

CASN News April 2012

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CASN News is supported by the Career Academy Support Network and is based in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California Berkeley. CASN works primarily with high schools and districts engaged in high school redesign and with other stakeholders who support the college and career aspirations of youth.

To learn more about CASN and for free, down-loadable resources; videos about academy practices; an academy forms bank; and more,

visit <http://casn.berkeley.edu> We also invite you to visit our new College Going Culture/ College Access website at <http://collegetools.berkeley.edu>

"I've had many teachers who taught us soon forgotten things, / But only a few like her who created in me a new thing, a new attitude, a new hunger / ... What deathless power lies in the hands of such a person." - "Captured Fireflies by John Steinbeck

"Education may be the hardest civil rights fight of all. Discrimination is harder to prove and people often don't know what levers to pull to fix the problem." - Bill Gates at a recent Urban League Conference

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FOUR DISTRICTS NAMED AS BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION FINALISTS

Four school districts were named as finalists for this year's Broad Prize for Urban Education, which recognizes urban school systems that show improved performance and progress toward narrowing the achievement gap. The finalists are: the Corona-Norco Unified School District in California, the Houston Independent School District in Texas, and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the School District of Palm

Beach County, both in Florida. The winning district receives \$550,000 for college scholarships for graduating seniors, while runners-up receive \$150,000 each.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TEACH ECONOMICS TO MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Students from Loyola High School in Los Angeles are fulfilling the community service requirement for their advanced placement economics class by teaching the subject to middle-school students. The high-schoolers are giving back to the community as they reinforce concepts they're learning in their own class. "This experience has been incredible," said high-school student Conrad Ukropina.

STUDENTS CREATE LOW COST ALTERNATIVE TO AN INTERACTIVE WHITE BOARD

Students at a North Carolina school developed a low-cost, rudimentary interactive whiteboard using a Wii controller, a marker and \$6 in supplies from an electronics store. A teacher at the school, which does not have interactive whiteboards, showed students a YouTube video explaining how to make the devices on their own. "It can do everything that a Promethium board can do, for the most part -- 85% of the functionality for 5% of the price," said teacher Josh Thornton. *(NOTE: online article includes a video plus you can find a whole array of videos on making low cost touch screen white boards on you tube)* <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2012/04/23/3193643/video-class-builds-low-cost-technology.html>

LACK OF INTERNET ACCESS IS BECOMING THE NEW DIVIDE

A news article from Florida describes how many low-income students in Central Florida lack Internet access at home, a situation that can interfere with their ability to complete schoolwork. Officials say the problem is expected to increase as more schools provide digital devices for students. "The digital divide is not because students lack devices," said Ocoee Middle School principal Sharyn Gabriel. "The digital divide stems from the lack of Wi-Fi."

NEW TED-ED SITE OFFERS "(VIDEO) LESSONS WORTH SHARING" FOR STUDENTS

TED-Ed very recently launched an educational website featuring lessons based on its original animated videos for grades K-12 and fostering innovative customized learning. Each lesson includes a three- to eight-minute video, multiple-choice quizzes, open-ended questions and links to related information. In addition, teachers can choose to "flip" the video and create customized lessons. TED-Ed's Lessons Worth Sharing beta version currently features video lessons on numerous topics, including How Pandemics Spread, How Folding Paper Can Get You to the Moon, The Secret Life of Plankton, and Videos Go Viral. <http://ed.ted.com>

IN OREGON, YOU'RE NOT READY UNTIL YOU'RE COLLEGE READY

Under new regulations set by the Oregon Board of Education, students will now have to prove that they can read, write, and apply math at a level that will serve them in college and on the job in order to graduate high school. In addition, to completing courses, high school students must demonstrate essential skills prior to earning a diploma. Part

of the regulations, read: "Students enrolled in grade 9 in 2010-11 and beyond will need to demonstrate that they can Read and comprehend a variety of text; Write clearly and accurately; Apply mathematics in a variety of settings."

PHILADELPHIA SCHOOLS TO "MODERNIZE" CAREER/TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Career and technical education programs in Philadelphia schools will be modernized to include offerings in high-demand, 21st-century fields, officials said Wednesday. As part of the plan, some vocational programs seen as outdated would be eliminated and a new focus would be placed on programs in the educational and medical fields. Other existing programs would be changed to ensure they offer a "pathway to college," one official said.

STEPPING IT UP (East Side Union HS District/San Jose, CA)

A year ago, San Jose's East Side Union High School District, the largest high-school district in Northern California, adopted the A-G requirements -- 15 courses students need to pass to be eligible for the University of California and California State University systems. This past fall, the district enrolled its first true class of A-G freshmen who will undergo close monitoring over the next four years to measure their success.

Implementing A-G standards is an especially positive move for a valley in need of local job creation. The assumption today is that many local students may not be up to the academic rigor of these classes that will help them qualify for the next wave of technology and other jobs driven by the innovation economy. The nonprofit Silicon Valley Education Foundation, which advocated for East Side Union to adopt A-G, has recognized the need to prepare students for the tougher coursework. Four years ago, the foundation created "Stepping Up to Algebra," a summer math course for middle school students about to enter eighth-grade algebra, the gateway course for college. This past summer, with financial support from Texas Instruments, it launched "Stepping Up to Science" for students from the lowest socioeconomic areas of East Side to prepare for ninth-grade biology -- the first A-G lab science course -- and a college path. Now the foundation and Education Trust West are helping East Side Union conduct a student course analysis to determine how more students can be successful in completing A-G requirements.

STUDIES: DOES EXPOSURE TO ALGEBRA IN MIDDLE SCHOOL HELP STUDENT MATH ACHIEVEMENT

Exposing struggling students to algebra in middle school may not improve their math test scores and may, in fact, lead to lower grade-point averages and reduced chances of taking and passing more advanced math courses in high school, two new studies from California and North Carolina show. "The bottom line is: It doesn't appear that being in any [algebra] courses makes a difference in terms of the math [test]," said Don Taylor, an education consultant for the California education department and lead author of the California study.

NEW BOOK: *STREETSMART SCHOOLSMART*

CASN takes great pride in sharing that our CASN Executive Director, Dr. Gilberto Conchas, has co-authored a new book: *Streetsmart Schoolsmart: Urban Poverty and*

the Education of Adolescent Boys. The book includes original research focused on the reasons why some boys join gangs while others do not, but also talks about the role of schools in creating opportunities for urban boys to succeed despite disparities in their economic and social circumstances. According to Rachel F. Moran, Professor of Law and Dean, UCLA School of Law, "this book provides an important testament to the power we have to change lives and to the remarkable resiliency that brings hope in the face of hardship." (Co-Authors: Gilberto Q. Conchas AND James Diego Vigil)

Streetsmart Schoolsmart is available from Teachers College Press. <http://store.tcpres.com/0807753181.shtml>

NATIONAL ACADEMY FOUNDATION HONORS NEW DISTINGUISHED ACADEMIES
NAF recently announced that 5 academies have reached Distinguished Academy status for the first time. They join several other academies that are receiving this status for the second year in a row,

The new Distinguished Academies include:

- Academy of Finance and Enterprise High School-- Long Island City, NY
- Academy of Hospitality and Tourism High School -- Brooklyn, NY
- Apex High School, Academy of Information Technology -- Raleigh, NC
- Miami Beach Senior High School, Academy of Hospitality and Tourism -- Miami Beach, FL
- Miami Norland Senior High School, Academy of Hospitality and Tourism -- Miami, FL

They join the continued Distinguished Academies:

- AJ Moore Academy, Academies of Hospitality and Tourism, Information Technology, and Finance -- Waco, TX
- Northeast High School, Academy of Finance -- St. Petersburg, FL
- San Diego High School - School of Business, Academy of Finance -- San Diego, CA
- Crooms Academy of Information Technology -- Sanford, FL
- Lancaster High School, Academy of Finance -- Lancaster, NY
- Southwest Miami High School, Academy of Finance -- Miami, FL

NEW REPORT: PRIMARY SOURCES 2012: AMERICAN TEACHERS ON THE TEACHING PROFESSION

A new report supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Scholastic attempts to "place teachers' voices at the center of the conversation on education reform."

The objectives of the report are to:

- * identify the supports and tools that directly impact student classrooms and teacher retention;
- * identify the way teachers benchmark their success -- and that of their students;
- * explore teachers' views on teaching --- where the practice of teaching stands today and how it should evolve to suit the changing needs of students and teachers; and identify the tools and resources necessary to attract and retain good teachers. http://www.scholastic.com/primarysources/pdfs/Gates2012_full.pdf

NEW REPORT: COLLEGE READINESS: A GUIDE TO THE FIELD

A new report prepared by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform and supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation scans the growing field of College Readiness. The report addresses the question "What is College Readiness?", provides a brief overview of the field; and discusses the dimensions of academic preparedness, academic tenacity, and college knowledge; and also describes some implications for research, policy, and practice.

- * Academic Preparedness (align standards, curricula, and assessment to college-ready expectations; use data to drive college readiness policies; intervene early to keep students on a college-ready track)

- * Academic Tenacity (expose students to tenacity-building activities; provide accelerated learning opportunities that promote persistence and attainment; restructure schools into personalized learning communities; provide additional supports for at-risk students)

- * College Knowledge (create a college-going culture in the school and community; support students through the college planning process; engage families in learning about and supporting college going) http://annenberginstitute.org/sites/default/files/CRIS_Guide.pdf

NEW REPORT HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY CURRICULUM

The quality of curriculum materials plays a significant role in determining student achievement, according to a new report by the Brookings Institution. Researchers are calling for increased focus by the federal government, states and nonprofit groups on the creation of new instructional materials that will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards.

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Classroom Resource: Check out the free version of Poll Everywhere Software for K-12 teachers.

<http://www.polleverywhere.com/k12-student-response-system>

CASN WEB RESOURCES

The Career Academy Support Network (CASN) [website](#) offers resources especially for academies:

- * Directories of career academies in California and nationwide.

- * Guides and handbooks on how to implement features of an academy.

- * Templates and forms you can tailor to your needs

- * Curriculum that integrates your academy's theme and academic subjects.

- * Ask-CASN, an online service offering direct access to CASN experts

- * Videos that spotlight key features of successful California Partnership Academies.

<http://casn.berkeley.edu>

SOME FUNDING AND AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

EPA: SENSE OF WONDER CONTEST

To honor the late preservationist and ecologist Rachel Carson, the EPA, Generations United, and the Rachel Carson Council, Inc., are holding 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." In her book *The Sense of Wonder* (written in the 1950s and published in a magazine in 1956), Carson used lyrical passages about the beauty of nature and the joys of helping children develop a sense of wonder and love of nature. Maximum award: publication on the websites of EPA Aging Initiative, Generations United, and Rachel Carson Council, Inc. Eligibility: entries must be joint projects involving a person under age 18 and a person age 50 or older. Deadline: June 1, 2012. <http://www.epa.gov/aging/resources/thesenseofwonder/index.htm>

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICS TEACHERS/FREDERICK AND FLORENCE BAUDER ENDOWMENT FOR THE SUPPORT OF PHYSICS TEACHING

The American Association of Physics Teachers Frederick and Florence Bauder Endowment for the Support of Physics Teaching was established to support special activities in the area of physics teaching. Activities can include but are not limited to the development and distribution of innovative apparatuses for physics teaching; traveling exhibits of apparatuses; and local workshops. Maximum award: \$500. Eligibility: AAPT members. Deadline: July 1, 2012. <http://www.aapt.org/Programs/grants/bauderfund.cfm>