

CASN News August 2011

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*

*Academy Factoid: In 2008, Nine out of Los Angeles Education Partnership's 12 Career Academies reported no dropouts, compared to a 29.6% dropout rate for LAUSD schools.*

In this edition:

- [Obama, Duncan Announce Process for State NCLB Waivers](#)
- [High School Graduation Rate Increases Nationwide](#)
- [New York Moves to Allow More On-Line Courses as well as Blended Learning](#)
- [Number of U.S. Students Studying Mandarin Triples](#)
- [Tennessee Schools Work to Enroll More Minority Students in Advanced Classes](#)
- [Oregon Considers Requiring All H.S. Seniors to Apply to At Least One College](#)
- [Florida Plans More Rigorous Writing Standards](#)
- [North Carolina Considers New Methods of Assessment](#)
- [Emerging Trend: Three States Move Toward One on One Computing](#)
- [Emerging Trend: South Korea to Replace Paper Textbooks with Digital](#)
- [Emerging Trend: How a Teacher's Use of a Class Website Can Support Student Success](#)
- [Assessment Consortia SBAC and PARCC Unveil Content Frameworks/Content Maps](#)
- [Taking Assessments Deeper - Policy Brief](#)
- [Searching for Quality PD - A Report on Two Recent Studies](#)
- [New Film: American Teacher](#)
- [From the Blogs - College Board Inspiration Awards](#)
- [From the Blogs - What Do Teachers Want?](#)
- [For the Proposal Writers in Our Midst](#)

- [Web Resources for Teachers and Students](#)
- [Opportunities](#)

*Editor's Note: In many of our Districts, school has already started and, in others, it is just about to begin. This time of year is always filled with such promise, such possibilities. In that spirit, I am sharing a story that touched me this summer. In a radio interview and in a recent book, Wendy Kopp, founder of Teach for America, told the story of Megan Brousseau, who was assigned to teach Biology in the South Bronx in a neighborhood that President Jimmy Carter once called "the worst slum in America." On the first day of class, Megan announced to all her ninth graders that her goal was for each and every one of them to take and pass the rigorous New York State Regents Exam in Biology. She told her students that "This is your chance to make history."*

*Megan found that 60 percent of her students were below grade level in English, with 20 percent more than three grades behind. For most of her students, English was a second language, with only Spanish spoken at home. But nine months and a tremendous amount of hard work later, all but 3 of her 112 students passed the Regents Exam on their first try; her other three students passed on a second try after additional tutoring from Megan.*

*So, here is a virtual toast to each of you, to your students, and to a splendid school year. This is OUR chance to make history.*

#### OBAMA, DUNCAN OK PROCESS FOR NCLB WAIVERS TO STATES

With efforts to rewrite the No Child Left Behind Act languishing in Congress and with Congress on recess, President Obama has directed the U.S Department of Education to grant waivers to states that agree to adopt a prescribed set of education reforms. Just what those reforms will be—and what freedoms states will gain in return—remain unclear. Those details will be made public in September, Obama administration officials said in a call to reporters.

"We want to deliver a very important message: Relief is on the way," said Melody Barnes, the director of the White House Domestic Policy Council. "Low expectations, uneven standards and shifting goals ... those days are numbered."

This marks an incremental step in the Obama administration's plan to offer flexibility to states by using its waiver authority, granted under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (of which NCLB is the current version). In June, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced he was prepared to grant waivers if Congress did not act by the time school starts this fall. Now, he's stating the obvious: Congress (which is currently in recess) will not reauthorize ESEA by this deadline, and so he is definitely going to grant waivers.

A few new, important details have emerged. For example, the waiver applications from states will be peer-reviewed by people outside the Department of Education. Duncan described the process as a "public" one with "lots of give and take."

"No states are competing against each other," Duncan said.

After the details are announced in September, states will have a couple of months to put their applications together, and the waivers will be given out this coming 2011-12 school year. This means states could, also this school year, reset the bar for what makes for acceptable growth on test scores. Schools and districts may not feel the effects of the

regulatory relief, however, until the 2012-13 school year, when things like tutoring and school choice might be waived. (sources: Education Week, New York Times, Washington Post.)

#### HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE INCREASES NATIONWIDE

The country's high-school graduation rate is at its highest point since the 1980s, according to a new analysis. In 2008, the most recent year for which data is available, 71.7% of high-school students graduated. The gain -- which followed two consecutive years in which the graduation rate fell or stagnated -- signals a possible turnaround in completion rates. However, while students in every racial and ethnic group improved, experts say minority-based graduation gaps remain a concern.

#### NEW YORK MOVES TO ALLOW MORE WEB-BASED COURSES AS WELL AS BLENDED LEARNING

New York's Board of Regents has approved regulations that promote online learning by easing requirements on "seat time" and in-person instruction from teachers for the state's students. The changes will allow schools to offer more Web-based courses, as well as blended learning, in which online and teacher-led instruction are combined.

#### NUMBER OF U.S. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS STUDYING MANDARIN TRIPLES

In another sign of China's growing prominence on the world stage, the number of U.S. students learning Mandarin Chinese has tripled in recent years according to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. And while the number of students studying Mandarin is dwarfed by the millions learning Spanish, the study of Mandarin continues to grow. Still in 2007-08, only 18.5 percent of K-12 public students were enrolled in foreign language education. The study questions whether American students are ready for a global society.

#### TENNESSEE SCHOOLS WORK TO ENROLL MORE MINORITY STUDENTS IN ADVANCED CLASSES

Few minority students in central Tennessee are taking advanced academic courses, and many are taught by inexperienced teachers, according to data from the U.S. Education Department's Office of Civil Rights. School officials say they are working to assign more rigorous courses, raise expectations and promote equality for all students. "We are aware of the gap, and we are working to address it," said Jay Steele, a Nashville school official.

#### OREGON CONSIDERS REQUIRING HS SENIORS TO APPLY TO AT LEAST ONCE COLLEGE

Oregon lawmakers are considering legislation that would require students to apply to at least one college to receive a high-school diploma. The measure, which already has been approved by the state's House, is intended to motivate students to at least consider a college education, the bill's sponsor said. Critics, however, say it just establishes another obstacle to receiving a diploma.

## FLORIDA PLANS MORE RIGOROUS WRITING STANDARDS

Florida plans to use a more rigorous grading standard for the writing portion of state tests next year in an effort to prepare for the introduction of Common Core State Standards. Greater attention will be placed on the correct use of grammar, punctuation and spelling, and students will be expected to make arguments backed by specifics. Educators say they have been focused on improving students' writing abilities in preparation for the change.

## NORTH CAROLINA CONSIDERS NEW METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The North Carolina State Board of Education is considering making the ACT college-admissions exam a requirement for high-school juniors. As officials consider whether to seek a waiver from No Child Left Behind's requirements, one option is to replace NCLB standards with a state measure that takes into account students' scores on ACT exams, graduation rates and other measures. Officials say the proposed system would measure students' readiness for college and career and could become a model for other states.

## FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL ISSUES IPADS TO ALL STUDENTS

Lake Minneola High School in Florida will distribute iPads to all of its students this fall as part of a statewide initiative to replace textbooks with digital materials by 2015. State officials will monitor the school's pilot program, gathering information to help other schools make the transition. (one of many similar stories)

**EMERGING TREND: THREE STATES MOVE TOWARD ONE ON ONE COMPUTING**  
Maine, Michigan and Texas are leading the way in implementing state-level, one-to-one computing initiatives in schools. Maine officials say widespread community support for the expansion of its technology initiative has grown despite the national recession, while a similar program in Michigan turned to nonprofit support when its funding was cut in 2006. In Texas, a pilot technology immersion program has been expanded after resulting in achievement gains for students.

## EMERGING TREND: SOUTH KOREA TO REPLACE PAPER TEXTBOOKS WITH DIGITAL

The South Korean government is investing \$2 billion to give all elementary school children Internet-connected electronic tablets and customized e-learning programs.

## EMERGING TREND: HOW A TEACHER'S USE OF A CLASS WEBSITE CAN SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS

In an article posted on Edutopia.org, teacher Nick Provenzano, a high school English teacher at Grosse Pointe South High School in Grosse Pointe, MI, describes how his use of his web site helps him to make more effective use of class time. "In the old days (pre-Internet) students who missed class would come to the teacher and ask for missed homework sheets or other assignments....(now) all assignments are posted (on my class web site) with links to all handouts.....If a student is absent, all (he/she has) to do is go to the site and print out any work...missed. They can use the school's library to do this in the morning, at lunch or after school."

Provenzano also describes the use of live blogging. "Students take notes in class and post them to the class blog. From there, students and parents can see what actually happened in class. The discussions, literary terms, themes, etc. are all detailed in the class notes. I no longer have to answer the question, "What did I miss yesterday?: If they do ask that question, I simply reply, "Web site."

SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT CONSORTIUM (SBAC) AND PARTNERSHIP FOR ASSESSMENT OF READINESS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS (PARCC) UNVEIL "CONTENT FRAMEWORKS"/CONTENT MAPS AND SPECIFICATIONS  
Common academic standards, adopted by almost every state, lay out major shifts in expectations for teachers and students in mathematics and English/language arts. Each of the consortium charged with designing assessments for the new standards has released some new documents that provide a vision of how the core standards might look in the classroom and on tests.

The SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) released its content maps and specifications in English/language arts. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) released content frameworks in both math and English/language arts. PARCC's documents focus on identifying the ideas that should be emphasized and how they could be grouped together; SBAC's document describes the ways students should be able to prove they have mastered the standards. NOTE: Most Districts are not waiting for the "test makers" and are already moving to use the core standards in curriculum design, benchmark assessments, etc. See: <http://www.parcconline.org> <http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/ContentSpecs/ELA-LiteracyContentSpecifications.pdfSpec>

### **POLICY BRIEF: TAKING ASSESSMENTS DEEPER**

A new policy brief from the Alliance for Excellent Education calls for assessments that measure a broader range of knowledge and skills than current assessments typically measure. These newer assessments would indicate whether students understand challenging content and are able to think critically, solve problems, communicate understanding, and work with peers. According to the brief, state accountability tests exert a strong influence on classroom practice, and can make expectations for student learning concrete, signaling to teachers what kinds of student performance will meet standards. The brief notes that technology can help a shift to assessments that measure deeper learning: Online simulations and other techniques can enable students to think critically and solve problems. Such assessments would also give results almost instantaneously, making them more useful to teachers.

The brief recommends that federal policy support the development and implementation of these newer assessments by requiring that assessments measure deeper learning competencies; by supporting professional development for teachers; by ensuring that assessments fairly measure performance of students with disabilities and English learners; and by continuing to support states for the ongoing operational costs of state assessments. <http://www.all4ed.org/>

## **SEARCHING FOR EFFECTIVE PD - TWO RECENT STUDIES**

A new report from MDRC synthesizes research from two recent studies on teacher professional development, one in reading and one in math, each of which shows the interventions were substantially less effective than had been hoped. The studies were carried out by the American Institutes for Research and MDRC for the U.S. Department of Education, and examined professional development that went beyond the "one-shot" workshop approach to include intensive summer institutes, follow-up group sessions, and coaching of individual teachers. In both studies, the PD had positive effects on some targeted instructional practices, but not on others. Most critically, students of teachers who received training scored no higher on subject-matter achievement tests than students of teachers who did not receive training. <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/603/overview.html>

## **NEW FILM: AMERICAN TEACHER**

In a review of "American Teacher," a new documentary produced by author Dave Eggers and former teacher Nínive Clements Calegari, Anthony Reborá writes in Education Week that the film seeks to counteract popular misconceptions about the teaching profession. The documentary, which is narrated by Matt Damon, portrays five high-performing educators from different parts of the country as they face daily challenges and manage the logistics of their lives. According to Reborá, "examples of the teachers' obvious professionalism and skill are set against, sometimes to comic effect, the near-Dickensian nature of their working conditions." The subjects must buy their own supplies, work impossible hours, and endure what Reborá calls injustices. For all teachers profiled, the problem of how to make ends meet on their minimal-growth salaries is "a grueling, intractable reality." The film intersperses the teachers' stories with commentaries and statistics on teacher pay and workloads, rising attrition, falling student achievement, and the notable differences in ways teachers are treated and supported in academically high-achieving countries like Finland, Singapore, and South Korea. Reborá states that the film's overall effect is powerful, and could generate important conversations when it is publicly released this fall.

Read more: [http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching\\_now/2011/05/the\\_struggles\\_of\\_the\\_american\\_teacher.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2011/05/the_struggles_of_the_american_teacher.html)

## **FROM THE BLOGS - COLLEGE BOARD INSPIRATION AWARDS**

As president of the College Board, I get to do a lot of traveling. Over the last 10 years, I've gone from Ft. Lauderdale to San Francisco, from Beijing to Dubai, and lots of places in between. Along the way I've met many prominent people doing great things to advance the cause of learning and improve global education. But each year, my greatest honor and favorite trip is paying a visit to the winners of the annual College Board Inspiration Awards.

The Inspiration Awards honor schools with underserved students, outstanding college-preparation programs, and fruitful partnerships between teachers, parents and community organizations. By improving their academic environment and creating a college-going culture, these schools have opened the doors of higher education -- and by extension a whole new world of opportunity -- for students facing stringent economic, social and cultural barriers.

This year's winners were Ebbert L. Furr High School in Houston, Texas; Mater Academy in Hialeah Gardens, Fla.; and PSJA North High School in Pharr, Texas. Each of these schools demonstrated significant and consistent academic growth across its entire student population. The number of students taking rigorous courses shot up, as did the percentage of students accepted to two- or four-year colleges. As a result, the campuses hummed with a palpable feeling of excitement and possibility. The students, teachers and administrators had turned their schools into icons of renewal, and they were justifiably proud of their work.

At Ebbert L. Furr, 75 percent of students take part in the school's Pre-AP® or AP® program, and are asked to sign a contract acknowledging the benefits of participation as well as the consequences of not meeting expectations. Parents are engaged through a variety of large- and small-group meetings, as well as individual conferences. In the more intimate, semi-monthly "Coffee with the Principal" meetings, parents and educators discuss specific goals and review results from benchmark assessments and mock exams.

At Mater Academy, where most students come from families with little to no post-high-school education, more than 90 percent of seniors are accepted to college -- a 15 percent jump in the last two years alone. The majority of the high school students are involved in multiple extracurricular activities while also taking honors, AP and dual enrollment courses. Many students also play an active role in the Hialeah community. A particularly motivated Mater student started a "Jeans for Teens" campaign to help clothe local underprivileged kids and an "Adopt a Family" program in which each club at the school collects holiday gifts for a family in need.

At PSJA North, hallways are decorated with college and university banners. Teachers work with students during the weekends and after school to make sure that they are given every opportunity to succeed. They even set up as a series of small learning communities with college names, including the University of Texas, Rice University and NYU.

"If someone walks into our school, they smell and breathe college readiness," said PSJA North Principal Narciso Garcia.

That's the kind of inspirational leadership we are looking for. It's not an easy quality to define. And it wasn't easy to determine which schools out of so many worthy candidates deserved Inspiration Awards.

We look for students and schools that are beating the odds and achieving at a level above and beyond their peers. And we are proud of every student and every school that improved even a little bit. But the bottom line is, it's not enough to do it on paper.

There has to be passion. There has to be spirit. There has to be a connection that transcends the classroom and inspires students to see the link between how they do in school and how they do in life.

The great teachers and administrators at these schools, from the principals to the librarians, feel this passion. They embody this spirit. Every day these dedicated men and women are inspiring students to do well in school, so that one day they'll have the opportunity to do whatever they want in life."

## FROM THE BLOGS - WHAT DO TEACHERS WANT

### What do teachers want?

*This was written by John Merrow, veteran education reporter for PBS, NPR, and dozens of national publications. He is president of Learning Matters, a non-profit media production company, and his latest book is The Influence of Teachers.*

I believe that the harsh criticism of teachers and their unions is largely undeserved. I also believe it is hurting public education.

In the clamor, the voices of regular classroom teachers are difficult to hear, which is why I am devoting this blog to them. With apologies to Sigmund Freud, "What do teachers want?"

Some answers to that question can be found in recent surveys by Met Life and the Gates Foundation/Scholastic. I include some of those findings below.

Renee Moore, a veteran teacher who is certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, says it's all about respect. "Highest on my list," she wrote, "would be more respect for the professional expertise of teachers, particularly for those of us who have shown consistently, year-after-year that we are highly accomplished teachers."

That seems to be consistent with a Met Life finding that most teachers feel they are being ignored. "A majority of teachers do not believe that teachers' voices are being heard. Seven in ten teachers (69%) disagree with the statement that "thinking about the current debate on education, teachers' voices in general have been adequately heard."

Moore continues: "By every means we currently have for measuring teacher performance, I am considered an excellent teacher; yet, when it comes time to decide what should be taught and how my students' learning should be measured, I have little or no say. This is also true for teachers as a group."

What form would respect take? "The reward for excellent teaching should be increased responsibility for the policy decisions that govern our work."

In other words, pay attention!

The Gates/Scholastic Survey of 40,000 teachers reveals that paying attention would also entail giving equal weight to teachers' assessments of student achievement. "From ongoing assessments throughout the year to student participation in individual classes, teachers are clear that these day-to-day assessments are a more reliable way to measure student performance than one-shot standardized tests. Ninety-two percent of teachers say ongoing in-classroom assessment is either very important or absolutely essential in measuring student performance, while only 27% say the same of state required standardized tests."

Another Board-certified teacher, Kenneth Bernstein of Maryland, calls for an end to micromanaging: "Treat us as a profession," he wrote. "That is, require appropriate training, which is not five weeks before turning us loose in a classroom. Give us appropriate support, which means do not overburden us with too many students in a class or too large a student load. And pay us as the professionals we are so that we do not lose so many of our gifted teachers because they cannot afford to raise a family on what they are paid."

I also directed my question — "What do teachers want?" — to Anthony Cody, a veteran teacher in Oakland. High on his list was collaboration. "American teachers get a fraction

of the time our counterparts overseas get, and most of the time is filled with either top-down professional development or administrative staff meetings. We need dedicated time to look at student work, to reflect and engage in these processes.”

The Gates/Scholastic Survey emphatically supported Anthony’s point. “When asked about teacher retention, nearly all teachers say that non-monetary rewards like supportive leadership and collaborative working environments are the most important factors to retaining good teachers. Fewer than half of teachers say higher salaries are absolutely essential for retaining good teachers and only 8% say pay for performance is absolutely essential.”

Money matters less than collaboration!

According to the Gates/Scholastic survey, “Teachers are skeptical of current measures of teacher performance, with only 22% indicating that principal observation is a very accurate measure. At the same time, more than half of teachers indicate that student academic growth (60%) and student engagement (55%) are very accurate measures of teacher performance — much more so than teacher tenure, which a significant number of teachers said is not at all accurate.”

The Met Life survey reveals a crucial nuance: the newer the teacher, the more likely they are to want to collaborate. “Regardless of their specific path to teaching, new teachers are strong proponents of collaboration. Although teachers across experience levels agree on many of the topics in the Survey, new teachers (those with five years of experience or less) emerge as having a particular affinity for collaboration. New teachers strongly agree in greater numbers than do veteran teachers (those with more than 20 years of experience) that their success is linked to that of their colleagues (67% vs. 47%).”

And the newbies are ready to collaborate with anyone who shares their concern for student learning. “New teachers are also more likely to emphasize the importance of collaborating with other groups to improve student achievement. They are more likely than veteran teachers to say that strengthening ties among schools and parents is very important for improving student achievement (95% vs. 85%).”

These are hopeful signs, because our teaching force is growing younger by the year. In 1987 the modal ‘years of experience’ was 15 years. In 2007 (the last year we have data for) the mode was one year!

The comments of all three veterans indicate their agreement with another Gates/Scholastic finding: they want the freedom to innovate. Here’s how the survey put it: “To keep today’s students engaged in learning, teachers recognize that it is essential for instruction to be tailored to individual students’ skills and interests. More than 90% of teachers say that differentiated assignments are absolutely essential or very important for improving student achievement and engaging students in learning. Also, showing a clear understanding of the world students inhabit outside of school, 81% of teachers say that up-to-date, information-based technology that is well integrated into the classroom is absolutely essential or very important in impacting student achievement.”

But innovation is not high on the list of those running the show. As Cody noted, “Modern ‘education reform’ has redefined the purpose of schools to be to raise scores in tested subjects. As teachers we feel responsible for so much more, and we find other things we value — critical thinking, creativity, compassion, civic engagement, even knowledge

of history and science — crowded out when we are coerced by threats of school closures, pay cuts or the loss of job security if our test scores do not rise.” Moore, Bernstein and Cody did not speak directly to the question of higher and common standards.... Here’s what Gates/Scholastic said on that point: “Teachers see the role clear common standards can play in preparing students for their future, but want clearer standards and core standards that are the same across all states. Nationwide, 74% of teachers say that clearer standards would make a strong or very strong impact on student achievement, with only 4% saying they would have no impact at all. 60% of teachers say that common standards would have a strong or very strong impact on student achievement, with only 10% saying that they would have no impact at all.” So what do we know? What’s the answer to my question? What do teachers want? Aretha Franklin said it best: R-E-S-P-E-C-T. It takes different forms, but that’s what they want — and it’s what they deserve.”

### **FOR THE PROPOSAL WRITERS IN OUR MIDST: [GRANTS.GOV](http://grants.gov) TIGHTENS SECURITY**

Grants.gov is improving the security of federal grant applications submitted through its site. "Grants.gov Security Upgrades and How They Impact You" (*Local/State Funding Report*, February 21, 2011) and a recent memo from the Grantsmanship Center describe these changes:

- Everyone using the site will have to update their password every 90 days.
- Your new password must be different from your last three passwords; it has to be at least eight characters long and must include at least one numeral, one uppercase letter, and one lowercase letter.
- The person responsible for authorizing individuals in your organization to submit grant applications (your E-Business Point of Contact or E-Biz POC) must provide the required Data Universal System number and Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN) when initially logging on to the site. You can find the MPIN at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov) by using either your organization's DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number or its legal business name.
- If you can't access the site because your password is incorrect or outdated, use the Grants.gov "I forgot my password" function. The system will then generate a new password and send it to you by email

### **FROM THE FIELD: SEMI-VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS INSPIRE HS SCIENCE STUDENTS**

A California high-school teacher uses videoconferencing technology to connect students with science happening in their own community. Teacher Ray Barber accompanied small groups of students to six sites -- from a glass-making company to a local brewery. Students produced webcasts for their classmates, who posed questions and interacted with the on-site experts. In some cases, the students brought back objects from their visits, which helped make the associated lessons more engaging for the others.

### **[A+ funding, C-minus results](#)**

In what it calls a first-of-its-kind analysis, Newsweek and the Center for Public Integrity calculated graduation rates and test scores in 10 major urban districts that got

education windfalls from the four top education philanthropists. Bill Gates, Michael Dell, Eli Broad, and the Walton family have collectively poured \$4.4 billion into school reform in the past decade, and Newsweek finds the results "are dispiriting proof that money alone can't repair the desperate state of urban education." Nine of the 10 districts substantially trailed their state's proficiency and graduation rates, but many also improved at a rate faster than their state's 60 percent of the time. Yet these improvements couldn't bridge the gulf between urban schools and their suburban and rural counterparts. "A lot of things we do don't work out," admitted Eli Broad. "But we can take the criticism." Newsweek feels that philanthropist confidence has given way to humility, but not retreat. They have "retooled, and learned a valuable lesson about their limitations." "It's so hard in this country to spread good practice," acknowledged Vicki Phillips of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "When we started funding, we hoped it would spread more readily. What we learned is that the only things that spread well in school are kids' viruses."

Read more: <http://www.newsweek.com/2011/05/01/back-to-school-for-the-billionaires.html>

## WEB RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

### *Get The Math*

Use this hip site to reinforce the need for algebra in today's world. View videos that explain how musicians, fashion designers, and video game designers use algebra.

<http://www.thirteen.org/get-the-math/>

### *Global SchoolNet*

Are you seeking collaborative projects or partners? Global SchoolNet's Projects Registry (PR) is the oldest (1995) online clearinghouse for teacher-conducted global learning projects. The PR contains more than 3,000 annotated listings – and is searchable by date, age level, geographic location, collaboration type, technology tools or keyword. The Project Registry is a central place for educators to find global partners and to new announce projects.

Many projects are aligned with the 21 Century Learning Skills matrix, the ICT Literacy Maps, especially in Science, Geography and English and International Society for Technology Education (ISTE) NETS Standards for Students,

<http://www.globalschoolnet.org/gsh/pr/>

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Kids in Need Teacher Grants**

An annual initiative of the [Kids In Need Foundation](#), the Kids In Need Teacher Grants program provides grants to K-12 educators working to provide innovative learning opportunities for their students. The grants are funded by retail and education credit union sponsors.

Teacher grant applications will be judged according to a rubric that emphasizes innovativeness and merit, clarity of objectives, replication feasibility, suitability of evaluation methods, and cost effectiveness. Projects may qualify for funding if they

make creative use of common teaching aids, approach the curriculum from an imaginative angle, or tie non-traditional concepts together for the purpose of illustrating commonalities.

All certified K-12 teachers in the U.S. are eligible to apply. The foundation does not fund preschool projects.

Teacher grant awards range from \$100 to \$500. Typically, two hundred to three hundred grants are awarded each year.

The program's retail and credit union sponsors make the grant applications available at their outlets during the back-to-school season. Applications from the sponsors are also available on the Kids In Need Foundation Web site.

Visit the Kids In Need Foundation Web site for complete program guidelines, project ideas, and applications.

<http://www.kinf.org/grants/index.php>