

CASN NEWS DECEMBER 2007

ALL OF US AT THE CAREER ACADEMY SUPPORT NETWORK WISH YOU THE JOYS OF THE SEASON AND A NEW YEAR IN WHICH ALL OUR HIGH SCHOOLS BECOME PLACES WHERE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS.

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FY2008 OMNIBUS BILL PASSES IN CONGRESS, SIGNED BY PRESIDENT BUSH

Federal education spending will increase 2.9% in the 2008-09 school year to \$59.2 billion, after Congress approved a budget bill that President George W. Bush subsequently signed into law on Dec. 26.

The Omnibus Bill followed months in which Congress initially agreed to an education funding increase of roughly \$3.2 billion, but then President Bush vetoed the bill, and Congress was forced to lower spending amounts. And lower they did, by nearly 40 percent!

With these funding levels for education, many programs associated with No Child Left Behind face cuts or increases that are less than the inflation rate, which essentially amount to cuts when one factors in increased costs.

- Title I received the biggest increase, gaining \$1.2 billion, or 8.5 percent. Total funding for this program will be \$14 billion for FY08.
- Teacher Quality Grants received a funding increase of \$73 million, or 2.5 percent, which falls below the inflationary rate.

A Sampling of Amounts included in the FY 2008 Omnibus Proposal:

Title I - \$ 14.14 Billion, Striving Readers - \$ 36 Million, Title II - Teacher Quality - \$ 2.99 Billion, 21st Century After School Programs - \$1.1 billion, Smaller Learning Communities - \$ 81.6 Million

Elementary/Secondary Counseling Program - \$ 11.12 Billion; Advanced Placement - \$842.9 million; Statewide Data Systems - \$ 398.8 Million; Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants - \$ 34.3 million; and Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Program - \$ 1.18 Billion

NOTES: A table showing the amounts provided for all the programs and activities of the Education Department is available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget08/08action.pdf>.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT PUBLISHES ITS 100 BEST HIGH SCHOOLS LIST

Another list of the top 100 high schools in the United States has been published by the U.S. News & World Report. Chosen from nearly 22,000 high schools across the country, the 100 schools that made the U.S. News Report list had to provide a good education for all of their students good enough to prepare them for postsecondary opportunities.

Only 1 in 8 of the schools that made the list has more than 50% of its students eligible for free or reduced lunches and only 1 in 5 serves a majority of nonwhite students. Approximately 1 in 5 of the schools earning the top 100 honor chooses its students based on academic merit.

The U.S. News list uses more data to judge schools than the one Newsweek publishes. The Newsweek list uses only the number of students taking Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams. U.S. News used a methodology developed by School Evaluation Services, Standard & Poor K-12 education data research business. Nearly 19,000 public high schools in 40 states were analyzed using data from the 2005-06 school year. <http://www.usnews.com/sections/education/high-schools/index.html>

BIOTECH CLASSES GAIN POPULARITY

More high schools across the country are offering biotechnology classes, in which students learn the newest lab techniques and cultivate skills needed for success in advanced sciences and engineering. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/18/technology/18ping.html>

GIRLS' SCIENCE PROJECT BREAKS NEW GROUND

Two Los Angeles area teens will compete in as finalists in the Siemens Competition in Math, Science & Technology in New York with a project that examines why women may become resistant to certain breast cancer drugs. Judges of the competition say that the project could have important implications in understanding why some breast cancers are drug-resistant.

<http://www.latimes.com/features/health/la-me-winners25nov25,1,3615085.story?coll=la-headlines-health>

MUSIC EDUCATION INITIATIVE TO BRING ROCK AND ROLL TO HSs

Steven van Zandt, of E Street Band and The Sopranos fame, recently created Little Steven's Rock and Roll High School, a curriculum designed for middle and high schools. The free curriculum, which includes a teachers' guide, lesson plans, DVDs, CDs and Web-based resources, explores the cultural and historic impact of rock. Van Zandt is working with Scholastic, Inc. to ensure the curriculum will satisfy music and social studies requirements in schools.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2007-11-11-van-zandt_N.htm?loc=interstitialskip

MASSACHUSETTS APPROVES RECOMMENDED PROGRAM OF STUDY

The Massachusetts State Board of Education recently approved a recommended high school program of study designed to ensure that students graduate college and career ready. The recommended courses include four years of English and math, with Algebra II, and three years of science and history.

ARIZONA PLANS TO RAISE MATH AND SCIENCE REQUIREMENTS

Arizona will raise its math and science requirements to four math, three science, and a half-unit of economics, beginning with the entering class of 2009. One concern raised by school districts regards the need to find enough quality teachers and lab space to meet these requirements.

CALLS GROW FOR A BROADER DEFINITION OF SCHOOL SUCCESS

For nearly six years, the federal government has defined school success mainly by how many students pass state reading and math tests. But a growing number of educators and lawmakers are pushing to give more weight to graduation rates, achievement in science and history and even physical education.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/15/AR2007121501747.html>

LONGER SCHOOL DAY APPEARS TO BOOST TEST SCORES

Last fall, 10 Massachusetts public schools lengthened the school day by at least 25%, giving students extra doses of reading, writing, and math. The extra time appears to be working. As a whole, schools with longer days boosted students' state-assessment scores in math, English, and science across all grade levels, and they outpaced the state in increasing the percentage of students scoring in the two highest state-assessment categories. source: Boston Globe

http://www.boston.com/news/education/k_12/mcas/articles/2007/11/30/longer_school_day_appears_to_boost_mcas_scores/

ARKANSAS TURNS SCHOOL BUSES INTO MOBILE VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS

Rural Arkansas students may spend up to 90 minutes on the bus both to and from school, but now, on-board cellular routers are allowing some of them to use an Internet connection to access virtual math and science lessons that supplement their regular in-school course work. This "mobile virtual classroom" is part of a pilot program that its founder hopes may soon be replicated in other rural communities.

A FEW REPORTS OF INTEREST

Report: Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs with Appropriate Interventions

This report from the National High School Center at AIR outlines steps that high schools can take to identify at-risk students and provide the necessary support systems and relevant interventions to assist students in obtaining a high school diploma. Further, the report discusses the use of early warning data systems to target interventions for groups and individual students, offers a variety of best practice approaches undertaken by higher-performing high schools, and presents effective programs that are currently being implemented to stem the dropout problem. For additional information, go to <http://www.betterhighschools.org/> .

Report: Easing the Transition to High School: Research and Best Practices Designed to Support High School Learning

The transition from middle school to high school represents a significant event in the lives of adolescents and requires support from and collaboration among families and school personnel. This resource provides information on how to support and promote a smooth transition into high school. For additional information, go to http://www.betterhighschools.org/docs/NHSC_TransitionsReport.pdf

Report: Keeping Pace with Online Learning

This report from the North American Council for Online Learning states that although online learning is growing rapidly and most states offer high-quality options, more oversight is needed, particularly to ensure accessibility for all students. <http://www.nacol.org>

Report: High Schools for Equity: Policy Supports for Student Learning in Communities of Color

This report from the School Redesign Network at Stanford University and Justice Matters offers policy recommendations based on case studies of five high schools that are improving the success of low-income students of color. <http://www.srnleads.org/press/news/hsfe.html>

North Carolina Ed Commission Report: Too Much Testing

A North Carolina blue-ribbon education commission recommended the state education board eliminate several statewide standardized exams, saying too much classroom time is devoted to testing. "We're testing more, but we're not seeing the results," said the commission's chairman, Sam Houston. "We're not seeing graduation rates increasing. We're not seeing remediation rates decreasing. Somewhere along the way testing isn't aligning with excellence." <http://www.newsobserver.com/news/story/780273.html>

SOME WEB RESOURCES OF INTEREST

Open Course Ware: MIT Adapts Free Online Courses for High Schools

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has created a new Web site (Highlights for High Schools) with free online resources that aim to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) instruction at the high school level. <http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/hs/home/home/index.htm>

Free Rice

This is a fascinating site that allows you to challenge your vocabulary while providing free grains of rice to those who are hungry throughout the world. This is a nice interactive way for kids to practice vocabulary. A sister site of worldpoverty.com, this site gives you all the information about the purpose of the site, how it affords to do what it does, and a nice explanation of how bettering your vocabulary helps you in your life.

<http://www.freerice.com>

At The Circus

Students use algebra or geometry software to discover that the height at which guy wires supporting two vertical poles cross does not depend on how far apart the poles are. This counterintuitive result can lead to conjecturing and testing hypotheses as to what factors determine the height at which the wires cross. Student worksheets, solutions, and a scoring rubric are included. <http://www.nsa.gov/teachers/hs/geom41.pdf>

College Board Launches New Web Site for Educators

The College Board has redesigned its web site designed to provide educators at all levels with tools and resources. The site has new content and features to provide educators with easier access to the tools, resources and information they need. <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/gateway>

SOME UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

BREAKING RANKS SECONDARY SCHOOLS SHOWCASE 2008

sponsored by: The Center for Secondary School Redesign & The National Association of Secondary School Principals

location/dates: Town and Country Resort and Convention Center, 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92108 (www.towncountry.com) on February 4 & 5, 2008.

This national showcase features teachers and students from some of the nations top secondary schools. More than 20 high schools and 10 middle schools will present their own stories of successful implementation of Breaking Ranks II and Breaking Ranks in the Middle strategies and techniques.

Secondary school administrators are encouraged to bring teams of five or more colleagues with them, as each participant can attend different presentations.

High schools invited to present this year include: Desert Edge High School-Goodyear, Az; Verrado HS - Buckeye, Az; Stanley E. Foster Construction Tech Academy - San Diego, CA; Hanover HS - Hanover, NH; Hope HS - Providence, RI; School of Business, San Diego HS Complex - San Diego, CA; Hagerstown High - Hagerstown, MD; Sourth Hagerstown HS - Hagerstown, MD; Urban Academy - New York City, NY; School of the Future - New York City, N.Y.; Napa Vintage HS - Napa, CA; JC Harmon HS - Kansas City, KS; School of International Business, Kearny High Educational Complex - San Diego, CA; Granger HS - Granger, WA;

Dayton Early College - Dayton, OH; New Tech High - Napa, CA; Kelvyn Park HS - Chicago, IL; Mountain Home HS - Mountain Home, AK; Seguin HS - Seguin, TX; Digital Media and Design, Kearny HS Educational Complex - San Diego, CA; St. Charles East HS - St. Charles, IL; St. Charles North HS - St. Charles, IL; North Lawndale College Prep Charter - Chicago, IL; Springdale HS - Springdale, AR; Academy of Information Technology, Hoover High School - San Diego, CA; David Douglas HS - Portland, OR; Mission HS - San Francisco, CA; Clear Creek ISD - League City, TX; Environmental Charter - Lawndale, CA; Doherty HS - Colorado Springs, CO; High Tech High HS - San Diego, CA; Bassett HS - La Puente, CA;

Registration Fee: \$385.00 per person.

- Special discounted rate of \$345.00 per person for teams of five (5) or more educators from the same school
- All students who attend are also eligible for the special discounted rate
- **Participants are responsible for their own travel, lodging, parking, and dinner expenses/arrangements. A block of hotel rooms will be available as a special rate for the nights of February 3rd and 4th, 2008
- **To register or for program information please contact the CSSR office at: 401-828-0077**
- 621 Wakefield Street, West Warwick, Rhode Island 02893
- www.cssr.us info@cssr.us

Ed Alliance High School Reform Conference, with a special focus on Smaller Learning Communities (SLCs). February 8 - 10, 2007. Hyatt Regency Orange County, CA

- New sessions on SLC best practices and implementation strategies
- An encore of the best sessions from previous conferences
- In-depth sessions
- Inspiring and informative keynotes
- Conference bookstore
- Registration fee: \$285.00
- Register on line OR Fax your registration with a credit card or P.O. to (831) 425-1244

CALIFORNIA PARTNERSHIP ACADEMIES CONFERENCE

FYI: This Conference attracts a national audience. Always a good conference.
March 24-26, 2008 <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gc/hs/cpaconference.asp>

STANFORD'S SCHOOL REDESIGN NETWORK HOSTS STUDY TOUR TO HILLSDALE HIGH SCHOOL IN SAN MATEO, CA

SRN LEADS is hosting Study Visits to Hillsdale High School in San Mateo, CA. These study visits take place January 29-30 (sold out), February 20-21, and April 30-May 1. SRN LEADS and Hillsdale staff have designed these visits to create a meaningful exploration of key issues of school redesign into smaller learning communities (SLCs).

Hillsdale started its redesign process in 2003, with equity as a major cornerstone. The student-centered, teacher-led redesign resulted in a change from a comprehensive high school of 1,200 into three SLCs of 400 students each. Hillsdale, which has seen successive gains in achievement since its redesign, was named a California Distinguished School for 2007 and is the recipient of a \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support its SLC work.

The Study Visits provide time for participants to explore the school and to identify their own needs and goals and frame their own school context within the visit.

<http://www.srnleads.org/learning-events/institutes/hillsdale08.html>

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

The Bay Area Coalition of Equitable Schools (BAYCES), the School Redesign Network (SRN Leads) and Oakland, California's EXCEL High School are sponsoring an urban small schools conference featuring keynote speakers Pedro Noguera and Linda Darling-Hammond. Visits to Oakland schools take place on April 25 and the conference takes place on April 26. Conference strands for educators, parents, and students include: identifying and developing emerging leaders, culturally relevant pedagogy, educating black and brown male students, identifying and serving underperforming students, practices for engaging all students in learning. In addition, specific strands will target parent organizing and engagement as well as student leadership.

BayCES is currently accepting presentation proposals, due in February 2008, and registration will open soon. <http://www.bayces.org>

SLC NATIONAL CONFERENCE: SHARING BEST PRACTICES & LESSONS

Sponsored by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories (NWREL) June 23 - 26, Las Vegas, NV <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sslc/events.php>

BUILDING LEARNING COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

July 14-18, 2008 at the Boston Newton Marriott. Build global and personal connections with some of the most creative and innovative educators in our field.

<http://www.novemberlearning.com/blc>

Keynotes include:

- Ewan McIntosh, National Adviser: Learning and Technology Futures, Scotland , UK
- John Davitt, Writer, Educator and Broadcaster, London , UK
- Dr. Pedro Noguera, Professor at the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University, NY
- For registration/information: <http://www.novemberlearning.com/blc>

SOME FUNDING AND AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

Mockingbird Foundation In-School Music Projects

The Mockingbird Foundation offers grants for in-school music projects that promote creative expression through music. Applications are encouraged to be diverse or to include unusual musical styles, genres, forms and philosophies. Maximum Award: \$5,000. Eligibility: 501(c)3 organizations, including public schools. Deadline: February 1, 2008.

Elgin Heinz Outstanding Teacher Award

The United States-Japan Foundation Elgin Heinz Outstanding Teacher Award recognizes exceptional teachers who further mutual understanding between Americans and Japanese. The award is presented annually to two pre-college teachers in two categories, humanities and Japanese language. Maximum Award: \$7,500 (\$2,500 monetary award, \$5000 in project funds). Eligibility: current full-time K-12 classroom teachers of any relevant subject in the United States who have been teaching for at least five years. Deadline: February 1, 2008.

2008 Horace Mann Abraham Lincoln Fellowship

Horace Mann and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM) are offering fellowships to study the life and legacy of the United States' 16th president. Maximum Award: \$1,000 fellowship, featuring a five-day institute in June and July 2008 at the ALPLM in Springfield, Illinois. Eligibility: full-time K-12 teachers at a public or private school in the United States. Deadline: February 15, 2008.

Staples Foundation for Learning

The Staples Foundation for Learning provides funding to programs that support or provide job skills and/or education for all people, with an emphasis on disadvantaged youth. Maximum Award: \$25,000. Eligibility: 501(c)3 organizations. Deadline: March 14, 2008

Toshiba American Foundation Grades 7-12 Grant Program

Purpose: To award grants to support projects designed by classroom teachers to improve science and mathematics education for students in grades 7-12.

Funder/Contact: foundation@tai.toshiba.com, 212-596-0620

Applicant: Grades 7-12 public school classroom teachers

Amount: Small grants of \$5,000 or less and large grants of \$5,000 or more.

Deadline: February 1, 2008 (for small grants), Ongoing (for large grants).

www.toshiba.com/tafpub/jsp/about/HowApply.jsp

Mockingbird Foundation

Purpose: To award grants to schools and non profit organizations that effect improvement in music education for children. Services must take place at the school.

Funder/Contact: Kristen Godard at grants@mbird.org

Applicant: Public K-12 schools

Amount: Grants range form \$50-\$5,000 each

Deadline: February 1, 2008 (online letter of inquiry (interest))

<http://www.mockingbirdfoundation.org>

Smaller Learning Communities

Purpose: The Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program awards discretionary grants to districts to support the implementation of SLCs and activities to improve student academic achievement in large public high schools with enrollments of 1,000 or more students. SLCs include structures such as freshman academies, multi-grade academies organized around career interests or other themes, "houses" in which small groups of students remain together throughout high school, and autonomous schools-within-a-school, as well as personalization strategies, such as student advisories, family advocate systems, and mentoring programs.

The priority of SLCs is "Preparing All Students to Succeed in Postsecondary Education and Careers". This priority supports projects that create or expand SLCs that are part of a comprehensive effort to prepare all students to succeed in postsecondary education and careers without need for remediation.

Funder: United States Department of Education

Applicant: Local Educational Agencies (District/Schools)

Amount: 40 grants will be awarded. Grant award amount is approximately \$1,250,000

per school for five years (\$250,000 per year).

Deadline: February 25, 2008. Notice of intent to apply due January 10, 2008.

[http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/
edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005](http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005)

/pdf/05-6315.pdf or look at www.grants.gov