

E-newsletter, October 2007

Dear Colleague,

Next week is National Newspaper Week. Scroll down to NCTE Inbox for great ideas to enrich your lessons using newspaper articles. Please share this e-newsletter with your peers and invite them to subscribe by e-mailing us at teacher_center@wsboces.org with their names and e-mail addresses.

Jane, Carol and Elyse

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A Light Touch

Only in America...

...do drugstores make the sick walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.

...do people order double cheeseburgers, large fries, and a diet coke.

...do banks leave both doors open and then chain the pens to the counters.

...do we leave cars worth thousands of dollars in the driveway and put our useless junk in the garage.

....do we buy hot dogs in packages of ten and buns in packages of eight.

...do we use the word 'politics' to describe the process so well: 'Poli' in Latin meaning 'many' and 'tics' meaning 'bloodsucking creatures'

Ever Wonder...

Why the sun lightens our hair, but darkens our skin?

Why you don't ever see the headline "Psychic Wins Lottery"?

Why "abbreviated" is such a long word?
Why doctors call what they do "practice"?
Why the man who invests all your money is called a broker?
Why the time of day with the slowest traffic is called rush hour?
Why Noah didn't swat those two mosquitoes?
Why they sterilize the needle for lethal injections?
Why don't sheep shrink when it rains?
If con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?

FYI

Courses and Workshops

Looking for a convenient Master's Degree Program? Here are two New Programs!

- **MA in Liberal Studies** with concentration in special ed inclusion or literacy (starts Winter, 2008) Stony Brook University
- **Master of Science in Literacy Education** (starts January, 2008) Dowling College

Benefits of enrolling through SETC include reduced tuition, convenient location, and a schedule tailored to your working calendar. For registration and information, call Suffolk's Edge Teacher Center at 254-0107 or check our website: <http://www.seteachercenter.org/> Click on Professional Development.

Online Courses

The NYS Online Academy is open to all teachers in the state! Sponsored by Teacher Centers, it can be found at the Rockland Teacher Center website at <http://www.rockteach.org/>. Click on Online Courses, then Online Academy Catalog and follow the directions. Be sure to check with your district for course approval.

Events

October 17, 2007. Kids Safe Online Cyber Security Awareness Conference in Albany with a simultaneous web-cast. Web-cast details and registration info are posted on www.msisac.org

October 18 and 19, 2007. The New York State Historical Association Presents: **2007 49th Annual October Conference For Teachers**. The conference focuses on issues, topics, and practices in social studies education and is held on the campus of the New York State Historical Association and its sister institution, The Farmers' Museum, Cooperstown, New York. You can download a conference packet and a registration form at: http://www.nysha.org/nysha/for_teachers/october_conference. To request a hard copy of the materials or to ask questions, email: statewideprograms@nysha.org.

October 19 -20, 2007, Food, Land and People Facilitator Training at the Doubletree Hotel in Syracuse, New York/. New York Ag in the Classroom is proud to announce that we have formed a Food Land and People Coalition within New York State. This will provide our teachers with a valuable, nationally acclaimed curriculum- /Food, Land, and People/- to be used in their classrooms across New York State. The goal of this training is to provide

trainers with key information to further develop their knowledge about the relationships between agriculture, the environment, and human populations and a network of professionals in the agricultural industry who will be key resources to agricultural education. As participants in this hands-on workshop you will learn about Food Land and People's philosophy, mission, conceptual framework, individual lessons, and facilitator responsibilities. You will receive a curriculum of 55 hands-on lessons, developed and tested by more than a thousand educators. The k-12 subjects range from environmental science and stewardship to human populations and land use issues.

This training is designed to train 15 educators and 15 agriculturalists who will be able to provide teacher in-services that teach teachers how to implement the Food, Land, and People curriculum.

This high-quality professional development opportunity meets the criteria for the No Child Left Behind Act section 9101(34). Each participant will receive a certificate for 16 professional development hours. There are no registration, lodging, or meal costs to you or your organization/school for your attendance. If you are interested in being part of this exciting educational in-service please contact:

Shari Lighthall, Professional Development Specialist at 315-346-1222 or slighthall@oswegatchie.org. Class is limited to 30 participants. For more information visit the Food Land and People web site at <http://www.foodlandpeople.org/>

October 29, 2007, 9AM - 2:30PM, 2007 Archives Month Event - Local Long Island History. Visit the Long Island Parks Regional Archives at the Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park. The Archives were created to ensure the long-term preservation of the development of Long Island, especially during the Robert Moses era. The collection dates from 1926 to 1980 and is an extensive documentation of Long Island's state parks and parkways as they have evolved over the past century. This is a unique opportunity to preview a rich source of history, and assess the future potential for student field trips to enrich the Social Studies curriculum. Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park in Oyster Bay, Burns Conference Center. \$30 registration Fee includes Breakfast, Lunch and Tours. To register, send your check for \$30 payable to and mailed to **Thomas A. Salzman, Historian, c/o Hempstead Town Clerk's Office, 1 Washington Street, Hempstead, NY 11550.** **Recreate or copy, paste, and print and fill out the form below and send with your check.**

Name: _____ Organization: _____
Number of Participants: _____ Email: _____
Mailing
Address: _____ State/Zip: _____
Phone: _____

Nov 1, 2007, Adolescent Literacy Conference to be held in Albany. NYSUT and the New York State Reading Association are co-sponsoring the event. The symposium will be held at the Campus Center at the University at Albany from 8:45 am until 4 pm. This will be an opportunity to hear from scholars, researchers, and practitioners who have been

researching and/or implementing successful literacy plans in a format that includes both general sessions and smaller breakout sessions. The cost is \$75 which includes continental breakfast, lunch and closing reception. Seating will be limited to 150 registrations. For registration information please go to www.nysreading.org.

November 17, 2007, [NCTE's Day of Early Childhood](#) at the [NCTE Annual Convention](#).

focusing on issues and strategies for teaching preschool and early elementary-age children.



Keynote presenter is Debbie Miller and closing keynote presenters are Celia Genishi and Anne Haas Dyson. Lucy Calkins's organization, **the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project**, is the highlight of [a special exploration of schools](#) during the convention. See strong reading and writing workshops in practice as you visit two different schools. At the end of the day, convene for a debriefing session led by Lucy Calkins, TCRWP staff developers, and New York City school leaders including Joel Klein, Chancellor of New York City schools.

Announcements

Sign-Up Deadline: October 31, 2007. Invite *Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest* into Your High School's English and Theater Classrooms! Register your school to participate in *Poetry Out Loud!* Administered by the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and the New York State Alliance for Arts Education (NYSAAE) and sponsored by Time Warner Cable, *Poetry Out Loud* provides a new and exciting channel for learning in high school English and Theater classrooms by inviting the dynamic aspects of classic world literature and charismatic public speaking into English and theater classes. *Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest* was created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation to encourage high school students to read a wide range of literature, building an understanding of texts and the world around them. *Poetry Out Loud* also helps students to master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritage. *Poetry Out Loud* satisfies NCTE English Language Arts Standards.

Upon registration, teachers will receive dynamic teaching tools that will invoke students' excitement about literature and poetry recitation, including sample lesson plans, audio CDs of poets reciting their own famous works, publicity materials for school competitions, and a DVD of winning student performances from the 2007 *Poetry Out Loud* National Finals. Through January 16th, classroom- and school-level competitions will take place across the state. The winners from school-level competitions will advance to regional competitions. From there, winners will go on to compete at the New York State finals, to be held in Albany, NY on **March 13th** (snow date March 14th). The state-level winner will receive \$200 and an all-expenses-paid trip with a chaperone to Washington, DC to participate in the National Finals in late April 2008. The winner will also receive a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books for his or her school library. A runner-up will receive \$100, with \$200 for his or her school library. Learn more about *Poetry Out Loud* by visiting www.nysaae.org/appinfo.htm or contact Lainy Snyder at lainy@nysaae.org for further information.

Arts in Education Funding for Long Island School/Arts Partnerships: Applications for

funding arts in education school/arts partnership projects for the 2007-08 school year are now available through the **Local Capacity Building (LCB) Initiative**, a statewide effort to provide local support for widespread participation in arts in education. The applicants of record for this program will be a school and either an individual teaching artist or a cultural organization. However, eligible projects will involve a direct collaboration between at least one classroom teacher and one teaching artist. The application deadline is **November 30, 2007** for projects starting **January 2008**. To learn more about past LCB Arts in Education projects and future workshop dates, and to download your copy of the application, visit the East End Arts Council's website at www.eastendarts.org or contact the LCB Coordinator, Ray Saltini, at (631) 610-8993 or Patricia Snyder, Executive Director, East End Arts Council at (631) 727-0900.

Worthwhile Websites

Technology Donation Programs

<http://www.crc.org/> Computer Recycling Center, Inc. (CRC). Through its "Recycling Computers for Education" program, CRC has been placing refurbished computers in California schools for the past five years. With its new "One Hundred for One Hundred" national campaign, CRC's goal is to inspire 100 groups, businesses, or individuals to collect 100 computers each over the course of 100 days, and then place these computers in schools within each community. Check the website for additional information.



<http://www.computers.fed.gov/> The Computers for Learning program donates surplus federal computer equipment to schools and educational nonprofits, giving special consideration to those with the greatest need. Any public, private, or parochial school or home-school serving pre-K through 12 students in the U.S. or its territories is eligible. Find out more on this website.



<http://www.giftsinkind.org/> Gifts In Kind International. Each year, thousands of companies contribute hundreds of millions of dollars in newly manufactured products through Gifts In Kind International to a network of over 50,000 charities around the world. To receive product donations and discounts, registration with Gifts In Kind International's Agency Partner program is required. Learn more on their website.



Sixteen great websites for elementary and/or middle school kids

[Eastchester \(N.Y.\) Middle School.](http://www.eastchester.k12.ny.us/schools/ms/index.htm) 


<http://www.eastchester.k12.ny.us/schools/ms/index.htm> A lively, diverse page of Web resources and information.



[Edheads Simple Machines.](http://www.edheads.org/activities/simple-machines/index.htm)   <http://www.edheads.org/activities/simple-machines/index.htm> Visit The House and The Tool Shed and learn about simple and compound machines.

[Edison National Historic Site.](http://www.nps.gov/edis/home.htm)   <http://www.nps.gov/edis/home.htm> This national site has a nice "Kid's Corner" with a large number of biographical pictorials of Thomas Edison.


EdSITEment   <http://edsitement.neh.gov> Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, provides web access to some of the world's great museums, libraries, cultural institutions, and universities. Lesson plans are also available for educators.



EIA Kid's Page.   <http://www.eia.doe.gov/kids/index.html> Learn about all the different forms of energy and their uses from Energy Ant.


Electronic Frontier Freedom Foundation.  <http://www.eff.org/> The Electronic Frontier Foundation is a non-profit civil liberties organization working in the public interest to protect privacy, free expression, and access to public resources and information online as well as to promote responsibility in new media.



Energy Quest.   <http://www.energyquest.ca.gov>. Wonderful adventures in energy education from the California Energy Commission.

English Grammar.  <http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/>
A dictionary of English grammar.

Enigma.  <http://www.stephen.com/enigma/enigma.html> This is a sliding puzzle site based on a toy of years ago. It offers interesting challenges and is totally addictive.



Environmental Education for Kids! (EEK!).   <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/eeek/>
Lots of information and ideas about the earth, animals, and other neat stuff including what kinds of jobs are available for people interested in the environment.



Eureka Science: I Can Do That!  <http://www.eurekascience.com/ICanDoThat/>
Learn all about what genes are and how they work. Also learn about cells, cloning and more.

Experimental Science Projects: An Introductory Level Guide.   <http://www.isd77.k12.mn.us/resources/cf/SciProjIntro.html> Do you have to do an experimental science project? This site provides tips for conducting the experiment and using the scientific method.

The Exploratorium, San Francisco.   <http://www.exploratorium.edu> An online version of a hands-on museum in San Francisco that permits you to do your own cow's eye dissection or learn the science behind a home run. Be sure to visit the "Learning Studio."

Explore DC.org.  <http://www.exploredc.org> Produced by WETA (D.C.'s public broadcasting station), this searchable database offers information and visuals about our nation's capital.

Exploring Leonardo.   <http://www.mos.org/sln/Leonardo/LeoHomePage.html>
"Leonardo da Vinci had a keen eye and quick mind that led him to make important scientific discoveries, yet he never published his ideas. He was a gentle vegetarian who loved animals and despised war, yet he worked as a military engineer to invent advanced and deadly weapons."

Exploring Maryland's Roots.   <http://mdroots.thinkport.org>. Learn about Maryland's pre-colonial and early colonial history through this interactive site.

[Sharing Success Research](#)

You Asked -- We Answered. Sample requests for research that we received from NYS educators and responded to:

Can you send any research on how to improve high school graduation rates and decrease drop out rates? [HS](#)

I am looking for information on Languages Other than English (LOTE) for our K-12 study group. [K-12](#)

Quantitative research data that shows positive academic results from implementing inclusion models of teaching in middle school settings - specifically, humanities-based courses (ELA and Social Studies). [MS](#)

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

- **College Admission [HS]**
- **Effective Reading Programs [HS/MS]**
- **Differentiating Instruction [K-12]**
 Spotlight: Autism [K-12]

[NCTE Inbox](#)

[News](#)

Tapping Instant Messaging. While some teachers are telling students to put away their cell phones, others are using instant messaging as part of the lessons in their classrooms. NCTE member William Kist is quoted. [Education Week, September 12, 2007](#)

Black History Museum Debuts Online. A new website will allow people to help shape the content of the National Museum of African American History and Culture until the building is completed some years from now. [The Washington Post, September 26, 2007](#)

Meeting of the Minds. In order to find ways to measure the learning of college students -- and ultimately compare those measurements across colleges -- the U.S. Department of Education plans to give three college associations a \$2.4 million grant to help them assess existing -- and develop new -- tests and other tools to measure student outcomes on a wide range of skills. [Inside Higher Ed, September 27, 2007](#)

Music Improves Verbal Skills. A new study, "[Musicians Have Enhanced Subcortical Auditory and Audiovisual Processing of Speech and Music](#)," shows that music training enhances the centers of the brain used for speaking and reading. [Science Live, October 1, 2007](#)

Principal Takes on the Summer Reading List. Joe Meloche, principal of Cherry Hill West High School in New Jersey, talks with Scott Simon about why he read all the texts on his school's summer reading list. [NPR, September 29, 2007](#)

. . . **MORE on Words and Punctuation.** "Spoken Word Not Enough for Dictionary": [Associated Press, September 15, 2007](#), "Smile: The :-) Turns 25": [USA Today, September 18, 2007](#), "Hyphens Perish as English Marches On": [MSNBC.com, September 23, 2007](#)

Schools' Censorship Growing, Says Group. Mark Goodman, executive director of the [Student Press Law Center](#) and 2002 winner of the [NCTE/SLATE National Intellectual Freedom Award](#), says that recently "administrators are likely to attempt to censor student expression in ways that I would argue the law doesn't allow, or more importantly, good education practice shouldn't allow." [The Washington Times, September 19, 2007](#)

91-Year-Old Uses Arts Program to Transform Struggling Students. His love for music and his belief that it can help students want to learn and succeed in the classroom led a retired business expert to develop a program that would use artists in cooperation with classroom teachers. [The Arizona Republic, September 12, 2007](#)

Views

School Writing Policies Make a Difference. Accomplished writing and sound writing instruction can be found in many schools. But those schools that consistently show high levels of achievement in writing succeed because they have institutionalized productive teaching and learning practices in their school writing policies. Consult the following guidelines for developing a writing policy in your school:

- [For elementary schools](#)
- [For middle schools](#)
- [For secondary schools](#)
- [For colleges](#)

Making Meaning through New Literacies. As the WTSP TV News story "[Students Learn to Podcast for a Grade](#)" points out, new literacies are coming into the classroom. See the [NCTE Policy Collection on Multimodal Literacies](#) to learn more about using technology and other multimodal literacies in the classroom.

Ideas

Newspapers in the Classroom. Choose your classroom activities for [National Newspaper Week](#), October 7-13. Journalism is a vital part of the English language arts and composition curriculum, as confirmed in NCTE's 2004 [Resolution on the Importance of Journalism Courses and Programs in English Curricula](#). The following resources provide options for using newspapers in the classroom at all educational levels. Elementary students can explore and write op-ed pieces, using the resources in the *Language Arts* article "[Exploring Inquiry as a Teaching Stance in the Writing Workshop](#)" (E). The article includes a "snapshot" of a fifth-

grade writing workshop and its study of op-ed writing to show inquiry in action.

If you work with middle level students, try writing letters to the editor, using ideas from the *Voices from the Middle* article "[Going Public: Letters to the World](#)" (M), which includes criteria for effective letters and an exploration of how student writing benefits when students write for a public audience.

Whether you're advising an extracurricular newspaper or working on a class newspaper project, the *English Journal* article "[So You've Been Asked to Advise a Student Publication](#)" (S) outlines the structures students can use for learning to find, research, develop, respond to, and reflect on story ideas. The *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* article "[Using Journalism Writing to Improve College Composition](#)" (C) explores news gathering and news writing techniques common to feature writing and outlines a profile writing project.

Teacher educators advising students on the job market can share the *English Journal* article "[Help! I Have Accepted a Supplemental Contract -- Now What?](#)" (S, TE), which provides tips and resources for teachers advising school newspapers and other extracurricular groups. For activities that use newspapers to teach passive voice, explore research paper alternatives, and discuss audience awareness, check out the [chapter excerpt](#) from the NCTE book [Applying NCTE/IRA Standards in Classroom Journalism Projects: Activities and Scenarios](#) (M-S).

[In the News](#)

Eye on Curriculum

Students, schools work to help environment. Some Kansas City, Mo., students are planting rooftop gardens, encouraging fellow students to recycle and sometimes even pushing their schools to become more environmentally friendly. "Not only is it good for the environment, but most importantly for us, it creates exceptional learning environments for kids," said Dave Hill, executive director of facilities and operations in a district that recently won an Environmental Protection Agency award. [The Washington Post/Associated Press](#) (10/2)

Little Rock Nine return, call for more progress. Fifty years after being escorted through an angry mob to their first day at the all-white Central High School, the nine pioneering black students returned in stretch limousines to cheers and applause from about 4,500 fans and dignitaries. "We thought this was a place that would accept us," Ernest Green, the first of the nine to graduate from Central High, told the crowd. "And you know what? Fifty years later, I think we were right!" [The Washington Post](#) (9/26), [Star Tribune \(Minneapolis-St. Paul\)/Associated Press](#) (9/26), [The Christian Science Monitor](#) (9/25).

Fourth-grade NAEP math scores reach 17-year high. While 39% of fourth-graders reached proficient levels on [the National Assessment of Educational Progress](#) math test, up from 13% in 1990, reading gains have been more modest, up to 33% from 29% in 1992. Sobering achievement gaps remained, with black fourth-graders continuing to score lower

than their white classmates. [The New York Times](#) (9/26), [Los Angeles Times](#) (free registration) (9/26), [USA TODAY](#) (9/26), [The Washington Post/Associated Press](#) (9/25)

Poor, rural Colorado district tops state reading scores. The Colorado district with the state's best reading scores isn't a suburban enclave with deep pockets: It's in a poor, rural region, where teachers work individually with every struggling student. "Failure is not an option," said elementary teacher Charylene Smith. "If a student fails, that means the adults aren't putting enough effort in. Year after year, we say that to ourselves, and it works." [The Denver Post](#) (9/23)

Learning and Teaching

Teaching secrets: Sit back, be patient to help students learn. Children need to be more active in their own learning not just passively allowing teachers to do all the work, members of the Teacher Leaders Network advise. "It's amazing how much kids will sit back and let teachers do the work for them," said English teacher Claudia Swisher, who has her students write, take and grade quizzes based on the content of her class syllabus, thus exposing them to the material three times. "And if we let it happen, who can blame them?" [Teacher Magazine](#) (9/25)

Professional Leadership

Biography profiles NYC union organizer Albert Shanker. In the 1960s, Albert Shanker transformed the New York Teachers Guild into a 70,000-member powerhouse and paved the way for more powerful teachers unions nationwide, writes Richard Kahlenberg in "Tough Liberal: Albert Shanker and the Battles Over Schools, Unions, Race and Democracy." As leader of the American Federation of Teachers from 1974 until his death in 1997, Shanker backed public school choice, standards and firing poor teachers. [Slate](#) (10/1)

U.S. teacher salaries among the lowest in developed nations. Compared to the country's economy, U.S. teacher salaries are near the bottom of 30 developed countries even though primary-level teachers log on average of 1,080 hours annually compared to an average 803 in other countries, according to an international education survey. The U.S. average \$40,000 annual pay for an elementary teacher with 15 years experience ranks 12th internationally, but among the lowest when compared to the U.S. gross domestic product; the same teacher would earn \$88,000 in Luxembourg. [Education Week \(article free to SmartBrief subscribers\)](#)

Fewer men drawn to teaching in Minnesota. Statistics show that in Minnesota, men increasingly are eschewing teaching careers in favor of better-paying fields. Said teacher Bjorn Anderson, "My thought going into teaching was about how I can provide if my wife wants to stay home?" [Star Tribune \(Minneapolis-St. Paul\)](#) (9/26)

Opinion: For greater accountability, give teachers more control. Research indicates that top-down accountability reforms backfire when teachers don't have the authority and control to meet the standards, Professor Richard M. Ingersoll writes.

Holding educators accountable for factors they do not control is useless and demoralizing. Accountability and power go hand in hand in workplaces; increases in one must be accompanied by increases in the other. [Educational Leadership](#) (9/2007)

Technology Solutions

Survey: Parents talk about Internet behavior but not analysis. Some 85% of parents talk to their children about Internet behavior, according to a new survey of 2,030 adults. Far fewer, however, discuss how to determine the validity and potential bias of information found online. [eSchool News](#) (10/1)

Intel to offer teachers free technology training. Intel will soon offer teachers worldwide \$300 million worth of online training to better incorporate technology into their lesson plans across the curriculum. Some 1.5 million teachers are expected to use the programs, according to Intel. [The Boston Globe/Reuters](#) (9/27)

Cell phones make their way to elementary schools. A number of parents are buying cell phones for their young children, and several companies, such as [Firefly](#), [Wherifone](#) and [TicTalk](#), have released kid-catered mobile devices that feature parental controls to meet this market's needs. [The Clarion-Ledger \(Jackson, Miss.\)/Sun \(Jackson, Tenn.\)](#), [The](#) (9/30)

Smithsonian creates virtual museum. Long before the Smithsonian opens its newest museum on African American History and Culture, slated to open in 2015, the Institution has launched a [virtual version](#) where visitors can also donate their own memories, essays or recordings to the real-world museum. "The culture of the African American experience ... is too important to wait five or 10 years until the building is open," said museum director Lonnie Bunch. "I wanted people to know that from the day I was hired, this museum exists." [eSchool News](#) (9/27)

Policy Watch

Increasing middle school crime worries educators. Rising middle school violence has educators and police struggling to understand what may be causing such a trend. Nationally, 94% of middle schools reported violence in 2006, up from 87% in 2000, according to the U.S. Department of Education. [The Boston Globe](#) (10/2)

Teacher-rights case denied U.S. Supreme Court hearing. An Indiana elementary teacher fired after telling students "I honk for peace" will not have her case heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. The justices' decision to deny a hearing means that a federal-appeals court decision that said teachers do not a constitutional right to freedom of speech in public school classrooms will stand. [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (10/2)

Analysis: Black students disciplined more than whites. In every state but Idaho, black students are being disproportionately suspended, according to a Chicago Tribune analysis of 2004-05 U.S. Department of Education data. "The data indicate that African-American

students are punished more severely for the same offense," said Russell Skiba, an ed/psych professor at Indiana University. [Chicago Tribune](#) (free registration) (9/25)

New York rejects abstinence-only sex education. New York is turning down millions in annual federal funding for abstinence-only sex education, the state health commissioner, Dr. Richard F. Daines, announced Thursday. "The Bush administration's abstinence-only program is an example of a failed national health care policy directive ... based on ideology rather than on sound scientific-based evidence," he said. [The New York Times](#) (9/21)

NCLB

Superintendents call for national NCLB standards. The superintendents of two large D.C.-area school systems are asking Congress for schools across the country to be measured on the same national criteria, not 50 state versions. "I've never figured out why in the world we wouldn't have a national education standard," said Montgomery County School Superintendent Jerry D. Weast. "We have standards for toys and everything else." [The Washington Post](#) (10/1)

As Congress debates NCLB, opinions fly. With House and Senate education committees considering changes to NCLB, educators, editorial boards and columnists from across the country are opining on how, or whether, to reform the law. [Education Week \(article free to SmartBrief subscribers\)](#) (9/21), [Education Week \(article free to SmartBrief subscribers\)](#) (9/24), [Slate](#) (9/24), [The Christian Science Monitor](#) (9/25), [Houston Chronicle](#) (9/22)

Kozol on hunger strike to protest NCLB. Prominent education author Jonathan Kozol, 71, has been on a mostly liquid diet since July to protest what he calls a punitive law that strips down education, demoralizes teachers and polarizes the races. "I'm too old to bite my tongue," he said. "I intend to keep on fighting this issue to my dying day." [The Boston Globe](#) (9/21), [MSNBC/Newsweek](#) (9/20)

In the Field

Schools find novel ways to raise funds. Arizona students are organizing game shows, golf tournaments and symphony performances to raise money for school supplies and class trips. School officials are discouraging once-popular door-to-door sales out of concern for student safety. [The Arizona Republic \(Phoenix\)](#) (10/1)

Junk-food ads banned from more children's TV shows. NBC Universal will extend its ban on junk food ads during certain children's programming to 26 subsidiary stations in June 2008. The move may spur rival networks to take similar steps, this article says. [Advertising Age](#) (9/26)

"You don't have to see the whole staircase...just take the first step."

--Martin Luther King, Jr.