

Dropout Prevention Update
September 1, 2004- Volume 4- Number 3
National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

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Online registration is available for the 16th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference, <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/conferen/conferen.htm>

Top Stories

An increasing number of urban districts are scrapping traditional high school grade structures and devising more flexible routes toward graduation to address high dropout rates.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=44Courses.h23>

In some states, minority students are far more likely to fail high school exit exams than their white peers. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0819/p12s01-legn.html> <http://www.ctredpol.org/>

On October 14, more than 6,000 communities will rally for afterschool programs by participating in the fifth anniversary of *Lights On Afterschool!* A variety of free materials are available.

http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/loa_2004/index.cfm

Funding Sources

The Toshiba America Foundation is giving grants of up to \$1,000 each for projects that improve science and mathematics teaching. Any K-6 teacher in a public or private school is eligible.

Deadline, October 1, 2004. <http://www.toshiba.com/taf/apply.html>

The Innovation Fund of the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation requests proposals from non-remedial, out-of-school programs in critical reading and/or writing for low-to-moderate income elementary and/or middle school students. Deadline: October 15, 2004.

http://jackkentcookefoundation.org/jkcf_web/content.aspx?page=2414227

The Best Buy Children's Foundation will award \$3 million in Best Buy gift cards to 1,200 schools whose educators use technology to make learning fun. Each selected school must be located within 25 miles of a Best Buy store. Deadline: October 1, 2004.

<http://communications.bestbuy.com/communityrelations/teach.asp>

Policy Updates

At least 17 states have laws requiring students to stay in school or maintain a certain grade point average to earn or keep their driver's license.

<http://www.stateline.org/stateline/?pa=story&sa=showStoryInfo&print=1&id=393472>

A new identification system will track the academic progress of each public-school student in Rhode Island from elementary school through high school—even if they move from district to district. http://www.projo.com/news/content/projo_20040821_id21.1e4c75.html

International Notes

Yemen is one of the least developed countries in the Arab world, yet 24 Yemeni high schools will be wired to the Internet for the first time. <http://main.edc.org/newsroom/Features/yemen.asp>

The German, time-honored system of teaching job skills through lengthy apprenticeships may be finished. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0803/p11s01-legn.html>

Students With Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) has formally endorsed a voluntary national publishing paradigm known as the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS).

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=5218>

The popular transition curriculum. *My Future My Plan*, developed by State of the Art, Inc. in collaboration with NCSET, is now available in Spanish.

<http://www.ncset.org/publications/mfmp.asp>

Effective Strategies

Career and Technical Education

Across the country, high schools are turning to career academies as a way to reshape large schools into small learning communities. <http://www.asbj.com/current/research.html>

The growth and popularity of Newport Harbor's (CA) culinary arts program reflects a nationwide trend. <http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=44Culinary.h23>

Educational Technology

Can computers help student learning? Learn what happened when one school mixed information technology with teaching and learning. <http://www.rand.org/publications/TR/TR126/>

High-tech gadgets increase the chances for cheating as educators struggle to update rules to prevent scholastic theft. <http://www.detnews.com/2004/schools/0408/04/d06-231968.htm>

Leading high-tech companies have opened a new, for-profit school called Northface University. <http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/showStoryts.cfm?ArticleID=5216>

Family Engagement

A relationship between parents and their children's school helps parents feel comfortable contributing to the school and their children's academic success.

<http://www.ascd.org/cms/index.cfm?TheViewID=2541&reid=sb>

EPIC is a national organization with the mission of helping parents, teachers and community members raise children to become responsible adults. <http://www.epicforchildren.org/>

Parental information and resource centers (PIRCs) provide training, information, and support to parents, school districts, and other organizations that carry out parent education and family involvement programs. <http://www.pirc-info.net/>

Resources & Tools

Take a look at some ideas for what a school might do at the beginning of the year to support staff so that they will be able to do their best for their students.

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/rhythms.pdf>

Tom Slater gives readers strategies for promoting positive achievement in public schools.

http://www.aasa.org/publications/sa/2004_08/punchback.htm

With dropout rates exceeding 50% in some inner-city schools and no shortage of disengaged students in suburban and rural systems, Rick Allen examines strategies for creating a more coherent high school structure. http://www.ascd.org/publications/ed_update/200408/allen.html

36th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward Public Schools.

<http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/k0409pol.htm>

We appreciate comments from our readers. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu Sources: Afterschool Alliance, ECS, Education News Reports, & Commentaries, EDWeek, eSn, PEN Weekly, rtcUpdates, SMHP