

## **CASN NEWS    MAY 2007**

**CASN News** is supported by the Career Academy Support Network (CASN) at University of California Berkeley Graduate School of Education. Our focus is on high schools and high school redesign, especially redesign which includes Academies/small schools/smaller learning communities.

CASN believes that quality teaching and learning are at the heart of any good high school and that every student has a right to rigor, relevance, and supportive adult relationships. We also work to build community engagement and partnerships which support student success.

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*"Human relationships are the heart of schooling. The interactions that take place between students and teachers and among students are more central to student success than any method of teaching literacy, or science, or math. When powerful relationships are established between teachers and students, these relationships frequently can transcend the economic and social disadvantages that afflict communities and schools alike in inner city and rural areas. - Cummins*

*"One of the central lessons we think we have learned about previous rounds of innovation is that they failed because they*

*didn't get at fundamental, underlying, systemic features of school life: they didn't change the behaviors, norms, and beliefs of practitioners. Consequently, these reforms ended up being grafted on to existing practices, and they were greatly modified, if not fully overcome, by those practices." - Evans*

### **ED SLC GRANT COMPETITION WATCH: ANOTHER UPDATE**

According to Gregory Dennis, the Program Officer in Charge of the SLC Grant Competition at the U.S. Department of Education, "May 17th is the latest information on the date for the Notice Inviting Applications to appear in the Federal Register. The 60 day window will remain."

### **ED FUNDING WATCH: GRADUATION PROMISE ACT (GPA)**

U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), Richard Burr (R-NC), and Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) introduced new legislation that would make \$2.5 billion in federal funds available for use in transforming the lowest-performing high schools into effective centers of teaching and learning. Called the Graduation Promise Act (GPA), the bill would leverage statewide systems of high school improvement, support the development of effective school models for struggling students and dropouts, and reform state policies to remove barriers to high school reform. Ultimately, and if passed into law, the bill would help to ensure that every student graduates from high school prepared for college and the workforce.

The GPA authorizes \$2.5 billion in new funding to: Create a federal-state-local secondary school reform partnership focused on transforming the lowest performing high schools; Build capacity for high school improvement and provide resources to ensure high school educators and students facing the highest challenges receive the support they need to succeed; Strengthen state systems to identify, differentiate among, and target the level of reform and resources necessary to improve low performing high schools and ensure transparency and accountability for that process; Advance the research and development needed to 1) ensure a robust supply of highly effective secondary school models that support the students

most at risk of being left behind and 2) identify the most effective reforms; Support states in aligning state policies and systems to meet the goal of college and career-ready graduation for all students.

**LEGISLATION WATCH: AMERICA CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXCELLENCE IN TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION & SCIENCE ACT (COMPETES ACT, BILL S.761)**

The U.S. Senate recently passed The America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act. The bill provides competitive grants for states and schools to increase the number of math, science, and critical foreign language teachers in both regular classes and AP/IB. Administered through the Department of Education, these grants may be used to expand the skills and capacity of existing teachers in these areas. The bill also provides for additional educational programs in math, science, and foreign languages.

Taking a different approach, the bill also establishes a Math, Science, and Engineering Education Fund in the Department of Energy to provide professional development for teachers in these subject areas and grants for specialty schools focused on the same subjects. The Department of Energy also establishes summer internship programs for middle and secondary school students and Centers of Excellence in Mathematics and Science at schools in the regions of national laboratories.

The House of Representatives recently passed a similar bill, (H.R. 362) that provides the National Science Foundation with resources to develop and implement math and science professional development training and educational scholarships for math and science teachers.

These bills are part of a growing movement in the Congress to increase America's international competitiveness.

**LEGISLATION WATCH: STRIVING READERS ACT**

U.S. Representatives John Yarmuth (D-KY) and Todd Russell Platts (R-PA) recently introduced new legislation that would provide grants to every state for reading and comprehension programs to meet the

needs of students in grades four through twelve. Called the Striving Readers Act, the legislation would help ensure that older students who are struggling to read and write at grade level receive the literacy interventions they need to succeed in school and graduate from high school with a meaningful diploma. It mirrors legislation introduced in the U.S. Senate on March 22 by U.S. Senators Jeff Sessions (R-AL) and Patty Murray (D-WA).

### **SUPREME COURT WATCH: UPCOMING DECISIONS COULD RESHAPE DESEGREGATION**

A pair of cases from school districts trying to maintain racial balance before a newly conservative United States Supreme Court could offer districts new flexibility to balance student populations or further re-segregate communities already heading in that direction. Both cases are brought by parents of white students trying to get into popular schools that school officials carefully balance by race.

[http://www.economist.com/world/na/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=9079930](http://www.economist.com/world/na/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9079930)

### **ED POLICY WATCH: WHAT'S UP WITH NCLB**

Superintendents across the country, some education commissioners and former President Bill Clinton are all calling for wholesale changes to NCLB as President George W. Bush urged Congress to renew and broaden the 2002 law. "Congress shouldn't weaken the bill. It's working," Bush said.

### **NEW FEDERAL FIGURES SHOW HIGHER HS DROPOUT RATES**

Much Higher in Urban Schools and Among Minority Males

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/05/09/AR2007050902411.html>

### **WISCONSIN GUARANTEES HIGHER ED TO QUALIFYING STUDENTS**

Wisconsin is rolling out the nation's most expansive guarantee of higher education to students in hopes of raising college aspirations and improving preparedness.

The state's 75,000 eighth-graders can sign the Wisconsin Covenant agreement starting May 10, promising to earn a B average, take courses to prepare for college and be good citizens.

In exchange, the state will guarantee a spot in one of its universities or technical colleges and a combination of work study, loans and scholarships to help low-income students pay their way.

The program is similar to those in Indiana, Oklahoma and at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill that educators say have been successful in keeping college affordable. All three target low-income students.

Wisconsin's program is unique because all students can sign up and will be urged at a key age to start preparing themselves for higher education.

"It's especially noteworthy that the focus is on eighth-graders," said Dan Hurley of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. "That is a remarkably critical year in terms of planting a seed and letting every young adult in Wisconsin recognize they can attend college." (SOURCE: CNN)

### **COLLEGE PACT REVOLUTIONIZES KALAMAZOO, INSPIRES OTHERS**

With 20 of 36 Boston valedictorians unable to afford college, calls are being made for improving the city's financial aid system. Meanwhile, a pact in Kalamazoo, Michigan, that promises graduates up to four years of free college has revolutionized the city's economy and schools. Also, a Wisconsin proposal pledging full financial aid for certain students reportedly would cause student financial aid subsidies to rise at least \$139 million over six years.

<http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070514/NEWS05/705140367/1007>

### **BILLIONAIRES LAUNCH STRONG AMERICAN SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN**

Eli Broad and Bill Gates have together pumped more than \$2 billion into improving schools; now they have joined forces to try and ensure education is a key topic of discussion during the 2008 presidential campaign. Dubbed Strong American Schools, their education campaign will include TV and radio advertising in battleground states and a push for more consistent curriculum

standards, longer and more school days and improved teacher quality.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/25/education/25schools.html>

### **FOREST GROVE HS TURNAROUND -- ABSOLUTELY (Oregon)**

After nearly five years Principal John O'Neill Jr.'s leadership, Forest Grove High is Oregon's only high school to win back-to-back awards from the state for improving and sustaining achievement. The school has made big strides for all students—a rare feat for a 2,000-student high school.

<http://www.oregonlive.com/oregonian/stories/index.ssf?/base/news/1178585714304530.xml&coll=7>

### **MAINE MAY REQUIRE HS SENIORS TO APPLY TO COLLEGE**

<http://bangordailynews.com/news/t/news.aspx?articleid=149230&zoneid=500>

### **SOME SCHOOLS/DISTRICTS PHASING OUT LAPTOP PROGRAMS**

As students show limited academic improvement and schools struggle to fix laptop technology and prevent student abuse, increasing numbers of districts nationally are ending experiments in providing students with leased laptops. "After seven years, there was literally no evidence it had any impact on student achievement -- none," said Mark Lawson, the school board president in Liverpool, N.Y., one of the first districts to experiment with laptops. "Teachers were telling us ... it's a distraction to the educational process."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/04/education/04laptop.html?>

### **EDUCATORS RE-EXAMINE WHO BELONGS IN SPECIAL ED CLASSES**

- There are nearly 7 million special education students in the United States
- Schools get roughly \$11 billion a year in federal money for special ed
- The Dept. of Education said it will award \$14 million to set up model programs

According to the U.S. Department of Education, many children in special education classes may not belong there. A new policy is aimed at intervening early with intensive teaching to give

struggling students a chance to succeed in regular classrooms. Of the millions of U.S. special ed students, roughly half have learning disabilities and most of those are reading related, such as dyslexia or problems in processing information. The new special education guidelines give states more latitude in terms of how students are assessed and in the use of some funding to intervene earlier.

One goal is to address an old problem: "There is over-placement of minority kids, particularly African American males, in special education." Some posit that the reasons may be more due to socio-economic disadvantage -- not disability.

<http://www.cnn.com/2007/EDUCATION/05/03/identifying.disabilities.ap/index.html>

### **EMERGING ED TECH PRACTICE: RHODE ISLAND OFFERS WEB-BASED CURRICULUM LINKED TO STATEWIDE STANDARDS**

Rhode Island teachers and others who want to know what good instruction looks like have a new resource: a Web-based archive of lesson plans, student work, and videos of effective teaching—all aligned with the state's academic expectations for students.

Use of the materials isn't mandated, even though they are billed as Rhode Island's first statewide curriculum. Nor does the site include the "scope and sequence" typical of district curricula, which generally say what to cover and in what order.

Instead, the online tool is meant to offer ideas on how to take the state's academic standards and turn them into classroom instruction, said Diane Schaefer, the director of instruction at the Rhode Island education department.

"It's not a curriculum in the sense that it's telling you what to do at this particular date and time, but it's telling you how to think about the process of teaching and learning," she said. "We didn't want to say, 'Take this and teach to it'; this is for a dialogue."

The materials are organized by grade level, and they tell how they address specific state standards. High school students shot much of the accompanying video.

Now covering mathematics and English/language arts, the site soon will add science, civics, and history. Found at [www.ride.ri.gov/instruction/curriculum](http://www.ride.ri.gov/instruction/curriculum), it is open to all, and includes ideas on how parents, business leaders, and community groups also can use the tool.

## **ASCD ANNOUNCES HIGH SCHOOL REFORM PROPOSAL**

Essential Components include:

### **"Multiple Assessments**

...measuring student learning is an essential tool when done properly. Unfortunately, NCLB places too much emphasis on single assessments that fail to help teachers improve their instruction and are inadequate for measuring the full breadth of student learning.

It is crucial that we develop a more sophisticated assessment system that incorporates more meaningful assessment data at the school level, such as portfolio assessments, demonstrations, oral presentations, and applied projects.

Such a system will ensure not only that important accountability decisions are based on the best possible data, but also that educators can use the data to determine which students are struggling, what strategies are working, and how teachers should adjust their instruction to ensure that each child succeeds.

### **Personalized Learning**

The ASCD High School Reform Proposal calls for personalized learning to ensure that students assume ownership for connecting their learning with future goals. This enables students to work with educational mentors and career coaches within the school building to not only to see greater relevance in their schoolwork, but also to grow increasingly engaged in school, connected to adults, and prepared for graduation and future success.

Research has shown that students who do not believe their schoolwork is relevant and who are not engaged are at a much higher risk of dropping out. Engaged students not only attend school more, but are also likely to get more out of their time in school because they approach learning more eagerly, seek

greater opportunities, and persist in the face of difficulty (Voke, 2002).

### **Flexible Use of Time and Structure**

...many schools are hindered by inflexible graduation, time and attendance requirements, such as the 100-year-old Carnegie unit, that do not reflect contemporary knowledge of best practices.

Where the Carnegie unit tries to force student learning to fit outdated instructional schedules, we must instead organize learning according to each student's needs in mastering an academic subject. This may mean that some students complete high school in fewer or more than the traditional four years. What counts is not the time spent in the school building, but the learning that the student masters.

We must give schools the opportunity to explore the best structures and environments to promote student learning—including connecting students to beneficial learning opportunities not only within the school, but also through internships, online instruction, and independent study.

### **Professional Development**

To fully support students in new kinds of learning, we must first support teachers and school leaders in gaining the knowledge, time, and resources to educate in new, innovative ways. The ASCD High School Reform Proposal calls for flexibility, innovation, and greater resources for professional development.

### **Business and Community Engagement**

The key to helping students succeed is focusing on the best opportunities for students to master learning objectives, whether those opportunities take place inside a classroom or at a nearby business or other location in the community.

Schools, in collaboration with local businesses, should be able to provide learning opportunities outside the classroom that harness the relevance and needs of business with the academic rigor of the school curriculum. This increases both business support and student engagement.

Studies have shown that combining academic rigor with career or technical learning, work-based learning, and mentoring designed to help the student move toward postsecondary goals not only improves graduation rates, but also helps boost scores in reading, math, and science (Bottoms, 2003)."

### **SOME ADDITIONAL HIGH SCHOOL REFORM RESOURCES**

The American Diploma Project. (2004). *Ready or not: Creating a high school diploma that counts.*

[http://www.achieve.org/files/ADPreport\\_7.pdf](http://www.achieve.org/files/ADPreport_7.pdf)

Brand, B. (2003). *Essentials of high school reform: New forms of assessment and contextual teaching and learning.*

<http://www.aypf.org/publications/EssentialsofHighSchoolReform.pdf>

Bridgeland, J., DiJulio, J., & Morison, K. B. (2006). *The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts.* Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises,

[www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/TheSilentEpidemic3-06FINAL.pdf](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/nr/downloads/ed/TheSilentEpidemic3-06FINAL.pdf)

National Academy of Sciences. (2003). *Engaging schools: Fostering high school students' motivation to learn.*

<http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10421.html>

National Center on Education and the Economy. (2006). *Tough choices or tough times: The report of the new commission on the skills of the American workforce.*

[http://www.skillscommission.org/pdf/exec\\_sum/ToughChoices\\_EXECSUM.pdf](http://www.skillscommission.org/pdf/exec_sum/ToughChoices_EXECSUM.pdf)

National High School Alliance. (2005). *A call to action: Transforming high school for all youth.*

<http://www.ecs.org/html/Document.asp?chouseid=6105>

## **REPORT: ALIGNING POSTSECONDARY EXPECTATIONS AND HIGH SCHOOL PRACTICE: THE GAP DEFINED (ACT)**

*(CASN News rerun)*

A new study by ACT finds a gap between what high schools are teaching in their core college preparatory courses & what postsecondary educators expect entering students to know in order for them to succeed in first-year courses. The report, *Aligning Postsecondary Expectations and High School Practice: The Gap Defined*, attributes the disconnect to unfocused state standards and state assessments that do not adequately measure what students need to know in college.

"There clearly is a significant gap between what high school teachers and college faculty expect of students," said Cynthia B. Schmeiser, president & chief operating officer of ACT's education division. "State policymakers and education leaders must work to close this gap by taking a more integrated approach to education and aligning their learning standards with college requirements" Currently, however, ACT argues that the extensive demands of state standards may be forcing high schools to treat all content topics as important, thereby sacrificing depth for breadth. In fact, according to the report, high school teachers across all subject areas (English/writing, reading, mathematics, and science) rate teaching their students advanced content as important or very important. But college instructors would rather see students arrive in postsecondary classes having gotten an in-depth understanding of the fundamentals of a subject area and strong basic skills. For example, in writing, postsecondary instructors valued basic writing mechanics such as sentence structure and punctuation, while high school instructors ranked these skills as less important. In math, postsecondary instructors gave greater importance to understanding and applying fundamental principles, while high school teachers focused on advanced math content.

Postsecondary and high school teachers do concur on one issue: that students need better reading skills. Despite this agreement, there is a general lack of reading courses in high school and a decline in the teaching of targeted reading strategies after ninth grade. ACT recommends more instruction in

reading and reading strategies throughout the high school years. All courses in high school, not just English and social studies but mathematics and science as well, must challenge students to read and understand complex texts, the report reads. Students must be given more opportunities to read challenging materials across the curriculum so that they are better positioned to comprehend complex texts in all subjects once they enter college or the workplace.

Another problem that stems from state standards that are not focused on what students need to know is that assessments designed to measure those standards will not focus on college readiness either. As a remedy, ACT suggests that states better target their standards to focus on the essential knowledge and skills in each content area, rather than trying to encapsulate a broad array of topics and skills. States should then align their assessments to these new standards and seek empirical evidence that their standards and assessments are actually preparing and measuring student readiness for postsecondary work.

Among its other solutions, the report suggests that states establish core course requirements for hs graduation and begin measuring college readiness in eighth grade and continue through the twelfth grade. It adds that colleges can provide data to high schools on how well their students are performing in college. In turn, hss could use this data to improve the quality of their courses and identify the subject areas in which their graduates had difficulty once they got to college. The complete report is available at

<http://www.act.org/path/policy/reports/curriculum.html>

### **BRIEF: MAKING WRITING INSTRUCTION A PRIORITY IN AMERICA'S MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS**

This brief from the Alliance for Excellent Education suggests policy options that would support strategies designed to improve the ability of students to write proficiently and help to ensure that they graduate with the skills necessary to succeed in postsecondary education and in the workplace.

<http://www.all4ed.org/publications/IssueBriefs.html>

### **REPORT: STRAIGHT FROM THE SOURCE: WHAT WORKS**

### **FOR FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS**

This report from the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education offers a comprehensive look at the college access struggles of students who are the first in their families to pursue postsecondary education. The report offers best practices for policymakers and college access professionals across the country.

<http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/PCNLibrary/ViewBiblio.aspx?aid=1977>

### **Performance Pay For Teachers: Designing a System That Students Deserve**

This report from TeacherSolutions, an initiative of the Center for Teaching Quality, is written by a diverse group of teachers from across the United States. It proposes a comprehensive new framework for teacher compensation, where base pay would still be tied to level of experience but where teachers could earn more through a variety of incentives as they progress from novice to expert.

<http://www.teacherleaders.orgteachersolutions.index.php>

### **COMMENTARY: STUDENTS LEARN TO THRIVE BY NOT BEING BYSTANDERS**

According to a recent study, a student's academic success may depend on whether s/he believes in her/his own ability to grow smarter. Researchers divided poorly performing middle-school students into two groups and arranged for students in both groups to receive intense, remedial instruction. However, those in the second group also were taught to understand

intelligence as an expanding opportunity, rather than an unchangeable destiny...After several months, testing revealed slightly improved scores in the first group, but soaring success among students in the second.

....Tackling the rigors of an advanced curriculum requires students to be active, enthusiastic learners who are convinced that their intelligence can grow and that their capacity for learning is enhanced even as they learn. On the other hand, students who assume their intellectual abilities were fixed at birth approach education passively,

coming to school with the attitude, appearance, and expectations of detached observers. It is critical that we teach kids to redefine personal intelligence as a power they can control, and over which they have personal responsibility.  
<http://www.statesmanjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2007705070316>

### **ISSUE BRIEF: COURSE CREDIT ACCRUAL AND DROPPING OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL**

This issue brief from the National Center for Education Statistics examines the relationship between the number of credits students earn and the timing of when they drop out of high school. The study found that high school dropouts earn fewer credits than on-time graduates within each academic year, and the gap in course credits accrued between dropouts and on-time graduates increased across academic years.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007018>

### **SOME PHYSICAL ED, SPORTS & FITNESS RESOURCES**

- . From the American Heart Association: How to Limit Tube Time and Get Your Kids Moving (to share with parents/families) □ <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=303390>
- . A Position Statement from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education: Appropriate Practices for High School Physical Education  
□ > <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/peappropriatepractice/AppropriatePracticesforHS.pdf>
- . From the CDC's School Health Policies and Programs Study: Fact Sheet for Physical Education and Activity  
□ <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/shpps/factsheets/pdf/pe.pdf>
- . From the American Academy of Pediatrics: Sports Injury Prevention Tips  
<http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/aprsportsinjurytips.htm>

### **FEATURED PRACTICE: MAKING TIME**

Implementing a professional development plan is often hampered by others' perceptions of teachers' work.

According to McDiarmid (1995), "Although reform has changed expectations for teachers, how the public and policymakers perceive teachers' work has not changed. They continue to think teachers are working only when they are with their students. As a result, there is little support for providing the time and resources teachers require for teachers to change their practice."

Castle and Watts explain that "the traditional view of teachers' work is governed by the idea that time with students is of singular value, that teachers are primarily deliverers of content, that curricular planning and decision making rest at higher levels of authority, and that professional development is unrelated to improving instruction".

This limited view of teaching does not allow opportunities for teachers to participate in curriculum development, learn & share successful methods of reaching students, discuss comprehensive and efficient ways to implement standards, and continue their own learning. Education must respond to the changing needs of students and their teachers, just as business has reacted to its changing needs by implementing employee training.

American Federation of Teachers President Al Shanker and then Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation Hugh Price (he has since become president of the National Urban League) have emphasized the critical importance of providing additional time for professional development.

Former American Federation of Teachers President Al Shanker pointed out that Saturn automobile company employees spend 5 percent (92 hrs. @ yr.) of their work time learning: "Imagine what a training program like this would do for people trying to restructure their schools. Or, put another way, imagine trying to change things as basic as the culture of a school with a couple of days of in-service training a year & some hours stolen from class preparation periods. If it takes 600 courses [a central training group offers nearly 600 different courses] and 92 hours a year per employee to make a better automobile, it will take that and more to make better schools. And if we're not willing to commit ourselves to that kind of effort, we are not going to get what we want."

## **A FEW IDEAS FOR FINDING TIME**

Purnell & Hill identify general approaches to creating time for staff development:

- \*Promote time outside the classroom during the school day (e.g., use substitutes to free teachers to attend workshops, conferences, observe other classes).*
- \* Refocus the purpose of existing time commitments (e.g., use faculty meetings).*
- \* Reschedule the school day (e.g., adjustments are made in the master schedule).*
- \* Increase the amount of available time (e.g., use of supplemental contracts and stipends for teachers to attend summer trainings, extend participation beyond the usual hours).*
- \* Promote teachers volunteering some of their time (e.g., create conducive conditions such as babysitting services, allocate space for teachers' conference).*
- \* Promote more efficient time use (e.g., make meetings more efficient, use technology).*

In addition, Raywid cites examples for creating professional development time:

- \* Use part or all of faculty, department, or team meetings for professional development.*
- \* Lengthen school day for 20 minutes four days per week; use an early release on fifth day to provide an extended period of time for professional development.*
- \* One morning per week, engage students in alternative activities such as community service that are supervised by parents, community members, or noninstructional staff; use this time for professional development.*
- \* Provide a common scheduled lunch and planning periods for teachers working on joint projects.*

Plus here are a few more ideas from the field for finding time to do the important work of high school redesign, of focusing on teaching and learning, etc.:

- \* Half the faculty covers for the rest of the faculty once per month on pre-assigned days; classes double up and/or teachers with smaller groups of students plan large-group activities.*
- \* Schools introduce late start/early release one - four days per*

month.

*\* Each SLC or department team is allocated two hours per week/month, with coverage provided by other teams, administrators, student teachers, or substitutes.*

*\* Two hours of no-contact, staff time are added to each Monday, then traded for three days added to vacation.*

*\* The school year is reorganized -- half-day twice per month is scheduled with no students; 5 minutes added to other instructional days for the minutes lost.*

*\* Teachers meet for an extended lunch and resource period or assembly schedule.*

*\* Roving substitutes, hired for a day, release SLC or department teams.*

*\* Providers of special group learning give assemblies to release teachers for three half-days per year.*

*\* Five days of summer work become part of the contract.*

### **STUDENT VIDEO: USING PARABOLAS IN REAL LIFE**

Students in a ninth grade Algebra class make a film about parabolas.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Z008bOG5Gc>

### **FEATURED WEBSITE: THE SILENT EPIDEMIC (Dropout Prevention)**

The Silent Epidemic is a new Web site dedicated to the million-plus teens who drop out of high school each year. Co-sponsored by Civic Enterprises, MTV, TIME Magazine, the National Governors Association (NGA), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Case Foundation, and The MCJ Foundation, the site includes facts and statistics about the staggering problem that has, for the most part, been hidden from the public's sight through the use of inaccurate graduation rates. A 10-point plan for reducing the number of dropouts, materials from a May 9th summit that launched a national movement to end the silent epidemic, and resources for parents, educators, students, and policymakers are all available on the new site. <http://www.silentepidemic.org>

### **FEATURED WEBSITE: TEACHERTUBE (CASN News revisit)**

Teachers now have their very own version of YouTube.

TeacherTube, launched in March 2007, is a video-sharing site

designed exclusively for educators.

TeacherTube provides many of the same tools featured on the popular YouTube site, which is blocked by many schools.

Teachers can use the TeacherTube to upload and share instructional videos, comment on and rank videos, and create video groups to bring together users with similar interests.

Videos can also be easily embedded on Web pages.

<http://www.teachertube.com>

### **WEB RESOURCE: PBS TEACHERS: TEACHER PORTAL FOR PBS RESOURCES**

Public Broadcasting System (PBS) has launched a new Web site for K-12 educators, called "PBS Teachers," offering thousands of free lesson plans, teacher professional development opportunities, videos, blogs, and more.

<http://www.pbs.org/teachers/>

### **NEW FROM WHAT KIDS CAN DO (www.wkcd.org)**

#### **Marin Teens Fight Carcinogens in Cosmetics**

The average teen is exposed to 200 chemicals a day through personal products such as eyeshadow & hair color. Many are potentially carcinogenic.

For several years, h.s. students in Marin County, CA have campaigned for "safe" cosmetics, spurred on by the high cancer rate in their famously wealthy community.

[http://www.wkcd.org/featurestories/2007/california\\_teens/index.html](http://www.wkcd.org/featurestories/2007/california_teens/index.html)

#### **Young Journalists Take Charge With Their Own News**

##### **Bureau**

At 14, Jonathan Gainer already has some notches on his journalist's belt, including interviewing a former U.S. president and reporting from West Africa. Along with 120 other teenagers from metro Indianapolis, he is part of Y-Press. Reporting with a youth angle on subjects of their own choosing, Y-Press journalists see their work published in the state's largest newspaper and other media outlets.

[http://www.wkcd.org/featurestories/040107\\_young\\_journalists/index.html](http://www.wkcd.org/featurestories/040107_young_journalists/index.html)

#### **Philadelphia Teens Tackle Inequalities in Their Schools**

On a recent afternoon, 35 students from the small schools housed in a north Philadelphia high school gather around a table in their meager school library. Most came because they saw a flier advertising free pizza at a meeting of an organization called Youth United for Change. But it's soon clear that this meeting is about much more than an after-school snack -- it's about inequality in their city's schools.  
[http://www.wkcd.org/featurestories/040107\\_yuc/index.html](http://www.wkcd.org/featurestories/040107_yuc/index.html)

### **Chemistry Students Examine School Bathrooms**

Ever wonder what kind of bacteria is festering in public bathrooms? So did a group of high school students in North Carolina. While most high school students stared at textbooks or memorized formulas, students at South Granville School of Health and Life Sciences decided to find out just how contaminated were the bathrooms in their public school.  
[http://www.wkcd.org/featurestories/2007/chemistry\\_students.index.html](http://www.wkcd.org/featurestories/2007/chemistry_students.index.html)

## **MORE WEBSITES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS**

### **Wired to Win (How the Brain Works)**

The Web site for an IMAX film on how the brain works includes interactive classroom resources designed to teach students about contemporary neuroscience.

The movie, *Wired to Win*, follows two cyclists competing in the Tour de France. It uses computer-generated imagery to show how the human brain interacts with the nervous system and other internal workings.

The companion Web site includes interactive explorations of the human brain that illustrate how it controls the body and how it functions during physical activity. Also provided are an activity guide for educators (in grades 4-12), standards correlations, trailers from the film, and podcast commentaries. The material is based on work supported by the National Science Foundation, which provided a grant to finance the film. National Geographics also provided support.

<http://www.wiredtowinthemovie.com>

### **Under Construction: Encyclopedia of Life**

Scientists are planning a massive, free Web site, called the

Encyclopedia of Life, to compile data on the Earth's 1.8 million known species, including descriptions, pictures, maps, videos and links to entire genomes and scientific journal papers.

<http://www.eol.org>

### **Geoffrey Chaucer Hath a Blog** - Grades 9 - 12

In April,

with his shoures soote, did Geoffrey Chaucer put quill to scroll, er, blogspote, to discuss matirs high and low. This action was not without controversy, and Chaucer has gained the enmity of one Johann Gowere (who art a wanker). Chaucer has striven to help the masses. Indeed, he wrote a most careful list of abbreviacions for your internette communication. Mayhap this is merely a cunnyng marketing device by a publisher of "Canterbury Tales"? How queynte an idea. Truly, this be a fyne read for gentils who can decipher Middle English.

Besides blogs in middle English, the site includes "Howe to Reade My

Writinges; Basic Glossary; Notes on translatynge Middel Englysshe; On my Englysshe; Elizabeth Renfeldes Notes on Pronounciacion and Vocabularie as sidelight links on the left. Also, under the heading "Linkes of Sentence and Solaas," there are links to a variety of related sites that are rich in information as well as interest. A favorite was Virtual Tour of Dante's Hell.  
<http://houseoffame.blogspot.com>

### **SOME UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **August 8-10: BayCES Coaching for Educational Equity Institute**

Save the date for the Coaching for Educational Equity Institute to be held August 8-10, 2007, in Oakland, California. Over the past 10 years BayCES has created an advanced set of curricular materials and methods for developing and training coaches for educational equity. At this Institute, highly experienced coaches will provide organizational, school, and school district leaders with the skills and knowledge to develop coaches and coaching programs. For more information on BayCES's three-day Institute for school leaders and teams, please visit:

[http://www.bayces.org/programs\\_services/summerinstitute.htm](http://www.bayces.org/programs_services/summerinstitute.htm).

### **National Capitol Summit on Latino Students & Educational Opportunity**

National Capitol Summit on Latino Students and Educational Opportunity this June 13-14, 2007 in Washington, DC, hosted by the University of Maryland College Park and The Educational Policy Institute. The purpose of the Summit is to bring focus and recognition of the important issues related to the expansion of educational opportunity for the nation's fastest growing constituency. The panel sessions will be staffed by top national policy makers, scholars and representatives of foundations.  
<http://www.educationalpolicy.org/AD/latinosummit07ad.html>

### **New American Youth Policy Forum Series: Role of Career and Technical Education in High School Reform**

The American Youth Policy Forum is hosting a series of forums on the role of career and technical education (CTE) in high school reform. The goal of this forum series is for policymakers and influentials to learn more about how CTE can contribute to effective high school reform and improved student outcomes, so that they can be more supportive of federal policies that allow high quality CTE to flourish at the state and local levels.  
<http://www.aypf.org/projects/CTEinHighSchoolReform.htm>

## **SOME FUNDING & AWARD OPPORTUNITIES**

### ***Horace Mann Scholarship Grants for Educators***

Horace Mann is dedicated to serving the needs of the educational community. The Horace Mann Companies is offering \$30,000 in scholarships for public and private school educators to take college courses. Scholarship money will be paid directly to each recipient's college or university for tuition, fees and other educational expenses.

Educators with at least two years of teaching experience and currently employed by a U.S. public or private school district or U.S. public or private college/university and planning to enter a two or four-year accredited college or university are eligible to apply. The college must be a public or private, not-for-profit institute. Educators in Hawaii, New Jersey, and New York are not eligible for this program.

One recipient will receive \$5,000 in scholarship funds payable over four years, and fifteen other recipients will receive \$1,000 each in scholarship funds payable over two years. Twenty additional recipients will each receive one-time \$500 awards.

All applications must be received by May 16, 2007, to be considered. <https://www.horacemann.com/educator-resources/educator-scholarship-faqs.html>

### **Target Local Store Grants**

Target's Local Store Grants fund the following programs:

- \*Arts Grants bring the arts to schools or make it affordable for families to participate in cultural experiences;
- \*Family Violence Prevention Grants support programs that strengthen families by preventing or reducing the cycle of family violence.

- \*Early reading grants

Only organizations that are verified with a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) designation, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service, are eligible to receive donations. Schools, libraries, and public agencies are eligible applicants.

Most

grants average between \$1,000 and \$3,000.

Applications are being accepted through May 31, 2007.

<http://sites.target.com/site/en/corporate/page.jsp?contentId=PRD03-001818>

### **Staples Foundation for Learning**

The mission of [Staples Foundation for Learning, Inc.](#) is "to teach, train, and inspire." The foundation contributes funds to national and

local charities that provide educational opportunities and job skills for all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth. To be eligible for consideration, the applicant organizations must have a nonprofit, tax-exempt classification under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; offer programs aligned with the Staples Foundation for Learning's mission; and focus on job skills and education. The requested amount of each grant can be up to \$25,000. Most grants awarded by the foundation are in the \$5,000 to \$25,000 range. The foundation reviews grant proposals on a quarterly basis. Visit the foundation's Web site for complete program information and updates, instructions on submitting an online application, and an FAQ.

<http://www.staplesfoundation.org>

#### Multiple Education Pathways Blueprint Grants (MEPB) (CFDA 17.261)

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment & Training Administration (ETA), announces the availability of approximately \$3 Million in grant funds to create a blueprint to build systems of multiple education pathways. The blueprint will serve as a city's plan to support youth who are at risk of dropping out of school and youth who have already dropped out of school. Eligible applicants are mayors of cities whose population is

between  
75,000 and 350,000 based on the 2000 Census and school  
and youth  
who have already dropped out of school.

Eligible applicants are mayors of cities whose population is  
between 75,000  
and 350,000 based on the 2000 Census and who have a  
cohort dropout rate  
of more than forty percent.

Ten grants of up to \$300,000 are expected to be awarded.  
Some grantees  
may receive lower or higher awards.

Applications must be received by 5:00 PM, June 7, 2007.  
<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20071800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2007/E7-8720.htm>

**Safe Schools/Healthy Students** (CFDA 84.184L)  
Grants support Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in the  
development of  
community-wide approaches to creating safe and drug-  
free schools and  
promoting healthy childhood development. Programs are  
intended to  
prevent violence and the illegal use of drugs and to  
promote safety  
and discipline. LEAs are required to partner with local law  
enforcement,  
public mental health, and juvenile justice  
agencies/entities. This program  
is jointly funded and administered by the departments of  
Education,  
Justice, and Health and Human Services (the appropriation  
amounts

listed above do not include funds appropriated for the departments of Justice, and Health and Human Services.

LEAs are eligible applicants.

Up to 25 awards will be made. An LEA with fewer than 5,000 students may apply for up to \$750,000; an LEA with at least 5,000 students but fewer than 35,000 students may apply for up to \$1,500,000; and an LEA with at least 35,000 students may apply for up to \$2,250,000.

Note: contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, the Secretary of Education may make additional awards later in FY 2007 and in FY 2008 from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition. The application deadline is June 19, 2007.

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpsafeschools/index.html>

**U.S. Department of Education**

**Safe Schools/ Healthy Students Program**

**CFDA 84.184L**

**Grant**

<http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do?mode=VIEW&oppId=13861>

**Sun Microsystems Foundation Open Gateway Grants Program**

The Sun Microsystems Foundation provides hardware & software grants, training, and technical support to: assist schools, particularly in economically disadvantaged communities, in making the transition to network computing; assist schools in utilizing network-based tools to implement new teaching

strategies that improve instruction & student outcomes; and the full integration of technology into curriculum to help ensure students are prepared to become information workers of tomorrow.

[http://www.sun.com/aboutsun/comm\\_invest/ogp/index.html](http://www.sun.com/aboutsun/comm_invest/ogp/index.html)

Email: [corpaffrs@corp.sun.com](mailto:corpaffrs@corp.sun.com) phone: 650.336.0487

Sun Microsystems, Inc., Corporate Affairs Department,  
901 San Antonio Road, M/S UPAL01-462, Palo Alto, CA 94303

### **Toyota USA Foundation**

Committed to improving K-12 education, the Toyota Foundation offers grants to nonprofit organizations for projects which increase the productivity of students and/or educators primarily in the areas of math and science. Applications are reviewed continually. (No deadline.)

<http://www.toyota.com/about/community/tusafoundation/index.html>  
phone: 310.618.6766

Foundation Administrator, Toyota USA Foundation,  
A 404, 19001 S. Western Avenue, Torrance, CAA 90509

### **Photo, Essay and Poetry Contest Celebrates Our Sense of Wonder and Love of Nature**

To honor the late preservationist and ecologist Rachel Carson, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Generations United, and the Rachel Carson Council, Inc., announce a photo, essay, and poetry contest "that best expresses the sense of wonder that you feel for the sea, the night sky, forests, birds, wildlife, and all that is beautiful to your eyes." The idea for this comes from Rachel Carson's *The Sense of Wonder*. Eligibility: Entries must be joint projects involving a person under age 18 and a person age 50 or older. Award: publication on the websites of EPA, Aging Initiative, Generations United, and Rachel Carson Council, Inc. Deadline: June 15, 2007.

<http://www.epa.gov/aging/resources/thesenseofwonder/index.htm>

### **Grants to Encourage Use of Outdoor Nature-based Classrooms**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation gives grants to

organizations to start or expand Nature of Learning programs in their communities. Grants support start-up expenses associated with new programs and give continued support to existing Nature of Learning programs. The Nature of Learning is the National Wildlife Refuge System's community-based environmental education initiative that seeks to use National Wildlife Refuges as outdoor classrooms to promote greater understanding of local conservation issues; encourage interdisciplinary approaches to learning that enhance student academic achievement; use field experiences and student-led stewardship projects to connect classroom lessons to real world issues; and partner local schools, community groups, natural resource professionals and local businesses. Maximum award: varies. Eligibility: Programs involving a partnership among a local school(s), community group (e.g., Refuge Support Group), and National Wildlife Refuge. Deadline: June 15, 2007.

<http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Search&template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=5237>

***Toyota International Teacher Program -- Costa Rica!***

The Toyota International Teacher Program to Costa Rica strives to expose educators of all classroom disciplines to the diversity of Costa Rica's peoples and ecosystems in an effort to inspire the creative teaching of international, cultural and environmental themes in U.S. schools and communities. Full-time teachers of all classroom disciplines in grades 7-12 in all 50 states and the District of Columbia are encouraged to apply. The Program will take place from February 24 to March 7, 2008 (including travel time). Participants will travel to Los Angeles for pre-departure orientation and then spend 10 nights in Costa Rica. Direct costs of participation (travel, transportation, lodging, meals, and all activities) will be paid by Toyota. . Online application must be submitted, and all support documents must be received at IIE by September 7, 2007.

[http://www.iie.org/Template.cfm?&Template=/programs/toyota/costarica/costarica\\_main.html](http://www.iie.org/Template.cfm?&Template=/programs/toyota/costarica/costarica_main.html)