

CASN NEWS October 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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Reminder: Any CASN_News group member can post a high-school related message, query, resource, etc. to the CASN_News community by simply sending your email to CASN_News@yahoogroups.com. To contact the CASN News editor, please email gaia_pc@yahoo.com OR patricia510@gmail.com

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"We take all of the excuses off the table and commit ourselves to working with the kids that walk through the door." (Barth,P., Haycock, K. et al)

*"Number of students who dropped out of high school last year: 1.1 million.....
Difference between the lifetime earnings of a high school dropout and a college graduate: \$1.5 million.....Of 300 questions asked in presidential candidate debates this year, number that address this issue: eight." (source: Editorial in the Washington Post by Melinda French Gates)*

"I believe that access to education is a civil right. The soul of America lies in ideas, in creativity, in brain power. The very foundation of a democracy is an educated electorate. And yet, the issue of education in this country is all too often marginalized, misused, and underfunded." - Sebastian Johnson, high school student

NCLB WATCH

The recent release of a preliminary proposal for reauthorizing the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act starts a busy fall in Congress, as both the House and the Senate try to revamp the NCLB accountability system and ramp up efforts to improve struggling schools.

Lobbyists and advocates spent the last week of the August congressional recess reading through the 435-page draft NCLB bill that outlines key House members plans to change the accountability system by measuring student academic growth and adding other indicators to those in reading and mathematics. Comments on the draft should be sent to our elected officials.

NOTE: For an article on what is happening in the U.S. Senate regarding NCLB and some other education-related bills, please see: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/09/26/05senate.h27.html>

EDUCATION FY2008 FUNDING STILL UP IN THE AIR: TIMELINE UNCLEAR FOR EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Congress is hard at work on the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), but the same cannot be said for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education appropriations bill. There has been little movement since the House of Representatives passed its version of the bill on July 19. Although the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its version of the bill on June 21, a timetable for debate on the Senate floor has yet to be determined. The Senate will likely consider the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, which controls spending for the U.S. Department of Education, sometimes this fall.

As passed by the House of Representatives, the overall bill totals \$607 billion --- \$10.8 billion more than requested by President Bush and \$2.5 billion more than the amount approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee. For the U.S. Department of Education, the House bill includes approximately \$62 billion in discretionary spending, an increase of \$5.5 billion over FY2007 education funding. *(NOTE: The House version of FY2008 education funding proposal includes funding for smaller learning communities; the Senate version does not. It is worth advocating for support for education and specifically for funding related to high schools with your elected representatives.)*

RECORD NUMBER OF STUDENTS TAKE ACT, SCORES UP SLIGHTLY

A record number of students took the ACT college entrance exam this year, including minorities, whose numbers have seen double-digit increases since 2003. The 1.3 million high schoolers who took the test last spring also bumped up the typical score, but marginally: The average national composite score this year is 21.2, up from 21.1 in 2006. It's the third such increase in the past five years, which is striking because scores usually drop when more students take a test. (source: USA Today)

CLASS OF 2007 POSTS LOWEST SAT SCORES IN EIGHT YEARS

As record numbers of students took the college-placement exam, national average reading and math scores dropped slightly for the second year in a row. The combined math and reading scores were the lowest in eight years, the AP reports. College Board officials said the declines were not significant, but the Massachusetts education commissioner called for wider access to practice tests, such as the PSAT.

NYC WINS PRESTIGIOUS URBAN EDUCATION PRIZE

The third time proved the charm for the New York City public school system, which won the prestigious Broad Prize for Urban Education for the progress of its reform efforts, the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation announced... The nation's largest school district, with nearly 1.1 million students, had been a finalist for the award the past two years.

U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings praised officials of New York City and the four other districts that were selected as finalists for being "fellow warriors in raising student achievement." New York and the runners-up—the Bridgeport public schools in Connecticut, the Long Beach Unified district in California, the Miami-Dade County schools in Florida, and the Northside Independent School District in San Antonio—were selected from among 100 school systems nationwide that were evaluated for the annual award.

"I want to say thank you to a leadership team that has been uncompromising about changing the face of public education," Joel I. Klein, the chancellor of the New York City schools, said at the press conference held to announce the winner.

MARYLAND CONSIDERS ALTERNATIVE TO HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAMS

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/28/AR2007082800763.html>

SOME TEACHERS CRITICIZE A.P. AUDIT

Some veteran AP teachers are finding their successful classes rejected, at least initially, by the College Board, as some say the college instructors auditing them are "alarmingly inconsistent" and put no value on their teaching records. The board says auditors agree on 95% of submitted syllabuses and that 90% of submissions have been approved.

YAHOO CREATES FREE ONLINE TEACHER SERVICE

Yahoo is developing a free online service designed to make it easier for educators to create, find, & share lesson plans, worksheets, & ideas. The product, Yahoo for

Teachers, is a type of social network that allows teachers to collaborate on coursework & store information that they find online & want to showcase in class. The service is expected to premiere this fall.

MTV TO LAUNCH SOCIAL NETWORK TO PROMOTE YOUTH ACTIVISM

Viacom Inc's MTV announced plans to launch a new Internet social network sponsored by foundations operated by the founders of Microsoft and AOL to encourage youth activism. The site, Think.MTV.com, is designed to be a resource for social and political issues, aiming to inform as well as let users connect with other like-minded people on issues from the environment to discrimination. Think.MTV.com will let users create pages, as on other online social networks Facebook and MySpace, and upload photos and videos, some of which may be aired on MTV's online or cable network.

INTEL WILL OFFER TEACHERS FREE TECHNOLOGY TRAINING

Intel will soon offer teachers worldwide \$300 million worth of online training to better incorporate technology into their lesson plans across the curriculum. Some 1.5 million teachers are expected to use the programs, according to Intel.

STUDY OF MANDARIN TO BE REQUIRED IN SOME AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

All students at some Australian public schools as soon as next year may be required to study Mandarin Chinese; several private schools already teach Mandarin to all. "...As the Chinese economy becomes more important ... jobs onshore and offshore will depend on students being conversant in other languages particularly in Mandarin," said headmaster Shane Hogan...

GEORGIA SEES FEWER DROPOUTS

The number of high school dropouts in Georgia fell this year, even though student enrollment increased. Governor Sonny Perdue has set a goal to reach an 80 percent graduation rate in the next three years.

<http://www.savannahnow.com/node/366785>

NEARLY 10,000 WISCONSIN EIGHTH GRADERS PLEDGE TO MAKE IT TO COLLEGE

Nearly 10,000 eighth graders have signed the Wisconsin Covenant, which promises college admission and adequate financial aid to all students who do well academically and stay out of trouble in high school. Although the program is being praised by Governor Jim Doyle for getting thousands of students to think about

college early, Republican lawmakers are concerned that the guarantee has not yet been approved by the state legislature.

<http://www.madison.com/wsj/home/local/index.php?ntid=239336&ntpid=1>

ENGINEERING A BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS

A story about Project Lead the Way.... A rapidly growing program aimed at propelling more U.S. students toward engineering careers is attracting recruits beyond the usual pool of prospective high school talent.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/09/26/05preengineer.h27.html>

COME BACK, MR. CHIPS

According to the National Education Association, the number of male schoolteachers is hovering at a 40 year low. Only one quarter of the United States 3 million teachers are men. Although the feminization of the teaching profession has been underway since the 1890s, school administrators say it is becoming a more salient issue as boys fall behind girls in graduation rates and demonstrate more difficulties with reading and writing. (sources: Newsweek, NEA, MSNBC)

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20657203/site/newsweek>

WOMEN FEED THE JUMP IN COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

Colleges and universities these days are seeing a surge in enrollment it's $\frac{1}{2}$ and it's increasingly driven by young women, according to U.S. Census data. The numbers confirm years of enrollment data showing that women have not only closed the college enrollment gap but they have far surpassed men on campuses. For every four men enrolled in graduate school in 2006, there were nearly six women.

(source: USA Today)

FIRST DO THE MATH

The debate over whether to teach physics, chemistry or biology first in high school is missing the point, research suggests. Instead of worrying about what order to teach the three major high school sciences, educators should focus on math, because that subject best prepares students to do well in all the sciences once they get to college.

Researchers at Harvard and the University of Virginia analyzed the grades of more than 8,000 undergraduates who took introductory biology, chemistry and physics at 63 colleges and universities. They also looked at how much preparation those students had in high school. Students who took more high school biology tended to excel in college biology, but they did not do any better in chemistry or physics, the team reported in Friday's issue of the journal Science. Similarly, those who took

more high school chemistry did better in college chemistry, but not biology or physics. The same pattern held true for physics. The one thing that helped students do well in all college science was having taken an advanced high school math class. That undermines a commonly held belief that math training is not particularly important or helpful for the study of biology. The fact that each high school science subject gave college students a boost only in that specific subject casts doubt, the authors said, on the idea that changing the traditional order of biology, chemistry and physics in high school will have any impact on college performance. (Source: Washington Post)

REPORT: MANY HS GRADUATES NOT PREPARED FOR COLLEGE

Even if they earn a high school diploma, two of three graduates may be ill-prepared for college, according to industry statistics. Kim McClung, a Washington state English teacher, said too many teachers aim their class at the "lowest common denominator." (NOTE: article has links to the ACT study: "Rigor at Risk: Reaffirming Quality in the High School Core Curriculum") <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/16/education/16report.html>

REPORT: BEYOND ACCESS: HOW THE FIRST SEMESTER MATTERS FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASPIRATIONS AND PERSISTENCE

More than half of a sample of California community college students who entered higher education with the goal of completing a four-year degree abandoned this goal after just one semester, according to a recent study by Policy Analysis for California Education. The report suggests that by encouraging first semester students to enroll in as many credit courses as they can handle and by supporting their classroom progress with tutoring and other academic services, persistence rates in the pursuit of four-year degrees may increase. (Policy Analysis for California Education) http://pace.berkeley.edu/pace_publications.html

REPORT: TEACHERS REPORT JOB SATISFACTION

Ninety-three percent of teachers reported satisfaction with their jobs 10 years after entering the field, according to a new survey that also found attrition rates for teachers were actually lower than for other professionals. The report, released ...by the National Center for Education Statistics, surveyed 9,000 graduates who received their bachelor's degrees in various disciplines in the 1992-93 school year. Nearly 20 percent of those graduates entered the teaching profession. The findings from the survey debunk several long-held views on teacher pay, turnover, and job satisfaction.

For instance, it found that only 18 percent of those who entered teaching changed occupations within four years of getting a degree. Given that other professions experienced attrition rates between 17 percent and 75 percent during that period, the number of career-switchers from teaching was on the low end of the scale, according to the data. More than half those who became teachers were still teaching 10 years later. Teacher advocates and unions have long claimed that turnover among new teachers ranges from 30 percent to 50 percent within the first five years. The take for a long time was that there is this incredibly high attrition among teachers from schools, said Mark Schneider, the commissioner of NCES, an arm of the U.S. Department of Education. The report, he said, shows that teacher-turnover rates are actually lower than those in other professions. (Source: Education Week) For a copy of the report, please see: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007163>

REPORT: STATE RUN VIRTUAL SCHOOLS GATHER STEAM

Don't look now, but online learning--though still in its infancy--is well on its way to becoming a major part of state-sponsored education across the country. That's the impression left by a new report from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), whose member states have long been in the forefront of developing government initiatives in virtual schooling.

<http://www.sreb.org>

REPORT: RETHINKING HIGH SCHOOL: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE, CAREER, AND LIFE

Should every student pursue higher education? Not necessarily. Should every student be prepared for and have the choice to attend college or pursue other types of post-high-school education? Absolutely!

This *Rethinking High School* report profiles five reform programs funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation that demonstrate success preparing ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students to be college-ready.

Researchers noted five themes embodied in these programs:

- *Helping students from low-income and underserved communities see college as an attainable goal*
- *Strengthening academic programs with full access to rigorous, college preparatory curriculum*
- *Ensuring a coherent, fully articulated curriculum from middle grades through high school*
- *Providing extra academic and social supports during students' critical freshman year*
- *Drawing out-of-school youth back into the classroom* <http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/rs/842>

PITTSBURGH STUDY: TEACHERS KEY IN AFFECTING PUPILS' SUCCESS

Though yawning achievement gaps exist between black and white students in Pittsburgh Public Schools, who the teacher is might be the best predictor of how well students will do, according to a two-year study of student performance presented to the school board...

The report, which included test scores in 199 math teachers' classrooms, found average test scores varied as much as 59 percent from the top teacher's classroom to the bottom, regardless of the students' race, according to the study led by Robert P. Strauss, a professor of economics and public policy at Carnegie Mellon University.

"These ... are not random effects," Strauss said. "In Pittsburgh, the teachers who are successful are successful with black kids and white kids."

THE LONG BEACH (CA) WAY

In 2003, the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) won the coveted Broad Prize for Urban Education. This year, the district made history by once again earning the distinction of placing as a top-five finalist for the prize. The award is given to the urban school district that demonstrates the greatest progress in raising student achievement and closing achievement gaps between white and minority students. LBUSD has many visitors - some from as far away as Japan and Romania - who are interested in learning more about the "Long Beach Way" of educating students.

According to the Los Angeles Times, some of the practices that have made Long Beach so effective include:

- Politics take a backseat to education. Everyone, including the mayor, superintendent, and school board, focuses on instruction.
- Extensive participation by teachers, parents, and the community is encouraged and coveted.
- The district upholds its standards for dress, behavior, and achievement, leaving teachers and administrators free to concentrate on teaching.
- The superintendent, Chris Steinhauser, demands that student achievement data is studied and that achievement gaps are closed.
- New teachers receive two years of intensive training, including professional development that focuses on effectively teaching English learners.
- Social promotion does not occur. Every year, approximately 1,000 students are held back.

- All students, not just top performers, are offered the opportunity to participate in rigorous courses, such as Advanced Placement classes.

http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/asection/la-ed-longbeach19sep19.1.888888.story?coll=la-news-a_section

EMERGING PRACTICE: MIX-IT-UP DAY

Boundary Crossing

This month, our nation marks the 50th anniversary of the Little Rock Nine's attempt to integrate schools. Have we really learned how to break down barriers?

This lesson plan is excerpted from the 2007-2008 Mix It Up Planner. This year's Mix it Up at Lunch Day will be held on Nov. 13, 2007!

Objectives

- Students will draw conclusions about boundary crossing from history and literature.
- Students will identify boundaries in their classroom or school, cross those boundaries, report back and reflect on what they learned.

Background Information

To set the stage for the activity, teachers should read or story-tell this background information with students, allowing them to ask questions:

In May 1954, the U. S. Supreme Court issued its famous *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that was to end segregation in schools. A civil rights organization called the NAACP attempted to register black students in previously all-white schools throughout the South. One of those schools was Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas.

In September 1957, nine black students showed up at Central High's doors and were met by white protestors. The governor even sent the Arkansas National Guard to keep the black children out. The sight of a line of soldiers blocking the teenagers from going to school made national headlines. After President Dwight Eisenhower intervened, the governor removed the soldiers.

The nine students still had to face hundreds of protestors, mostly parents of white students who didn't want the black students to attend the school. Federal troops were sent in to protect the black teenagers, but they still encountered physical and verbal violence throughout the year.

The next year, the governor closed all the public schools rather than allow integration to continue. The Supreme Court ultimately made Arkansas reopen Little Rock's schools to all children.

Sample Middle/High School Activity

Time and Materials

- * One or more class periods
- * Poster paper and pens for student-created maps

After sharing the background information, ask students if they think we've improved since the fifties. Why?

In small groups of four, ask student to draw a map of your school's lunchroom and /or campus (as applicable) noting who the different groups are and where they eat and spend lunchtime. Why do they think students self-segregate?

Hang the maps in the classroom for at least a week and ask students to venture out of their own lunchtime comfort zone and move into a different group's area. (They can do it in pairs to feel more comfortable.) As they practice moving out of their comfort zones, invite students to draw arrows on their maps, showing how they moved from their group to other groups. Keep track of this for as long as students remain engaged with the activity.

Discussion or Writing Prompts

- What are ways society segregates us? Why does this happen?
- What are ways we segregate ourselves? Why do we do this?
- How did it feel to move to a different group? Was it fun, or were you nervous?
- How were you received in the different group? Are there ways that you could make it positive for everyone? What are they?
- Will you remain in your own group from now on, or will you venture into other groups from time to time? Why?

RESOURCES

Historic photos of segregation and civil rights are coupled with author Toni Morrison's fictional student dialogue in *Remember: The Journey to School Integration* (\$18). The poignant voices of children offer a sharp contrast to the book's shocking real-life pictures. Included is a list of key events in civil rights and school integration as well as notes on the photos. (All grades)

ISBN# 0-618-39740-X Houghton Mifflin

PeaceJam (\$25, VHS) is a documentary that follows five teenagers whose lives involve such relevant topics as school shootings, homelessness and gangs. The documentary follows them as they interact with leading Nobel Peace Prize

laureates. See how you can move teenagers from the culture of violence to transformation. (Grades 6-12) peacejam.org

Get Involved: Organize Mix It Up at Lunch Day at your school on November 13, 2007.

MENTORS THAT MATTER -- from What Kids Can Do

Who are the significant adults in the lives of teenagers, beyond the home and classroom? How do they reach out to youth, and why?

In the first six months of 2007, youth across the nation gave their answers, as they interviewed, photographed, and publicly honored Mentors That Matter in four cities (Chicago, Providence, San Francisco, and Tampa). They nominated people from all walks of life artists, coaches, public officials, even a school bus driver and a hair stylist who show that they care about youth.

Sponsored by MetLife Foundation, the WKCD initiative developed literacy, communication, and photography skills in some 200 students who participated. But it also did much more.

Young people showed how much they value adults who reach out to share time and expertise with them. And as the mentors told their own compelling stories, they revealed that adults, just like youth, benefit from time spent together.

Here WKCD presents a look at the resulting photo-narratives from each city. In late 2007, a selection of the work will appear in the book *Pass It On: Interviews by Youth with Mentors That Matter* (Next Generation Press).

A SAMPLING OF WEBSITES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Holocaust Memorial Museum For Students

This site offers multimedia exhibits to help students learn about the Holocaust. Topics include Kristallnacht, the St. Louis ocean liner, the rescue of the Jews of Denmark, Oskar Schindler, the Warsaw ghetto uprising, Father Jacques, the dress of Lola Rein, Nazi book burnings, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, America's responses, Arthur Szyk, maps, and children. (Holocaust Memorial Museum) http://free.ed.gov/resource.cfm?resource_id=1928

Chronicling America

This site lets students research and read American newspaper pages from 1900 to 1910.

http://www.free.ed.gov/resource.cfm?resource_id=1932

BBC-GCSE Bitesize English - Grades 8 - 12

This excellent, interactive site was actually developed to assist students in the UK prepare for exams in that country. However, it is a fantastic site for any teacher anywhere who teaches writing. It addresses writing to persuade, inform, advise, or explain. It offers a variety of methods usable by students independently or in a class. It offers interactive tests, mock exams, and audio recordings on each topic -- available as mp3, RealAudio, or downloadable pdf files. A wonderful addition is a set of audio recordings of poetry critiques (good models for poetry podcasts your students could create). <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/English>

Memory

Memory dissects a sheep brain to show us "the anatomy of memory." See works of an artist who paints entirely from memory. (Compare his paintings to photos of places.) Play interactive games that test your memory -- learn ways to improve it. Discover why some things are easier to remember than others (doodles game). Which facial features help us remember a face? Which image of the penny is correct? Try a mnemonic device called "elaborative encoding." (Multiple Agencies) http://free.ed.gov/resource.cfm?resource_id=1916

ChemCollective Student Tutorials (Carnegie Mellon)

This phenomenal website, originally created for post-secondary students, provides interactive tutorials and virtual "labs" on many topics of chemistry. The tutorials feature audio, video, and interactive elements. Some examples of specific topics include density, dilution, composition of mixtures, PH and buffers defined, and many others. NOTE: This website requires Flash. <http://www.chemcollective.org/tutorials/php>

In the Classroom:

Use this website to re-teach a chemistry concept or to introduce a new topic on an interactive whiteboard or on student laptops. Be certain to provide a link from your teacher web page to these tutorials, for students to review at home. Also, you might wish to preview the difficulty level of the content, since some will go into AP-level.

Search for Ancestors: DNA Analysis

Search for Ancestors looks at the history of the double helix, the science behind DNA test kits for people who want to learn more about their ancestry, an interactive map of human migration over 200,000 years, DNA analysis tracing African-American lineage, and how mutations found in DNA can unlock the past. (Online NewsHour, National Science Foundation) http://free.ed.gov/resource.cfm?resource_id=1919

Rock The Web

On November 14, 2007. Engage the brand new or soon-to-be voters in your U.S. History and government classes by joining in this first-time "event" for the 2008 presidential election cycle. Specifically designed for high school and college students, the event will allow groups from thousands of high schools to join via the web in a live forum with many of the top presidential candidates. Then they will be able to "vote" through the Rock The Web site. Over a million high school students will participate.

See the detailed schedule by clicking on "Program" under the Schools menu. This event is being presented by The Lou Frey Institute of Politics & Government at the University of Central Florida and the EWN Foundation.

Schools must preregister (see form or link for "schools" on the home page). A teacher may enroll as the coordinator for his/her school (one coordinator per school, please). Once a school preregisters, its teachers can receive a log-in, access the accompanying lesson plans to prepare students, and have their students to "register to vote." <http://www.rocktheweb.org>

Note to teachers:

If you are the first in your school to hear about Rock the Web, talk with your peers and designate a coordinator to register the school NOW so your school can participate. Approximately 40,000 high schools are being contacted by the Rock the Web organization. Since the event requires a log-in, you might want to gather your school's government/civics/U.S. History students in an auditorium with an online computer and projector for the live portion. You can also use multiple teacher log-ins in different rooms, but the time of the event is fixed, since it is live. Most current 12th graders and many 11th graders will be of voting age in November, 2008.

Team up with your fellow social studies teachers to divide and conquer any preparation tasks for this event or get your principal on board by suggesting that the local media cover the event (positive press!).

Cornell Notes

Create ready-to-go notetaking sheets for your students or have them create their own using this online tool that generates pdf (Acrobat Reader) files to your

specifications. Once you choose the options you want under Create Your Personal Notepaper (blank, ruled, etc), click Submit to see your "perfect notetaking sheet" in Acrobat Reader. Click "Save a copy" to keep it or simply print it out on the spot. <http://www.eleven21.com/notetaker>

My Brochure Maker

This site was recommended by a CASN Newswire participant who is also an Academy lead. Easy-use online tool for making brochures. <http://www.mybrochuremaker.com>

EDUTOPIA MAGAZINE FEATURES 10 EDUCATION BLOGS

The September 2007 issue of Edutopia features a listing of 10 Blogs We Love. Since this is from the George Lucas Educational Foundation, most of these blogs include a focus on the use of technology in the classroom. Here are some of the most popular sources of big and deep thoughts about education and teaching:

David Warlick's 2 cents Worth

What makes Warlick's 2 cents worth priceless is a mix of intense curiosity, refreshing enthusiasm, and photos that speak of a wry and observant personality. <http://www.davidwarlick.com/2cents>

Around the Corner v2

Miguel Guhlin's blog features the quote "Courage can't see around corners, but goes around them anyway." Look past its uninspiring interface, and you'll find just this kind of pithy talk. <http://www.edsupport.cc/mguhlin>

Dangerously Irrelevant

In ongoing debates about education, the borderline-irrelevant topics often prove enlightening. The only danger is in not paying attention to them. <http://www.dangerouslyirrelevant.org/>

Joanne Jacobs

Jacobs practices a kind of free linking and free thinking that takes you from country to country and from religion to technology to health, all in the orbit of education. <http://www.joannejacobs.com/>

Kathy Schrock's Kaffeeklatsch

The keyword in the name of this blog refers to an informal gathering to drink coffee and chat. As a Web barista, Schrock serves a compelling educational brew. <http://www.kathyschrock.net/blog>

Leader Talk

Written by school leaders for school leaders, proof that those at the top are fighting for change, too. <http://www.leadertalk.org/>

Moving at the Speed of Creativity

Uses plain language to highlight exciting technology and innovation in education. <http://www.speedofcreativity.org/2007>

NYC Educator

It may be the Daily Show of education blogs, combining parody, retro images, and a skeptical sensibility in service of a true concern for our educational future. <http://www.nyceducator.com>

PBS Teachers: Learning.Now

Checking out the well-crafted entries on this site is like a one-on-one with a patient mentor: lots of wisdom, few wasted words. <http://www.pbs.org/teachers/learning.now/>

Weblogg-ed

As its snowy mountain logo implies, Will Richardson's weblogg-ed is a breath of fresh air. Without clutter, his entries can be meditated on in singular simplicity. <http://www.weblogg-ed.com/>

WHAT WE ARE READING

(Please share your own suggestions for books related to high school and teaching and learning that are worth a read. Please send ideas for CASN News to patricia510@gmail.com

Minding the Gap: Why Integrating High School with College Makes Sense and How to Do It (editors: Nancy Hoffman, Joel Vargas, Andrea Venezia & Marc S. Miller; Harvard Education Press) Minding the Gap advocates for "an integrated secondary/postsecondary system, one in which a post-high school credential is the default end point, and in which the transition between sectors is eliminated to the greatest extent possible. In other words, if low-income students disappear in the transition between high school and postsecondary, rethink and restructure the transition and build the structures needed for a seamless system."

SOME UPCOMING CONFERENCES/EVENTS

Breaking Ranks Fall Institute

Co-sponsored by the Center for Secondary School Redesign and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. October 22-26, 2007
Bedford, New Hampshire

<http://www.cssr.us/institute%20NH07.htm>

National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC) Conference

This year's NCAC Conference meets November 3-5, 2007 (with tours on November 6) in St. Louis at the Hyatt Union Station, The focus will be on all Smaller Learning Communities and Career Academies. CASN's own Susan Tidyman is one of the conference planners and this is always a very good conference.

This year's keynote speakers include Pedro Noguera, professor at the Steinhardt School of Education at New York University and author of *City Schools and the American Dream: Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education* and of *Unfinished Business: Closing the Racial Achievement Gap in Our Schools* AND Maxine Clark, CEO of Build-a-Bear Workshop. For more information and to register on line, please see <http://www.ncacinc.org>.

Coalition of Essential Schools Annual Fall Forum: A Principled Stand November 8-10 2007 Denver, Colorado http://www.essentialschools.org/pub/ces_docs/fforum/fforum.html

Education Trust National Conference: Courageous Choices: Tackling the Tough Issues to Raise Student Achievement, November 8-10, 2007 Washington, D.C.
<http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust>

National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASPP) Annual Conference: Build the Team - Lead the Charge
February 22-24, 2008 San Antonio, Texas
<http://www.principals.org>

Third Biennial Education Trust-West Conference: Closing Achievement and Opportunity Gaps: Our Mission is Possible: The Time is Now
February 24-26, San Francisco, CA (registration materials available mid-October.)
<http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/etw>

California Partnership Academies Conference
Expanding the Vision, Exploring New Horizons
(note: always includes many participants from other states)
March 24-26, 2008 San Diego, California
NOTE: Conference Brochure, Call for Presentations, and Call for Roundtable Discussions & Share Fair Displays are available on line.
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/cpaconference.asp>

16th Annual Model Schools Conference
June 22-25 Orlando, Florida (SAVE THE DATES)

National Academy Foundation 2008 Institute for Staff Development

July 8 - 11, 2008 Orlando, Florida (SAVE THE DATES)

High Schools That Work Summer Staff Development Conference

July 9 - July 12, 2008 Nashville, Tennessee (SAVE THE DATES)

Smaller Learning Communities Design Studios 2007-2008

NOTE: There is also a listing for Smaller Learning Communities Design Studios offered through Northwest Regional Education Laboratories, the official federal SLC technical assistance provider available on the NWREL website. Schools hosting SLC Design Studios this year include: Noble HS (Berwick, Maine); Academy of Irving ISD (Irving, Texas); Statesboro HS (Statesboro, Georgia); James Monroe HS (North Hills, CA), and Irvington HS (Fremont, CA) See: <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sslc/events.php>

2007 SOME FUNDING AND AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

Tiger Woods Foundation

The Tiger Woods Foundation grants focus on providing opportunities to underserved youth, ages 5-17. The Foundation supports programs that enhance the learning process for youth and year-round mentoring and/or tutoring programs. Organizations must be tax exempt under Section 501 (c) (3), not a 509 (a) private foundation, and must submit a letter from the IRS declaring this status. Personnel costs must be less than 50% of the applicant total expenses. Most of the Foundation grants are made to organizations and programs that are based in urban cities. Note: because public schools are not 501(c)(3) tax exempt, they are not eligible for funding. Grants typically range from \$2,500 to \$25,000. Proposals must be received by February 1, May 1, August 1, or November 1. Applications received after one cycle has ended will be considered in the next cycle. <http://www.tigerwoodsfoundation.org/grants/default.sps?itype=7609>

Braitmayer Foundation

The Braitmayer Foundation is interested in K-12 education throughout the United States. Of particular interest are:

- * Curricular and school reform initiatives.
- * Preparation of and professional development opportunities for teachers, particularly those which encourage people of high ability and diverse background to enter and remain in K-12 teaching.

Grants may be used as seed money, challenge grants, or to match other grants. Normally, the Foundation does not approve grants for childcare, pre-K, or after-school programs. It also does not fund equipment, including hardware, software, or books. Grants of up to \$10,000 will be awarded to 501(c)(3) or other tax-exempt organizations. Applications are due by November 15, 2007. <http://www.braitmayerfoundation.org/guid.htm>

Tommy Hilfiger Corporate Foundation

The Tommy Hilfiger Corporate Foundation initiatives focus on developing & supporting programs & partnerships that promote educational opportunities for diverse populations in the United States. The Foundation wants to be a major force in improving education by focusing funds on programs that expose youth to experiences in education and career-related opportunities. In addition, the Foundation invests in health-related organizations and cultural programs that impact a diverse population of youth.

You must include your 501(c)(3) tax exemption letter with your 3-5 page application.

Grants range from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

Proposals must be received by April 1 or October 1. <http://usa.tommy.com/opencms/opencms/foundation/index.jsp?section=foundation>

For the Good of the Game (Golf) Grant

For the Good of the Game Grants provide opportunities for personal development through golf and its values. These grants allow the introduction to the game to people who otherwise would not have the opportunity, specifically kids from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and individuals with disabilities. Grants may be used for instructional programs, caddie or other work-based curriculums, and the construction of facilities.

All grant recipients must be tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code or government entities such as schools or municipalities.

When formulating your request, keep in mind that the United States Golf Association, sponsor of this program, will not fund the entire budget of a program. Each year, the USGA dedicates approximately \$5 million for this initiative. In 2006, 201 awards were made totaling \$4,842,855 and in 2005, \$4,697,699 funded 182 projects. You are encouraged to review previous awards made through USGA at http://www.usga.org/aboutus/foundation/grants/grants_by_year/

[grants by year.html](#) when determining the type of program and the budget amount for which you will apply.

Grant requests are due by 5 PM MT on January 23, 2008. <http://www.usga.org/aboutus/foundation/grants/deadlines.html>

State Farm Good Neighbor Service-Learning Grant

The State Farm Good Neighbor Service-Learning Grant supports youth (5-25 years old), teachers, and school-based service-learning coordinators in implementing service-learning projects for Global Youth Service Day 2008 (April 25-27). Projects must be youth-led and a component or measurable part of the project must take place during Global Youth Service Day.

One hundred grants of up to \$1,000 each will be made. TIME SENSITIVE Applications must be postmarked or emailed by October 16, 2007. <http://servenet.org/Toolkit/ContentManagement/ServiceWireNews/tabid/122/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/302/Default.aspx>

2007 Organic School Garden Awards

The Organic School Garden Awards recognize and reward the most outstanding existing organic school gardens. Any school within the United States with an organic garden is invited to enter the contest. The organic garden must be used by the school/classrooms for educational purposes. Three awards will be made: the 1st Place Organic Gold Award, \$1,000; 2nd Place Organic Silver Award, \$500; and the 3rd Place Organic Bronze Award, \$250.

Entries must be postmarked by October 31, 2007. TIME SENSITIVE <http://www.kidsregen.org/gardens/rules.shtml>

Allstate Foundation

The Allstate Foundation supports national and local programs that fit within three focus areas: safe and vital communities; economic empowerment; and tolerance, inclusion, and diversity. Among the program areas supported are youth anti-violence, teen safe driving financial and economic literacy, teaching tolerance to youth, and ending hate crimes.

Grants are available to nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Foundation has no deadlines for submission. <http://www.allstate.com/citizenship/foundation/funding-guidelines.aspx>

Nike Community Affairs

Nike invests in programs that support youth and physical activity through its corporate giving program. Nike seeks to get kids more physically active, get kids involved in the teamwork of sport, and have real, positive, and measurable impact.

U.S. applicants must be tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or a unit of government if the contribution is solely for charitable or public purposes. Giving is focused to communities where Nike has a significant employee or business presence.

Nike accepts proposals throughout the year. Generally, applicants will be notified of the status of their request within eight weeks of submitting a proposal.

Note: Nike also makes product donations to nonprofit organizations dedicated to youth physical activity. Nike will not provide product donations to individual sports teams. <http://www.nike.com/nikebiz/nikebiz.jhtml?page=26&item=guidelines>

Westinghouse Electric Company (CT, DC, IL, MD, MN, NH, PA, SC, TN, UT, WA)
The Westinghouse Electric Company Charitable Giving Program makes charitable contributions throughout the U.S. in communities where Westinghouse has a presence. In education, Westinghouse emphasizes elementary, secondary, and high school programs that emphasize math and science, though consideration is given to other relevant, non-fine arts programs.

All grant recipients must be tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. Individual award amounts will be \$5,000 or less. Only two grants can be awarded to an organization over a five-year period. Awards are made quarterly. http://www.westinghousenuclear.com/Community/Charitable_Giving/mission.shtm

Prudential Spirit of Community Awards

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards honor young people in grades 5 through 12 who have demonstrated exemplary voluntary service to their communities. Maximum Award: \$5,000. Eligibility: Students grades 5-12 who have conducted a volunteer service activity within the past year.

Deadline: October 31, 2007 TIME SENSITIVE <http://www.prudential.com/spirit>

International Reading Association Regie Routman Teacher Recognition

The International Reading Association Regie Routman Teacher Recognition Award honors an outstanding elementary teacher of reading and language arts dedicated to improving teaching and learning through reflective writing about his or her teaching and learning process. Maximum Award:

\$1,000. Eligibility: regular classroom elementary teachers of reading and language arts grades K-6; must be IRA members. Deadline: November 1, 2007. TIME SENSITIVE http://www.reading.org/association/awards/teachers_routman.html

National Schools of Character Awards Program

The 2008 National Schools of Character Awards Program names public and private schools and districts (K-12) as National Schools of Character (NSOC) for their outstanding work in character education. The program honors recipients, showcases their work, and helps them to inspire and lead others. Maximum Award: \$20,000. Eligibility: schools engaged in character education for a minimum of three full years, starting no later than December 2004, and having a minimum of 175 students; districts engaged in character education for a minimum of four full years, starting no later than December 2003. Deadline: December 3, 2007.

http://www.character.org/site/c.gwKUJhNYJrF/b.2766927/k.58C8/National_Schools_of_Character_Awards.htm

Staples Foundation: Grants to Support Job Skills & Education

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: December 7, 2007.

<http://www.staplesfoundation.org/foundapplication.html>

Target Field Trip Grants for Teachers

Apply by November 1, 2007 for a field trip grant of up to \$1000 to be awarded for student field trips between February and June 2008.

<http://sites.target.com/site/en/corporate/page.jsp?contentid=PRD03-002537>