

## March 2008 E-Newsletter

Dear Colleague,

There's a lot going on! Scroll down to [FYI](#) for a comprehensive list of conferences, events, courses and workshops. Please share this e-newsletter with your peers 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.

*Jane, Carol and Elyse*

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### *A Light Touch*

**Things you probably didn't know and may not care to remember....**

A rat can last longer without water than a camel.

A raisin dropped in a glass of fresh champagne will bounce up and down continuously from the bottom of the glass to the top

A duck's quack doesn't echo. No one knows why.

During the chariot scene in "Ben Hur", a small red car can be seen in the distance.

On average, 12 newborns will be given to the wrong parents daily!

Donald Duck comics were banned from Finland, because he doesn't wear pants.

The number of possible ways of playing the first four moves per side in a game of chess is 318,979,564,000.

There are no words in the dictionary that rhyme with orange, purple and silver.

The name Wendy was made up for the book "Peter Pan". There was never a recorded Wendy before.

The very first bomb dropped by the Allies on Berlin in World War II killed the only elephant in the Berlin Zoo.

The first CD pressed in the US was Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA".

The original name for butterfly was flutterby.

The phrase "rule of thumb" is derived from an old English law which stated that you couldn't beat your wife with anything wider than your thumb.

The first product Motorola started to develop was a record player for automobiles. At that time, the most known player on the market was Victrola, so they called themselves Motorola.

Charlie Chaplin once won third prize in a Charlie Chaplin look-alike contest.

Chewing gum while peeling onions will keep you from crying.

### **Words in Common**

See if you can figure out what these words have in common.

1. **Banana**
2. **Dresser**
3. **Grammar**
4. **Potato**
5. **Revive**
6. **Uneven**
7. **Assess**

Are you peeking or have you already given up?

Give it another try.

You will kick yourself when you discover the answer.

Go back and look at them again; think hard.

OK . . . Here You Go. Hope You Didn't Cheat.

Answer: No, it is not that they all have at least 2 double letters.

(Thought I had the answer, but I did not go far enough.)

Scroll down for answer

In all of the words listed, if you take the first letter, place it at the end of the word, and then spell the word backwards, it will be the same word.



### **Courses and Workshops**

**March 11, 2008, 4:30-5:30PM: Free Web Seminar: Teaching English in Diverse 21st Century**

**Classrooms.** NCTE is offering a special **free** opportunity to participate in Ernest Morrell's "[Powerful English: Innovative Practices in Diverse 21st Century Classrooms](#)". The online session focuses on the possibilities for rethinking the definition of what English is as a discipline and also what it means to teach English powerfully in this context. Logins are limited, so be sure to [sign up early](#). Can't make it on Tuesday? Don't worry -- you can [order the free archive version](#) of the seminar online.

**March 12, 2008:** You're invited to Tools for Tolerance for Educators Program, **Achievement Gap: Issues and Answers**. This program engages today's educators in a compelling, one-day professional learning experience proven to help participants discover how to measurably improve equity, academic performance and high school completion. This program helps education professionals plan strategies to create socially, emotionally, and intellectually safe school cultures that are academically rigorous for all students across all demographic characteristics. To register for this free professional development opportunity please visit [www.toolsfortolerance.com/nytceducators](http://www.toolsfortolerance.com/nytceducators).

**April 2, 2008, 6:00-8:00 PM: Motivating Hard to Reach, Uninterested, and Disruptive Students,** Speaker: Dr. Allen Mendler, Co-Author of **Discipline with Dignity**. Connetquot High School Auditorium, 190 7th Street, Bohemia, NY 11716, \$10 fee (*Will be refunded upon attendance at the seminar*). Attendees will receive 2 contact hours toward inservice credit Register by March 31 at Owl Teacher Center at 631/226-2772 or [www.owlcenter.org](http://www.owlcenter.org).

**April 5, 2008: Grasp the Math NEW! TI-Nspiration Tour** at MacArthur High School, Levittown. Attend hands-on TI-Nspire sessions, led by T3TM Teachers Teaching with Technology instructors, to explore activities from your choice of two of the following subjects: Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry, Precalculus, Statistics, Calculus, Trigonometry. Registration is \$25 per person *and* includes lunch. Registration is FREE for pre-service students. TI-Nspiration Tour participants receive a \$100 discount coupon to attend a T3 TI-Nspire 3-day workshop certificate of completion and 30-day trial CD of TI-Nspire computer software. Program sponsored by Texas Instruments. Seats are limited. Register at [http://www.ti-nspire.com/tools/nspire/resources/nspiration\\_tour.html](http://www.ti-nspire.com/tools/nspire/resources/nspiration_tour.html)

**May 31-June 1, 2008: The Battle of Saratoga Teacherhostel**, Saratoga Springs and vicinity. Spend a weekend immersing yourself in one of the most critical battles of the American Revolution. Participants will be exposed to multiple perspectives involving the battle including the British plans before and reaction afterward, the battlefield from land and from the water, and the effort to preserve the battlefield for future generations. Join with scholars, the National Park Service, and re-enactors to learn about the event. Contact Hours: 18, Cost: \$175 (includes two lunches and one dinner), Cutoff Date: April 30, To register, go to: [http://www.ihare.org/programs\\_teacher2008.html](http://www.ihare.org/programs_teacher2008.html).

**June 5, 2008:** Tools for Tolerance Program, **Stop Bullies, Stop Bystanders**. This program will help participants construct how they can measurably reduce and even eliminate the vicious cycle of putdowns, intimidation, and violence that plagues school buildings. Stop Bullies, Stop Bystanders<sup>®</sup> provides a framework to identify bullying and research-supported suggestions for responses that are unlike any other program. Specific attention is directed at the potentially lethal combination of hate, anger, bias, isolation, alienation, weapons, the internet, and peer dynamics. To register, visit [www.toolsfortolerance.com/nytceducators](http://www.toolsfortolerance.com/nytceducators).

### Events

**Saturday, March 15, 2008, 11:00 AM**, Don't miss this special book signing at Borders. Beth Finke and Hanni the Seeing Eye dog will be signing their new book, *Hanni And Beth: Safe & Sound*, Borders of Bohemia, 5151 Sunrise Highway, Bohemia.

**March 15-17: ASCD 2008 Annual Conference: Courageous Leadership for Positive Change.** Devastated by Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans citizens and Americans across the nation have worked hard to rebuild the Big Easy and provide an appropriate school environment for students who are returning. ASCD will contribute to that industrious spirit by holding the 2008 Annual Conference in New Orleans. The ASCD Homepage highlights this event and offers information on sessions, becoming a conference volunteer, the DonorsChoose Challenge and more. [View the ASCD Homepage](#)

**April 2-5, 2008: [2008 CCCC Convention](#)**, New Orleans. Did you know that you can plan your 2008 CCCC Convention experience online? The [Online Program](#) is your guide to the hundreds of sessions, workshops, technological offerings, and innovations in educational materials available during this year's Convention. [Register online](#) today. As of March 1, there is still housing available at the New Orleans Doubletree Motel. Don't miss a great professional development experience that you'll never forget! See you in New Orleans!

**May 7, 2008, 8:30AM-3:30PM:** New York State Alliance for Arts Education, in partnership with the Art League of Long Island, East End Arts Council, Eastern Suffolk BOCES and Long Island Arts in Education Roundtable, will present a day-long conference on Long Island; **Tools for Success: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning**, The conference will provide strategies for using arts integration as an engaging tool to build the creative thinking skills that are essential for students' success in the 21st Century global workplace. This conference is designed for non-arts and arts educators, administrators, teaching artists, and cultural organizations. Bring a team! Register a group of three from your school and receive discounted registration. Registration is \$125 for individuals or \$300 for a team of three. Fees

include professional development workshops, lunch, and one complimentary copy each of the Dana Press' *Transforming Arts Teaching: The Role of Higher Education, Planning an Arts Centered School and Partnering Arts Education: A Working Model from Arts Connection*. To register, download a registration form at [www.nysaae.org/artsedconf.htm](http://www.nysaae.org/artsedconf.htm). For more information, contact the New York State Alliance for Arts Education at [info@nysaae.org](mailto:info@nysaae.org).

**May 12, 2008, 8:15AM to 3PM:** Mid-Hudson Principals' Center *presents The Promise and Practice of Professional Learning Communities featuring Dr. Giselle Martin-Kniep* and the Communities for Learning Staff, Ulster BOCES Conference Center. Spend a day with *Communities for Learning: Leading lasting change.™* **Target audience: teams of teachers, administrators and students.** Priority will be given to Principals' Center members. You may register by: The MyLearningPlan.com direct link at <http://www.ulsterboces.org/>; choose the Principals' Center option. Contact Rebecca Rotzler by phone at 845.255.1402, by e-mail at <mailto:rrrotzler@mhnic.org>. Fee: \$50 each day for Principals' Center members, \$125 all others. Light lunch & materials included.

**June 2, 2008:** The OWL Teacher Center in cooperation with Molloy College announces an Information Meeting for all teachers interested in a **Certificate Program in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)**. Secondary Teachers will be able to meet with representatives from Molloy at 3:30 p.m.; Elementary Teachers will meet at 4:15 PM. Site: Lindenhurst Administration Bldg., All-Purpose Room, 350 Daniel St. Lindenhurst, NY 11757. Come and meet the Molloy representatives who will answer all of your questions about the program. Prospective classes to be held in Lindenhurst with a 30% tuition discount. Contact Owl Teacher Center at 631/226-2772 or [www.owlcenter.org](http://www.owlcenter.org)

**July 20-23, 2008:** Reserve your seat now for the [NCTE Institute for 21st Century Literacies](#) in Indianapolis, Indiana. The hands-on institute will help you develop and design literacy curriculum, instructional strategies, and assessment practices to prepare students for success in the 21st century. The institute is meant for teachers, literacy coaches, department chairs, and district leaders.

**August 11–13, 2008, 9:00AM–3:00PM:** **First Annual Literacy Coaching Conference: Summer Institute Focused on Enhancing Teaching and Learning Across Content Areas**, A High Quality Institute with nationally renowned literacy coaching advocates and authors. Keynote speakers include: Dr. Jim Knight from University of Kansas—Center for Research on Learning, Dr. Cheryl Dozier from University of New York at Albany, Mary Catherine Moran from SUNY Oneonta—Eastern Stream Center, A group of experienced coaches and professional learning providers will provide workshop sessions for demonstrations and modeling. State University of New York, Oneonta, Division of

Education. For Graduate Credit or Professional Development (one seat hour). For more information, please contact **Jean Yaro at 607-436-3176, Fax: 607-436-2554, E-mail: [yaroje@oneonta.edu](mailto:yaroje@oneonta.edu)**. Catskill Regional Teacher Center. Registration fee of \$180 includes continental breakfast and box lunch.

### Announcements

**Have you seen our website? [www.seteachercenter.org](http://www.seteachercenter.org).** There you can find information about our workroom for teachers, low cost graduate programs, in-service credit opportunities, mini-grant applications, Policy Board members, newsletters and e-newsletters, collegial inquiry funding, instructional coaching...and more teacher resources.

**Take the Teacher Challenge at <http://www.teacherchallenge.org/>!** The Teacher Challenge is a competition for educators who teach energy-related topics. The competition was created to encourage collegiality among teachers and to give teachers an opportunity to share quality educational materials. To become finalists and compete in the Teacher Challenge, teachers must first submit a lesson plan that demonstrates how they teach about energy. **Who May Enter the Teacher Challenge?**

Educators from K-12 schools, science and nature centers, museums, or other informal teaching venue.

**Entries due March 31 for the May 8 Challenge!**

**April 18<sup>th</sup> deadline. Attention Teachers:** Please help us find our "**Student of the Year - Hero for Tolerance.**" The Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center needs your help! We would like to honor students who have demonstrated a positive change in their attitude or behavior as a result of attending our Tolerance Workshop. This award will promote tolerance in your school and community by publicly recognizing a student who is a leader against prejudice and a role model for justice. The "Student of the Year - Hero for Tolerance" award will be ceremoniously presented on **May 7, 2008** at the **Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center's** annual Tolerance Benefit. Contact Sarah at [sarahcushman@holocaust-nassau.org](mailto:sarahcushman@holocaust-nassau.org) or **516-571-8040** for a nomination form.

**Make Your Plans for Poem in Your Pocket Day!** Invite students and colleagues to choose a favorite poem and carry it in their pockets to celebrate the first national **Poem in Your Pocket Day** on **April 17**, sponsored by the Academy of American Poets. During the day, encourage readers to unfold and read their pocketed poems in celebration of the visions of poets. To share your ideas or receive more information about Poem in Your Pocket Day, please contact Elaine Bleakney at [ebleakney@poets.org](mailto:ebleakney@poets.org).

**Application deadline- May 9, 2008; 2008 Toyota Teacher Program.** Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. began taking U.S. teachers to Japan on study tours in 1998. After 10 successful years and almost 500 participants, this educational and cultural exchange has exceeded expectations and set a new precedent for Toyota's philanthropic future. **Applications are available now for the 2008 Galapagos Program!** Selected participants will travel from November 22 - December 6, 2008 on a fully

funded study program that is geared toward international and environmental study. Participants work to create an interdisciplinary lesson that can be implemented in their home schools. Check online at [www.iie.org/toyota](http://www.iie.org/toyota) or e-mail to [toyotateach@iie.org](mailto:toyotateach@iie.org).

**Save the Date! May 22, 2008, 8:30 AM—2:45 PM: Meeting the Challenge: Success for Special Needs Learners**, Melville Hilton. For more information about this SETC-sponsored conference, go to [www.seteachercenter.org](http://www.seteachercenter.org).

## *Sharing Success Research*

Please [click here](#) to access research information on:

- School Reform [HS]
- Homework [Elem, MS, HS]
- Out-Of-School Programs [Elem, MS, HS]
- Professional Development [Elem, MS, HS]

Please click on the link to access research information. Elementary, MS and HS

- [Character Education](#)

Please [click here](#) to access research information on:

- Instructional Time [Elem]
- Reading [MS, HS]
- Response to Intervention [Elem, MS, HS]
- Reading, Writing, and Mathematics [Elem, MS, HS]

## *Worthwhile Websites*

Eight great websites for elementary and middle school students.

[IEEE Virtual Museum](http://www.ieee-virtual-museum.org/).  <http://www.ieee-virtual-museum.org/> For "electrifying" information about the history and uses of electricity, visit this site sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Inc. Biographies of well-known, and not so well-known, scientists in this field are included.

[The Imagination Factory](http://www.kid-at-art.com).  <http://www.kid-at-art.com> This site provides art activities using recycled materials. Ideas and clear directions can be found for painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, fiber arts, and crafts from recycled media.

[Indexes to Biographies.](http://www-groups.dcs.st-and.ac.uk/~history/BiogIndex.html)  <http://www-groups.dcs.st-and.ac.uk/~history/BiogIndex.html>  
Alphabetical and chronological index to mathematicians.

[Infection, Detection, Protection.](http://www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/infection)   <http://www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/infection> Created in conjunction with the American Museum of Natural History's "Epidemic! The World of Infectious Disease" exhibit, this site will help kids and their parents understand what causes diseases and how to prevent them. Find out how Lou got the flu, investigate bacteria in the cafeteria, and more.

[InfoNation.](http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation/info.asp)  <http://www.cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation/info.asp> Choose two countries and the site will compare them statistically, economically, and more.

[Insectclopedia](http://www.insectclopedia.com)  <http://www.insectclopedia.com> Comprehensive site about the world of insects ranges from identification to bug cuisine.

[International Digital Children's Library](http://www.childrenslibrary.org/)     <http://www.childrenslibrary.org/> Read books from around the world when you visit this website. Hundreds of books in twenty-nine different languages are available.

[International Tennis Federation.](http://www.itftennis.com/)  <http://www.itftennis.com/> It will also become a comprehensive library of current information including player biographies, results, rankings, Davis Cup, Fed Cup, and other team competition results." Excellent section of rules of tennis. Easy navigating.

## NC7E Inbox

### News

**Prisons vs. Colleges.** A [report](#) by the Pew Charitable Trusts shows that Vermont, Michigan, Oregon, Connecticut, and Delaware spend more on their prisons than they do on institutions of higher education. [Inside Higher Ed, February 29, 2008](#)

**U.S. Educators Seek New Ideas Abroad.** In an effort to raise U.S. students' performance on international tests, Americans are looking to other countries for the best education technology practices. [eSchool News, February 19, 2008](#).

**How to Make Great Teachers.** Economist William Hussar of the National Center for Education Statistics predicts that the United States will need to recruit 2.8 million more teachers (3.2 million people teach in U.S. public schools) over the next eight years because of baby-boomer retirement, growing student enrollment, and staff turnover. The key is finding and keeping quality teachers. [Time & CNN, February 13, 2008](#).

**Georgia County Going to All Single-Sex Public Schools.** [Atlanta Journal-Constitution, February 14, 2008](#)

### Reading and Literacy.

"Staff Development Tied to Literacy Gains for Students": [Education Week, February 11, 2008](#)

"School Program Boosts Student Reading Levels": [The Post and Courier, February 14, 2008](#)

### Writing.

**The Power of Words for Cancer Patients:** A new report in [The Oncologist](#) suggests that expressive writing may improve the quality of life for cancer patients. [The New York Times, February 26, 2008](#)

**Balancing Academic Tradition and Skills Employers Demand:** [The Washington Post, March 3, 2008](#)

**Good Grammar Gets Its Day:** [National Grammar Day](#) was Tuesday, March 4. [The Daily Tar Heel, March 4, 2008](#)

### Blog....

**Grammar Myths for Language Learners.** Yesterday was the first [National Grammar Day](#), a new holiday that encourages people to champion good grammar. NCTE INBOX blogger Traci Gardner celebrates by sharing strategies for good grammar instruction for English language learners in [this week's NCTE INBOX Blog](#).

### Ideas

**Grammar and the English Language Learner.** The [Policy Research Brief on English Language Learners](#) published this month discusses the wide range of students who are learning English in U.S. schools. Despite the many ways that they are different, all English language learners (ELLs) can benefit from instruction that positions their native languages as resources -- even grammar instruction. These resources focus on strategies that demonstrate the point. ELLs can benefit from instruction that starts where they are grammatically and that acknowledges the meanings they have constructed. Learn more in the *Language Arts* article "[Analyzing the Writing of English Learners: A Functional Approach](#)" (E), which discusses how to talk about language in the context of teachers' own writing.

Teachers hear about the importance of teaching grammar in context all the time, but what does it mean? The *English Journal* article "[Zooming In and Zooming Out: Putting Grammar in Context into Context](#)" (M) explores how powerful working with only a few sentences can be for a group of sixth graders.

Allow students to make their own context for grammar exploration with the *English Journal* article "[Analyzing Grammar Rants: An Alternative to Traditional Grammar Instruction](#)" (S-C). ELLs are sure to have been taught "good" and "proper" rules that they were later told they could break. Make their own language experience the focus by asking them to think about how such rules work (or don't). Check out the *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* article "[Why Our Students Need Instruction in Grammar, and How We Should Go about It](#)" (C) for a research-based theoretical underpinning for effective grammar instruction as well as several specific strategies -- based on experience and

research -- for addressing grammar productively. Teacher educators can use the journaling technique demonstrated in the NCTE book [Engaging Grammar: Practical Advice for Real Classrooms](#) (TE), which focuses on how to move beyond fixing surface errors to teaching how grammar can be used as the building blocks of sentences to create meaning. The book's [sample chapter](#) chronicles how co-author Tom Oliva, an experienced teacher inexperienced in teaching grammar, applies the concepts in this book in a real classroom.

**Exploring Gender Issues in Fairy Tales.** Wilhelm Grimm was born in Hanua, Germany, on February 24, 1786. Celebrate the 222nd birthday of this famous folklorist and gear up for [Women's History Month](#) in March by exploring the Grimm Brothers' famous stories and their representations of women and girls. These resources can get you started: [Once Upon a Time Rethought: Writing Fractured Fairy Tales](#). How are gender roles part of the fairy tale genre? What makes a fairy tale a fairy tale? In this ReadWriteThink lesson, students work together to craft a list of common fairy tale elements; then, they explore and analyze a variety of tales, then compose their own, new tales for others to enjoy. [Enchanting Readers with Revisionist Fairy Tales](#). Ask students to examine three examples of revisionist fairy tales -- a book, a graphic novel, and a poem -- in which female characters act in empowered roles rather than behaving in helpless and submissive ways, which is often the case in traditional folk or fairy tales, in this ReadWriteThink lesson plan by NCTE author James Bucky Carter. [Learning English with High-Interest, Low-Vocabulary Literature: Immigrant Students in a High School New-Arrival Center](#), Using *The Paper Bag Princess* and *Super Cilantro Girl*, the activities described in this *English Leadership Quarterly* article explore vocabulary and language acquisition for ELL and ESL students using an additive approach that validates students' heritage language and culture. [Reading as Resistance: Gendered Messages in Literature and Media](#). Explore the social construction of gendered messages in this *English Journal* article. The activities, which can be easily adapted for the college classroom, include an analysis of Disney's *Cinderella*. [Gender 101: Helping Students Become Aware of Stereotypes of Gender and Language](#). This article from *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* invites students to draw from their own knowledge of gender to become more aware of stereotypes of gender and language. Ask students to apply the analytical techniques to well-known fairy tales and folktales.

## [In the News](#)

### [Eye on Curriculum](#)

[Report: New methods more than double Oregon's ELL pass rate.](#) Instead of simply exposing non-native speakers to the English language through immersion, Oregon schools have found that explicitly teaching grammar and rules to English-language learners helped nearly 9,000 students demonstrate fluency in English in the 2006-2007 school year, versus fewer than 4,000 the year before. "For a long time, we just read to them and exposed them to English and figured they would pick it up just like

native speakers do," said Danelle Heikkila, who directs an Oregon district's ELL program. [The Oregonian \(Portland\)](#) (3/6)

[Culinary-arts class rates high among teens.](#) A Minnesota culinary-arts class has become so popular that the school had to establish a waiting list in its second year. "Culinary arts is a great opportunity for people, even if they're not interested in it as a career," student Lessard said. "It's a great class. It opens your mind to things you probably wouldn't have tried before." [St. Cloud Times \(Minn.\)](#) (3/1)

[Dividing schools by gender gains traction in the U.S.](#) Single-sex schools are gaining momentum in the U.S., according to The New York Times. "What kind of message does it give when you tell a group of kids that boys and girls need to be separated because they don't even see or hear alike?" asks legal scholar Rosemary Salomone. "Every time I hear of school officials selling single-sex programs to parents based on brain research, my heart sinks." [The New York Times](#) (3/2)

[Imaginative play may help solve some behavioral problems.](#) Researchers say unstructured play helps children learn to control their own emotions and behavior -- abilities that are a better predictor of a child's academic success than IQ. The regulated play many modern children experience doesn't foster such skills because the control has shifted to adults, which is something several researchers suspect may be behind the rising number of ADHD diagnoses. "I think a lot of kids get diagnosed with ADHD now, not all but many just because they never learned how to exercise ... the executive functions early," neuroscientist Adele Diamond says. [National Public Radio \(text and audio\)](#) (2/28)

### [\*Professional Leadership\*](#)

[Educators: Overbearing parents can make a tough job more difficult.](#) Some 60% of teachers in one Maryland county say they have been harassed by "helicopter" parents, dubbed this because of their hovering tendencies, according to the local union's job-satisfaction survey. "The workload is bad, but coupled with over-demanding parents, the job is horrible," said union president Ann DeLacy. "Teachers are leaving teaching because of parents. The turnover is incredible." [The Sun \(Baltimore\)](#) (free registration) (3/4)

[Teachers to join U.S. Education Department staff.](#) U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings plans to install five teachers on her staff, just months before her term ends. The Bush administration ended a teacher-in-residence program in 2001. [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (3/3)

[Iowa district to drug-test all employees.](#) A Des Moines-area system is believed to be the first in Iowa to mandate drug-testing for all prospective and current public school employees. "It was surprising to me that other districts don't do this," said West Des Moines school board member Susan Moritz, who helped create the policy. "It came out of the idea that our bus drivers were already being tested, and if we felt that was important for our bus drivers, wasn't it also important for the people who were in our buildings?" [The Des Moines Register \(Iowa\)](#) (2/27)

### [\*Learning and Teaching\*](#)

[Opinion: Why "charity" in education may be unkind.](#) Depending on "charity," be it in the form of federal grants or school vouchers, puts educational standards at risk, writes Mary Tedrow, a Virginia high-school English and journalism teacher. Not only is "the good that is done ... unevenly distributed," there is "the contingent effect on public policy," Tedrow says. "Why shape policy to reflect justice if someone is willing to stand in to fill some of the gap with a plug of money?" [Teacher Magazine](#) (2/26)

### [Technology](#)

[How important is technological literacy among educators?](#) Members of the Teacher Leaders Network ponder the question in a recent discussion of educator Karl Fisch's [award-winning 2007 blog post](#), with some highlighting their own insecurities about using technology and others expressing frustrations with those who refuse to embrace it. [Teacher Magazine](#) (3/5)

[Teachers urge stores to boycott "Bully" video game.](#) A group representing 4 million teachers in six countries, including the U.S., wants retailers to stop selling "Bully: Scholarship Edition," a video game that the educators say encourages bullying by rewarding players who harass fellow students and teachers. Developer [Rockstar Games](#), whose updated version of the original game, "Bully," goes on sale today, said that critics were overreacting and that the game was meant purely as entertainment. [The Globe and Mail \(Toronto\)](#) (3/4)

### [Policy Watch](#)

[Ruling: Home-schooled children must have credentialed teacher.](#) A California appeals court has ruled that parents without teaching licenses cannot home school their children. It's unclear whether the ruling will be enforced, this article says, noting that the state's education department permits home schooling so long as certain conditions are satisfied but currently does little to ensure these qualifications are being met. [Los Angeles Times](#) (free registration) (3/6)

[All buildings may be green by 2011 in Ohio district.](#) An Ohio district aims to become the first in the state where children spend their entire K-12 education in environmentally friendly school buildings. Ohio has been a leader in the green school movement, mandating last fall that all new schools rank high in environmental friendliness. [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#) (3/3)

[Clinton offers plan to halve child poverty in 12 years.](#) Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., wants to boost Head Start and other preschool programs and improve access to healthy foods as part of her plan to halve the number of children living in poverty by 2020. "I have spent a lifetime working to help children, which is my first passion. If our children get off to a good start so much of the other stuff is taken care of," she said. [International Herald Tribune/Associated Press](#) (2/28)

### [NCLB](#)

[Spellings stumps for NCLB renewal.](#) U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings was in Texas last week, as part of a cross-country sweep in which she is urging the renewal of NCLB. "Parents know a lot more about their schools than they ever have," Spellings said of the school data that's now available. "It's going to be hard to take that away." [Houston Chronicle](#) (3/1)

[Bipartisan attacks greet Bush's education budget.](#) Some Republican and Democratic lawmakers in Congress are united in their opposition to President George W. Bush's education budget proposal, saying it inadequately funds both NCLB and special education. Rep. David R. Obey, D-Wis., who oversees education appropriations in the House, said Congress will simply wait for a new president if Bush isn't willing to compromise. [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (2/27)

[Virginia may abandon NCLB.](#) If the federal government refuses to grant the state's wavier requests, Virginia's board of education should plan a withdrawal from the federal law by July 2009, according to legislation approved by the state's House of Delegates. Virginia's Senate has passed similar legislation, albeit without a deadline. Withdrawing from NCLB could cost the state in excess of \$350 million per year in federal aid, according to this article. [The Virginian-Pilot \(Norfolk-Portsmouth-Virginia Beach-Chesapeake\)](#) (2/25)

### [In the Field](#)

[Study: Reduced TV, computer use lead to weight loss in children.](#) Reducing computer usage and TV viewing by half allowed children to eat less and lose weight, U.S. researchers said. The study "shows the upside to this ominous mix -- reducing screen time can help prevent childhood obesity by several mechanisms. Less screen time may be even more important to dietary pattern than to physical activity pattern," Dr. David Katz, director of the Yale University School of Medicine Prevention Research Center, said. [Forbes/HealthDay News](#) (3/3)

*"I like a teacher who gives you something to take home to think about besides homework."*

---Lily Tomlin