

CASN NEWS late March 2009

CASN News is supported by the Career Academy Support Network in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California Berkeley.

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PLUS visit our new College Going Culture/College Access website at <http://collegetools.berkeley.edu/>

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IN THE NEWS

FLORIDA HS STUDENTS MAY BE REQUIRED TO PASS STANDARDIZED TESTS IN ORDER TO GRADUATE

Florida students would be required to pass standardized tests in order to graduate from high school under a plan being considered by Florida lawmakers. However, while the legislation would mandate higher academic standards, it offers no additional funding for schools.

(source: Tampa Tribune)

HISPANIC STUDENTS DRIVING DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN U.S. SCHOOLS

Hispanics account for one-fifth of students in kindergarten through 12th grade overall, and about one-quarter of the country's kindergartners, according to recently released census data. If the trend continues, minority students will become the majority by 2023, and officials say the future of U.S. education relies on reaching out to Hispanic students.

(source: USA Today)

OBAMA BUDGET AIMS TO MAKE COLLEGE MORE AFFORDABLE

Rather than sending college students to private lenders for federally guaranteed loans, the Obama administration proposes directly loaning the money to students and using an estimated \$47.5 billion in savings over the next 10 years to increase Pell grants for low-income students. Some private lender kickback scandals and reduced loan availability have increased such direct government funding in the past year, but the changes could be "one of the biggest changes in the history of federal aid to college students," said Terry Hartle, a senior vice president of the American Council on Education, a trade group. (sources: Wall Street Journal, New York Times)

A NATIONAL (BUT NOT FEDERAL) STUDENT DATABASE?

Under long-time opposition from key Republican members of Congress and officials from private universities, it is highly unlikely that a federal student database will be created anytime soon. However, backers of a system that would allow schools to track students' progress from elementary to higher ed and even the workforce have begun to garner support at the state level. While the majority of states already have student record databases, the challenge lies in getting those states to link their databases, thus creating a national database. A new grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop a "high school research and reporting system that will allow participating high schools in all 50 states to better measure the academic success of their students after they graduate" could lead to such a result.

WHERE EDUCATION AND ASSIMILATION COLLIDE: IS SEGREGATING ELL STUDENTS DOING MORE HARM THAN GOOD?

In an extended article that profiles one suburban high school in Virginia, The New York Times weighs the pros and cons of contemporary methods for educating immigrants in America. Hylton High is distinguished by high test scores and graduation rates, but these come "at considerable cost" to its English language learners, who are separated from other students and given intensive support in what amounts to modern-day segregation. The last decade has seen a huge influx of immigrants, legal & illegal, leading to the greatest expansion in public schools since the baby boom. According to officials, one in 10 of all public school students are now English language learners, a 60 percent increase from 1995 to 2005. This places schools on the "front lines of America's battles over whether and how to assimilate the newcomers and their children." (source: New York Times) http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/15/us/15immig.html?_r=1&ref=education

OPINION: RELATIONSHIPS AND RIGOR ("No Picnic For Me, Either")

In an op-ed in The New York Times, David Brooks writes that a well-known anecdote from President Obama's childhood -- his mother waking him at 4:30 each morning to tutor him before school -- perfectly encapsulates what's required to reform American education. When young Barry complained, his mother responded, "This is no picnic for me either, Buster." That exchange contains what Brooks feels are the crucial traits for academic success: rigor and relationships. Mr. Obama had an adult passionately invested in his future, but also, in Brooks's words, one "disinclined to put up with any crap." "We've spent years working on ways to restructure schools, but what matters most is the relationship between one student and one teacher. You ask a kid who has graduated from high school to list the teachers who mattered in his life, and he will reel off names. You ask a kid who dropped out, and he will not even understand the question." No Child Left Behind has ushered in the ability to measure student progress and predict success, but Brooks feels we're faltering where the other ingredient is concerned. We need to foster relationships, in his view through reforms like merit pay for teachers and school vouchers. Despite this, he is hopeful: President Obama "has broken with liberal orthodoxy on school reform more than any other policy. He's naturally inclined to be data driven. There's reason to think that (his recent) impressive speech will be followed by real and potentially historic action." <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/13/opinion/13brooks.html?em>

SOME WEB SITES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

[Teachers.TV](http://teachers.tv)

Just as it sounds, this site has video for teachers and teaching. The three main "features" of this site include a "How to Use" link, resources for staff development, and ready to go videos for the classroom. You are able to search for video clips by subject and key stage (grade levels). All subjects are included and the topics vary greatly: Teenage Dads, Probability, Natural Wonders, Youth Culture since the 1960s, Art, Think Business - Information Technology, *Adventuras Vascas* (a Spanish series), and many other highly intriguing topics. To leave comments or to upload your own video, you will need to register. It's all free. This site requires Flash. <http://teachers.tv>

FUNDING, COMPETITION, & AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

America Honda Foundation Youth & Scientific Education Grants

The American Honda Foundation makes grants to K-12 schools, colleges, universities, trade schools, and other youth-focused non-profit organizations for programs that benefit youth and scientific education. The maximum award is \$60,000. Grant applications are accepted four times per year; the next deadline is May 1, 2009. <http://corporate.honda.com/america/philanthropy.aspx?id=ahf>

Student Film Competition

Middle and high school students are invited to participate in a film competition with *the.News* -- an online news broadcast targeted to middle and high school students and developed by MacNeil/Lehrer Productions, producers of *The NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer. Applicants are asked to produce video reports up to five minutes long on the general topic: *Made in Washington* -- How do decisions made in Washington affect your community? Deadline: All video entries must be postmarked by March 31, 2009. TIME SENSITIVE!! Awards: First, second, and third prizes will be awarded in each grade. First prize will be a mini DV Digital Camcorder, second prize will be a digital camera, and third will receive a \$100 gift certificate. Winners will also be posted on the web site. Eligibility: Student in grades 6 -12. <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/thenews/youreport>

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**DEVELOPING A COLLEGE GOING CULTURE:
DEMONSTRATION SITE VISIT & WORKSHOP AT SAN LORENZO H.S.– 50 E.
Lewelling Blvd., San Lorenzo, CA 94580
THURSDAY, APRIL 2nd -- 9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

AN INVITATION: You and/or your high school team are invited to attend a *free* demonstration site visit and workshop on best practices in developing a college going culture at your school.

San Lorenzo High School in San Lorenzo, California has been designated as a demonstration site for a special College Going Culture project funded by the James Irvine Foundation. Working with partners from the Career Academy Support Network (CASN) – Graduate School of Education – UC Berkeley, the University of California Office of the President (UCOP), and the Center for Educational Partnerships – UC Berkeley, staff from San Lorenzo High School will share best practices around developing a college going culture.

College Going Culture strategies will be shared including:

- Building a college going culture school wide

- Embedding college-going expectations, explorations and information in our new Ninth Grade Houses & Advisories
- College Thursdays
- How our math program supports students to be college ready
- Engaging parents in supporting college aspirations
- Using resources from College Tools for Schools (<http://collegetools.berkeley.edu>)

Participants will visit some classes and have the opportunity to meet with administrators, counselors, students and staff. They will also engage in hands-on explorations of the new College Tools web site and acquire College Going Culture resources and tools.

A Continental Breakfast and Lunch will be provided. NOTE: There is no registration fee as this professional development opportunity is supported by a grant from the James Irvine Foundation.

Please RSVP by March 30, 2009 to patricia510@gmail.com. Please include name/s, school/district, & email contact information. We will follow up with a confirmation of your registration for the April 2nd College Going Culture Demonstration Site Visit/Workshop as well as directions to San Lorenzo High School and parking information. Questions: Please contact Patricia Clark at patricia510@gmail.com or 510.504.3826.

UPCOMING EVENT:

High School Learning Communities National Conference

This national conference is organized by the Recreating Secondary Schools Program of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL).

Las Vegas, NV - June 21-24, 2009

Designed by practitioners for practitioners, this conference provides teachers, administrators, and district staff with programmatic tools and strategies to strengthen their high school redesign efforts.

Sessions will be in workshop format with on-site coaching by practitioners and technical assistance providers to help teams solidify their plans and troubleshoot anticipated barriers.

Participants will leave the conference with plans to support their redesign implementation that they can share with their local school and district teams. Building on last year's highly successful sessions, the conference will feature:

- Presentations by practitioners with "in the trenches" experience in transforming high schools
- Topical workshops and personalized coaching sessions that will give teams and individuals access to expertise as they tackle the intensive work of structural and instructional improvement
- Strategies for changing classroom practices, differentiated instruction, teaming, aligning core and CTE, expanding leadership, and supporting students for all postsecondary options
- Motivational keynote sessions, networking luncheons, and exhibits showcasing a range of resources available to small schools, career academies, and small learning communities

<http://www.nwrel.org/slcconference/2009>