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Calls to Participate

Two New Special Education Research and Development Centers Underway

The National Center for Special Education Research funded two \$10 million Research and Development Center awards in July 2012: the Special Education Research and Development Center on Reading Instruction for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, led by Principal Investigator Amy Lederberg and co-Principal Investigator Susan Easterbrooks (Georgia State University); and the Center on Secondary Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, led by Principal Investigator Samuel Odom and co-Principal Investigator Kara Hume (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

<http://ies.ed.gov/whatsnew/newsletters/?index=roundncser>

Adolescent Siblings of Children with and without Disabilities Sought for Sibling Emotionality Survey

<https://redcap.vanderbilt.edu/surveys/?s=RbeQdw>

The "Sibling Emotionality Survey" seeks adolescent siblings and parents in families with two children, both adolescent, with and without disabilities, to participate in a survey of how having a brother or sister impacts adolescents, by filling out an online survey taking 15-20 minutes. One adolescent and one parent in each family will be asked to click the link and respond to questions about the respondent and his/her family.

Learning Disabilities Association of American Web Site Survey

<http://www.lidaamerica.org/>

Learning Disabilities Association of American (LDA) is in the process of updating their Web site and would like input to help them provide the information sought by visitors to the site. With this upgrade, LDA strives to make the improved site a “go-to” destination for anyone seeking general information on learning disabilities as well as advocacy legislation and other timely national and state developments.

Lights On Afterschool Celebration

<http://tinyurl.com/9t8kmcl>

On October 18, 2012, people will gather at some 7,500 sites across the country and at U.S. military bases worldwide to support the afterschool programs that help working families, keep kids safe and inspire them to learn. The 13th Annual Lights On Afterschool Celebration provides an opportunity for afterschool programs to promote the benefits of engaging in high quality learning beyond the classroom. Participants are encouraged to host their own events and invite parents and community members, or work with other programs in the community to host a larger event.

Stop Bullying Video Challenge

<http://stopbullying.challenge.gov/>

The Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention invite youth ages 13-18 to create 30-60 second public service announcements as part of the Stop Bullying Video Challenge. Video submissions should showcase ways the youth are taking action against bullying and promoting kindness and respect within their communities. The grand prize is \$2,000, and two runner-ups will each receive \$500. The three winning videos will be featured on stopbullying.gov. Deadline for entries: October 14, 2012.

CADRE Survey on Parental Conflict and Special Education Decision Making

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/V786TK9>

CADRE is developing a resource focusing on issues that families experience in times of high stress due to divorce or estrangement and strategies that can be used to assist them, particularly during the process of special education decision making. CADRE invites responses on a brief survey to assist them in developing this resource.

Inclusive Schools Network

<http://tinyurl.com/7vguh9j>

The Inclusive Schools Network seeks input from people who use or offer inclusive education services, to learn more about what kinds of information and services the Network could offer, and invites responses on a brief survey of opinions.

National School Safety Advocacy Council's Conference on Bullying Seeks Session Proposals

<http://tinyurl.com/8knek5f>

The National School Safety Advocacy Council's Annual National Conference on Bullying will be held February 27-March 1, 2013 in Orlando, Florida. Any professional with advanced knowledge and experience dealing with issues surrounding bullying is invited to submit session proposals or original research for presentation during the 2013 conference, to share effective models, policies, research and information and provide colleagues with insights and best

practices addressing the bullying issues facing schools and communities. Deadline for proposals: October 19, 2012.

National Service-Learning Conference Seeks Proposals for Workshops

<http://attendesource.com/profile/web/index.cfm?PKwebID=0x29850f48f>

The 24th Annual National Service-Learning Conference seeks proposals for workshops. Workshops are the heart of the conference, providing professional development opportunities and showcasing service-learning projects from across the country. It is an opportunity to connect with people and share how a project was implemented, how it is connected to curriculum goals, and what makes it effective.

Department of Education Seeks Feedback on Vision for Results-Driven Accountability

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep/osep/rda/index.html>

The Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is rethinking its accountability system in order to focus on results. OSEP'S vision for Results-Driven Accountability is that all components of accountability will be aligned in a manner to support states in improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities, and their families. OSEP invites the public to help re-conceptualize the accountability system.

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Special Education Resources

Assistive Technology in Action (August 2012)

Video Series

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYmfrY4Hfk>

The Family Center on Technology and Disability and PACER Center are pleased to announce the release of their new assistive technology awareness series, "Assistive Technology in Action." Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs, this fully-captioned video series is designed to strengthen awareness of AT devices that help individuals with disabilities participate fully in school, at home, and in the community. The first video in the series, "Meet Sam," features Sam Graves, a young man with cerebral palsy who, with the help of AT, is a successful college student, blogger, and sportsman.

Bright Futures Family Pocket Guide (2012)

Guide

https://org2.democracynaction.org/o/6739/t/11331/shop/shop.jsp?storefront_KEY=347

The 2nd Edition of the "Bright Futures Family Pocket Guide" is reorganized for greater ease of use, and has updates and new information. It was developed for families by families, in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and other professionals, and based on the AAP's "Bright Futures: Guidelines for the Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents" (3rd ed.), and provides information on: the roles families play in the health and well-being of their children; the importance of well-child visits for all children; forming partnerships with other families and with professionals to improve policies, care, services, and support for all children and families; a framework for children's good health; child development; and links to resources and further sources of information for children's good health.

Building and Maintaining A Good Relationship with Your Child’s Teacher (2010)

Article

<http://www.ldonline.org/article/25155/>

LD OnLine, an educational service of public television station WETA in Washington, DC, in association with the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, has made available online “Building and Maintaining A Good Relationship with Your Child’s Teacher” (2005), by the National Center for Learning Disabilities, on the importance in supporting the needs of a child with disabilities of having a strong, positive relationship with the teachers and others in education at the child’s school. The article includes tips on how to foster a sense of partnership with the teacher and administration to support a child’s education.

Dare to Dream (2012)

Videos

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/transition/video/>

The New Jersey Office of Special Education has archived online the leading presentations of the 2012 regional Dare to Dream Student Leadership conferences, highlighting the importance of student self-advocacy and leadership. Each conference features presentations from students and adults with disabilities who have demonstrated self-advocacy and leadership skills, and a variety of concurrent breakout sessions on the transition and self-advocacy process. (NOTE: The video links are in Quicktime and it takes several minutes for them to download.)

Expanding Learning Time: Reviewing the Evidence (August 2012)

Report

<http://tinyurl.com/cmsqamy>

The educational achievement and attainment of young people in the United States, especially disadvantaged children, has been a longstanding concern. Extending learning time for students (through a longer school day or year, or through offering academic services during out-of-school time) can be effective in improving educational outcomes for students. The Wallace Foundation commissioned Child Trends to review the evidence on the effectiveness of school-based and community-based extended learning time approaches. Child Trends’ report, “Expanding Time for Learning Both Inside and Outside the Classroom: A Review of the Evidence Base,” synthesizes the results, finding Extended Learning Time effective, if used well.

Integrated Employment Toolkit (2012)

Toolkit

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/ietoolkit/>

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) has developed this Integrated Employment Toolkit to provide valuable information as individuals, community employment agencies, policymakers and others pursue integrated employment as the employment goal for youth and adults with disabilities. The Toolkit offers a resources, reports, papers, policies, fact sheets, case studies, and discussion guides from a variety of sources to accommodate the full range of users and increase understanding about the value and potential of integrated employment.

Iris Center Education Resources (2012)

Database

<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resources.html>

The IRIS Center provides special education resources for educators and other professionals about

students with disabilities. The center's collection of online Information Briefs has been updated and revised and many new categories are now available, including assistive technology, differentiated instruction, and reading strategies.

Least Restrictive Environment Applies To Transition Too (July 2012)

Report

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2012/07/10/feds-lre-transition/15988/>

By law, students with disabilities are supposed to be included in general education to the greatest extent possible. Now, federal officials say the same tenet of inclusion should apply to transition as well. Informal guidance issued recently from the U.S. Department of Education and reported by "Education Week" and "Disability Scoop, The Premier Source on Developmental Disabilities News," indicates that the requirement in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, that students be placed in the "least restrictive environment" extends beyond the confines of the classroom, and includes work placement experiences that are part of a student's individualized education program, according to the Director of the Office of Special Education Programs at the Department of Education.

Making the Move: Transition Strategies at California Schools with High Graduation Rates (October 2011)

Report

<http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/rs/1197>

"Making the Move: Transition Strategies at California Schools with High Graduation Rates," a report produced by the California Comprehensive Center at WestEd, American Institutes for Research, and the California Department of Education, looks at high schools with successful graduation rates to help understand how to make sure students graduate from high school and are ready for college and career. The report discusses strategies these schools use, challenges they face in achieving high graduation rates, and helping middle grades students transition to high school.

OJJDP Updates Statistical Briefing Book (2012)

Report

<http://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/>

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has updated its Statistical Briefing Book (SBB) to include 2011 data on juvenile populations, 2010 data on victims of domestic violence, and FBI supplementary homicide reports through 2010. Data from 2010 on homicide victims and perpetrators have also been added to the Frequently Asked Questions section. The SBB offers easy access to juvenile justice information. Its data analysis tools allow users to create custom analyses of juvenile populations, arrests, court cases, and residential placement. The National Center for Juvenile Justice developed the SBB for OJJDP.

Personnel Preparation Program Partnerships (2011)

Forms, Templates, Issue Brief

<http://www.personnelcenter.org/personnelprep.cfm>

The Personnel Improvement Center provides information through its Web site and delivers on-site services that assist states in the facilitation of statewide meetings to develop and implement personnel preparation program partnerships that will provide increased access to preparation programs coursework for community members in high need locales.

Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools (June 2012)

Toolkit

<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Preventing-Suicide-A-Toolkit-for-High-Schools/SMA12-4669>

The Suicide Prevention Resource Center of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has released a toolkit that provides strategies to help high schools, school districts and their partners design and implement strategies to prevent suicide and promote behavioral health among students. It also includes information on screening tools, warning signs and risk factors, statistics and parent education materials.

Toolkit for Expanding Learning/Collaborative for Building After-School Systems (2012)
Toolkit

<http://expandinglearning.org/toolkit>

The Expanding Learning and Afterschool Project, in partnership with the Collaborative for Building After-School Systems (CBASS), has released a new Toolkit for Expanding Learning. The toolkit provides guidance to city agencies, school districts, intermediaries, state agencies and Statewide Afterschool Networks developing plans for afterschool, summer learning and expanded learning time initiatives. The toolkit features resources based on CBASS collaborators' experiences in working with expanded learning stakeholders.

Where to Begin? The Evolving Role of Placement Exams for Students Starting College
(August 2012)

Report

<http://www.jff.org/publications/education/where-begin-evolving-role-placement-exam/1452>

For years, colleges have used placement exams to classify incoming students as “college ready” or assign them to developmental education. But emerging research has cast doubt on the practice, sparking national debate. “Where to Begin? The Evolving Role of Placement Exams for Students Starting College” summarizes and clarifies the contentious debate issues, helping state and college leaders evaluate their options in moving forward.

Update from the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities

Update from the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)

NICHCY's *disability in your classroom* blog series.

Looking for practical tips that you can use today in your classroom? NICHCY authors a series of specific disability blogs full of great tips and resources that can be utilized in your classroom today. Also explore our blog page, which features information and perspectives related to serving students with disabilities in schools.

<http://nichcy.org/blog>

Speech and Language Impairments in Your Classroom: 8 Tips for Teachers

<http://nichcy.org/s-l-i-8-tips-for-teachers>

Intellectual Disabilities in Your Classroom: 9 Tips for Teachers

<http://nichcy.org/intellectual-disabilities-in-your-classroom>

LD in Your Classroom: 7 Tips for Teachers

<http://nichcy.org/ld-7-tips-for-teachers>

AD/HD in Your Classroom: 10 Tips for Teachers

<http://nichcy.org/adhd-10-tips-for-teachers>

What does FAPE really mean?

Check out NICHCY's latest full-text expert journal article, *Without Data All We Have Are Assumptions: Revisiting the Meaning of a Free Appropriate Public Education* by Jean B. Crockett and Mitchell L. Yell. It is a clear, comprehensible article examining past Supreme Court decisions around the IDEA requirement that schools provide a "free and appropriate public education" (FAPE) to students with disabilities.

<http://nichcy.org/laws/legal/yell1>

FROM OUR FRIENDS AT THE IDEA PARTNERSHIP



Want to find out more about the Common Core State Standards? Idea Partnership will be hosting *Overview to the Common Core State Standards Collections* webinars. Register now for [September 13](#), [September 27](#), [October 11](#), or [October 25](#) session. Visit the Idea Partnership website for more information.

<http://www.ideapartnership.org/>



IT ALL STARTS IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Back-to-school tips for parents of children with special needs.

Reading Rockets offers back-to-school tips for parents emphasizing communication, organization, and staying up-to-date on special education news.

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/38405/>

What's LRE, and what does it have to do with your child's placement?

<http://nichcy.org/schoolage/placement/overview>

Home-to-school connections guide.

This guide provides you with relevant and valuable tools and resources for how best to strengthen the bonds between schools, families, and communities for student learning and success.

<http://www.edutopia.org/home-to-school-connections-resource-guide>

About brothers and sisters.

This series of articles looks at the challenges and triumphs of siblings of kids with special needs, with book excerpts and reviews that focus on their sibling issues and a chance for parents to give them a special cheer.

<http://specials.about.com/service/newsletters/specialchildren/1342188000.htm>



THE LITTLE ONES: EARLY INTERVENTION/EARLY CHILDHOOD **Help children transition from one activity to another, and one place to another.**

From the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI), *Thoughtful Transitions Reduce Traffic Jams and Challenges* gives teachers tools and strategies to use when teaching children how to transition between activities and places within the early childhood environment.

http://www.challengingbehavior.org/communities/make_n_take/make_n_take_home.html

Communicating via backpack.

Also from TACSEI, the new *Backpack Connection Series* gives teachers and parents/caregivers a way to work together to help young children develop social-emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. The handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

<http://www.challengingbehavior.org/do/resources/backpack.html>

Ask the cognitive scientist: what is developmentally appropriate practice?

A noted cognitive scientist explores the term "developmentally appropriate practice" (DAP) and discusses the importance of understanding learning variability when planning instruction.

<http://tinyurl.com/9au3fbb>



SCHOOLS, K-12

Great teachers harness the energy of students.

During this year's Teacher Appreciation Week, 50 of ED's senior officials and career staff went "Back to School." Each staff member was matched with a classroom teacher and spent a full or half day experiencing the life of a teacher. ED's Dennis Bega shadowed 10th and 11th grade teacher Lisa Clarke in Kent, Wash. This blog recaps Dennis' experience in Ms. Clarke's classroom for a day.

<http://tinyurl.com/buhldf6>

Support students in their LRE---here's a starter set of resources!

Need information, resources, and technical assistance (TA) to help you and others support children with disabilities in their least restrictive environment in school? Here's a starter list of places to look online.

<http://nichcy.org/schoolage/placement/lre-resources>

Big exams this fall?

Test preparation can make all the difference between being confident or stressed during an exam. Bookshare has many test preparation books to provide plenty of practice opportunities. Here are a few to get you started:

<http://blog.bookshare.org/2012/08/07/books-to-help-you-prepare-for-those-big-tests/>

Teaching tools based on brain facts.

Looking for some strategies to better engage students and pique their interests? Brainfact.org has a collection of multimedia resources for teachers develop engaging and interactive lessons.

<http://www.brainfacts.org/educators/>

Adventures in an autism classroom: On the value of token economies.

Token Economy Systems work for ALL types of students, no matter what their academic or communication level! Here is one example of how this system can be used in the classroom.

<http://classroominthecorner.blogspot.com/>

Free technology for teachers.

With so many apps out there, it can become quite daunting to find apps that are useful or relevant. Well, there's an app for just that.

<http://www.freetech4teachers.com/>

The 60-second guide to texting in the classroom.

Although cell phones have the potential to pose a number of problems in the classroom, technologies offered by cell phones can be harnessed to improve student learning. Here are a few examples as to how teachers can utilize text message technology in their classrooms and increase student engagement and content mastery:

<http://edudemic.com/2012/07/the-60-second-guide-to-texting-in-the-classroom/>



STATE & SYSTEM TOOLS

Comprehensive policy guide for protecting students with life-threatening food allergies.

<http://www.nsba.org/foodallergyguide.pdf>

Guide to funding comprehensive services in child care and early education.

This guide is meant to help states look beyond major sources of child care and early education funding and consider alternative federal financing sources to bring comprehensive services into early childhood settings.

<http://tinyurl.com/cx4v424>

Handbook on family and community engagement.

From the U.S. Department of Education, this handbook represents years of experience in the family and community engagement field, and various perspectives on what should guide this work and how it should be carried out.

<http://www.families-schools.org/downloads/FACEHandbook.pdf>

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Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET

[Accessibility Manager](#)

Dover, NH 100 Education Way

Job Category: Temporary

Position Summary

Working in partnership with Innovation Lab, Content Design and Development, and Publishing, the Accessibility Manager will build team knowledge around all aspects of accessibility. The Accessibility Manager will serve as a team leader and will establish and refine procedures that support specialized activities performed by the team. The Accessibility Manager will be an on-

site expert who can speak with authority about accessibility, is the "go-to" person, and can speak to the industry and the public with deep knowledge about the services we provide. The Accessibility Manager is positioned to identify new opportunities that expand our accessibility capabilities and initiate research to improve Measured Progress's approaches to providing accessible content. Additional responsibilities will include the following:

- Develop and deploy procedures that support Measured Progress's accessibility goals and deliverables.
- Speak to Measured Progress's capabilities in accessibility.
- Collaborate with Innovation Lab to assure on-going knowledge transfer and participate in expanding expertise.
- Work with personnel to refine and build knowledge around accessibility.
- Collaborate with Information Technology to define requirements and enhance accessibility tools.
- Train staff members on tools, processes, and accessibility issues.
- Collaborate with Content, Design, and Development; Publishing; and others to create and maintain schedules.
- Actively engage in Measured Progress's strategic goals to support their leadership position in the area of accessible assessment content and delivery.
- Staff and develop necessary team for support of Measured Progress's accessibility goals.
- Participate in a leadership role to foster on-going collaborative environment of process and technology improvement; continued mentoring and development of staff; and strategic change management within Testing Services and Measured Progress.

Qualifications

- Master's degree in Education, preferably with training in Universal Design for Learning and Special Education
- Minimum of ten (10) years of experience in the field of accessibility and/or special education (PhD will be considered for five (5) years of experience)

Measured Progress's corporate campus is located 65 miles north of Boston in the New Hampshire Seacoast region. Measured Progress offers an exceptional benefits package and work environment, featuring on-site child care and gym facilities, generous paid time off and [retirement savings](#) plans, and immediate eligibility for health, dental, vision and life insurance.

As an EOE/AA employer, Measured Progress openly encourages applicants from diverse backgrounds.

All interested applicants apply online

<https://employment.measuredprogress.org/careers/>

Special Education Teacher

Randolph, Massachusetts 02368

Job Category: Full Time

The May Institute

Randolph, MA

The **May Center for Child Development** in Randolph is looking for a Special Education Teacher to work in a classroom setting taking on lead responsibilities and providing services to children and adolescents with autism or other developmental disabilities.

Responsibilities Include:

- Providing coordination and leadership of the classroom
- Designing an individualized curriculum, writing educational plans, collecting and evaluating data, and writing student progress reports
- Delivering individualized and group instruction and other educational objectives
- Implementing comprehensive behavior support plans
- Training and supervising other teachers and classroom assistants

Requirements Include:

- Master's degree (or enrollment in a Master's program)
- Certification in moderate or severe special education or working towards certification
- Experience in ABA preferred
- Strong organizational and communication skills
- Commitment to helping children with significant challenges learn and grow

Apply online at: www.mayinstitute.org or email your resume to: careers@mayinstitute.org

The **May Institute** is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Apply Here: <http://www.Click2Apply.net/22y5gnt>

Private Teacher

Bradenton, FL

Job Category: Private Teacher

Description

My son has several diagnoses... SPD, ASD and Aspergers. Who knows which is most accurate. Not sure it matters. I need someone that understands he is moving so he can pay attention not because he is being disobedient. He also makes vocal sounds on a regular basis. You will have to be tolerant. His need for moving is like the need for oxygen. We have a playground and

trampoline, plenty of area to fun and climb or swim. It doesn't matter in which fashion he learns (while swimming, running, etc) as long as he is having fun.

As you can imagine he has had difficulty in typical private schools, so that is why we have chosen to home school. Learning can be fun... hands on... I just need to find that person capable of doing that.

He is an 8 year old boy that is ALL boy. He is our angel.. and we love him beyond belief. I would like someone to push him beyond grade level in Math. That's the good thing about homeschool, you can be on different grade levels in different subjects.

He is in several therapies which could take place after school, or before.

I am thinking that perhaps 4 hours may be all that is needed to teach curriculum. He has advanced remarkably in FastForward. I have tons of equipment and supplies for the new teacher.

Times are flexible but I do prefer early mornings to early afternoons. (perhaps 8-11 or 12) Please email questions and salary requirement.

Requirements

The person we seek will be a Christian, have a huge amount of patience, and someone that will make learning a fun adventure.

Benefits

Flexible hours. Nice home to work in.

Contact

Email is best:
Lee@Santilli.us

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Upcoming Conferences, Workshops and Events

2012

2012

October

The Bridge from School to Afterschool and Back *Conference*

October 8, 2012 - October 9, 2012

Seattle, WA

<http://tinyurl.com/d8ar64d>

The 10th Annual Bridge Conference brings together afterschool and youth development professionals, school leaders, funders, researchers, policymakers, trainers/coaches and business leaders from across the country. It focuses on research, cutting-edge resources and strategies for strengthening services. This year's theme is "Empower Youth Voices." The Conference will be hosted by School's Out Washington.

Into Adulthood: Transition to Work for Individuals with Autism

Online Course

October 8, 2012 - November 19, 2012

No Location Specified

<http://www.worksupport.com/training/webcourses/autism.cfm>

"Into Adulthood: Transition to Work For Individuals with Autism" is an online course that will be offered by Virginia Commonwealth University's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, beginning on October 18, 2012. Each Monday, one of the course's six weekly lessons will be posted and remain accessible at any time during the following week. The lessons cover two topics each week: Transition for Students with Autism, and Characteristics Associated with Autism Spectrum Disorders; Self Determination, and Positive Behavior Supports; Developing a Transition Individualized Education Plan, and Inclusion; Teaching from the Classroom to the Community, and Life and Social Skills Development; Supporting Parents, and Adult Services; and Employment, and Post Secondary Education.

Training 2: Introduction to the New EWS Collator Tools

Web-based Event

October 10, 2012

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM (Eastern)

<http://tinyurl.com/8rj3l3k>

"Introduction to the New EWS Collator Tools," the second in the National High School Center's series on the Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring system (EWIMS) implementation process, will provide a demonstration of the new EWS Middle Grades and High School Collator Tools. Members of the National High School Center's EWS Team will explain how to load the

EWS Collator Tools with readily available student data, and how that data can be loaded into either the EWS Middle Grades or High School Tools.

National Symposium on Juvenile Services: Merging Juvenile Justice and Youth Development: Responding to the Needs of the Field

Conference

October 14, 2012 - October 18, 2012

Las Vegas, NV

<http://www.npjs.org/symposium.php>

The National Partnership for Juvenile Services (NPJS) will host its 18th National Symposium on Juvenile Services, “Merging Juvenile Justice and Youth Development: Responding to the Needs of the Field” to address topics of importance to juvenile justice practitioners, such as jurisdictional planning, juvenile probation, the Prison Rape Elimination Act, and the education and health of youth in confinement.

National Dropout Prevention Network Conference

Conference

October 14, 2012 - October 17, 2012

Orlando, FL

<http://tinyurl.com/bta2vsa>

The 24th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference, “Ignite the Potential Within Connect, Inspire, Graduate!,” will be held October 14-17, 2012, in Orlando, Florida.

DCDT 2012 “Transition – Reaching New Altitudes”

Conference

October 24, 2012 - October 26, 2012

Denver, CO

<http://a3.acteva.com/orderbooking/bookEvent/A316890>

“Transition – Reaching New Altitudes,” sponsored by the Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT), will be held in Denver, Colorado, October 24-26.

Achieving Inclusion Across the Globe

Conference

October 25, 2012 - October 28, 2012

Washington, DC

<http://www.thearc.org/page.aspx?pid=2824>

The Arc has partnered with Inclusion International, a global federation of family-based organizations advocating for the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities worldwide Inclusion International, for the 2012 National Convention and International Forum. The event will connect with members of the intellectual and developmental disability community from across the globe and offers sessions from experts in the field, social events, networking opportunities, and The Arc’s annual business meeting.

Training 3: Effectively Using Your EWS Reports: Hints and Tips

Web-based Event

October 25, 2012

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM (Eastern)

<http://tinyurl.com/co55797>

“Effectively Using Your EWS Reports: Hints and Tips,” the third in the National High School Center’s series on the Early Warning Intervention and Monitoring system (EWIMS)

implementation process, will discuss the various reports that can be run using the EWS Middle Grades and High School Tools. Members of the National High School Center's EWS Team will demonstrate how to run the reports and suggest different ways that schools and districts may use the reports to help inform their EWS decisions

The Help Group Summit 2012 ? Advances and Best Practices in Autism, Learning Disabilities and ADHD

Date: Friday, October 26 and Saturday, October 27, 2012

Location: Los Angeles, CA

Website: <http://www.thehelpgroup.org>

Abstract: This annual event features 30 speakers presenting cutting-edge information in their respective fields, bringing together researchers, clinicians, educators and parents. Continuing education credits are available. Addition topics include breakthroughs in social skills, music, transition, and technology

November

State of the Art Conference on Postsecondary Education and Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

Conference

November 29, 2012 - November 30, 2012

Fairfax, VA

<http://kihd.gmu.edu/policy/conference>

The 2012 State of the Art Conference on Postsecondary Education and Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities will be held at George Mason University's Fairfax, VA campus. Conference themes include: (Day 1) Leadership and Sustainability, Promoting Systemic Change, Program Development and Evaluation, Transition to College; and (Day 2) Research and Evaluation, Academic, Social and Independent Living, and Employment.

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Funding Forecast and Award Opportunities

Forecast of Funding Opportunities under the Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs for Fiscal Year 2012-2013

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edlite-forecast.html>

This document lists virtually all programs and competitions under which the U.S. Department of Education has invited or expects to invite applications for new awards for fiscal year 2012-2013 and provides actual or estimated deadlines for the transmittal of applications under these programs. The lists are in the form of charts organized according to the Department's principal program offices and include programs and competitions previously announced as well as those to be announced at a later date.

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FY 2012 Discretionary Grant Application Packages

<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html>

This site, from the Department of Education, provides information on grant competitions that are currently open.

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AGI: A World of Change in My Community

<http://www.earthsciweek.org/contests/photography/index.html>

The American Geological Institute is sponsoring a photography contest to celebrate Earth Science Week 2012. The photography theme for this year is "Earth Science is a Big Job." Maximum award: \$300, a copy of AGI's Faces of Earth DVD, and winner's photograph on the Earth Science Week Web site. Eligibility: interested residents of the United States of any age. Deadline: October 19, 2012.

EarthEcho International and NEA Foundation Invite Applications for Water Planet Challenge Grants

<http://www.neafoundation.org/pages/educators/grant-programs/nea-foundation-earthecho-grants/>

A collaborative effort between EarthEcho International and the NEA Foundation, the Water Planet Challenge grant program supports student service-learning programs designed to help improve the health of our water planet. Grants of \$2,000 are available to middle and high school educators for programs using EarthEcho's Water Planet Challenge Action Guides to involve their students in environmental awareness and conservation of water resources. The Water Planet Challenge Grants are available as NEA Foundation Student Achievement Grants to middle and high school public educators. Interested applicants must cite specifically how they are using EarthEcho's Water Planet Challenge Action Guides in the classroom with students. From conserving energy and improving the quality of drinking water to understanding the impact of the Gulf Oil spill, the Water Planet Challenge's collection of action guides, videos, lesson plans, and service-learning materials is intended to help educators connect with students and jumpstart student awareness and involvement in effecting change. Deadline: October 15, 2012.

FirstEnergy Accepting STEM Grant Applications From Educators

https://www.firstenergycorp.com/community/education/educational_grants.html

FirstEnergy Corporation is offering education grants of up to \$500 for creative classroom projects planned for the 2012-2013 school year. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Classroom Grants are awarded for creative, individual classroom projects for grades pre-kindergarten through 12 and are available to educators and youth group leaders located in communities served by FirstEnergy's 10 electric operating companies, or in

communities where the company has generating plants or does business. FirstEnergy is a diversified energy company dedicated to safety, reliability and operational excellence. Its 10 electric distribution companies comprise one of the nation's largest investor-owned electric systems. Deadline for STEM grant applications: submitted by September 17, 2012. Grants will be awarded based on the recommendations of the FirstEnergy Education.

Lexus/Scholastic: Eco Challenge

<http://www.scholastic.com/lexus/>

The Lexus Eco Challenge is a program designed to inspire and empower middle and high school students to learn about the environment and take action to improve it. Maximum award: \$30,000 in scholarships and grants. Eligibility: middle and high school teams comprised of 5-10 students and one teacher advisor. Deadline: Challenge One (Land/Water) – September 24, 2012; Challenge Two (Air/Climate) – October 29, 2012.

National Science Teachers Association Accepting Entries for Shell Science Lab Challenge

<http://www.nsta.org/shellsciencelab/>

The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), with support from Shell Oil Company, is accepting entries for the third annual Shell Science Lab Challenge. The challenge invites middle and high school science teachers (grades 6-12) in the United States and Canada (with special attention to urban and underrepresented groups) to illustrate replicable approaches to science lab instruction utilizing limited school and laboratory resources. Fifty-four regional finalists will be selected and asked to create a short video that displays the school's current science laboratory facilities and explains how winning equipment and resources would make a difference in their science teaching and their students' learning experience. The judging panel will select 18 regional winners, then five national finalists, and then a grand-prize winner. More than \$90,000 in lab makeover prizes will be awarded to the 18 winning schools. Winners will receive science lab equipment, cash grants, membership in NSTA, and support to attend NSTA conferences on science education. Deadline: November 12, 2012.

National Science Teachers Association Invites Applications for Shell Science Teaching Award

<http://www.nsta.org/about/awards.aspx#shell>

A partnership between Shell Oil Company and the National Science Teachers Association, the Shell Science Teaching Award recognizes one outstanding classroom teacher (grades K-12) who has had an impact on his or her students, school, and the community through exemplary science teaching. Nominees must be classroom teachers whose responsibilities include teaching science, must have a minimum of eight years of experience (not including the current school year) as a teacher of science, and must teach in a private or public school in the United States, U.S. Territories, Department of Defense schools, or in Canada. The honoree will receive \$10,000. The recipient and the two finalists will each receive an all-expense-paid trip to attend the NSTA National Conference on Science Education. Deadline: November 12, 2012.

NEA Foundation: Learning & Leadership Grants

http://www.neafoundation.org/programs/Learning&Leadership_Guidelines.htm

NEA Foundation Learning & Leadership Grants support public school teachers, public education support professionals, and/or faculty and staff in public institutions of higher education. Grants to individuals fund participation in high-quality professional development experiences, such as summer institutes or action research; grants to groups fund collegial study, including study groups, action research, lesson study, or mentoring experiences for faculty or staff new to an assignment. Maximum award: \$2,000 for individuals and \$5,000 for groups engaged in collegial

study. Eligibility: public schoolteachers grades K-12; public school education support professionals; or faculty and staff at public higher education institutions. Deadline: October 15, 2012.

NEA Foundation: Student Achievement Grants

http://www.neafoundation.org/programs/StudentAchievement_Guidelines.htm

The NEA Foundation Student Achievement Grants provide funds to improve the academic achievement of students by engaging in critical thinking and problem-solving that deepen knowledge of standards-based subject matter. The work should also improve students' habits of inquiry, self-directed learning, and critical reflection. Maximum award: \$5,000. Eligibility: practicing U.S. public school teachers, public school education support professionals, or faculty or staff at public higher education institutions. Deadline: October 15, 2012.

Nestlé Very Best in Youth Program Accepting Applications for 2013 Community Service Awards

<http://verybestinyouth.nestleusa.com/public/default.aspx>

The biennial Nestlé Very Best in Youth program was created to spotlight the best in youth leadership by identifying and honoring teenagers in the United States whose community service efforts are making a difference in the lives of others. Nestlé seeks to help these young people make a difference by donating \$1,000 in the name of each winner to the charity of his or her choice. Nestlé also awards the winner a trip to Los Angeles, California, for the Very Best in Youth awards ceremony. Contestants must be between 14-18 years of age and be legal residents of the fifty United States and the District of Columbia. Contestants must demonstrate good citizenship, a strong academic record, and be able to demonstrate how they have made a special contribution to their school, church, or community. Deadline: November 8, 2012.

The Prudential Spirit of community Awards

<http://spirit.prudential.com>

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program is a youth recognition program based on volunteer community service, created in 1995 by Prudential in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals, to honor middle level and high school students for outstanding service to others, to applaud young people who are making a difference in their towns and neighborhoods and to inspire others to contribute to their communities. One middle-school and one high-schools student from each of the 50 states plus the District of Columbia receive awards of \$1,000, and a trip to Washington, DC, in May for recognition events. Applications must be submitted to school principals or the head of an officially designated local organization no later than November 6, and the deadline for schools and other officially designated local organizations to certify their selected applications is November 13, 2012.

VFW: National Citizenship Education Teachers' Award

<http://www.vfw.org/Community/Teacher-of-the-Year/>

The VFW's National Citizenship Education Teachers' Award recognizes the nation's top elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote America's history and traditions. Maximum award: \$1,000. Eligibility: teachers K-12. Deadline: November 1, 2012.

Lockheed Martin: Grants for Education

<http://tinyurl.com/78jcxth>

Lockheed Martin provides grants for K-16 Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Education. This includes Lockheed Martin's K-12 STEM Education Initiative, Engineers in the

Classroom, as well as STEM-focused curricular and extracurricular programs that provide employee engagement opportunities in a community in which Lockheed Martin has employees or business interests. Maximum award: varies. Eligibility: 501(c)(3) organizations that deliver standards-based science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education to students in K-16. Deadline: rolling.

Lowe's Toolbox for Education Improvement Project Grants

<http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/>

Grants of up to \$5,000 will be awarded to K-12 public schools and affiliated parent groups working to improve school facilities and encourage parent involvement and community spirit in their local schools. Funded by the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation, these awards support school improvement projects at K-12 public schools in the United States. Preferred are funding requests that have a permanent impact such as facility enhancement (both indoor and outdoor), and landscaping/cleanup projects, as well as projects that encourage parent involvement and build stronger community spirit, such as reading gardens, vegetable gardens, physical fitness areas, school landscaping projects, school nature trails, parent involvement centers, peer tutoring centers, playgrounds, and rotating student art exhibits. (Grant money cannot be used to pay for memorials, stipends, salaries, artists in residence, field trips, scholarships, or third-party funding.) Grant requests must be between \$2,000 and \$5,000 per school. Deadline for submitting applications for the fall 2012 grant cycle: October 12, 2012. (However, if 1,500 or more applications are received before the deadline, then the application process will close.)

MetLife/NASSP: National Principal of the Year

<http://www.nassp.org/Awards-and-Recognition/Principal-of-the-Year>

The MetLife/National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) National Principal of the Year honors secondary school principals who have provided high-quality learning opportunities for students and demonstrated exemplary contributions to the profession. Maximum award: \$5,000. Eligibility: any principal, headmaster, or leader of a public or private middle-level or high school from the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, or the U.S. Department of State Office of Overseas Schools. Middle-level and high schools are defined as those containing some portion of grades 6 through 12; candidates must have been principals for three years or longer. Each candidate must be a principal (or headmaster) and member of NASSP and his or her state affiliate association at the time of selection as state principal of the year. For national finalists, these conditions must also be met at the time of national principal of the year interviews in August and at the national winner announcements in September. Deadline: varies by state; see website.

NASSP/Virco: Assistant Principle of the Year

<http://www.nassp.org/Awards-and-Recognition/Assistant-Principal-of-the-Year>

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)/Virco, Inc., National Assistant Principal of the Year program recognizes outstanding middle-level and high school assistant principals who have demonstrated success in leadership, curriculum, and personalization. Maximum award: \$5,000. Eligibility: any assistant principal or equivalent (e.g., vice principal, associate principal, or dean) of a public or private middle school or high school who has been an assistant principal at one or more middle-level or high schools for a minimum of two years and is a member of NASSP and their state affiliate association. Deadline: varies by state; see website.

National Science Teachers Association Awards for Excellence in Inquiry-Based Science Teaching

<http://www.nsta.org/about/awards.aspx?lid=tnavhp#delta>

The Delta Education/Frey-Neo/CPO Science Awards for Excellence in Inquiry-based Science Teaching will recognize and honor three full-time PreK-12 teachers of science who successfully use inquiry-based science to enhance teaching and learning in their classroom. Maximum award: \$1,500 towards expenses to attend the NSTA National Conference, and \$1,500 for the awardee. Eligibility: PreK-12 teachers of science. Deadline: November 30, 2012.

Project Ignition Grants to be Available

<http://www.sfprojectignition.com/>

Car crashes are the number one cause of death for adolescents. "Project Ignition" brings together students, teachers and communities to create change and save lives. The National Youth Leadership Council® and State Farm® have announced the availability of \$2,000 Project Ignition grants to public high schools to address teen driver safety through service-learning. Information on past projects and tips on how to apply are provided on the website. Deadline for applications: November 15, 2012.

AIAA Foundation: Grants for Excellence in Math, Science, Technology, and Engineering

<https://www.aiaa.org/Secondary.aspx?id=4184>

American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Foundation Classroom Grants encourage excellence in educating students about math, science, technology, and engineering. Eligibility: current AIAA Educator Associate or AIAA Professional members actively engaged as K-12 classroom educators. Maximum award: \$200. Deadline: rolling.

CVS Grants

<http://info.cvscaremark.com/community/our-impact/community-grants>

The CVS Caremark Community Grants Program focuses on inclusive programs and programs for children with disabilities under age 21; academic and enrichment programs at public schools; and programs that provide access to quality health care services and health education for at-risk and underserved populations of all ages. Grants of up to \$5,000 go to organizations that have a CVS in the area. Application deadline: October 31, 2012.

NCTM: Improving Students' Understanding of Geometry Grants

<http://www.nctm.org/resources/content.aspx?id=1324>

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Improving Students' Understanding of Geometry grant is to develop activities that will enable students to better appreciate and understand some aspect of geometry that is consistent with the Principles and Standards for School Mathematics of NCTM. The project should include applications of geometry to art, literature, music, architecture, nature, or some other relevant area, and may integrate the use of technology into the teaching of geometry. Proposals must address: geometry content, the appropriateness of the application, the link between the Geometry Standard and the project's activities, and the anticipated impact on students' learning. Maximum award: \$4,000. Eligibility: teachers preK-8 who are NCTM members as of October 15, 2012, or teach at a school with a preK-8 NCTM school membership as of October 15, 2012. Deadline: November 9, 2012.

NCTM: Using Mathematics to Teach Music

<http://www.nctm.org/resources/content.aspx?id=1318>

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) offers Using Mathematics to Teach

Music grants to encourage the incorporation of music into the elementary school classroom to help young students learn mathematics. Any acquisition of equipment must support the proposed plan but not be the primary focus of the grant. Proposals must address: the combining of mathematics and music; the plan for improving students' learning of mathematics; and the anticipated impact on students' achievement. Maximum award: \$3,000. Eligibility: individual classroom teachers or small groups of teachers currently teaching mathematics in grades PreK-2 level who are also (as of October 15, 2012) Full Individual or e-Members of NCTM or teach in a school with a current (as of October 15, 2012) NCTM PreK-8 school membership. Deadline: November 9, 2012.

Nestlé USA: Very Best in Youth Program

<http://verybestinyouth.nestleusa.com/About/Default.aspx>

The Nestlé USA Very Best in Youth Program honors young people ages 13-18 who have excelled in school and who are making their community and the world a better place. Maximum award: \$1,000. Eligibility: youth ages 13 and 18 years of age who demonstrate good citizenship, a strong academic record, and can show how they have made a special contribution to their school, church, or the community. Entrants must have permission from a parent or legal guardian to submit nomination. Deadline: November 8, 2012.

Humane Society of the United States: Education Mini-Grant

http://www.humanesociety.org/parents_educators/award/humane_education_mini_grant.html

The Humane Society of the United States is accepting applications for the 2012 Humane Education Mini-Grant, to fund innovative humane education opportunities in K-12 classrooms. Maximum award: \$1,000. Eligibility: all certified K-12 teachers in the U.S. Deadline: November 30, 2012.

Target Launches \$5 Million Giving Competition with “Ellen DeGeneres Show”

<http://ellen.warnerbros.com/schoolgiving/>

Target will distribute \$5 million in grants of \$100,000 each to elementary and secondary schools recommended by viewers of the “Ellen DeGeneres Show,” as part of its pledge to distribute \$1 billion in support of education by the end of 2015. To participate, viewers must submit through the show’s Web site the name of a school that needs help and a compelling story that explains why the school should receive a grant. From those submissions, Target will select fifty schools to receive a grant, which can be used for new books, upgraded technology, and other efforts designed to improve the school's learning environment. In addition, two schools will be featured on the “Ellen DeGeneres Show.” No deadline for application listed.

Fund for Teachers: Grants

<http://www.fundforteachers.org/about-us.php>

The Fund for Teachers provides funds for direct grants to teachers to support summer learning opportunities of their own design. Maximum award: \$5,000. Eligibility: teachers who work with students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12, with a minimum of three years teaching experience, full-time, spending at least 50 percent of the time in the classroom at the time grants are approved and made. Deadline: varies by state.

Open Society Foundations’ Youth Initiative Seeks Proposals to Curate Web Pages at Youthpolicy.org

<http://www.youthpolicy.org/blog/2011/09/call-for-curation-proposals/>

The Open Society Foundations’ Youth Initiative seeks proposals from NGOs for up to \$10,000

to develop and curate thematic pages on Youthpolicy.org, an online youth portal and community. The Web site aims to consolidate knowledge and information on youth policies across the world. Potential themes for Web site pages:, Participation and Citizenship, Activism and Volunteering, Children and Youth Rights, Global Drug Policy, Community Work, Research and Knowledge, Informal Learning, Environment and Sustainability, Multiculturalism and Minorities, Justice, etc. Proposals must outline how the theme will be addressed, how content will be produced on a regular basis, how and how many contributing authors and bloggers will be involved, and how users interested in the theme will be driven to and engaged at the site. Organizations seeking funding must be registered NGOs. Grants will not be made to individuals or for-profit entities. Proposals must be submitted in English and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Best Buy: Teach @15 Award

http://www.bestbuy-communityrelations.com/teach_awards.htm

The Teach@15 Award program improves classroom learning by helping schools (grades 7-12) meet their technology needs. A teen member (age 13-18) who is a registered member on www.at15.com can nominate his/her school to win a Teach@15 Award. Maximum award: \$1,500 in the form of Best Buy Gift Cards. Eligibility: accredited, nonprofit junior or senior public, private, parochial, magnet, and charter high schools in the U.S. serving any grades 7-12. Deadline: ongoing.

NEA Foundation and Consortium for School Networking Invite Ideas for Mobile Phone Education Innovations

<http://tinyurl.com/28vmvu5>

The NEA Foundation's newest C2i challenge, conducted in partnership with the Consortium for School Networking, is inviting ideas for mobile phone technology that can transform teaching and learning. The foundation will award grants of \$1,000 to as many as five individuals who post the best ideas on the C2i page at the U.S. Department of Education's Open Innovation Portal. The solutions selected will be shared by the NEA Foundation and CoSN via multiple outlets. The C2i challenge is open to public school educators, students, and others with an interest in improving public education. Proposed solutions must effectively incorporate smart phones or cell phones. Portal registrants can also review, comment, and vote on the posted solutions.

AIAA Foundation: Grants for Excellence in Math, Science, Technology and Engineering

<http://www.aiaa.org/content.cfm?pageid=244>

American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Foundation Classroom Grants encourage excellence in educating students about math, science, technology, and engineering. Eligibility: current AIAA Educator Associate or AIAA Professional members actively engaged as K-12 classroom educators. Maximum award: \$200. Deadline: rolling.

USGA/Alliance: Grants for the Good of the Game

http://www.accessgolf.org/grants/alliance_grants.cfm

The National Alliance for Accessible Golf (Alliance) and the United States Golf Association (USGA), believing golf should be open to everyone, support a wide variety of programs that create opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate in the sport. They especially encourage inclusive programming – opportunities that allow participants with disabilities and participants without disabilities to learn and play the game side by side. Maximum award: \$20,000. Eligibility: tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations as defined under Section 501(c)3 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code or government entities such as public schools or municipalities. Deadline: rolling.

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Book Review: Teach Like Your Hair's On Fire: The Methods and Madness Inside Room 56

By Heather Johnson, Florida International University

Abstract

Rafe Esquith is a teacher that has truly found his calling. It may seem impossible or somewhat of a hopeless situation to reach disadvantaged young minds, but Esquith has broken all boundaries and leaped vicissitudes by teaching and motivating these children. He teaches of the morality behind doing what is right and hard work ethic. Well known and recognized for his work, Rafe Esquith is the first teacher in history to earn the National Medal of Arts. In this book *Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire*, he writes of his experiences and actual modality of being able to engage his fifth grade students in completing literature, algebra, sports and economics (to name a few). His tone and shameless self-promotion makes this a truly inspiring great read for any teacher or parent.

Upon reading the introduction to Esquith's *Teach Like Your Hair's On Fire*, one would consider that the content seems a bit fictional: A teacher who claims to have the key to transforming inner city children that are circumvent to poverty and turbulence, to children that are voluntarily coming to class early and stay late for the sake of learning. Upon teaching by the rule to "be nice and work hard", many of his fifth grade children (that started off without a promising future) grew up to abscond to college/higher education and become successful adults (Esquith, 2007). Rafe Esquith is a fifth grade elementary teacher that has surpassed his devoir as a teacher with adulation and passion. This is a teacher who decided to go above and beyond the curricula and really dedicate himself to making a difference in his children's lives. He did not adhere to the typical schedule of an elementary school teacher. Even after twenty two years of work experience, he came into work early every day and stayed late in the evening in order to cover the material effectively with the kids such as art, physical fitness, mathematics, and literature to name a few. This makes Esquith a rare individual who believes in the *value* of work. When questioned about work ethic in an interview in 2007, he responded: "If you're a great cook, spend part of your day cooking with the children, and if you love the *Chronicles of Narnia*, then read that with your children even if it isn't part of the prescribed reading text of your school" (Edwards 2007).

Affixed to writing his book, Rafe Esquith did not intend to set forth a "how to" or a book of "tips", but simply to write of his experiences which is highly modest considering the awards and accomplished reputation. What is also quite modest and humble about the content of this book is that it all takes place in a quarter that seems hopeless and deplorable at the sight. Rafe Esquith's class takes place in a run-down and leaky small classroom that sits in the public squalor of Los

Angeles, surrounded by impoverishment. In a setting such as this one, most teachers feel burn out and have basically lost hope on trying to get through to the kids. Rafe Esquith is the exception as he sat and thought to himself if it was all worth it. Upon feeling inspired, he decided to put one hundred percent effort and apply himself to reaching and really teaching in a different manner, even if it defies the school's schema.

This is when ordinary teaching methods were no longer going to be used; Esquith came up with his own techniques to engage the students into the curriculum. He started off the school year by first introducing the concept of morality. According to Lawrence Kohlberg and the six stages of development, the human species does not usually grasp morality and abstract thinking until the estimate ages after fifth grade, and Eureka! Esquith was able to do so with this age group by teaching them to avoid trouble and to do so just because it was the *right* thing to do. Esquith adjusted these concepts to their age group by using demonstrations, with movies such as *To Kill a Mocking Bird* and *The Shawshank Redemption*. Instead of lecturing the kids on how to solve a problem, he gave them interdependent techniques to do so, such as drawing out a Venn Diagram, working backwards, or making a chart. This is the type of book that should be read by all teachers; not only is it written based off of award-winning techniques, but it is truly inspiring.

References

Esquith, R. (2007). *Teach like your hair's on fire: The methods and madness inside room 56*. New York City: the Penguin Group.

Interview of Rafe Esquith by Bob Edwards, "Bob Edwards Weekend Hour 2: Part 3 of our series on education reform, featuring teachers, after school programs, and educational researchers" (from about 00:40 to about 13:40 in the podcast), September 4, 2009 broadcast (but the interview is a rebroadcast, originally broadcast two years before, according to the program), Bob Edwards Show website, retrieved September 5, 2009

Let Them Read with You: Support for the Inclusion of Children with Autism in Classroom Reading Programs

By: Lola Gordon, Ed.S

Abstract

NCLB and IDEA support the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classroom reading programs. Yet children with moderate disabilities such as autism are most often receiving their reading instruction outside of the regular classroom in a resource room. While the benefits of allowing children with autism to learn to read alongside typical peers are abundant, it is a difficult task to undertake, and many professionals are still confused and reluctant to begin the process. Research has been done to show that with the proper supports children with autism can have a positive experience not just participating in the regular classroom for their reading instruction, but in being provided the opportunity to have rich and meaningful experiences with real literature, not just memorizing sight words. Children with autism are as alike and different as other children, and they need to be given the same opportunities as other children with the proper supports.

The topic of including children with disabilities in classroom reading programs with typical peers is not new. NCLB and IDEA have focused their attention to scientifically-researched based practices for all children, including children with disabilities, when planning reading instruction, and there has been increasing encouragement and acceptance by many to increase the amount of time children with disabilities spend learning alongside their typical peers. But does this encouragement apply to children with more moderate disabilities like autism when it comes to reading instruction, or is this population of children still receiving the majority of their reading instruction in resource rooms, removed from the opportunity to learn what their peers are learning? And when these children do receive reading instruction in the classroom, are they being given the opportunity to become immersed in rich literature and literacy experiences, or are they relegated to memorizing sight words in the back of the classroom? As an educator who has spent the past twelve years studying and directly working with children with moderate to severe disabilities, particularly autism, I ask these questions because they still need to be asked. While public education has certainly become more accepting of and inviting to this population of children, I believe there still remains a great misunderstanding of the capabilities and strengths that these children can possess. They have been accepted into regular classrooms, but in many cases they have not yet been given the opportunities to demonstrate what they are truly capable of achieving. The term “life skills” is often used to describe the curriculum these children receive, but isn’t reading a life skill? Doesn’t the ability to read provide the strongest form of independence one can possess, particularly for those individuals who may have difficulty communicating in a typical fashion, common in the autistic community? As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, “what lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us”. Let’s help children with autism show what lies within them by giving them the opportunity to reach their potential as readers.

The task of teaching a child with autism to read is not an easy one. Many children with ASD (autistic spectrum disorder) also present with other disabilities or impairments that can make instructional planning in reading difficult, and sometimes confusing. Because of this confusion among those working with this population of children formal reading instruction is often put on the back-burner in favor of life-skills instruction. But the ability to read is a life-skill, and it is one that can foster independence in many other areas of life. So let's look at what can be done to help get these children on the path to reading. First, it is crucial to get the perspectives of the parents of children with ASD. The parents of children with ASD typically have the most insight when it comes their own child's unique learning needs and styles, and can provide a great deal of information that can assist professionals in determining what children with ASD can do well, and where their gaps may be (Austin). Finding out what types of books and about which topics a child is interested in will be imperative in determining how to provide instruction that will be meaningful and motivating. The proper teaching approach will make all of the difference, and when a child's particular interests and strengths can be capitalized upon the more chance of success exists (Miller-Wilson).

Some helpful attributes regarding children with ASD will be helpful to keep in mind when beginning to plan instruction. Children with autism often have particular interest areas, and gathering objects and reading materials about an interest area is a good place to begin with instruction. Also, children with ASD often suffer from sensory processing issues that can interfere with instruction due to the fact that a child may be unable to filter out extraneous information such as noises, other's talking, etc. This overload of sensory information can lead to some of the stereotypical behaviors seen in children with ASD, such as hand-flapping or rocking, which is one of the challenges of providing reading instruction in the regular classroom. Because classrooms can be busy and sometimes noisy places, especially during activities such as Reader's Workshop, children with ASD will need the support of professionals to help them focus on the tasks they are presented with. While a sensory-neutral space with low noise and limited visual stimulation is best for children with ASD to focus, there are ways to create that type of atmosphere in the regular classroom so that learning alongside typical peers can take place. Choosing the proper materials to use during instruction is also crucial for success. While children with ASD may not be able to follow the typical curriculum at the same pace as their peers, there are ways to use the materials that the rest of the class is using to provide reading instruction for children with ASD. A key component to providing effective instruction for all learners, not just children with disabilities, is to identify the learning style that best suits each individual child. Whether it is visual, auditory, or kinesthetic type learning an approach can be found that properly suits each child. This should be done for all children in the classroom, and understanding that the particular accommodations that are discussed as means to help children with ASD succeed in reading are also appropriate approaches that should be used with all learners will be extremely important. Educators will find it beneficial to see the correlation between what are considered to be accommodations for children with disabilities and what are considered just good teaching practices. Computer programs and other types of technologies can be very effective for children with ASD, and these types of programs are readily being used with all children to support reading instruction in the classroom. A study published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* reported that children with autism get much enjoyment from computer-based reading instruction. Working alongside a "buddy" on a computer-based reading program is one specific way that children with ASD can be integrated with their peers for reading instruction. While the specific methods that are used to help integrate children with autism are abundant and varied, ultimately the most successful reading programs and the most successful professionals are the ones that capitalize on each child's unique set of interests and learning style. All children, not just children with autism, have

strengths and challenges, and understanding that fact can make providing instruction for children with ASD in the classroom a little bit more achievable.

A review of the literature shows that many children with autism can, with the proper instructional methods, become very skilled at decoding, but tend to struggle with comprehension. Without comprehension, reading has no purpose. Making the shift from reading for process to reading for understanding is a stage in which even fluent readers can be challenged (Randi, Newman & Griorenko, 2010). Children with ASD, though generally demonstrate well-developed word recognition and decoding skills with proper instruction tend to struggle with comprehension, likely due to the communication and social skills deficits they display. Expository texts appear to be easier for children with ASD to comprehend as opposed to narrative texts, as these children often have difficulties with the pragmatic aspects of language and process language better when factual, concrete information is presented to them. One main difficulty with including children with ASD for reading instruction and fostering comprehension is that many classroom teachers do not focus on explicitly teaching comprehension strategies. Children with ASD benefit, as do many non-disabled children, from direct instruction of comprehension (Ganz & Flores, 2009).

Children with ASD, when they are present in the regular classroom during reading instruction are often excluded from rich and meaningful literacy experiences, such as storytelling, writing and dramatic play. They often follow a different curriculum and are often asked to perform “busy-work” such as practicing memorizing sight words while the rest of the class is getting exposure to real literature (Vacca, 2007). Why? There is no argument that children with ASD face many challenges when it comes to learning to read – including attention difficulties, lack of motivation and specific problems with decoding and/or comprehension.

While inclusion for reading can be difficult for all those involved, children with ASD can experience something incredibly stimulating and beneficial when learning alongside non-disabled peers. For educators and other professionals it requires a lot of time and patience to try and reach this population of students on their level, but every child should be given the opportunity to learn to read in an authentic manner. Children with ASD benefit from peer mediated instruction and peer tutoring that helps develop their social and communication skills with children their own age rather than only interacting with adults in a resource room. With the proper supports being part of a classroom community helps children with ASD reach their fullest potential, and when these children are learning alongside their non-disabled peers a sense of belonging can develop, and other children in the classroom learn to accept and embrace differences (NAEYC, 2009).

Children with ASD are as alike and different from each other as typical children. Just as non-disabled children have unique strengths and needs when it comes to reading instruction, so do children with ASD. There are many challenges to teaching a child with ASD to read alongside his/her peers, and while it may not be completely appropriate or achievable for all children in this population, the willingness to try, and provide every opportunity available needs to be present. While most children with ASD tend to prefer working alone, it is important to help them gain exposure and realize the positive aspects of interacting with their peers in a learning environment. When children with ASD are not in school they are expected to function and be part of a non-segregated world. So why, when they are in school do many feel that their instruction should be segregated? Let’s help these children experience what it is like to be integrated in all aspects of their lives, not just their lives outside of school. It is challenging, and as somebody who has been teaching children with disabilities in both segregated and non-segregated settings for many years I feel that a push toward more inclusion as much as is

appropriate can be a positive experience for all who are involved. And when it comes to teaching children with ASD to read, let's provided every opportunity we can to help them achieve this very important life-skill.

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Lola Gordon has been an educator to children with special needs for the past twelve years. She has worked with children in both public and private school settings, and has taught some of the most severely impacted populations of special needs students, having done extensive work with children with autism. In addition to being an educator Lola is also an accomplished musician, and has been playing the flute since age 6. She received her Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Western Connecticut State University. Shortly after beginning her teaching career she realized that working with children with special needs was where she belonged, and she then returned to school to earn her Master's degree in Special Education from the University of Connecticut. After spending many years involved in education she took a break from full-time teaching to raise her daughter, who is now 3 years old. While on break from teaching Lola returned to the University of Connecticut to earn a Sixth Year degree in Reading. She is actively researching and writing on the topic of providing effective and appropriate reading instruction for children with special needs. Lola is currently an adjunct faculty member at Manchester Community College in Manchester, CT, teaching courses in the Disability Specialist program.

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