

E-newsletter September 2007

Dear Colleague,

How quickly summer flies by! Welcome back! Please share this e-newsletter with your peers and invite them to subscribe by e-mailing us at teacher_center@wvsbooces.org with their names and e-mail addresses. Best wishes for a rewarding and successful school year.

Jane, Carol and Elyse

Contents

[A Light Touch](#)

[FYI](#)

[Worthwhile Websites](#)

[NCTE Inbox](#)

[In the News](#)

A Light Touch

Asylum for the Verbally Insane

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,

But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.

One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,

Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.

You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,

Yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.

If the plural of man is always called men,

Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?

If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,

And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?

If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,

Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?

Then one may be that, and three would be those,

Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,

And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.

We speak of a brother and also of brethren,

But though we say mother, we never say methren.

Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,

But imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!

Let's face it - English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce. Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend?

If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? So if Father is Pop, how come Mother isn't Mop?

In what other language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? We ship by truck but send cargo by ship. We have noses that run and feet that smell.

We park in a driveway and drive in a parkway. And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?

How can your house burn up as it burns down, how can you fill in a form by filling it out, and how can an alarm go off by going on?

FYI

Courses and Workshops

Graduate Programs at the Teacher Center

Benefits of enrolling through SETC include reduced tuition, convenient location, and a schedule tailored to your working calendar.

Stony Brook University programs:

NEW! MA in Liberal Studies with concentration in special ed inclusion or literacy (starting Winter, 2008)

Educational Computing Certificate program (starting Fall, 2007)

School District Leader Certificate (starting Fall, 2007)

Dowling College program:

NEW! Master of Science in Literacy Education (starting January, 2008)

For registration and information, call Suffolk's Edge Teacher Center at 254-0107 or check our website at <http://www.seteachercenter.org/>, and click on Professional Development.

NYS Teacher Center Online Academy

The Online Academy 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

Oct 4, 2007. NYS ASCD conference, Building Background Knowledge to Assist Students in Building Academic Vocabulary with Debra Pickering. For information go to

<http://newyorkstate.ascd.org/>

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 October Conference For Teachers. Please join us at our 49th annual October Conference for Teachers. This professional development opportunity focuses on issues, topics, and practices in social studies education. The Conference is held on the campus of the New York

State Historical Association and its sister institution, The Farmers' Museum, during the picturesque autumn of Cooperstown, New York. Download a conference packet and 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.

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.

In addition to an exciting range of sessions throughout the day, you'll hear from opening



keynote presenter Debbie Miller and closing keynote presenters 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

Students, Get Published! Teachers, Showcase Your Lesson Plans! **Portraits of Learning 2007 Technology & Learning's Digital Photo Contest for Kids**, sponsored by Adobe Digital Kids Club. Technology & Learning invites K-12 students to participate in the sixth annual digital photography contest. The competition, open to all K-12 students, challenges you to capture—and share—your unique vision of the world in a "Digital Diary—Through My Lens." If you have an artistic side, you also have the option to digitally enhance your photos with your favorite imaging software. The best digitally enhanced photo wins a special prize from Adobe.

How: Enter the best possible photo. Your photo may be submitted "as is" or you can manipulate it using photo editing software. Write: A short description of no more than fifty words about how your photograph reflects your point of view.

The contest is open to all K-12 students who may submit digital photos taken **between January 1, 2007 and October 19, 2007**. Fill out an **entry form** for each photo and be sure to include descriptions on the entry form. **Photographs must be received by midnight, October 19, 2007**. Find out more at

<http://www.techlearning.com/content/contest/photos/forms.html>

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 East End Arts Council was invited by NYSCA to make grants in support of partnerships between schools and teaching artists or cultural organizations in the Long Island region that focus on the integrated study of the arts and non-arts subjects. 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**. For those interested in applying for the grant, you are strongly encouraged to attend the LCB grant writing and professional development workshops offered in the fall of 2007. 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. You may also contact the LCB Coordinator, Ray Saltini, at (631) 610-8993 or Patricia Snyder, Executive Director, East End Arts Council- 631.727.0900.

Scholarship Opportunity! The Brentwood Campus of Long Island University has a long history of supporting hard-working professionals in the field of education. Following in this rich tradition, the Campus is offering a special scholarship just for educators and counselors. Starting in the Fall 2007 Semester, the Campus will award **\$1000 per semester** for new students who register for 12 credits or more, and **\$500 per semester** for new students who register for 6 to 9 credits.

The Brentwood Campus offers masters degree programs in Childhood Education, Special Education, Literacy. School Counseling and Mental Health Counseling. Fall classes begin on **Wednesday, September 5, 2007**, and Late Registration continues through September 21st. For more information call John Metcalfe, Director of Admissions, at (631) 273-5112 or e-mail john metcalfe@liu.edu.

NCTE Orwell and Doublespeak Awards. The NCTE Public Language Award Committee invites nominations for the 2007 NCTE George Orwell Award and the 2007 NCTE Doublespeak Award. Winners will be announced in November at the NCTE Annual Convention in New York City. The [NCTE George Orwell Award for Distinguished Contribution to Honesty and Clarity in Public Language](#), established in 1975, recognizes writers who have made outstanding contributions to the critical analysis of public discourse. The [NCTE](#)

[Doublespeak Award](#), established in 1974, is an ironic tribute to public speakers who have perpetuated language that is grossly deceptive, evasive, euphemistic, confusing, or self-centered. The nomination deadline for both awards is **September 15**.

Robert Shafer Award for Contributions to International Education. Given by the NCTE Standing Committee on International Concerns, this new award recognizes Robert Shafer's work in international education and, more specifically, his outstanding contributions to teaching and learning English in an international context. [Nominations of individuals or organizations](#) concerned with the teaching and learning of World Englishes may be made by **September 30**.



Worthwhile Websites











<http://www.classtrips.com/> A comprehensive directory of day, overnight and travel trips for school, scout and youth groups. Over 500 types of trips to select from. Listings are coded by grade level, curriculum subject, supporting state learning standards and scout merit badge achievements. 1# of Google and Yahoo.









<http://www.familybuzzguide.com/> Listings of quality family entertainment, recreation, enrichment and resources for kids in the NY Tri-State area (NYC, NY, NJ, CT). Weekend calendar of events. Listing of museum exhibits for kids. It also has reviews for Books, Videos & Movies for Kids. Great for parents and grandparents. Within the top 10 searches for the main search engines such as Yahoo and Google.

<http://www.buzzguide.com/> Listings of quality entertainment, recreation, enrichment and resources for adults in the NY Tri-State area (NYC, NY, NJ, CT). Visitors can search for events by geographic area, subjects, fee/free. It also has reviews for Books, Videos & Movies.

Twenty great websites for elementary and/or middle school kids

- [Country Reports](http://www.countryreports.org).  <http://www.countryreports.org>. This emulated site pulls information about countries from sources such as the CIA Factbook and presents them in a concise, easily readable format.
- [Crazy Bone](http://www.crazybone.com).  <http://www.crazybone.com> Have fun with dozens of on-line games, jokes, magic tricks, recipes, tongue twisters and coloring sheets.

- **Cybrary**  <http://www.cybrary.org> Lots of links to sites selected by a school librarian for kids in grades three through eight. You can find sites that help with your homework, and you can find sites just for fun.
- **Daily Sudoku**  <http://www.dailysudoku.com/sudoku/index.shtml> Fans of this popular game will enjoy a new puzzle challenge daily. Different levels and patterns such as "squiggly" allow for many ages to enjoy the site.
- **Database of Award-Winning Children's Literature**  <http://www.dawcl.com/> Search by children's book author or illustrator to see awards won or search for award-winning books (and runners-up) by the names of more than forty international (American, British, Australian, New Zealand) children's book awards limited by setting, ethnicity, publication year, age of reader, keyword, or other qualifiers in this database of almost 5,000 titles.
- **Desert Life.**  <http://www.desertusa.com/life.html> Begin your exploration of the American Southwest with a general introduction to the complex and delicate desert ecosystems, including a discussion of the roles humans play in the changing desert environment.
- **Destinations.**  <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/> A travel guide publisher offers photos and information about most world nations.
- **Diego Rivera Museo Virtual.**  <http://www.diegorivera.com/> El primer Museo Virtual dedicado a Diego Rivera en Internet. Pintor muralista, fue uno de los grandes artistas del Siglo XX. Nació en la ciudad de Guanajuato y en 1892 se trasladó a México con su familia.
- **The Dinosauria**  <http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/diapsids/dinosaur.html> What do we know about dinosaurs? How did they live? How did they die? How do they live on today? Includes a section on myths and contains links to numerous other dino-sites.
- **Discovering Dinosaurs (Encyclopaedia Britannica)**  <http://search.eb.com/dinosaurs/dinosaurs/index2.html> Explores how our knowledge of dinosaurs has evolved through the centuries.
- **Discovery School's Puzzlemaker.**  <http://puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com> Puzzlemaker is a fun and easy puzzle generation tool for all ages that allows users to create and print customized word search, crossword and math puzzles using your own word lists.
- **Distinguished Women of Past and Present.**  <http://www.DistinguishedWomen.com> These are women who were writers, educators, scientists, heads of state, politicians, civil rights crusaders, artists, entertainers, and others. Search for biographies of distinguished women by name or by field.

- **Don't Buy It.**  <http://pbskids.org/dontbuyit> Find out about advertising tricks, learn how to be a smart shopper and see what you can do to avoid being cheated in the marketplace.
- **Dragonfly.**  <http://www.muohio.edu/Dragonfly/> The Dragonfly Web Pages are for scientific investigators of all ages. Get involved in the creative process of science and see how science relates to your life.
- **DSO Kids: Dallas Symphony Kids**  <http://www.dsokids.com/2001/rooms/musicroom.asp> Welcome to the Dallas Symphony Orchestra's "magical world" of musical fun and learning for students, parents, and teachers. The music room is filled with information about musical instruments, composers, and music periods as well as the Dallas Symphony. Look for games, activities, and a library of music clips highlighting composers, instruments, musical notes, and national anthems from selected countries. A teacher's lounge provides information for the classroom.
- **Learning about Laurence Yep.**  <http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/special/kay/yep.html> He is the author of many novels set in both China and the United States such as Child of the Owl, Dragonwings, Sweetwater, and Dragon's Gate.
- **Earth and Moon Viewer.**  <http://www.fourmilab.ch/earthview/vplanet.html> "Presents an earth map—you can see where it is day, or night, right now. You can view either a map of the Earth showing the day and night regions at this moment, or view the Earth from the Sun, the Moon, the night side of the Earth, above any location on the planet specified by latitude, longitude and altitude, from a satellite in Earth orbit, or above various cities around the globe."
- **Earth Science Explorer.**  <http://www.cotf.edu/ete/modules/mse/explorerer.html> His name's Explorasurus, and here is the deal: He'll teach you of Earth when the dinos were real. We'll travel the world, and we'll travel through time. We'll find out the dinosaur's reason and rhyme. This is a virtual earth science museum.
- **Earthquakes for Kids**  <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/learning/kids.php> From the U.S. Geological Survey. Learn about past, present and future predictions for earthquake activity. Includes neat facts about quakes, science fair project ideas and answers to frequently asked questions about earthquakes.
- **Eco Kids Online.**  <http://www.ecokids.ca> Discover cool things about science and nature, wildlife, environmental issues and more through games and activities.

NCTE Inbox

News

With Turnover High, Schools Fight for Teachers, Teacher turnover costs big money and schools are paying the price as baby boomers retire and new teachers leave the profession. [The New York Times, August 27, 2007](#)

Average SAT Scores Are Lowest Since 1999, [Guardian Unlimited, August 28, 2007](#)

Say "So Long" to Traditional Letter Writing, Even though students are using email and IM, they're still writing and communicating, say some, but others yearn to have students write and send letters the old-fashioned way. [CNET News.com, August 24, 2007](#)

Schooled in Persistence, Jonathan Kozol Is Still National Conscience on Education
In his new book, *Letters to a Young Teacher*, Jonathan Kozol continues his crusade for fairness and equity in public education. On November 15, [Jonathan Kozol](#) will be speaking at NCTE's Annual Convention in New York City. [The Boston Globe, August 19, 2007](#)

Children of Color Being Left Behind, In California, achievement gaps between Black and Latino students and White and Asian American students persist at a time when all students' scores have leveled off. "We cannot afford to accept this, morally, economically, or socially," state school chief Jack O'Connell said. [San Francisco Chronicle, August 16, 2007](#)

Professors Draft Guidelines for Violence in Student Writing, A group of Virginia Tech writing teachers suggest a protocol for teachers to follow when they receive disturbing writing from students. [The Roanoke Times, August 19, 2007](#)

Ideas

Embracing Technology in the Classroom, The title of a recent *Hartford Courant* article asks, "[R T33ns KO'ing Eng?](#)" As the article explains, students' eagerness to communicate using nonstandard language in text messages and other digital technologies demonstrates evolving, creative ways of expression and valid forms of communication. Instead of forbidding students' self-expression, teachers can find ways to embrace technology and encourage students' playful and purposeful language use. These NCTE resources can help.

The *Language Arts* article "[Critical Inquiry and Multiliteracies in a First-Grade Classroom](#)" (E) demonstrates how students use a range of tools, including email and other technologies, to engage in an inquiry project focused on an issue in their local community.

Tap middle school students' interest in online chats and email with the *Voices from the Middle* article "[Improving Writing: Online Bulletin Boards](#)" (M). The article shares

student excerpts that show how the author uses bulletin boards for peer conferencing with middle-level students and includes a list of "Six Tips for Setting Up a Classroom Online Bulletin Board" (which are valuable for teachers working at any grade level).

Invite students to explore the lingo of the online world by reading books included in the *English Journal* book review article "[Internet Literature for Media-Savvy Students](#)" (M-S). Even teachers with limited technology access in the classroom can use these books to explore the ways that people read and write with technology.

From *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, the article "[The Professional Email Assignment, or, whatsyername@howyadoin.com](#)" (C) outlines an activity that allows students to gain digital literacies via community, critical engagement, and application. By exploring the genre of professional email, students can investigate when the slang of Internet communication is appropriate and when it is not.

Teacher educators can find useful strategies in the *English Education* article "[Multiliteracies Meet Methods: The Case for Digital Writing in English Education](#)" (TE). The article provides a rationale for teaching digital writing and explores the rhetorical, interactive, and pedagogical implications of such teaching.

Worried about students who spend too much time online or who choose the Internet over the library? For an exploration of possible limitations to the role of technology in education, read articles that address "[Technology: Challenges and Concerns](#)" (G) from the April 2007 issue of *English Leadership Quarterly*.

Creating Community through Writing. It's time for school bells to start ringing, classrooms to start buzzing, and teachers to start off on their yearlong adventure with a new group of students. By tapping the following resources, teachers can build community in the classroom that will support writing instruction throughout the school year!

It is important for students to feel that they belong in their classroom. They need to feel that they own the space and the learning that takes place in it. Foreground such ownership for students by collaboratively writing an owner's manual that describes the classroom's areas and procedures. The ReadWriteThink lesson [Our Classroom: Writing an Owner's Manual](#) (E) has everything you need to get started.

Younger elementary students who are just learning to write can collaborate with the ReadWriteThink lesson [Creating Class Rules: A Beginning to Creating Community](#) (E), which focuses on a simple shared-writing activity to bring students together.

Check out the ReadWriteThink lesson plan [Introducing Each Other: Interviews, Memoirs, Photos, and Internet Research](#) (M) for a get-acquainted activity that invites pairs of students to learn about each other and share their findings with the rest of the class.

For a similar activity for older students, try the ReadWriteThink lesson [The Feature Story—Fifteen Minutes \(and 500 Words\) of Fame!](#) (S), which asks students to write a newspaper profile of a classmate, with a particular focus on a talent, interest, or passion of that classmate.

To learn more about students as writers, try the ReadWriteThink lesson [Writing about Writing: An Extended Metaphor Assignment](#) (S-C), which uses Richard Wilbur's poem "The Writer" as an inspiration for students' own descriptions of their writing practices. The activity can be adapted for the college classroom as well.

Read seven creative ways to kick off college classes (other than just reading the syllabus) in "[What Works for Me: First-Day Class Activities](#)" (M-S-C) from *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*. The ideas can easily be adapted for younger students as well!

Teacher educators can share "[Insights for Interns: First Day Fears](#)" (TE) from *English Journal* with preservice and new teachers. The article includes a first-time intern's fears as she approaches the first day of class and an experienced teacher's response and encouragement. Preservice and new teachers can use the article as a starting point for their own journal entries on their fears and jitters and the support that they receive from one another and from experienced teachers

In the News

Eye on Curriculum

Controversy, lack of teachers hamper Arabic study, With skyrocketing interest in learning Arabic, schools are facing a shortage of teachers who speak the language. Unlike Chinese or more traditional languages, however, offering Arabic sometimes involves religious or cultural barriers like the controversy and protests that greeted New York City's Arabic-language Khalil Gibran International Academy. [USA TODAY](#) (9/4), [Newsday \(Long Island, N.Y.\)](#) (9/5), [Education Week \(article free to SmartBrief subscribers\)](#) (8/31)

Report: Segregation on rise in U.S. schools, Even before the U.S. Supreme Court decision in June, public schools were becoming more racially segregated, according to a Civil Rights Project of the University of California in Los Angeles report published Wednesday. "Resegregation ... is continuing to grow in all parts of the country for both African Americans and Latinos and is accelerating the most rapidly in the only region that had been highly desegregated -- the South," the report said. [The Washington Post/Reuters](#) (8/29)

Class of 2007 posts lowest SAT scores in eight years, As record numbers of students for the second year in a row. The combined math and reading scores were the lowest in eight years, the AP reports. College Board officials said the declines were not significant, but the Massachusetts education commissioner called for wider access to practice tests, such as the PSAT. [The New York Times](#) (8/29), [USA TODAY](#) (8/29), [TIME/Associated Press](#) (8/28), [The Boston Globe](#) (8/29)

Stereotypes still keep girls out of math, sciences, In elementary school, 66% of girls and 68% of boys report liking science, but as they become more aware of stereotypes in later grades, twice as many boys express interest in math and science careers as do girls. Five common myths persist vis-a-vis girls' preferences and strengths when it comes to scientific subject matter, according to the National Science Foundation's Research on Gender in Science and Engineering program. [MSNBC/LiveScience](#) (8/27)

Opinion: Gifted children left behind, As schools focus on helping struggling students pass standardized tests, the resulting basic lessons and drills destroy gifted students' interest in learning. Those who can afford it are flocking to private schools, which are exempt from testing and can turn away students with special needs. [The Washington Post](#) (8/27)

Learning and Teaching

Secrets of an award-winning teacher, Award-winning middle school science teacher Anthony Cody says behavior management is all about engaging students in learning. He offers tips on doing so, such as: Make sure students know you care, encourage experimentation, use tests to emphasize main points instead of trivia, and enforce a short list of posted rules. [Teacher Magazine](#) (8/21)

Professional Leadership

Study: Student achievement improves under merit-pay plans, Student achievement improves when their teachers are paid for their performance, according to an analysis published in the September issue of the Journal of Policy Analysis and Management. "The evidence certainly suggests when you offer incentives, you're likely to get better results," said co-author Michael J. Podgursky, a University of Missouri-Columbia professor of economics. [ScienceDaily](#) (9/4)

Retired teachers return to fill in, With many U.S. districts short on certified teachers, some are asking retirees to return as substitutes. "There is truly a need for good

substitute teachers," said Charlene Adams, who taught special education for 30 years before retiring, and now works as a substitute. [The Washington Post](#) (8/30)

"Highly qualified" rule stirs debate, Some 17% of U.S. school districts and 33 states are falling behind on NCLB goals for highly qualified teachers, according to a new Center on Education Policy report. Two-thirds of districts, however, say the requirement has little or no affect when it comes to student achievement. [The Christian Science Monitor](#) (8/30)

Technology Solutions

Amid record text messaging, educators note changes in writing, As text messaging nears its 15-year anniversary, teachers are increasingly seeing abbreviations creep into school work. "As I watch students texting, I see them routinely using abbreviations to the point that they do not know how to spell the word correctly," said now retired high school English teacher Ruth Maenpaa, who also says teens accustomed to texting may struggle to compose longer essays. [USA TODAY](#) (9/4)

High-tech board helps teacher adapt. Elementary teacher Dave Schlachter replaced his chalkboard with an electronic white board to continue teaching after he developed a disability, but he has found that it transformed his classroom as well. "The creativity it brings to all of us is remarkable," he said. "I'm teaching in a totally different way as a result." [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#) (9/2)

Education-technology companies booming, With schools and colleges clamoring for new technology, new ed-tech firms are springing up to help them. "The volume of opportunity in education technology is far greater than it was five years ago," venture capitalist Frank Bonsal III said. [The Washington Post](#) (8/30)

Online tutoring booms under NCLB, Tutor.com aided 750,000 students with homework and other school issues last year as parents look for new ways to supplement classroom learning. [The Boston Globe/Reuters](#) (8/31)

Presidential candidates reach out on Facebook, MySpace, Nearly every major presidential candidate is using social-networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace to try and capture the votes of the younger demographic, as well as boost volunteerism with campaigns and attendance at political events. [The Boston Globe/Reuters](#) (8/23)

Policy Watch

States increasingly mandate later school start dates, Amid pressure from parents and other interested parties, 11 states have now passed laws banning early school starts and at least four other states are debating such a move in what seems to be a reversal of a previous trend to start the school year earlier. [USA TODAY](#) (8/28)

Analysis: Indiana averages 1,700 suspensions per school day, Indiana's 1,800 schools handed out more than 313,000 suspensions during the 2005-06 school year, according to an Indianapolis Star analysis. Since many students were suspended more than once, about 100 schools issued more yearly suspensions than they had students. [The Indianapolis Star](#) .

NCLB

Proposed NCLB changes popular in suburban schools, A Democratic plan to soften punishments against schools where one or two subgroups fail to show improvement is garnering cautious praise from teachers unions and suburban schools while others say it waters down the law's most basic provisions. "The heart of the law has been hollowed out," said Amy Wilkins, vice president of the Education Trust, who helped draft the original NCLB in 2001. [The New York Times](#) (9/1)

Connecticut schools still struggle with NCLB, One out of three Connecticut public schools failed to meet NCLB standards this year, education officials said. In 2005, Connecticut sued over NCLB testing requirements, saying the law is an underfunded federal mandate and therefore unconstitutional. [The Boston Globe/Associated Press](#) (8/30)

Kozol: Navigate NCLB with "mischievous irreverence", Young teachers who dedicate themselves to inner-city schools are leaving in droves not because of disadvantaged students, but because of NCLB's "systematic crushing of their creativity and intellect," writes award-winning author Jonathan Kozol. In his new book, Kozol urges such teachers to work with parents and principals to navigate NCLB and district bureaucracy with "mischievous irreverence." [Teacher Magazine/Education Week](#) (8/29)

Opinion: NCLB ignores parent, student roles, A one-wheeled tricycle won't get far no matter how hard that wheel is pushed, writes 26-year teaching veteran Ilsa Birmingham. NCLB ignores the vital roles students and parents play in education, Birmingham writes, but without them a teacher's hard work will not move the child forward. [The Seattle Times](#)

Lawmakers float NCLB revisions, NCLB penalties may be eased for schools that nearly reach goals, allow some students with limited English to take tests in their native language and give credit to students on the path to proficiency, under the House education committee chairman's proposal. The plan would also allow states to use the so-called "growth model" to measure the progress of individual students rather than whole grades. [The Washington Post](#) (8/29), [San Diego Union-Tribune/Associated Press](#) (8/28)

In the Field

Study: Inattention tied to excessive childhood TV exposure, Children who watch more TV than two hours daily developed 40% more attention problems, according to a long-term study of more than 1,000 New Zealand children published in the journal Pediatrics. "Those who watched more than two hours, and particularly those who watched more than three hours, of television per day during childhood had above-average symptoms of attention problems in adolescence," researcher Carl Landhuis wrote. [Scientific American/Reuters](#)

Study: U.S. adults, children are gaining weight, Some 25 million U.S. children are now obese or overweight, three times the rate in 1980, a new Trust for Americas Health study found. Adult obesity also is growing in most states, with Mississippi at the top of the list for the third consecutive year, with 30.6% adults reaching obese levels. [Scientific American/Reuters](#) (8/27), [The New York Times/Associated Press](#) (8/28), [The News & Observer \(Raleigh, N.C.\)/McClatchy News Service](#) (8/28)

"Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe."

Abraham Lincoln