Volume 10, Issue 11, December 2015

A monthly educational administration e-newsletter, keeping you linked and us green.

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Amy Reynolds, Angel Nash, & Gopal Midha
UCEA Headquarters Graduate Research Assistants

UCEA Mission Statement

UCEA is a consortium of higher education institutions committed to advancing the preparation and practice of educational leaders for the benefit of schools and children.

We fulfill this purpose by:
• Promoting, sponsoring, and disseminating research on the essential problems of schooling and leadership practice;
• Improving the preparation and professional development of educational leaders and professors; and,
• Positively influencing local, state, and national educational policy.
2015 UCEA Convention at a Glance

Thank you to ALL for making this year’s convention a success!

- 1 city
- 3 days
- 21 different countries
- 33 Individual Gifts
- 81 JSN Runners
- 99 Member Institutions
- 117 School Site Visitors
- 272 Sessions
- 327 Graduate Students
- 864 Attendees

Happy holidays from all of us at UCEA Headquarters!
We look forward to seeing you in Detroit, MI next November!

Save the Date
November 17-20, 2016

UCEA 2016
Detroit, Michigan
2016 UCEA Award Recipients

UCEA is dedicated to the promotion and encouragement of educational leaders whose efforts create excellence within the educational leadership community. Each year UCEA recognizes those individuals who have made significant contributions toward the advancement, preparation, and practice of educational leaders. UCEA is proud to announce this year’s award winners for the following awards:

Roald F. Campbell Lifetime Achievement Award
Gary M. Crow—Indiana University

Jack A Culbertson Award
Anjalé D. Welton—University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

UCEA Master Professor Award
Gail C. Furman—Washington State University-Spokane

Jay D. Scribner Mentoring Award
Betty Malen—University of Maryland

Paula Silver Case Award
Matthew M. Kaiser—Metropolitan School District of Washington Township
Kesha M. Seitz—Metropolitan School District of Mount Vernon
Elizabeth A. Walters—Metropolitan School district of Perry Township

JRLE Best Article Award
Chad R. Lochmiller—Indiana University

Distinguished Service Award
Michele Acker-Hocevar—Washington State University-Spokane
Gail C. Furman—Washington State University-Spokane
Liz Hollingworth—University of Iowa
Edwin M. Bridges Award
Margaret Terry Orr—Bank Street College of Education
Allan Walker—Hong Kong Institute of Education

The UCEA Awards program is made possible by the thoughtful nominations of our members. Who do you know that deserves to be nominated? Watch for the call for nominations early in 2016!
2016 WILLIAM L. BOYD NATIONAL EDUCATION POLITICS WORKSHOP

Sponsored by the Politics of Education Association and the University Council for Educational Administration

UCEA and the Politics of Education Association are pleased to invite your participation in the 2016 William L. Boyd National Education Politics Workshop for emerging scholars. At this time we are accepting registrations for both scholars and mentors.

Call for Emerging Scholars
(students and new academics/researchers)

The Politics of Education Association and the University Council for Educational Administration invite graduate students and recent doctoral graduates to a special 2 1/2-hour workshop. The William L. Boyd National Educational Politics Workshop, scheduled on the first afternoon of the AERA annual meeting, will give emerging scholars (students and new academics/researchers) the opportunity to learn about current and promising research in the politics of education field and interact with leading politics of education scholars.

Registration—Emerging Scholars CLICK HERE

The Politics of Education Association was established in 1969 to foster and support research on political processes, policy, and outcomes relevant to education, to collect and disseminate data, research, and findings on politics of education to policy makers, practitioners, and scholars in the field of education and elsewhere, and to unite scholars, practitioners, policy makers, researchers, and others interested in the pursuit of research and development on educational politics, policy, and related issues.

Call for Mentors

The Politics of Education Association and the University Council for Educational Administration invite its members to serve as mentors to current doctoral students and/or recent doctoral graduates. The Boyd Workshop aims to connect doctoral students and recent graduates with mentors in order to share their expertise and experiences in the discipline. Please note that volunteering will require attendance at a 2 1/2 hour workshop held on the first afternoon of AERA’s annual meeting in Washington, DC. If you are interested in serving as a mentor, please complete the electronic form found at the link below—even if you have served as a mentor at previous Boyd Workshops. Doing so confirms your willingness to serve as a mentor in Washington, DC in 2016.

Registration—Mentors CLICK HERE

When/Where: The workshop will take place on Friday, April 8th, 2016 from 3:30-6:00 pm at a location convenient to the AERA conference hotels.

Eligibility: Students with an interest in educational politics and currently enrolled in graduate schools in the U.S. or abroad are welcome to attend as are educational researchers who earned their doctoral degrees after March 1, 2015. There is no fee to attend, but space is limited. Applicants whose research interests are not clearly tied to education politics will not be accepted. The opportunity to submit an application will end January 17, 2016 at 5:00 pm or when we reach maximum capacity.

Questions: If you have any questions, please contact Dr. W. Kyle Ingle at william.ingle@louisville.edu or Dr. Dana Mitra at dmitra@psu.edu

UCEA Welcomes New Member Institutions

UCEA extends a warm welcome to our two newest Associate Member Institutions, East Carolina University and Rowan University!
2016 David L. Clark National Graduate Student Research Seminar in Education Administration and Policy

The Clark Seminar is co-sponsored by UCEA, Divisions A & L of AERA, and SAGE publications. It brings together promising graduate students and distinguished faculty for two days of generative academic dialogue. This year, it will be held in April 2016 in Washington, D.C., prior to the annual AERA conference. While students will be notified of selection soon, we are pleased to announce this year’s distinguished faculty mentors:

UCEA
- Sarah Nelson Baray, Texas State University
- Monica Byrne-Jimenez, Hofstra University
- Donald Hackmann, University of Illinois
- Wayne Lewis, University of Kentucky

AERA - Division A
- Terah Venzant Chambers, Michigan State University
- Terrance Green, University of Texas at Austin
- Hans Klar, Clemson University
- Penny Tenuto, University of Idaho

AERA – Division L
- Edward Fierros, Villanova University
- David Garcia, Arizona State University
- Luis Huerta, Columbia University
- Janelle Scott, University of California—Berkeley

Nominations Due Dec. 11 for Three American Council on Education Leadership Diversity Awards

Nominations are being accepted until Dec. 11 for three ACE awards honoring individuals or programs that work to diversify the ranks of higher education leadership.

The awards will be presented during ACE2016, AEC’s 98th Annual Meeting, scheduled for March 12-15 in San Francisco.

The Reginald Wilson Diversity Leadership Award honors individuals who have demonstrated leadership and commitment on a national level to the advancement of racial and ethnic minorities and other under-represented populations in higher education.

The Donna Shavlik Award recognizes an individual who has shown sustained and continuing commitment to women’s advancement in higher education through actions or initiatives enhancing women’s leadership and career development, campus climate and mentoring of women at both the state and national levels.

The ACE State Network Leadership Award for the Advancement of Women in Higher Education recognizes an outstanding and innovative program, sponsored by an ACE State Network or by a college or university, that helped advance or support women or women’s issues in higher education.

For more information about any of these awards, please email InclusiveExcellenceGroup@acenet.edu or call 202-939-9390.
AASA Released the Study of the American Superintendent: 2015 Mid-Decade Update

The School Superintendents Association, released the Study of the American Superintendent: 2015 Mid-Decade Update to follow up on The American School Superintendent: 2010 Decennial Study, a comprehensive study on the demographics, background and experiences of American school superintendents. This year’s report includes a supplementary section on gender and the superintendency. Some of the report’s key findings include:

- The pattern of an aging superintendency continues from the 2010 study; one-third of superintendents plan to retire within five years.
- While increases have been made throughout the years, females only make up 27 percent of the superintendency, up only 2 percent from 2010. This stands in direct contrast to the female-dominated teaching force.
- Superintendents most often see politics as inhibiting their performance, with school board members, staff and community as the greatest contributors.
- Career satisfaction remains high; over 80 percent of present superintendents would choose to be a superintendent again. This number is lower for female superintendents, at 78 percent.

This report will serve as an important benchmark as the superintendency changes. Data generated by our findings will help us as we focus on growing the next generation of school system leaders.

The report is available on the new my.aasa.org website here.

Online Course on Regenerative Leadership for Sustainable Development

Beginning November 1, a 4-week online course is available on Regenerative Leadership for Sustainable Development through the U.N.’s University for Peace (UPEACE) in Costa Rica. This is one of five classes of the U.N. Centre for Executive Education’s Diploma in Social Innovation.

The courses expectations and outcomes for participants to:

- Develop their leadership style as sustainability change agents.
- Gain a good grounding in the principles and definitions of sustainability and sustainable development.
- Understand and apply leadership and management frameworks that are strongly correlated to sustainability work, including the regenerative leadership framework.
- Acquired the knowledge and skills to design, lead, and manage successful regenerative projects in organizations and communities.

Should anyone wish additional information and to register, the link is: http://centre.upspace.org. Please share with those who could be interested.
ANNOUNCING THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL EMERGING SCHOLAR MANUSCRIPT COMPETITION

International Journal of Leadership in Education

FIRST PRIZE
• $500
• A year’s subscription to the International Journal of Leadership in Education
• Recognition at the IJLE’s Editorial Board meeting at AERA 2016
• Consideration of manuscript for publication

FINALIST EARLY FACULTY CATEGORY
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• A year’s subscription to the IJLE
• Recognition at the IJLE’s Editorial Board meeting at AERA 2016
• Consideration of manuscript for publication

FINALIST GRADUATE STUDENT CATEGORY
• $300
• A year’s subscription to the IJLE
• Recognition at the IJLE’s Editorial Board meeting at AERA 2016
• Consideration of manuscript for publication

CRITERIA
All work must be the author’s original research on any aspect of education that incorporates a leadership perspective and must incorporate/reference at least two IJLE articles published during 2002-2015. Manuscript must be submitted while author is enrolled in a graduate program or within the first two years of completion. Any submitted manuscript will be subject to blind review and may be considered for publication at a later date.

SUBMISSION
All manuscripts must be submitted no later than January 15th, 2016. Manuscripts must be submitted electronically via http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/tedl and should be designated as an ‘Emerging Scholar Competition’ type of manuscript. Please contact IJLE at ijle@txstate.edu for more information or inquiries.

www.tandfonline.com/tedl
UCEA would like to announce a new report for policy makers and professors of educational leadership.

Now available online.

The Policymaker’s Guide to Research-Based Policy for Principal Preparation Program Approval and Licensure explores code, rules and regulations, and State Board of Education documents for all 50 states and the District of Columbia and provides detailed state profiles as well as state-to-state comparisons of 9 policy areas and 22 sub standards that support the development of effective leaders.
20% discount with this flyer!

Education Policy Perils
Tackling the Tough Issues

Edited by Christopher H. Tienken, Seton Hall University, USA and Carol A. Mullen, Virginia Tech, USA

Education Policy Perils provides educators and those interested in the future of public education with research-based and practical analyses of some of the foremost issues facing public schools today. The collection, written by experienced scholar-practitioners, offers insights that include descriptions of challenges facing educators and recommendations for overcoming them with an eye toward more successful policy and better implementation. The authors apply their expertise to a range of issues from international testing to policy challenges related to curriculum on the state and national levels. This volume is a vital resource during a pivotal time of major changes in education policy.

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Leading for Urban School Reform and Community Development

By Terrance L. Green

Improving urban schools of color and the communities where they are located requires leadership that spans school and community boundaries. The purpose of this study is to understand how principal and community leader actions support urban school reform along with community development at two community schools in the urban Midwest and Southeast. Using a cross-case study design, this research draws on interviews, school–community observations, and document analysis. Concepts from community development leadership and cross-boundary leadership are joined to theoretically frame this study and guide the analysis. Data analysis was conducted using the constant comparative method.

Factors That Influence School Board Policy Making: The Political Context of Student Diversity in Urban-Suburban Districts

By Sarah Diem, Erica Frankenberg, & Colleen Cleary

This article examines factors that affect school board policy making about student diversity within two southern urban-suburban school districts experiencing changing demographics: Jefferson County Public Schools and the Wake County Public School System. Both districts have a history of voluntary integration efforts, and research shows that racially diverse countywide districts can make integration more feasible. However, as courts constrain mechanisms used in policies to establish/maintain racial integration, it is crucial to examine how school boards make policy decisions while navigating the politics of their communities and competing conceptions surrounding racial diversity. This study employed qualitative case study methods to understand under what circumstances school boards are creating policy, paying particular attention to the local sociopolitical and geographic contexts. Data collected consisted of 37 interviews with school district officials and community stakeholders. Mainstream and specialty media articles, legal documents, and policy documents from the districts or other governmental bodies also helped frame the local contexts.

Educating Amid Uncertainty: The Organizational Supports Teachers Need to Serve Students in High-Poverty, Urban Schools

By Matthew A. Kraft, John P. Papay, Susan Moore Johnson, Megin Charner-Laird, Monica Nguyen & Stefanie Reinborn

We examine how uncertainty, both about students and the context in which they are taught, remains a persistent condition of teachers’ work in high-poverty, urban schools. We describe six schools’ organizational responses to these uncertainties, analyze how these responses reflect open- versus closed-system approaches, and examine how this orientation affects teachers’ work. We draw on interviews with a diverse set of 95 teachers and administrators across a purposive sample of six high-poverty, urban schools in one district. We analyzed these interviews by drafting thematic summaries, coding interview transcripts, creating data-analytic matrices, and writing analytic memos.

The 20th-Year Anniversary of Critical Race Theory in Education: Implications for Leading to Eliminate Racism

By Colleen A. Capper

Though the first published application of critical race theory (CRT) to education occurred 20 years ago, implications of CRT for educational leadership did not occur until López conducted a CRT analysis of the politics of education literature in 2003. No publications explicitly identify the implications of CRT for leadership practice. Given the gap in the literature, the research question that anchors this article asks, “How can CRT inform educational leadership to eliminate racism?” To address the research question, I conducted a literature analysis of CRT in educational leadership, identified the CRT tenets that guided each publication, and derived six primary, interrelated CRT tenets from this analysis. I also extracted from the publications explicit and implicit implications for leadership practice as these implications related directly to each of the six CRT tenets.

Acknowledgement of Reviewers for 2014–2015

Manuscript reviews are critical to upholding the high standards of our journal and profession. Every Educational Administration Quarterly (EAQ) manuscript typically receives three blind reviews from scholars knowledgeable in the topic and methodology of the work. Most published articles undergo at least two revisions, if not more, and we strive to have the same reviewers critique the progress of each version. Thus, any one manuscript can require numerous hours of reading, critiquing, and offering guidance on revisions. This work is conducted by EAQ’s editorial board members, ad hoc reviewers, and editorial team. (Membership of EAQ’s editorial board and EAQ’s editorial team is listed inside the front cover of each issue of the journal.) All of these committed individuals volunteer significant time to help maintain the quality of the journal.
UCEA Publications Highlights

Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership
Co-Editors: William R. Black, Zorka Karanxha, Vonzell Agosto
December 2015; 18(4)

It's Not Funny: A Case Study
By Sylvia Méndez-Morse
This case study may be used with personnel supervision, school law, and other school leadership courses. It describes the behavior and actions of one teacher toward another. Student discussions can focus on supervision, workplace mobbing, workplace bullying, as well as sexual harassment. Students should focus on a school leader’s role in such situations.

Principals and School Counselors: Separate Entities in Identifying Achievement Gaps in College Readiness for African American Students With Disabilities
By Laura A. Roberts & Tamisha M. Bouknight
This case illustrates an example of how one school relied solely on aggregate data and failed to address the college readiness needs of African American students with disabilities. However, the way in which the school counselor identified this opportunity gap may not have been the most ethical approach, and now she is faced with a dilemma.

“That’s Not in My Job Description!”: Personnel Management in the Accountability Era
By Corrie Stone-Johnson
This case examines the challenges facing a high school principal in a struggling suburban district in the Rust Belt. This school is faced with declining achievement of entering students and a loss of both teaching and support staff. In this context, the principal struggles with the assignment of non-professional duties, which do not fall under the work of either teachers or counselors but are critical to the successful operation of the school.

Strong One Lasting One: An Elementary School Principal’s Ability to Establish a Positive School Culture by Building Trust
By Goldy Brown III
Trust is a key element in improving learning and teaching. Reviewing research on the topic of establishing trust by school leaders illuminates actions needed to make a positive difference in the culture of a school. Using the concept of mindfulness, the instructional leader was able to regain the trust of the community, parents, faculty, and staff.

A New Supervisor With a New Agenda: A Principal Ponders Political Options and Risks
By Mary Lynne Derrington & Donald Larsen
A tenured respected principal learns that supervisory relationships with staff are only one side of the leadership coin. The other side turns up when a new assistant superintendent is assigned as his supervisor. Problems are imminent when the supervisor seems ready to usurp the principal’s traditional decision-making authority.

There’s Battle Lines Being Drawn
By Gary Schumacher & Craig Hammonds
This case is written for graduate students in a superintendency seminar course, a school–community relations course, or a school leadership course, such as a school politics course. It presents a highly charged school referendum issue in a school district that is comprised of two distinctly different communities. An initial referendum to construct a new middle school failed by a wide margin.

Culturally Conscious Curriculum: The Fight Between State and Federal Policies in Tucson
By Ann E. Blankenship & Leslie Ann Locke
This case study outlines the struggle for desegregation and the adoption of culturally responsive curricula in the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) as it attempted to balance state politics and federal court oversight. The case offers a detailed illustration of the political and legal events that led up to the adoption, elimination, and reinstatement of the TUSD Mexican American Studies (MAS) program.

Analyzing Data and Asking Questions at Shell School, Sea County Florida
By Charles Vanover
This case discusses early work to implement the Common Core State Standards at a fictitious school in Florida. The case is designed to support students’ efforts to use school accountability data for inquiry and to conceptualize change in schools where previous leaders’ efforts were not successful.

Gang Activity on Campus: A Crisis Response Case Study
By Mabangane Shaw & Sarah Meaney
This case study challenges readers to consider a contemporary issue for campus threat assessment and emergency preparedness: gang presence on college campuses. A body of research examining the presence of gangs and gang activity on college campuses has developed, revealing that gangs pose a viable threat for institutions of higher education. The question of whether and how to confront this issue raises questions regarding student safety, success and retention, as well as violence on campus.
Editor’s Introduction: Linking Leadership and Instruction

By Sharon D. Kruse & Gordon Gates

Lights, Camera, Action: Advancing Learning, Research, and Program Evaluation Through Video Production in Educational Leadership Preparation

By Jennifer Friend & Matthew Militello

This article analyzes specific uses of digital video production in the field of educational leadership preparation, advancing a three-part framework that includes the use of video in (a) teaching and learning, (b) research methods, and (c) program evaluation and service to the profession. The first category within the framework examines videos produced by students and/or faculty to advance student-centered and reflective learning practices. The second category describes methods for research in leadership education through production of videos or documentary films. The third category explores videos created to evaluate programs or to share innovations within the field. This article includes web links to 23 video examples with guidelines for readers to practice video production within each category.

Improving Instructional Leadership Through the Development of Leadership Content Knowledge: The Case of Principal Learning in Algebra

By Michael D. Steele, Kate R. Johnson, Samuel Otten, Beth A. Herbel-Eisenmann, & Cynthia L. Carver

Instructional leadership is integral to improving mathematics teaching in secondary schools. However, administrators often lack sufficient content knowledge in mathematics to be effective in this role. This study examined the impact of professional development focused on developing leadership content knowledge in algebra. Data included written assessments, case discussions, and interviews from 10 principals. Analysis identified shifts in principals’ algebra content knowledge and their frames for interpreting algebra instruction. Principles improved their connections between mathematical representations and shifted from using frames highlighting teacher characteristics toward using frames highlighting teacher and student thinking. Implications for leadership professional development design are discussed.

Leading Technology-Rich School Districts: Advice From Tech-Savvy Superintendents

By Scott McLeod, Jayson W. Richardson, & Nicholas J. Sauers

Superintendents’ instructional leadership is critical to the academic success of school systems. In addition to traditional work complexities, today’s superintendents must navigate rapid and significant technological transformations. In this study, an exploratory sample of “technology-savvy” superintendents was interviewed to ascertain advice about how to navigate the complexities that surround successful district-level technology leadership strategies and mind-sets. Participants highlighted issues such as budgets, professional development, and instructional leadership, and affirmed the value of personally modeling technology use. They also emphasized both personal and organizational risk-taking and shared how communities of practice can help alleviate skill and knowledge gaps.

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THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL LEADER

Private School Pioneers: Studying the Emerging Field of Private School Management Organizations

School leaders of private schools (also commonly referred to as independent schools) are beginning to model their approaches to management after charter management organizations (CMOs) and education management organizations (EMOs). In an effort to accomplish sustainability and growth in the private school sector, the formation of private school management organizations (PSMOs) has evolved. These groups are independent entities that operate three or more private schools. The report, by the Friedman Foundation, offers examples of currently operating PSMOs, potential pitfalls to avoid, as well as suggestions for ways to interact with fledgling organizations.

Keywords: private school management, school lead commonalities

STUDENT LEARNING AND CURRICULUM

How Washington Created Some of the Worst Schools in America

A recent report reviewing the current state of the network of schools for Native American children has concluded that the schools have not been improved over the past eight decades. The network, managed by the Interior Department, has not reformed the 183 schools that span over 23 states. Many schools have cut programs such as science and social studies, to focus on their suffering reading and math scores. Even with more focused curriculum, only 5 percent of students’ mathematics were considered to be on grade level. Results continue to baffle many as the education students receive in Bureau of Indian Education schools is amongst the most costly in the country at $15,000 per pupil. One of the most recent pushes has included a shift that allows for more tribal control over the schools.

Keywords: Native American schools, Bureau of Indian Education

TEACHERS

Petition: Exclude Test Scores from Teacher Evaluations This Year

Prompted by concerns regarding state student assessments, some are supporting the exclusion of students’ tests scores from teacher evaluations. One group of educators and supporters who are against the use of this data is urging the General Assembly of Tennessee and State Board of Education to offer a one year waiver. The group began an online petition to gather support. As if currently stands, if a student’s state tests scores benefit the teacher, they will count for 35 percent of the teacher’s evaluations. However, if the scores will not benefit the teacher, then they will only account for 10 percent of the teacher’s evaluation.

Keywords: state assessment, state legislature for teacher evaluations

RECENT RESEARCH

Online Charter School Study

The Center for Research on Education Outcomes released a report detailing their results of an in-depth investigation of the academic impact of attending online charter schools. The report, intended for online education stakeholders, used student-level data, school leader survey responses, and state policy data to compare progress of students attending online charter schools to that of students attending brick-and-mortar charter schools and traditional charter schools. The mixed methods analysis included results showing that online charter students had weaker growth, pre-online mobility is the same for online charter students, positive growth across a sector is possible as some online charter schools that are part of multi-school networks had average impacts on academic growth which were stronger than the typical online charter, few school-level practices had a strong relationship with academic growth, and being an online school matters more than being a charter school.

Keywords: charter schools, online education

REFORM

Eight Major Challenges Acting Ed Secretary John King Will Face in 2016

Acting Secretary of Education, John B. King, Jr. will start in his new role on January 1, 2016. With less than a year to fulfill his role, Mr. King will have the responsibility of leading the department in deciding on issues related to higher education accreditation, cost regulation, student outcomes and financial aid, and sexual assault. In the elementary and secondary education realm the Department will continue to address the adoption higher state standards, innovative educational models, and expanding access to early childhood education.

Keywords: Department of Education, Secretary of Education
**FEDERAL POLICY**

**Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaces No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

ESSA, which replaces the NCLB act, passed the House and Senate with strong bipartisan support and was signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015. The new law requires that every student in America be taught to high learning standards to prepare them for college and a career and it requires that schools — on a statewide basis — annually assess students' progress toward those standards, providing information to educators, families and communities. It scales back the federal government’s role in education, bringing the accountability back to the states and removes many of the high stakes that had been attached to student scores. While the previous version of the law, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, enacted in 2002 aimed to provide additional support, regardless of race, income, zip code, disability, home language, or background, its prescriptive requirements had become increasingly unworkable for schools and educators.

*Keywords: NCLB, ESSA, school accountability*

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**National Educational Technology Plan 2016 released**

The U.S. Department of Education recently announced the release of the 2016 National Education Technology Plan and new commitments to support personalized professional learning for district leaders across the country working to strengthen teaching and student achievement through the effective use of technology. The plan is the flagship educational technology policy document for the United States and this year's update to the National Education Technology Plan includes a strong focus on equity besides redesigning teacher preparation program towards a thoughtful use of technology and improving technology based assessments.

*Keywords: education technology, professional learning*
ALASKA

State Board of Education Sets Ranges of Scores for New State Assessments

The State Board of Education & Early Development adopted regulations that set the range of scores within each achievement level in the Alaska Measures of Progress (which assesses students’ understanding of the state’s standards for English language arts and math) and Alaska Alternate Assessment (which is given to assess English language arts and math in students with significant cognitive abilities). Students are scored on a 1-4 scale. In summer 2015 more than 125 Alaska educators had recommended the scores for each of these levels and the State Board accepted these recommendations on October 9, 2015. Students’ scores on the Alaska Measures of Progress 2015 shall be used as a baseline.

Keywords: achievement levels, state standards

CONNECTICUT

Smarter-Balanced Assessments

The Connecticut State Board of Education released the Connecticut Core Standards, setting learning expectations for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level so that by the time they graduate from high school, they are ready to succeed in college and the workplace. These Core Standards, informed by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, focus on critical thinking and problem solving and are evaluated through the Smarter Balanced assessments. Approximately 267,000 students took the Smarter Balanced exams in 2015, the first operational year of the new state assessments. Their results are likely to be used as the baseline for measuring growth in student achievement in the future.

Keywords: Smarter Balanced Assessment, Core Standards

IOWA

88% school districts now covered under Iowa’s teacher leadership system

Iowa Department of Education has added 97 school districts to the teacher leadership system taking the total to 295 (88 percent of Iowa districts). Iowa’s teacher leadership system which taps into the expertise of top teachers to improve classroom instruction and raise student achievement, is an important component of the state’s education reform package passed by the Legislature in 2013 and is also considered nation’s most comprehensive teacher leadership system. A recent report found that the system has helped in retaining effective teachers, promoting collaboration, rewarding professional growth and improving student achievement. The teacher leadership system cost nearly $50 million in fiscal year 2015. That amount is expected to grow to about $150 million annually by fiscal year 2017.

Keywords: teacher leader, student achievement

GEORGIA

Increased flexibility in evaluating teachers

In response to the concerns of teachers and school leaders, the Georgia Department of Education is working towards a modified implementation of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System, beginning with a pilot in selected districts this year. The modified implementation allows for a more personalized approach to evaluating teachers and keeping the standard six-observation requirement only for new or ineffective teachers. This is in response to the call from school-level leaders all over Georgia to reduce the administrative burden resulting from the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System. The six districts chosen for the pilot represent high schools, middle schools, elementary schools, and charter schools in urban, suburban, and rural areas throughout Georgia.

Keywords: teacher evaluation, administration

Want to find more on a specific state?

See Education Week’s regularly updated States News page for headlines and stats by state.

See the ECS State Education Policy Database for legislative updates by date and topic.
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