and a diminishing achievement gap because so many low-performing students leave, according to a new analysis of data pertaining to 271,000 students by Rice University and the University of Texas-Austin. The researchers found an overall graduation rate among the state's public school students of just 33%, and noted that the accountability system permits principals to hold back students believed to

pose a risk to a school's overall scores, and that a large number of such students ultimately drop out.

To download the full report, [Avoidable Losses: High-Stakes Accountability and the Dropout Crisis](http://www.tuff-teach.com/pcs/showthread.php?t=17224), see <http://www.tuff-teach.com/pcs/showthread.php?t=17224>

REPORT: ONLY 5% OF CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS RESTRUCTURED SUCCESSFULLY LAST YEAR

Just 33 of the more than 700 California schools that were in NCLB restructuring during the 2006-07 school year improved their performance sufficiently to be granted a change in status, according to the Center on Education Policy. "Federal restructuring strategies have very rarely helped schools improve student achievement enough to ... exit restructuring," the report concludes. "Our findings in California point to the need to rethink restructuring across the nation."

See [Managing More Than a thousand Remodeling Projects: School Restructuring in California](http://www.cep-dc.org) at the Center on Education Policy website <http://www.cep-dc.org>
[http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?
fuseaction=document.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=232](http://www.cep-dc.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=232)

POLICY BRIEF: THE PERKINS ACT OF 2006: CONNECTING CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION WITH THE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS AGENDA

This new policy brief by Achieve, Inc. is designed to inform leaders, particularly those who are implementing the American Diploma Project (ADP) agenda in their states, about the opportunities to align and coordinate strategies between ADP and the Perkins Act. It addresses the major components of the new Perkins Act, discusses CTE career and technical education more broadly in the context of the ADP agenda, and offers a number of specific complementary and mutually supportive strategies state ADP leadership teams could employ to implement the ADP agenda and the Perkins Act. <http://www.achieve.org/node/984>

REPORT: A CULTURE OF EVIDENCE: AN EVIDENCE-CENTERED APPROACH TO ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This report is the third in a series from the Educational Testing Service (ETS). This paper provides a framework to improve, revise and introduce comprehensive systems for the collection and dissemination of information on student learning outcomes. It presents a practical approach to help the educational community respond to accountability concerns while respecting the diverse attributes of students, faculty and the institutions. <http://www.ets.org/cultureofevidence.html>

STUDY: AVOIDABLE LOSSES: HIGH-STAKES ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE DROPOUT CRISIS

A new study by researchers from Rice University & University of Texas- Austin, indicates that the Texas public school accountability system, the model for the national No Child Left Behind Act, contributes directly to low graduation rates, with a disproportionate

number of dropouts being African American, Latino, & English Language Learners. The study analyzed student-level data on more than 271,000 students in one of Texas' large urban districts over a seven-year period and included an analysis of the policy and its implementation along with extensive observations in the district high schools and interviews with students, teachers, administrators, and students who left school without graduating. The researchers found that 60 percent of African American students, 75 percent of Latino students, and 80 percent of ESL students did not graduate within five years and found an overall graduation rate of 33 percent. <http://www.epaa.asu.edu/eepaa/v16n3/>

PAPER: BEATING THE ODDS: THE REAL CHALLENGES BEHIND THE MATH ACHIEVEMENT GAP --- AND WHAT HIGH-ACHIEVING SCHOOLS CAN TEACH US ABOUT HOW TO CLOSE IT, Susan Goldberger, with Katie Bayerl (2008)

One of the largest and most persistent inequities in the modern American education system is the gap in math achievement along income and race lines. Yet some secondary schools are demonstrating their capacity to "beat the odds" and produce consistently strong math performance with students who likely would fail in traditional settings.

This paper, prepared for the Carnegie-IAS Commission on Mathematics and Science Education, highlights several obstacles to raising math achievement that deserve more attention, then describes the key characteristics of model schools that are rising to the challenge. Success of high-achieving schools teaches important lessons about how to design schools, classroom-level mathematics instruction, & the preparation of math teachers to reach those who are too often considered unreachable.

<http://www.jff.org/KnowledgeCenter/Beating+the+Odds%3A+The+Real+Challenges+Behind+the+Math+Achievement+Gap%97And+What+High-Achieving+Schools+Can+Teach+Us+About+How+to+Close+It.html>

REPORT: GETTING AHEAD OR LOSING GROUND: ECONOMIC MOBILITY IN AMERICA

The Economic Mobility Project, an initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts, just released its new report, *Getting Ahead or Losing Ground: Economic Mobility in America*. The report examines the trends & issues impacting economic opportunity for Americans & finds that across every income group, Americans are more likely to surpass their parents' income in absolute terms if they earn a college degree, reinforcing conventional wisdom that higher education provides a means for opportunity. In addition, the report finds that 84 percent of Americans born into the bottom quintile who earn a college degree move up at least one rung on the economic ladder—& 10 percent make it to the top. This compares to only 5 percent of those born into the bottom that make it to the top without a college degree.

http://www.economicmobility.org/reports_and_research/mobility

SCHOOL STRATEGIES & THE 'COLLEGE LINKING' PROCESS: RECONSIDERING THE EFFECTS OF HIGH SCHOOLS ON COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

Researcher Lori Hill looks at school effects on college enrollment in her paper, *School Strategies and the 'College-Linking' Process: Reconsidering the Effects of High Schools on College Enrollment*. Published in *Sociology of Education*, the paper examines strategies that schools use to facilitate college transitions and whether these strategies influence different outcomes for students from different racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Hill analyzed three "college-linking" strategies: traditional, clearinghouse, and brokering. <http://www.asanet.org/galleries/default-file/Jan08SOEFEATURE.pdf>

REPORT: 4th ANNUAL AP REPORT TO THE NATION

The College Board released its 4th Annual AP Report to the Nation, which looks at participation in Advanced Placement (AP) programs by state, placing the AP participation and performance data within the context of a state's population and racial/ethnic demographics. Appendices provide state-by-state data for multiple years on the numbers of students who took an AP exam in high school as well as information broken out by race/ethnicity on the proportion of students that earned a score of 3 or higher on AP examinations. <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/data-report-research/ap/nation>

REPORT: ORGANIZED COMMUNITIES, STRONGER SCHOOLS: A PREVIEW OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The Annenberg Institute today released a preview of findings from a six-year study of the impact of community organizing on school improvement in seven urban communities.

The study found strong and consistent relationships between community organizing and school-level improvements, policy and resource decisions, and student academic outcomes and concluded that effective organizing helps expand the capacity of urban public schools to support student success.

<http://www.annenberginstitute.org/Products/Mott.php>

REPORT: WHAT KEEPS GOOD TEACHERS IN THE CLASSROOM? UNDERSTANDING AND REDUCING TEACHER TURNOVER

Teachers are crucial to the success of our students. Yet many of them are leaving their schools and the profession every year, particularly in poorer, lower-performing schools. Several studies have attempted to identify why teachers leave and how to stem their turnover, but few have identified the quality of teachers who are departing. As in any profession, not all attrition is bad, but whether bad or good, it has financial ramifications. This brief explores the costs associated with teachers leaving the profession and their schools, the characteristics of those likely to leave, and what can be done to prevent unnecessary and costly turnover. http://www.all4ed.org/about_the_crisis/teachers/teacher_turnover

KNOCKING AT THE COLLEGE DOOR: Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity 1992-2022

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education recently released its annual report which forecasts the number of high school graduates in the United States until the year 2022. They found that minority students will account for nearly all the growth in the number of high school graduates over the next several years.

http://wiche.edu/policy/knocking/1992-2022/knocking_complte_book.pdf

BRIEF: MEASURING & IMPROVING EFFECTIVENESS OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

This brief from the Alliance for Excellent Education defines teacher effectiveness at the high school level, explores different ways of measuring teacher effectiveness, and discusses how to use these measures to improve teaching and learning. http://www.all4ed.org/publication_material/fact_sheets/effectiveness

www.all4ed.org/publication_material/fact_sheets/effectiveness

REPORT: TECHNOLOGY COUNTS 2008: The Push To Improve Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

This special report from Education Week and Editorial Projects in Education provides articles about the growing STEM education movement and outlines the efforts of several states to improve STEM education.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/toc/2008/03/27/index.html>

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: HILLSDALE HS

One of our favorite SLC high schools, Hillsdale HS in San Mateo, is looking for a new administrative principal for one of their three small learning communities, Kyoto House. For more information about Hillsdale HS and the Smaller Learning Community work they are doing, see: <http://www.hillsdalehigh.com> For more information regarding this position, please contact Jeff Gilbert at JGilbert@smuhd.org

WEB RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

Public Schools Insight: New Website Promotes Vision For Public Schools

The Learning First Alliance has launched a new website that promotes a fresh, 21st-century vision for public schools, with real examples of what is working in all kinds of public schools and districts. On the site, you can learn about imaginative strategies public schools are pursuing to help students succeed. You can also hear insights from extraordinary people on public education's front lines, listen to exclusive interviews with leading thinkers, and find tools to help you tell stories about success in your own public school or district. <http://www.PublicSchoolInsights.org>

TeacherTube & SchoolTube

TeacherTube, created by a superintendent, makes it easier for teachers to share educational videos for classroom use, while SchoolTube primarily features videos that students produce for class. <http://www.teachertube.com> <http://www.schooltube.com>

Adobe Puts Basic Photoshop Ware Online for Free

Photo bugs can access a basic version of Adobe Systems' Photoshop online and pay nothing to use the software. The company, which recently posted the freebie on its site, said the goal was to enhance its brand recognition among younger people who edit, store and share their pictures over the Internet. <http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshopalbum/starter.html>

Cell Biology Animation/Communicating at an Unknown Rate Grades 7 - 12

What happens when a biologist with a passion for art creates a website? This fabulous animation site shows the artistic side of biological processes along with a few surprises. View animations that demonstrate amino acids and proteins, cell anatomy, evolution time line, Krebs cycle, and photosynthesis, to name a few. Some animations are very simplistic but artfully done. Other links include Architectural art, Fibonacci numbers, and Golden ratios. The site is written in 6 languages. Caution: a link for sale of CD of the animations is also on the page. This site requires Flash.

In the classroom: Use this site as an introduction to your lessons or as a review on an interactive whiteboard or projector. Your visual/spatial students and budding artists will be especially intrigued by such an approach. Create classroom models of DNA using the 3D stereoscopic models on the site. Follow the animation to write the steps of complex cellular activities. Use the zoom to see close up views of the structures.

<http://www.johnkyrk.com>

Interactives: Historical and Cultural Contexts Grades 6 - 12

This website teaches students to recognize different kinds of primary documents, interpret them by using context clues, and apply what they've learned to better understand the past. Professional historians rely heavily on primary documents in their research. The world wide web has opened up a wealth of primary documents for use by a broader audience, and students can gain valuable insight into the past by understanding and analyzing them. Advanced classes, particularly AP-level, emphasize the importance of primary documents. What is particularly good about this site is that it is written at a level accessible to younger students. This allows teachers to begin using primary documents much sooner. The Speed Round requires FLASH.

In the Classroom: The site would work well on an interactive whiteboard (or projector) as a classroom activity. With the teacher leading and clarifying, the class might walk through several simple document analyses to gain an understanding of primary documents and their uses. If you do History Day competition, this activity would be a good starter early in the process. Alternatively, students could be instructed to complete the activity independently as an introduction to a more complex discussion of primary documents or to prepare for the dreaded DBQs ("document-based questions") in AP History classes.

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/historial/index.html>

Oceanography

This free telecourse focuses on the marine environment as a unique & important part of life on earth, & explores areas of interest & concern to students & scientists alike. Students will learn about the origin, structure, and evolution of the ocean; structures and processes involved in creating the sea floor; causes & influence of waves & tides; life in the oceans; environmental impact of humans on oceans. http://www.free-ed.net/free-ed/science/EarthSci/Oceanography/Ocean02_VOD.asp

Our Environment & Oceans for Life

This phenomenal website from National Geographic provides short videos, resources, and lessons about a variety of oceanography and marine biology topics. This site requires Flash. http://www.ngsednet.org/community/index.cfm?community_id=128

English Renaissance Drama Grades 9 - 12

Students know something about Shakespeare, but they tend to think he was the only playwright of his day. This site helps them realize that he was only one of many in the Elizabethan period and that there was a Tudor period before and a Jacobean period after him. This is an exhaustive, albeit entertaining, and authoritative look at English drama as it moved from the Middle Ages through the Renaissance. The articles are written by professors and they all contain links with explanations for all the referenced allusions. While rather encyclopedic in nature, having all the resources in one place is extraordinarily handy for the teacher of this period.

In the Classroom: Have students "become" one of the rival playwrights after researching the times and the playwright might be interesting. Perhaps students could do a panel discussion or write a blog entry as their "playwright." Don't miss the Introduction section to get valuable information about the theaters and the staging conventions of the time.

<http://www.luminarium.org/renlit/rendrama.htm>

NPR: Election 2008 - Grades 6 - 12

Sifting through the volume of information on the 2008 Presidential elections could be a full-time job! If you want a handful of sites that give you current, unbiased (as much as any political information can be!) data about the election, consider using this National Public Radio (NPR) site. It starts with a flash-enabled US map that is currently reflecting the status of primaries and caucuses. You can link to a nice side-by-side comparison of candidates' views on central issues like Iraq, the economy, health care, and climate change. There is a helpful primary calendar that keeps you posted on where we are in the process. Finally, there is updated news and commentary about the campaign season. This site requires FLASH,

<http://www.npr.org/templates/topics/topic.php?topicid=1102>

Literary Visions

This website offers a wide range of free video streaming for understanding different aspects of literature from a variety of experts. You must register, but it is free. Note: streaming of the videos is free, but you cannot download them. (You can purchase them as a set of DVDs if you choose.) Topics range from an introduction through analysis of an essay, short fiction, poetry, tone, drama, power, and uses of literature. This powerful and useful series is brought to the web by Annenberg Media.

Classroom use: Use one of the streaming videos on a projector or whiteboard to introduce students to the style used by a writer. Then assign small groups to watch, summarize, and react to different styles and report their observations to the class. <http://www.learner.org/resources/series41.html>

The Visible Body

The Visible Body is the most comprehensive, highly detailed anatomical human body visualization tool available. This fantastic application allows a search for structures in the body by name. Use the 3D controls to move and rotate the body in 3D space. Add systems to the body by dragging the words to the body. Body parts can be made opaque and transparent as needed. Clicking and dragging the model also performs the same functions as the 3D controls. Zoom in and out of the model to see parts closer. By using the controls, parts of the human anatomy can be explored and seen transparently. Find the names of the systems or structures by clicking on the structures.

NOTE: currently there is no G-rated version available, but it is pending. An email address is necessary for verification and to receive a link to launch the application. If you ask your students to use the site, each student will need to sign up separately. Students registering must be over the age of 13 or use the site with a parent/teacher. Obtain parent permission to avoid safety concerns with student email accounts or create a teacher Gmail account with up to 20 subaccounts for students (by code name or number) within your classes. <http://www.visiblebody.com/>

SOME UPCOMING EVENTS

BayCES Conference: On Our Watch: Preparing Urban Students for Life, Leadership, and Academic Excellence

Join teachers, researchers, parents, students, administrators and community groups for On Our Watch: Preparing Urban Students for Life, Leadership, and Academic Excellence, April 25-26, 2008, in Oakland to share best practices for improving student outcomes in urban schools. The symposium features small school tours, workshops by local teachers and scholars, and powerful keynote speeches.

The opening reception will take place at 6:00pm on Friday, April 25, at Preservation Park's Nile Hall in Downtown Oakland. The reception will feature a keynote address from **Dr. Pedro Noguera**, discussing his new book, *The Trouble With Black Boys: And Other Reflections on Race, Equity, and the Future of Public Education*. Advance copies of the book will be available for purchase at the reception. Space is limited.

The opening plenary speaker on Saturday morning will be **Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond**, recently named one of the 10 most influential people in education by the Editorial Projects in Education Research Center. Dr. Darling-Hammond's plenary keynote is titled, "Re-imagining Urban Education: Creating Schools that Work for All Students."

The symposium will offer over 50 workshops that span a range of issues relevant to creating high-achieving and equitable schools. Sample workshops include: From Deficit to Asset: A New View of the Learner, (Dr. Miranda Dianda, NEA); Building Racial and Cultural Competence in the Classroom: Strategies From Urban Educators (Jennifer Obidah, University of West Indies, Barbados); The "Three Rs" of Powerful Parent Partnerships, (Rhina Ramos, Bay Area Parent Leadership Action Network) Get Organized! Examples of Student Leadership and Voice, Youth Empowerment School Students, Oakland); Creating a College Going Culture, (Wyn Skeels, Community Partnerships Academy, Berkeley High School); and more. For more info & to register, visit <http://www.bayces.org/article.php/EXCELconf>

Coaching For Educational Equity Institute

This summer, BayCES will host two Coaching for Educational Equity (CFEE) institutes for coaches, support providers, and education leaders. CFEE Participants gain insight into the effects of power and privilege on students and adults in schools, and skills to coach and facilitate leadership development and school transformation. The CFEE Institutes will be held on **June 25 - 27, 2008** and **August 6 - 8, 2008**. <http://www.bayces.org>

The Career Academy National Standards of Practice Workshop for District and High School Administrators

Are you a district or high school that wants to start a career academy or support your career academy at a higher level? Do you want to learn how to create a model career academy? The National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC) is offering a two-day workshop on the National Standards of Practice (NSOP). These 10 Standards were introduced in 2004 by a consortium of national organizations to provide national consistency and quality to career academies. You will learn what the Standards are, what they look like in high quality academies, & how you can implement them.

To register for the workshop or for more info: ncac@phmc.org or <http://www.ncacinc.org>

Noble High School SLC Design Studio: Creating and Sustaining SLCs Where All

Students Achieve, North Berwick, Maine, April 30 - May 2, 2008

<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sslc/events/Event.php?EventID=50>

Developing Critical Thinking in a Heterogeneous Classroom, School of the

Future, April (New York, NY). For exact dates, contact Stacy

Goldstein, stacypaigeny@gmail.com www.sof.edu.

Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) National Conference 2008 "From Structure to Instruction: Sharing Best Practices and Lessons Learned in SLCs and Small Schools" Las Vegas, Nevada June 23, 2008 - June 25, 2008

In partnership with NAF, CASN and NWREL, this SLC conference is designed by practitioners for practitioners to provide teachers, administrators and district staff with tools and strategies to strengthen their SLC practice. The conference is designed and delivered by experienced SLC practitioners as they reach out to other grantees to support their implementation. In keeping with the objective of connecting secondary schools with post-secondary education, the conference will be held at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. Sessions are grounded in best practices used by a cadre of SLC Practitioners and researchers on what they know works best in SLC settings. Sessions are in workshop format, and participating teams will leave the conference with plans to share with their teams at their local schools and districts. On-site coaching by Practitioner Advisers and researchers will be available for teams to help solidify their plans and troubleshoot anticipated barriers. Post-conference sessions will be held on June 25 from 8:00-5:00 to provide more in-depth focus on topics of special interest to school staffs and their leadership teams. <http://www.nwrel.orgscpd/sslc/events/Event.php?Events=66>

CESNW (Coalition of Essential Schools Northwest) and Small Schools Project - Symposium and Seminars, Mt. Rainier High School, Highline School District, June 23-27, 2008. Featured speakers include Deborah Meier and Kathleen Cushman. More info available in March at <http://www.cesnorthwest.org>

Model Schools Conference 2008

June 22 - 25, 2008 Orlando, FL

Theme: Great Challenges - Real Solutions - Right Now!

Highlights include:

- Model high schools, middle grade programs, elementary schools and CTE programs will share how they implemented a rigorous and relevant education for all students and achieved high levels of success.
- How-to sessions will provide practical solutions that can be put to immediate use to improve student learning.
- Six one-day PreConferences will be held on Saturday, June 30.
- Post-Conference during the afternoon of June 25 and in the morning of June 26.
- CTE Conference within a Conference (in partnership with the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and CORD's National Career Pathways Network)
- FOR MORE INFO: <http://www.modelschoolsconference.com>

National Academy Foundation (NAF) 2008 Institute for Staff Development, July 8 - July 11, 2008 Orlando, Florida <http://www.naf.org>

22nd Annual High Schools That Work (HSTW) Staff Development Conference: Skills for Success in the 21st Century July 9 - July 12, 2008 Nashville, Tennessee <http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/professionalDev/SummerConference/2008Conferenceindex.asp>

Coalition of Essential Schools Small Schools Summer Institute. Portland, Oregon, July 14-18. The Institute features workshops & facilitated conversations with some of the most effective small school educators in the country, including those from CES Mentor Schools such as Urban Academy, Eagle Rock School, Boston Arts Academy, & Quest High School. http://www.essentialschools.org/pub/ces_docs/ssp/si08splash.html

SOME FUNDING AND AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

Film Your Issue 2008 Short Film Competition for Students
<http://www.filmyourissue.com/2008.shtml>

School Leadership Grants Now Available

U.S. Department of Education is currently accepting applications for grants under the School Leadership Program. The School Leadership Program is designed to help districts recruit, train, and retain principals and assistant principals in high-need schools. Grantees may use funds to provide financial incentives to aspiring new principals, provide stipends to principals who mentor new principals, carry out professional development programs in instructional leadership and management, provide incentives for teachers or individuals from other fields who would like to become principals, and other activities. 24-30 grants ranging from \$250,000-\$750,000 are expected to be awarded in FY 2008. Competition is open to high-need districts & institutions of higher education in partnership with districts. A "notice of intent" to apply is due April 2, 2008, & the deadline for applications is May 2, 2008. <http://www.ed.gov/programs/leadership/applicant.html>.

Do Something Plum Youth Grants

Do Something Plum Youth Grants are available to young people who submit creative proposals to further the growth and success of their existing community action project. Maximum Award: \$500. Eligibility: Applicant must be 25 or younger at the time of application. Deadline: weekly.
http://www.dosomething.org/plum_youth_grant_application

Creating Young Historians (Resources & Grants)

Save Our History, a program of the History Channel, seeks to inspire students to become local historians and preservationists by providing a free, downloadable educational manual, lesson plans, & project guides for teachers of elementary, middle, & high school students.

The program also awards grants for projects in which museums, historic sites, preservation organizations, or libraries partner with a local school or youth group to help preserve the history of their communities. Applications are due June 6.

<http://www.intel.com/education/sts/2008winners.htm>

Grants for Programs that Benefit Youth and Scientific Education

American Honda Foundation makes grants to K-12 schools, colleges, universities, trade schools & other youth-focused nonprofit organizations for programs that benefit youth & scientific education. Maximum Award: \$100,000. Eligibility: Schools & youth-focused nonprofit organizations. Deadline: May 1, 2008. <http://corporate.honda.com/america/philanthropy.aspx?id=ahf>

2008 Butler-Cooley Excellence in Teaching Awards

Turnaround Management Association (TMA) is accepting nominations for the 2008 Butler-Cooley Excellence in Teaching Awards. The awards honor teachers who have demonstrated exceptional dedication and skill in shaping the lives of children and teens through education. Maximum Award: \$5,000 cash and travel and lodging expenses to TMA's 2008 Annual Convention and 20th anniversary celebration in New Orleans, Louisiana. October 27-29, 2008. Eligibility: primary or secondary school teachers employed by accredited schools for at least five years. Deadline: May 1, 2008.

<http://www.turnaround.org/about/awards.aspx>

Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes

Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes seeks nominations for its 2008 awards. The Barron Prize honors young people between the ages of 8 and 18 who have made a significant positive difference to people and our planet. Each year, the Barron Prize selects ten winners from across the United States - five focused on helping their communities and fellow beings, and the other five focused on protecting the health and sustainability of the environment.

Nominees must be prime mover of a service activity & have demonstrated positive spirit & high moral purpose in accomplishing their goals. Nominees must be nominated by a responsible adult who has solid knowledge of the young person's heroic activities & is not related to the nominee. Ten national winners will each receive \$2,000 to support their service work or higher education. Deadline: 4/30/08. <http://www.barronprize.org/>

Teens for Planet Earth Service Awards

The Teens for Planet Earth Service Awards recognize teens around the world for service-learning projects that demonstrate their commitment to the environment. TPE teams whose projects are deemed to be of exceptional quality will be awarded at three levels:

Bronze: Recipients of the Bronze Award will receive a certificate of merit from the Wildlife Conservation Society for their achievements.

Silver: Recipients of the Silver Award will receive a certificate of distinction from the WCS for their achievements as well as an entire webpage devoted to showcasing their team's service-learning project. The winning teams will be profiled in the Teens for Planet Earth Service Awards Report.

Gold: Recipients of the Gold Award will receive a certificate of excellence from the WCS for their achievements; an entire webpage devoted to showcasing their team's service-learning project; a profile in the Teens for Planet Earth Service Awards Report; and US \$1,000 to further enhance their project or education.

Selection will be highly competitive. As part of your application, you will submit a report with specific project data, photo documentation, testimonials, and more. Deadline: April 15, 2008

<http://teens4planetearth.com/serviceawards/application>

Youth Venture Go Overboard Challenge

Commit to a cause you are passionate about - saving the environment, hunger, poverty, literacy, health - and launch your own organization! Youth Venture, in partnership with Burton Snowboards and Girl Overboard book author Justina Chen Headley, are sponsoring the Go Overboard Challenge Grants for the best youth led ideas to change the world.

The best ideas submitted by a team (two or more persons) for a new sustainable organization are eligible to win a grant of up to \$1000.00.

Deadline: May 1, 2008 <http://genv.net/en-us/burton>

Tiger Woods Foundation -- Grants for Underserved Youth

The Tiger Woods Foundation is accepting applications for grants through its underserved youth grant program to support projects that provide education and youth development to underserved youth ages 5-17, particularly those that focus on youth in urban American cities.

Award amounts vary; average amounts are \$2,500-\$25,000. Eligible applicants are organizations that have been in existence for at least one year, have been determined to be tax exempt under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and are not private foundations as defined in Section 509(a) of the Code. Deadline: May 1, 2008 (2nd quarter awards)

http://www.tigerwoodsfoundation.org/grants_and_scholarships.php

Teaching Tolerance Grants for Schools/Districts

Teaching Tolerance offers grants of up to \$10,000 for programs that engage collaboration between educators, researchers, parents/guardians and student groups that aim to equalize students' experience in schools. Such programs might include:

- Equitable discipline policies and practices
- Consistent educational experience for migrant, homeless, or foster-care students
- Special education advocacy, with emphasis on parent and students' rights
- Prejudice reduction efforts in racially isolated schools
- Equitable school assignment plans

Grants require a two-stage application procedure, beginning with a Letter of Inquiry &, on invitation, followed by the submission of a full proposal.

Letters of Inquiry should not exceed 3 pages and must include:

- Contact name, email address, phone number, organization name/address
- Summary of the proposal's main points
- Information about the school or district and its capacity to carry out the proposal, including credentials of key project leaders
- Concise description of the project, including the motivation and need(s) addressed, what will take place, how many people will benefit from the program, and who will participate
- Anticipated short- and long-term outcomes that connect clearly to students' holistic experiences in schools
- Brief estimated budget and timeframe
- Brief overview of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods
- Plans to disseminate information about your project to encourage replication and sustainability

Notification of our interest will be mailed in June. If a Letter of Inquiry is selected for further consideration, you will receive detailed instructions for submitting a full proposal.

Submit Letter of Inquiry to: Teaching Tolerance Grants, 400 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36104

Final Deadline for receipt of inquiry letters for this year is May 15, 2008.

High Tech Camp for Girls

Microsoft DigiGirlz High Tech Camp for girls works to dispel stereotypes of the high-tech industry and gives young people a chance to experience firsthand what it is like to develop cutting-edge technology. During the camp, girls are exposed to executive speakers, technology tours and demonstrations, networking and hands-on learning workshops.

Maximum Award: camp attendance. Eligibility: girls grades 7-12; must be 13 at the time of attendance. Deadline: varies; see website.

<https://www.microsoft.com/about/diversity/programs/camps.msp>

ING Unsung Heroes

ING Unsung Heroes awards program recognizes innovative & progressive thinking in education through monetary awards. Maximum Award: \$25,000. Eligibility: full-time educators, teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, classified staff members with effective projects that improve student learning at an accredited K-12 public or private school.

Deadline: 4/30/08

<http://www.ing-usa.com/us/aboutING/communityconnections/ineducation/unsungheroes/index.htm>

Wireless Lab Sweepstakes

Discovery Education and CDW-G will award wireless labs to five schools. Maximum Award: wireless lab valued at more than \$50,000. Eligibility: legal residents of U.S.A. who are 18 years & older & who are employed at accredited public, private or parochial school in U.S.A. containing any class with students from kindergarten through Grade 12. Deadline: 5/1/08.

<http://cdwg.discoveryeducation.com/new/site/index.cfm>

Awards for Breakthrough Middle and Secondary Schools

National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) & MetLife Foundation are calling for entries in the search for the nation's top "Breakthrough Schools." Applicants should be high achieving middle or high schools, or schools that are making dramatic improvements in student achievement, whose best practices and outstanding results can inform other schools as they further their own improvement efforts. Honorees will be chosen based upon documented success in implementing strategies aligned with the three core areas of NASSP's Breaking Ranks II publication. Those three areas are collaborative leadership; personalization; and curriculum, instruction and assessment. Maximum Award: \$5,000. Eligibility: high-achieving middle and high schools where 40 percent or more of students are eligible for free and reduced-priced meals. Deadline: 5/15/08,

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

Project Ignition: Innovative Safe Driving Awareness Projects

Sponsored by State Farm & coordinated by National Youth Leadership Council, Project Ignition provides students in grades 9 through 12 & their teachers with the opportunity to work together to address the issue of teen driver safety.

Applicants must be willing to create & produce an innovative public awareness, service-learning project based on teen driver safety. Students must create this project with the support of a teacher/advisor & school/organization. Students are invited to convey their safe-driving message in the most creative way possible. Participants may choose to use the Internet, direct mail, print advertising, video, live performance, or other medium. Last year's participants created school assemblies, designed print advertising, and hosted community-wide events.

Any interested student can submit an online application. In May, twenty-five applicants will be selected to each receive a \$2,000 check from State Farm to help put their plan into action. Student teams will then launch their campaign & gather their results for final judging in December. In January, up to ten finalists will be notified and will receive a stipend of up to \$5,000

each from State Farm for travel to NYLC's Annual National Service-Learning Conference in March, where the projects will be highlighted in front of an international audience. Judges will select the "Best of the Best" award, with the winning school receiving a grant for \$10,000. Deadline: 5/16/08

<http://fconline.foundationcenter.org/pnd/15012098/prjctignit>

Toshiba America Foundation Grants for Math and Science

Toshiba America Foundation makes grants for projects in math & science designed by classroom teachers to improve instruction for students in grades K-12. Maximum Award: \$10,000. Eligibility: Grades K-12. Deadline: Decisions about grants under \$5,000 (K-6: \$1,000) are made on a rolling basis & applications are accepted throughout the year. Deadline for large grants grades 7-12: 8/1/08 <http://www.toshiba.com/tafpub/jsp/home/default.jsp>