



Center for the Study of Education Policy (CSEP)

- **District #87 Selects Coordinator for District #87/Illinois State University partnership for IL-PART U.S. Department of Education Grant** - The Bloomington Pantagraph published an article yesterday on the selection of Mary Kay Scharf to coordinate the district/university partnership work to occur between Bloomington School District and Illinois State University as a result of a new U.S. DOE School Leadership Grant. Read more [here](#).



Early Childhood Education

- **What to Look for in a High Quality Preschool** - While increasing access is an important first step toward preschool, research is also emphasizing the importance of quality. Given these findings the government is "ramping up its efforts to make high quality preschools available to more children." Research and early childhood experts at the American Institutes for Research discuss in this article questions everyone should ask when looking at a preschool. Read more [here](#).
- **Primeros Pasos: Strengthening programs that support Illinois infants and toddlers** - A new paper on Latino infants and toddlers in Illinois, this October titled "Primeros Pasos" highlights the disparity in access for Latino infants and toddlers and points to the areas for improvement especially in culturally and linguistically responsive services and workforce as a response to growing numbers. Thorough analysis of existing data is balanced with vignettes from the field to further illustrate recommendations put forth by the report. Read more [here](#).



K-12 Education

- **From Early Childhood to High School, What Predicts Postsecondary Success** - Intended to help policymakers and educators identify qualities that predict postsecondary success, this brief summarizes research on the subject from early childhood to high school. At the lower levels, predictors mostly leapfrogged to achievement at higher levels - for example, kindergarten readiness correlating with 3rd grade reading proficiency. At the high school level, there were numerous indicators and predictors reflecting a breadth of research. Read more [here](#).
- **Minority Students Make up New Majority in Illinois Public Schools** - New enrollment numbers show that Illinois' public school system for the first time does not have a white majority, with Latino, black, Asian, and other racial groups combined eclipsing white students across the state's classrooms. Read more [here](#).

- **High School Programs and Dual Credit** - Obtaining college credit at no cost is imperative, especially when local, state and national officials are mandating that more students attend college and obtain a degree without incurring debt. In 2012, 8.9 percent, or 7,745 of the 86,969 students entering college, enrolled with college credit (Ohio Board of Regents). "All of us agree that we need to have a system to increase opportunities across the state of Ohio, especially to those who traditionally not consider college," Stephanie Davidson, vice chancellor for academic affairs, told the regents. "We need to require everyone to participate. It is appropriate for colleges to accept students according to their own admission standards. And the funding has to be transparent and equitable. We need to acknowledge that in the cost structure the high school should be able to retain some money." Read more [here](#).
- **One in 10 Students in U.S. Schools is an English Language Learner** - The latest issue of the Progress of Education Reform explores the research and data underscoring the urgency of better serving the growing English-language learner (ELL) population and highlights research approaches that may inform state responses. In the 2010-11 school year, approximately 4.7 million public school students - nearly one in 10 students in U.S. public schools - were ELLs. In eight states, ELLs comprised 10% or more of the public school population, with 29% of California's public school students being English-language learners. Read more [here](#).
- **Why Teachers of Color Quit** - Several recent articles - "Why Do Teachers Quit?," "I Quit for Teach for America," "I Almost Quit Teach for America" - raised reasonable concerns about the difficulties of teaching in predominantly black and Latino, low-income communities: the inadequate training, the poor classroom conditions, the inability to maintain work - life balance. "Yet as I read these articles, I realized they still had not discussed some of the specific struggles I encountered as a teacher of color." Read more [here](#).
- **The Road to Equity: Expanding AP access and success for African-American students** - In most school districts, as access to and participation in Advanced Placement exams have gone up, the exam passing rates have gone down. This however, isn't always the case. The Eli and Edy Broad Foundation, looking to identify urban districts with promising trends in student achievement and college readiness, analyzed four years of AP exam participation and passing rates for students in 75 districts whose demographics qualify them for consideration for the annual Broad Prize for Urban Education. It found six districts where African-American students were improving their passing rates while keeping participation levels steady. This report illustrates some of the promising practices contributing to AP success in these six districts. See report [here](#).
- **Rethinking 12th Grade: Preparing all students for college before college** - Seven states and the District of Columbia have implemented initiatives for transition to college courses in high school: Florida, ILLINOIS, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia, according to this brief. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) is working with its 16 member states to embrace a college-readiness agenda and has developed model transition courses available online to everyone. For example, Tennessee offers a bridge math course, which this year is expanding to 9,000 students who will then be eligible to take a tuition-free math class for dual credit. Read more [here](#).



Teacher and Leadership Effectiveness

- **Encouraging Teacher Leaders to Become Principals** - According to *Building Pathways*, a new report by Chris Bierly and Eileen Shay, "schools systems need to move from leaving great leadership to chance to strategically building an internal pipeline of new leaders." More than 80 percent of teachers and 75 percent of teacher leaders nationally indicate they aren't likely to pursue the principal role. Bierly and Shay outline in their report the challenges to creating a school leadership pipeline and offers a road map for system leaders to establish new standards, practices, and management structures to meet the challenges. Read more [here](#).
- **Evaluating School Principals: From the statehouse to the schoolhouse** - Here the recorded podcast from a webinar that takes an in-depth look at how a state and large urban district are working together to evaluate and support principals, with particular attention to supporting principals as evaluators of teachers. Read more [here](#).



Common Core Standards

- **Future of the ACT test** - Be ready for the student in your house to be talking about PARCC and not ISAT. Illinois is moving to what's billed as a better indicator of readiness, the multi-state Partnership for Assessment for College and Careers test. "PARCC is designed to show growth and to better drive instruction," says Illinois public school superintendent Christopher Koch. "That's different than what ACT's doing for us currently." Read more [here](#).
- **Implementing the common Core Standards: The Role of The Elementary School Leader** - "As shown by MetLife's 2010 *Survey of the American Teacher*, American's educators strong believe that all students should graduate from high school ready for college and a career (85%)." The new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are strongly aligned with those statements. For CCSS to be implemented effectively to achieve the intended outcomes, principals, teachers, and other educators must have adequate supports and guidance. As Gail Connelly, Executive Director of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), stated, "Principals and teachers must have access to the essential professional development opportunities they need to fully implement the common Core, to transition to rigorous standards that strengthen teaching and learning, and to develop effective strategies that engage families and communities in schools." Read the brief [here](#).
- **A Primer on Common Core-Aligned Assessments: What is this Primer and Who Should Use it?** - This primer on Common Core assessment is for state policymakers, advocates, educators, and other stakeholders who are transitioning to new assessments. Comparisons are made with current state tests, ACT Aspire, PARCC and SBAC (Education First). Read more [here](#).
- **Survey: Principles Prioritize Common Core, but Report Lack of Readiness** - America's school principals overwhelmingly have put the rollout of the Common Core

State Standards at the top of their agenda, but the vast majority also say they are not adequately prepared to manage both the budgeting and the overall shift in instruction that is demanded by the new learning goals in English/language arts and mathematics. Read more [here](#) about the article.

- **NEA and BetterLesson Launch New Site with Over 3,000 Common Core Lessons** - The National Education Association ([NEA](#)) and [BetterLesson](#) launched a [new website](#) that has been built entirely for the Common Core State Standards and features the lessons of over 130 master teachers who represent K-12 grades for math and English language arts and literacy.
- **The Common Core Shifts** - This [new video presented by Student Achievement Partners](#) focuses on the Common Core shifts in mathematics. This 5-minute video addresses how the math standards push teachers to significantly narrow and deepen the way time and energy is spent in the math classroom rather than racing to cover topics in a mile-wide, inch-deep curriculum.
- **The National PTA Parents' Guide to New Assessments in Illinois** - The guide includes background on the standards, information about PARCC, Illinois' assessment consortium, the testing timeline, sample test questions, impacts on students, new accountability systems and ways for parents to get involved and support their child's learning at home. To access the guide, click [here](#).
- **PowerUp WHAT WORKS website** – This new web site offers free customizable resources to improve teaching and learning for struggling students and those with disabilities, including Instructional Strategy Guides for English Language Arts and Math, grab and go resources to help struggling students meet the Common Core State Standards, and a Technology Implementation Guide to integrate technology into the classroom. To access the web site, click [here](#).



Higher Education

- **Higher Education Accountability** - The Obama administration has published a notice in the Federal Register asking for technical expertise as the Department of Education comes up with a Postsecondary Institution Ratings System (PIRS). To assess the performance of colleges, the department is inviting ideas about data elements and metrics to be included, methods of data collection, and ways to weigh the factors in the ratings. Read more [here](#).
- **Public-University Group Offers Alternative to Obama's College-Rating Plan** – The Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities is recommending that rather than rate colleges, the Obama administration should hold them accountable through expanded disclosures and tightened standards for receiving federal student aid. The association [suggested](#) three measures that might be used: retention and graduation rates; employment and continuing-education rates; and loan-repayment and default rates.
- **A New Gallup Survey will Measure the Value of a Degree, Beyond Salary** - A new initiative from Gallup and Purdue University strives to go beyond salaries and employment status, especially on the intangibles, in measuring the return on an investment in a college degree. The Gallup Purdue Index, supported by Lumina

Foundation, will survey adult college graduates to find out how the graduates perceive the effect of college on their careers and quality of life. Read more [here](#).

- **New Approach to Transfer** - "A group of 16 public institutions in four Western states have agreed to a transfer agreement based on what students know rather than on courses they have taken or the credits they have earned." The Interstate Passport Initiative, is a set of "mutually agreed-upon learning outcomes for lower division courses in the general education core. Read more [here](#).
- **Comprehensive on Completion** - Maryland's public colleges are working to comply with one of the nation's most ambitious college completion bills. High schools must test students on their college readiness before they finish their junior years and create "transition" courses for students who are deemed unprepared. Public colleges must require students to complete at least one non-remedial math and English course as part of their first 24 credits. Read more [here](#).
- **Progress: Teachers, Leaders and Students Transforming Education** - To get more students ready for college and careers, Kentucky is expanding access to advanced placement for low-income students. During its first five years of implementation, Advance Kentucky has been a driving force in Kentucky's statewide 100 percent increase in total AP qualifying scores, among the largest gains of any state in the country. The program began in 2008 with 12 schools. Kentucky's partnership in Race to the Top (RTTT), which focuses on college and career-readiness, allowed the state to scale this AP initiative growing to 88 schools around the state. Advance Kentucky reached 43 percent of public schools in the state by 2013-14. Read more [here](#).



Events and Opportunities

- **New Erikson President Named** - Geoffrey A. Nagle, a leader in early childhood policy and research, has been named president and CEO of Erikson Institute, effective January 1, 2014. "Geoff is an innovative 21st century leader who will help guide Erikson and the entire early childhood field to new levels of influence and impact," says Kate Neisser, chair of the Board of Trustees and member of the search committee. "His presidency will build on Erikson's history of leadership, while also extending its entrepreneurialism in the service of children and families." More information [here](#).
- **The Promise of Universities in School Reform Webinar** – On January 31st, 2:00 – 3:00 pm central time, a webinar will be held by the Anchor Institutions Task Force, Netter Center for Community Partnerships, and Coalition for Community Schools at the Institute for Educational Leadership, that features case studies on the role of various higher education institutions in support schools.

Speakers Include:

- Dr. Ira Harkavy, Associate Vice President and Director, Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, PA)
- Dr. Henry Taylor, Founding Director, Center for Urban Studies, University of Buffalo (Buffalo, NY)
- Dr. Mary Walsh, Department Director, Boston College Center for Optimized Student Support, Boston College (Boston, MA)

- Dr. Robert Kronick, Director of University-Assisted Community Schools, University of Tennessee Knoxville (Knoxville, TN)

[Please click here to register for this webinar.](#) Questions about the webinar can be directed to Reuben Jacobson at jacobsonr@iel.org or 202 822 8405 ext 131.

- **Wallace Webinar: From Partnerships to Professional Learning Communities** - On February 3rd from 2-3 p.m., UCEA is proud to bring to offer a webinar highlighting the formation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for principal preparation programs. Many educational leadership programs have or are developing partnerships with local schools and districts in an effort to increase the relevancy of their preparation programs to the particular needs of local educational communities. Members of the Wallace Preparation Provider PLC argue that we need more than partnerships, however. They argue that we need professional learning communities. Click [here](#) to register for the webinar.
- **Engaging Parents as Partners in Common Core Math** – On Friday, January 31, a face to face meeting will be held at the Chicago History Museum (1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago) from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on engaging parents on the common core standards. Click [here](#) to register for the event.