

# Suffolk's Edge

TEACHER CENTER

## *E-newsletter*

### *February 2007*

*Dear Colleague,*

*Click on [In the News](#) below and scroll down to [NCLB](#) to find five articles reporting on current activity and commentary on No Child Left Behind. Please share this e-newsletter with your colleagues and invite them to subscribe by e-mailing us at [teacher\\_center@wsboces.org](mailto:teacher_center@wsboces.org) with their names and e-mail addresses. We will promptly add them to our subscription list.*

*Jane, Carol and Elyse*

#### *Contents*

[A Light Touch](#)

[FYI](#)

[Worthwhile Websites](#)

[NCTE Inbox](#)

[In the News](#)

#### *A Light Touch*

##### **Now You Know Everything**

"Stewardesses" is the longest word typed with only the left hand and "lollipop" with your right. (Bet you tried this out mentally, didn't you?)

No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver, or purple.

"Dreamt" is the only English word that ends in the letters "mt".

Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing.

The sentence: "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" uses every letter of the alphabet.

The words 'racecar,' 'kayak' and 'level' are the same whether they are read left to right or right to left (palindromes).

There are only four words in the English language which end in "dous": tremendous, horrendous, stupendous, and hazardous.

There are two words in the English language that have all five vowels in order: "abstemious" and "facetious."

TYPEWRITER is the longest word that can be made using the letters only on one row of the

keyboard.

A "jiffy" is an actual unit of time for 1/100th of a second.

A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.

Almonds are a member of the peach family.

An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

Babies are born without kneecaps. They don't appear until the child reaches 2 to 6 years of age.

February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a full moon.

In the last 4,000 years, no new animals have been domesticated.

If the population of China walked past you, 8 abreast, the line would never end because of the rate of reproduction.

Leonardo Da Vinci invented the scissors.

Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite!

The average person's left hand does 56% of the typing.

The cruise liner, QE2, moves only six inches for each gallon of diesel that it burns.

The microwave was invented after a researcher walked by a radar tube and a chocolate bar melted in his pocket.

The winter of 1932 was so cold that Niagara Falls froze completely solid.

Winston Churchill was born in a ladies' room during a dance.

Women blink nearly twice as much as men.

Now you know everything!

*FYI*

### Events and Courses

#### **February 15, 2007 Deadline Date for Gilder Lehrman Institute Summer Seminar**

**Application.** Are you a teacher who wants to learn more about the Colonial Era? ...The Civil War? ...The Gilded Age? ...The Cold War? To apply online or download an application form, visit: <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/seminars1.html>

Below are the **late winter and spring programs** for professional development credit being offered by the Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education (IHARE). Unless otherwise indicated, these are weekend programs. Non-teachers are welcome to participate as well. The programs and registration are on the IHARE website [www.ihare.org](http://www.ihare.org).

**February 24-25:** Underground Railroad Conference, Albany

**February 28:** Teaching Ancient Egypt, Albany Institute of Art (after school)

**March 31:** Amarna and King Tut Symposium, University of Pennsylvania Museum and Franklin Institute, Philadelphia.

**April 14-15:** Harvard Semitic Museum and Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The

New World Order: Assyrian Imperialism and Israel, Judah, Egypt, and Nubia.

**May 5-6:** King Tut and the Amarna Period, University of Pennsylvania Museum and Franklin Institute, Philadelphia.

**May 19-20:** Hudson River Art Symposium and Tour, Olana and Thomas Cole. The annual Hudson River Art conference is tentatively scheduled for Sunday.

**June 9:** New York and the Civil War, Fenimore Museum, Cooperstown.

Find out more at <http://www.ihare.org/>

Course: **Teacher Leader Skills for Professional Development,**

**Tuesdays, Feb. 27; Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27 (Part 1)**

**April 17, 24; May 1, 8, 15 (Part 2) Time: 4-7 pm,**

**Part 1:** *How to Construct a Course:* Learn what current research tells us about effective staff development while creating a workshop/course around your area of expertise.

**Part 2:** *Facilitating Study Groups & Professional Conversations:* Facilitation skills will be presented, discussed and modeled, as will development of probing questions, icebreakers, and activities based upon the elements of adult learning theory.

**Instructor:** *Charlotte Galluccio*

**Site:** Lindenhurst Administration Bldg, OWL Teacher Center

**Fee:** \$70            30 hours, 2 ins. credits            K-12

To register, contact OWL Teacher Center 350 Daniel St. Room 107 Lindenhurst, NY 11757. Phone: 631-226-2772, e-mail [owlcenter@optonline.net](mailto:owlcenter@optonline.net)

**March 21-24, 2007 CCCC Convention.** For more information on the 2007 Annual Convention of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, taking place, in New York City, check out the [Convention Preview](#), which includes information on featured [speakers](#) and [sessions](#), [workshops](#), and the [keynote address](#).

**April 12, 2007, 8-10 AM, Tobacco Free Schools Project Orientation Meeting,** Health Resource Library at Student Support Services, 31 Lee Avenue, Wheatley Heights.

***One-third of New York middle school students and nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of high school students report having seen students smoking on school property in the last 30 days.***

The Long Island Regional Student Support Services Center in partnership with New York State's Department of Health Tobacco Control Program, is recruiting and working with up to 50 schools in Nassau and Suffolk County to develop and implement comprehensive tobacco-free policies and procedures. This Orientation Meeting will provide an overview of tobacco as a risk behavior, details on the policy project, and current resources we provide to

support your school's tobacco-free efforts. Over 30 schools are currently participating. We welcome new middle and high schools to join this initiative. **Join us!** PLEASE RSVP TO: Gail Volk at 631-595-6847, [gvolk@wsboces.org](mailto:gvolk@wsboces.org) for Nassau Schools, Karyn Kirschbaum at 631-595-6816, [kkirschb@wsboces.org](mailto:kkirschb@wsboces.org) for Suffolk Schools. Breakfast will be provided.

**May 2-4, 2007. NYS Staff Development Conference at the Rochester Hyatt Regency.** Keynote speakers include: Kim Oliver, Teacher of the Year, Stephanie Hirsch, Executive Director of National Staff Development Council and Manuel Rivera, Superintendent, Rochester City Schools For conference registration information visit their website [www.nyssdc.org](http://www.nyssdc.org).

**May 3,4,5, 2007. Powerful Partnerships for Success,** a conference presented by the School Library Media Section (SLMS) of the NY Library Association. The Wyndham, Syracuse, NY. Join visionaries to share ideas, learn from practitioners, connect with vendors, and equip yourself with tools to improve your program. Keynote Speaker: Toni Buzzeo. "Collaborating to Meet Standards: Beyond the Basics to Advocacy." For information go to [http://www.nyla.org/index.php?page\\_id=52](http://www.nyla.org/index.php?page_id=52)

The following are the **summer programs** for professional development credit being offered by the **Institute of History, Archaeology, and Education (IHARE)**. Non-teachers are welcome to participate as well. These programs combine history, art, ecology, and literature as appropriate. The programs and registration forms are available on the IHARE website [www.ihare.org](http://www.ihare.org).

**6/23-24** Iroquois and the Seneca, Iroquois Museum and Fenimore Museum, Cooperstown: The one-day program last year has been expanded to a two-day program with the addition of the Iroquois Museum and different activities at the Fenimore Museum

**6/25** Gracie Mansion, New York City including a walking tour along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**6/26-29** The American Revolution in the Hudson Valley: A revised version of the program last year to include Fort Clinton, the Trailside Museum, a completed visitor center at Fort Montgomery, Stony Point, Mount Beacon, and more time at the Military Museum at West Point including presentations with by the curators (30 hours).

**7/9-12** The Hudson River: The Rivertowns Experience: It will include the new slavery exhibit at Philipse Manor Hall, more time at Philipsburg Manor, the Old Dutch Burial Ground, a talk at Sunnyside on Washington Irving, walking tours in Hastings-on-Hudson and the Croton Aqueduct, and various Rockefeller sites along with the fun stuff on and in the river (30 hours)

**7/16-19** The Hudson River: The Left Bank Experience (Dutchess and Ulster): Includes sites in the Kingston area, Huguenot Village, Mohonk Lodge, going on the River with the Riverkeeper, the Green County Historical Society, the Mountain Top Historical Society, and the Catskill Center (30 hours).

**7/23-27** The Capital Region Experience: A new program including participation of the Albany Institute of Art, Albany Rural Cemetery evening ravine walk, Albany Underground Railroad, Historic Cherry Hill, Fort Crailo, New York State Capital and Plaza Tour. (30 hours)

### Announcements

The New York State Writers Institute invites talented creative writers in grades 8-12 to apply to participate in the annual New York State Summer Young Writers Institute. The program, which offers workshops in poetry, prose and screenwriting, is open to both public and private school students who reside anywhere in New York State. The cost, including room, board and materials is \$450. There is an application fee of \$15. Financial aid is available. This year's session meets from July 1-7, 2007. **Applications must be postmarked by April 15, 2007.** More information and an application are available at <http://www.albany.edu/writers-inst/nyssywi.html>. The program is housed at the YMCA Conference Center on Lake George in upstate New York. Questions may be addressed by calling 518-543-8833, ext. 206 or via email at [caltap@nycap.rr.com](mailto:caltap@nycap.rr.com).

### **Internship programs**

The New York State Military Museum is actively looking for **student interns** throughout the state. We have begun collecting burial information on NY men and women who are veterans. Interns would have to visit cemeteries in their area, locate markers that indicate that the person buried there was in the military and collect the following information: Last NAME, First NAME, WAR, TOWN Cemetery is located, CEMETERY Name, LOCATION in cemetery, RANK, ORGANIZATION (Branch, Division, Regiment, Company, etc.), HEADSTONE material, Headstone inscription, NOTES (Anything you consider important or unusual), Your name, Year you last saw the grave, A digital photo if you have one in jpg format. Students interested in the project can contact Jim Gandy, Assistant Librarian / Archivist, email [jgandy@nysmm.org](mailto:jgandy@nysmm.org), phone 518.581.5109  
<http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/historic/mil-hist.htm>

The King Manor Museum offers **three high school internships** throughout the year: February-June; July-August; September-December. The interns participate in the program

through providing tours of the museum on weekends from 12:30pm-4:30pm. The interns also hold other minor duties such as opening and closing the museum and minimal house cleaning. A short research paper, 2-3 pages is also required. The King Manor Museum provides the interns with a monetary stipend at the completion of the program. For more information, contact the King Manor Museum, Mailing Address: 90-04 161<sup>st</sup> St., Ste. 704, Jamaica, NY 11432; 718-206-0545; Email: [KingManor3@earthlink.net](mailto:KingManor3@earthlink.net); Website: [www.KingManor.org](http://www.KingManor.org).

**NYS Summer School of the Arts** runs a summer program. The website has audition information, application forms etc. [www.emsc.nysed.gov/nyssa/](http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/nyssa/).

### *Worthwhile Websites*

[http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_lesson/lesson/lesson339.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson339.shtml) Five games to engage students as they learn Math.

[http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_curr/management\\_tips/management\\_tips017.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/management_tips/management_tips017.shtml)  
Inexpensive solutions to classroom storage problems.

#### **Twelve great websites for elementary students**

**[ACHUKA](http://www.achuka.co.uk/index2.php)**    <http://www.achuka.co.uk/index2.php>

News, reviews, interviews, and author profiles of British authors and poets. Interviews with authors/illustrators like Anthony Browne are a special treat.

**[The Adventures of Herman: Autobiography of Squirmin' Herman the Worm](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms/index.html)**      
<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/worms/index.html>

Learn all about earthworms including their life cycle, anatomy and history.

**[Akhlah: The Jewish Children's Learning Network](http://www.akhlah.com/)**     <http://www.akhlah.com/>

Learn about Jewish holidays, traditions, history, and scripture at this child-friendly site.

**[Albright-Knox Art Games](http://www.kids.albrightknox.org)**    <http://www.kids.albrightknox.org>

This interactive site engages children in art activities that help them to learn about artists and the works of art in the collection of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, NY

**[Amazon Interactive](http://www.eduweb.com/amazon.html)**    <http://www.eduweb.com/amazon.html>

Explore the geography of the Ecuadorian Amazon through online games and activities. Learn about the rainforest and the Quichua people who call it home. Discover the ways in which the Quichua live off the land. Then try your hand at running a community-based ecotourism project along the Río Napo.

**[American Girls Series](http://www.americangirl.com/fun.html)**    <http://www.americangirl.com/fun.html>

An American Girl is a unique current girls' series by Valerie Tripp, Janet Beele Shaw, Connie Porter, Susan S. Adler, and Maxine Schur. The series title is American Girls Collection. The American Girls stories are told through the eyes of girls living in different time periods. This site expands on the stories and has a club for fans of American Girls.

[American Memory](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ammemhome.html).  <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ammemhome.html>

Primary documents and historical materials available on the Web from the Library of Congress. Find out about Women's Suffrage; do a virtual jigsaw puzzle; take guided tours through the site.

[The Ancient Olympic Games](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Olympics/).  <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Olympics/>

In this exhibit, you can compare ancient and modern Olympic sports, tour the site of Olympia as it looks today, learn about the context of the Games and the Olympic spirit, or read about the Olympic athletes who were famous in ancient times. Part of the Perseus Project at Tufts University.

[Animal Corner!](http://www.animalcorner.co.uk)  <http://www.animalcorner.co.uk>

This United Kingdom-based site includes information on all kinds of animals from elephants and wolves in the wild to hamsters and goldfish in your house.

[Animorphs Page](http://scholastic.com/animorphs/).  <http://scholastic.com/animorphs/>

The home page for this popular paperback series of young people with the capacity to morph into animals of great power in order to fight alien enemies. Written by K. A. Applegate.

[Archiving Early America: Historic Documents from 18th Century America](http://earlyamerica.com/).  <http://earlyamerica.com/>

The main focus is primary source material displayed digitally. A unique array of original newspapers, maps, and writings come to life on your screen just as they appeared to our forebears more than 200 years ago. There is information about the documents as well.

[Artenautas](http://artenautas.conaculta.gob.mx/)  <http://artenautas.conaculta.gob.mx/>

Read animated stories, jokes, poetry and more on this Spanish-language website.

### Thirteen great websites for middle school students

[Votes for Women" Suffrage Pictures 1850-1920](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/vfwhtml/vfwhome.html).  <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/vfwhtml/vfwhome.html>

Part of the American Memory exhibit at the Library of Congress.

[4,000 Years of Women in Science](http://www.astr.ua.edu/4000WS/).  <http://www.astr.ua.edu/4000WS/>

This site lists more than 125 names from our scientific and technical past. They are all women!

[A Game A Day.](http://www.agameaday.com)  <http://www.agameaday.com>

This site offers puzzles, games, and related materials designed to stimulate learning, problem solving, and creative thinking.

[A Guided Tour of the Visible Human.](http://www.madsci.org/~lynn/VH/)  <http://www.madsci.org/~lynn/VH/>

The Visible Human Project consists of some 9,000 digitized sections of the body. The animations and images in this tour demonstrate the planes of section and how the 2-D images provide a unique means of studying the 3-D anatomy of the human body. Click on "Interactive Annotations" for a good starting point.

[Abacus.](http://www.ee.ryerson.ca:8080/~elf/abacus/)  <http://www.ee.ryerson.ca:8080/~elf/abacus/>

The abacus is a calculator whose earliest known use is circa 500 B.C. by the Chinese civilization. Addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication can be performed on a standard abacus. This site offers instructions on the use of the abacus.

[Abraham Lincoln Online.](http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln.html)  <http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln.html>

This site includes an enormous amount of information about Lincoln, including listings of outstanding historic sites and a very large number of books.

[Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum, Chicago.](http://www.adlerplanetarium.org)  <http://www.adlerplanetarium.org>

The Adler opened on May 12, 1930, as the first planetarium in the Western Hemisphere, and continues today to interpret the exploration of the universe for the broadest possible audience.

[African American History.](http://historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?op=listarticles&secid=8) 

<http://historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?op=listarticles&secid=8>

Very large collection of African American history links to a wide range of cultural and historical African American concerns.

[African-American Mosaic.](http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/intro.html)  <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/intro.html>

A Library of Congress Resource Guide for the Study of Black History and Culture. Includes reproductions of original documents, personal stories, and ex-slave narratives. Part of the Library of Congress online exhibitions collections.

[American Treasures.](http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/)  <http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/>

Divided into three main areas—Memory, Reason, and Imagination—with approximately twenty items in each, this site is exceptionally rich. It is to be a continuously updated exhibit at the Library of Congress.

[Animal Diversity Web](http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/index.html)  <http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/index.html>

A collection of pictures and information about animals. Accounts of individual species include information on distributions, natural history, conservation, and economic importance, along with pictures and sounds if available. There are even short movies.

[Anne Frank Online.](http://www.annefrank.com/)  <http://www.annefrank.com/>

More than 1,000,000 children under the age of 16 died in the Holocaust. Anne Frank was one of them.

[ArabNet: Arab Countries.](http://www.arab.net/)  <http://www.arab.net/>

This is an important online resource about the Arab world in the Middle East and North Africa. It presents information on Arab art, homes, economics, history, and even the A-to-Z of camels.

*[NCTE Inbox](#)*

## News

**Survey of Educators Finds Lack of Focus on 21st Century Media Literacy Skills.** A recent survey of teachers finds that 60 percent of educators say their school does not emphasize the need for media literacy, and 80 percent surveyed say they need to learn to teach media literacy on their own. The survey was conducted by Grunwald Associates and commissioned by Cable in the Classroom. [EducationNews.org, February 2, 2007](#)

**The Bush Budget, 2008.** President Bush has released his 2.9 trillion dollar Fiscal Year 2008 budget this week, and it includes a spending plan for education. For higher education, the budget calls for increasing Pell Grants and other aid for college students. [Inside Higher Ed, February 6, 2007](#) Read the entire [Department of Education Budget Proposal](#).

**Taking Teens Back to Basics of Reading.** More and more secondary schools have to teach students how to read. Schools in the Denver area are intensifying literacy instruction for middle school and high school students. [The Denver Post, February 3, 2007](#)

**States Adopt New Tests for English Learners.** In light of new demands from the federal government, several states are implementing new tests for English language learners. At issue is whether or not alternate tests for ELLs are comparable to the regular reading and math tests the states use to measure yearly progress. [Education Week, January 24, 2007](#)

**States Tackle Global Competitiveness.** Many U.S. governors are using their State of the State addresses this year to call for new education programs to curb the high school dropout rate and ensure global competitiveness of their students. The proposals put forth run the gamut from laptops in school, personal learning plans, increased professional development funding for teachers, increased school funding, more demanding courses,

virtual high schools, and reduced class size. [eSchoolnews, January 26, 2007](#)

**Schools Turning to Wealth, Not Race, to Integrate Schools.** A growing number of school districts are considering using a student's socioeconomic status, not race, to help determine what school they will attend. This trend has been fueled by court orders that limit race-based criteria on determining where students attend public schools. [USA Today, January 18, 2007](#)

**Overhaul of Schools Would Let Teachers Rate Principals.** New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg is announcing plans to give principals in New York City public schools more power in evaluating teachers and making tenure decisions. But with that plan comes something the teachers' union has been requesting for a long time; teachers will get to rate their principals. [The New York Times, January 19, 2007](#)

## Ideas

**Literacy Across the Content Areas and Curriculum.** The *Denver Post* article in the News above discusses the literacy skills students need to excel. One of the best ways to support these skills is to include literacy instruction in a part of every class. The following strategies and resources can help teachers integrate literacy instruction in K-12 content areas and across the college curriculum.

Nonfiction texts can bridge between English and other content areas. Announced late last month, the [2007 Orbis Pictus Nonfiction Book Awards](#) (G) highlight the best nonfiction books of 2006. Award winners from previous years are available on the [Orbis Pictus Nonfiction Book Awards website](#) (G). For a lesson incorporating the 2005 Orbis Pictus Honor Book *Actual Size*, try ReadWriteThink's [Bridging Literature and Mathematics by Visualizing Mathematical Concepts](#) (E), which connects instruction on measurement and proportions to literature.

Graphic organizers are flexible tools that students can use in any content area. The *Voices from the Middle* article "[I Am Thorgood, King of the Orgies': The Reading Challenge of Content Vocabulary](#)" (M) discusses the two difficulties that get in the way of success during content reading and suggests ways that graphic organizers can help. Students can use the [ReadWriteThink Alphabet Organizer](#) to create a customized version of "Things We Can Read from A-Z" organizers described in the article.

Current research suggests that the best way to teach vocabulary is to group related words to help students better understand larger language systems. "[The Mouse That Roared: Teaching Vocabulary with Source-Based Lessons](#)" from *English Journal* presents a lesson

focusing on the names of muscles but relating them to more common words, demonstrating a strategy that can work across the curriculum. See the *English Journal* website for [reproducible copies of the worksheets](#) described in the article.

Tapping literary models outside the English classroom encourages students to think about in rewarding ways. The *College Composition and Communication* article "[Writing Across and Against the Curriculum](#)" (C) discusses the potential of poetry across the curriculum to challenge students to express meaningful thoughts and emotions not readily available to them in disciplinary languages and contexts.

Emphasizing content knowledge with little consideration for reading, writing, and thinking skills may go down in history as one of the greatest educational errors of all time, second only to thinking that English teachers are the only ones responsible for teaching literacy skills. The *English Leadership Quarterly* issue "[Focusing on Literacy Learning: But Where's the Content?](#)" (TE) explores how teacher educators work with core subject teachers to show them how to integrate content literacy strategies that will increase their students' learning of content knowledge.

**Avoiding Plagiarism in the Internet Age.** How do classroom teachers respond to the *Bangor Daily News* article "Educators Warn Students: Be Wary of the Web"? These NCTE resources provide teacher-tested practices to guide students to successful research strategies that avoid Internet-based plagiarism:

- [Research Building Blocks lesson plans](#) from ReadWriteThink (E)
- [Campaigning for Fair Use: Public Service Announcements on Copyright Awareness](#) from ReadWriteThink (M)
- "[Spinning Straw into Gold: Transforming Information into Knowledge during Web-Based Research](#)" (S) from *English Journal*
- "[Teaching about Plagiarism in the Age of the Internet](#)" (C) from *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*

## *In the News*

### Eye on Curriculum

**Skilled workers at a premium.** In Virginia, vocational education programs are producing fewer skilled tradespeople than the area requires, according to a recent study commissioned by the Virginia Manufacturers Association, the Virginia Workforce Council

and the Virginia Manufacturing Advisory Council. The study recommends a greater emphasis on vocational education in public schools. [Richmond Times-Dispatch \(Va.\)](#) (2/5)

**Middle schoolers to earn college credit.** All 8,000 eighth-graders in Detroit's public schools will be required to take a life-skills class that will give them college credit, and, educators hope, prepare them for the next step in their education. [The Detroit News](#) (2/2)

**Test results differ at U.S., state levels.** There are wide discrepancies between federal and state test scores on assessments that were established as a result of NCLB regulations, the Web site Stateline.org reports. [United Press International](#) (1/31)

**NYC to add smaller schools.** New York City's Department of Education plans to open 20 small secondary schools, about half within larger ones, and several of which will focus on at-risk students. [The New York Times](#) (free registration) (1/31)

**Getting a head start on Spanish.** In Michigan, where students must earn two foreign language credits to graduate, some elementary schools are trying to put classes like Spanish into play early. Parents say it works because children can pick up the language easier as a youngster. [The Ann Arbor News \(Mich.\)](#) (1/29)

**Teachers don't often use local newspapers.** Mirroring broader social trends, the rise of the Internet has meant fewer newspapers in classrooms across the nation, according to a survey from the Carnegie Knight Task Force at Harvard University. Instead, teachers are using a few national news sources online and foregoing local news coverage. [Yahoo!/Editor & Publisher](#) (1/28)

**Accelerated Reader program under scrutiny.** People are taking the Accelerated Reader program, often used to monitor supplemental reading, to task. They say the program awards too few points for reading classic texts, while rewarding children more points for reading popular books with less value. [The Washington Post](#) (free registration) (1/29)

### [Professional Leadership](#)

**Stress means big payout for teachers.** Between 2002 and mid-2006, school officials in Australia paid more than \$21 million to teachers who took stress leave, saying they were under too much pressure from bullying students and overbearing parents. [The Sydney Morning Herald](#) (2/5)

**Florida county targets teacher exodus.** In Florida, where 40% of all new teachers quit within the first five years, Brevard County's schools have implemented a mentoring program to help boost retention rates. [Florida Today \(Melbourne\)](#) (2/1)

**Study: Teacher pay on par with white-collar standards.** A conservative-leaning think tank in New York City says teachers are paid on par with other white-collar workers. A study by the Manhattan Institute found that the average public school teacher in Iowa City earns 27% percent more money than the average white-collar worker, when wages are calculated per hour. However, a teachers union analysis of the data finds that teachers make \$20,000 below the average for white-collar workers. [The Des Moines Register \(Iowa\)](#) (1/31)

**Teachers blog to vent, learn.** Teachers across the nation are using their own blogs to vent frustrations and defend public education, but they walk a fine line with administrators when airing school business in public is concerned. [Houston Chronicle](#) (1/29)

**Lunch lady brings world to students.** Food service director Jean Ronnei works in the St. Paul School District in Minnesota, where students speak more than 70 languages, so the award-winning culinary expert tries to make eating about learning, by often serving meals traditional to their native countries. [Star Tribune \(Minneapolis-St. Paul\)](#) (free registration) (1/25)

**Teachers get bonus for National Board certification.** School districts are awarding teachers with certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the top honor in the field, with stipends and pay increases. The number of board-certified teachers in the U.S. has tripled in the past five years to more than 55,000. [The Washington Post](#) (free registration) (1/21)

**Opinion: Movies misrepresent school conditions.** Tom Moore, a history teacher in the Bronx, says movies that supposedly depict rough inner-city classrooms often fail to portray the actual problems facing urban teachers. [The New York Times](#) (free registration) (1/18)

### [Technology Solutions](#)

**Teachers face up to out-of-school online conduct.** Teachers with risque content on their social networking pages are facing some of the same kinds of sanctions that greet students who post out-of-bounds material online. Because of the growing trend, schools have been

forced to examine policies for appropriate out-of-school conduct for teachers. [San Diego Union-Tribune](#) (2/6)

**Using games to teach.** A new project developed by university researchers uses wireless handheld devices to teach students about math and reading, using a game-like interface. [eSchool News](#) (free registration) (1/31)

**Microsoft develops easier tools to help create educational programming.** Microsoft is developing software that would allow people with no programming training to create their own instructional programs. The new suite of tools, called Grava, were unveiled at the British Education and Training Technology Conference earlier this month. [eSchool News](#) (free registration) (1/30)

**Field trips no longer a bus ride away.** Schools across the nation are using video-conferencing equipment to let students reach far-flung locations. About one in four U.S. schools has the equipment to support these "virtual field trips," according to a report. [USA TODAY](#) (1/30)

**Study: Smart boards no big boost.** A study for Britain's Department for Education and Skills found that classes that use interactive white boards don't necessarily excel, and some are even impeded. The report said most teachers used the boards for math and science lessons, but student motivation typically was short-lived, and their grades didn't get a boost as a result. [BBC](#) (1/30)

### Policy Watch

**Bill proposes fining parents who miss teacher meetings.** A bill introduced in the Texas Legislature would impose a \$500 fine on parents who miss conferences with their child's teachers. The representative who filed the bill said it was designed to encourage parents to be more involved with their child's education. [CNN/Associated Press](#) (2/1)

### NCLB

**NCLB funding increased in budget.** President George W. Bush has budgeted an additional \$1 billion to fund the No Child Left Behind Act, as part of a proposed \$56 billion for federal education programs. The proposed budget adds funds for vouchers and cuts special-

education grants to states. Democrats in Congress are expected to demand more money for education. [The Washington Post](#) (2/6)

**Virginia county squares off against NCLB.** The Fairfax County, Va., Board of Supervisors voted 8 to 1 Monday to side with school officials who are refusing a Bush administration order to require English-learners to take reading tests at the same grade level as their native-speaking peers. The federal government has threatened to withhold school funding if officials do not comply. [The Washington Post](#) (2/6)

**U.S. warns Virginia over NCLB tests.** The U.S. Department of Education has threatened to sanction the state of Virginia if any of its school districts choose not to give a reading exam to students who are English Language Learners. The ongoing debate began last year. [The Washington Post](#) (2/1)

**Opinion: The cost of leaving a child behind.** Rep. Charlie Rangel, D-N.Y., says the No Child Left Behind Act fails to address the nation's dropout crisis. He argues that the "writing off" of just one child is too high a price for society to pay and said he looks forward to revamping the law. [The Hill](#) (1/31)

**School superintendent tells Annapolis High staff to reapply for their jobs.** In Anne Arundel, Md., the staff at Annapolis High have been told they will have to reapply for their jobs, because the school failed to meet NCLB standards for four consecutive years. [The Washington Post](#) (free registration) (1/24)

### **In the Field**

**Arkansas may trim obesity plan.** Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe says the state's obesity report cards, based on student weight-ins, cause hurt feelings among children and have other unintended negative consequences. Arkansas in 2004 became the first state to adopt such a program, launching a nationwide trend. [The Boston Globe/Associated Press](#) (2/5)

**Students look for answers to school woes.** About 60 Arizona high school students converged for the first statewide summit on controversial issues affecting students, including teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse and dropout rates. Students at the two-day session were asked for their solutions to policy issues that frustrate parents, teachers and administrators. [The Arizona Republic \(Phoenix\)](#) (2/1)

**A possible SAT security breach.** A possible security breach on the SAT exam in South Korea underscores the longstanding practice by the College Board of recycling entire SAT exams. At least one student who took the recent exam appeared to have had access to the questions ahead of time, according to the Educational Testing Service, which is investigating. The SAT exam at issue was identical to the one given in the U.S. in December 2005. [Houston Chronicle/Associated Press](#) (1/30)

*“Baseball is what we were. Football is what we have become.”*

--[Mary McGroary](#),  
Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist