

Neag Center
for
Gifted Education
and
Talent
Development

NEWS & VIEWS

The latest in Gifted Education

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Visit us on the web at <http://www.gifted.uconn.edu>

WELCOME TO NEWS & VIEWS! We would like to welcome you to the newly revised News & Views. This online publication of the Neag Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Connecticut will be updated approximately every two weeks. In it, you will find the latest news on the web; information about programs, scholarships, contests, and more; updates about the research studies being conducted at the Neag Center; book and website recommendations, and more.



MY VERY EDUCATED MOTHER JUST SERVED US NINE. No, that's not a typo or mistake - the popular mnemonic device students have used to remember

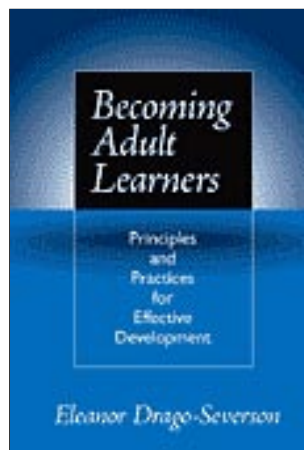
the order of the planets no longer includes "pizza." Science education just got much more interesting and science textbooks are factually incorrect now that Pluto is no longer considered a planet. Read more about Pluto's "demotion" in USA Today's article, "Teachers Have to Explain Missing Planet" - http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/space/2006-08-27-pluto-teachers_x.htm

GIVE KIDS GOOD SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN. Public Education Network (PEN) recently conducted a national poll and found that the American public thinks public education is the number one issue local leaders should address, edging out health care, the economy, and fears of terrorism at the local level. This poll also indicated that 84% of the American public believes the quality of public education has stayed not improved or even declined over the past five years. PEN has a new multi-year campaign, Give Kids Good Schools, which is aimed at achieving quality public education for all children by building a constituency of Americans who will use their voices and votes to improve public education. As a part of the campaign, PEN has a new website - <http://www.GiveKidsGoodSchools.org> - to help keep the public informed about issues impacting public schools and provide ideas for taking action to improve them. On this website, you can sign the pledge to demonstrate your commitment to making sure that ALL children in America receive a quality public education. You can also read about eight characteristics of good schools and five stories of places and lives that have been turned around by quality schools, engaged communities, and informed voters at http://www.parade.com/articles/editions/2006/edition_o8-27-2006/Better_Schools



NCLB = 99.9% PURE OR FAILING? Despite what many stakeholders, including teachers, school administrators, and lawmakers may think, Education Secretary Margaret Spellings said, "I talk about No Child Left Behind like Ivory soap: It's 99.9% pure or something." As the first major update of NCLB draws near, Spellings indicated that NCLB is close to perfect and needs little change. Read more about Spellings comments at <http://www.sacbee.com/24hour/politics/story/3361714p-12372741c.html>. On the other side of the issue, read Forbes' article on faltering education reform, including NCLB at http://www.forbes.com/home/business/2006/08/28/bush-education-reform-cx_np_o829oxford.html. According to the article, unless certain challenges are overcome in relatively short order, NCLB may fail.

FROM STRUGGLING SCHOOL TO MAGNET PROGRAM FOR GIFTED KIDS. While many middle-class parents opt out of struggling schools with low scores and high poverty, some, like Pamela Grundy, are choosing a different approach. Grundy chose to enroll her son in Shamrock Gardens Elementary, a struggling school, and recruit neighbors to do the same in an effort to help reverse the school's image. A coming change to the school might help her do this - Shamrock is launching a magnet program for gifted students in an attempt to get more middle-class parents to pick this high-poverty school. Find out what impact Grundy's and Shamrock's efforts had on the community and the other parents, and read more about whether risking placing your child in a struggling school is worth the risk at <http://www.charlotte.com/mlid/charlotte/living/education/15316977.htm>



BOOK REVIEW.

Becoming Adult Learners: Principles and Practices for Effective Development
by Ellie Drago-Severson
(2006)

Review by Gara Field

Dr. Drago-Severson was one of my professors at Harvard's Graduate School of Education, and she is currently at Teacher's College - Columbia University in New York. She is an excellent researcher whose practical applications and case studies help make reflective practice and professional development an essential component of creating communities where adults and children are valued.

Read an interview with Dr. Drago-Severson about the book at <http://gseweb.harvard.edu/news/features/dragoseverson02012005.html>



GRANTS FOR TEACHERS. From Pen Weekly NewsBlast

“Office Depot/SHOPA 2006 Kids In Need Teacher Grants”
http://shopa.org/shopa_foundation/2006_teacher_grants/2006_teacher_grant_app.php?source=officedepot

The grants are available to fund projects that make creative use of common teaching aids, approach curriculum from an imaginative angle, or tie nontraditional concepts together

for the purpose of illustrating commonalities. Innovation and merit account for 40% of the evaluation.

Deadline: Sept. 30, 2006. Maximum Award: \$500. Eligibility: K-12 teachers.



“Grants to Support Art and Music Programs”

<http://www.airbornetrust.com/index.aspx>

The Airborne Teacher Trust Fund invites elementary and middle school teachers to submit proposals for art and music programs that their schools are unable to fund.

Deadline: October 1, 2006. Maximum Award: \$10,000.

Eligibility: elementary and middle school teachers in both public and private schools.

“Grants for Professional Development”

<http://www.neafoundation.org/programs/Guidelines%20Learning&Leadership.htm>

The NEA Foundation Learning and Leading grants are provided to individuals to fund participation in high-quality professional development experiences, such as summer institutes or action research and to groups fund collegial study, including study groups, action research, lesson study, or mentoring experiences for faculty or staff new to an assignment.

Deadline: October 15, 2006. Maximum Award: \$2,000.

Eligibility: K-12 public school teachers, public school education support professionals, and faculty and staff in public higher education institutions.

“Target Field Trip Grants”

<http://sites.target.com/site/en/corporate/page.jsp?contentId=PRDo3-001814>

Target Field Trip Grants are available to fund scholastic outings in situations where monies are otherwise lacking.

Deadline: November 1, 2006. Maximum Award: \$1000.

Eligibility: teachers, principals, paraprofessionals and classified staff in K-12 public, private or charter school in the U.S. Applications will be posted online beginning September 1, 2006.



GRANTS AND COMPETITIONS FOR STUDENTS. From Pen Weekly NewsBlast



"Grants to Help Overcoming Difficulties of Switching Schools"

<http://www.parentrelocationcouncil.org/essay/index.php>

The Parent Relocation Council offers an award for students who have demonstrated success in overcoming the difficulties during their family's relocation. In an essay, entrants tell how friends, family, and others helped them overcome challenges as they relocated to a new area, and transitioned into a new school and community.

Deadline: September 15, 2006.

Maximum Award: \$500 Gift Card to Target.

Eligibility: children ages 9-12 and teens, age 13-18.

"Recognizing Youth Community Service"

<http://www.angelsoft.com/angelsinaction/>

The Angel Soft Angels in Action Awards Program recognizes children and youth who are performing exemplary acts of community service. Georgia-Pacific, the makers of Angel Soft toilet paper, invites teachers, parents, guardians, and friends to submit nominations to honor "ordinary kids who are doing extraordinary things" to help improve their communities.

Deadline: October 1, 2006.

Maximum Award: \$15,000.

Eligibility: Youth 8 to 18 may be nominated.

"Siemens Competition in Math, Science & Technology"

<http://www.siemens-foundation.org/>

The Siemens Competition in Math, Science & Technology recognizes remarkable talent early on, fostering individual growth for high school students who are willing to challenge themselves through science research.

Deadline: October 2, 2006.

Maximum Award: \$100,000.

Eligibility: High School students.

"Rewarding Students Demonstrating Exemplary Volunteer Service"

http://www.principals.org/s_nassp/sec.asp?CID=539&DID=48173

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards honor young people in grades 5 through 12 who have demonstrated exemplary voluntary service to their communities.

Deadline: October 31, 2006.

Maximum Award: \$5,000.

Eligibility: Students grades 5-12 who have conducted a volunteer service activity within the past year.



LINKS TO LEARN FROM! Looking for links for a particular subject matter? From “academic all stars” to music to world facts, the LA Times has compiled an annotated list of links for exploring subjects in detail. Check it out at <http://www.latimes.com/news/education/la-fi-technopolis24aug24,1,792509.column?coll=la-news-learning>

RENZULLI LEARNING SYSTEMS RECOMMENDATIONS! Here are some favorite websites from RLS that may help teachers interest and motivate their students through the use of Internet technology:

Virtual Knee Surgery at

<http://www.edheads.org/activities/knee/>

How to Do Research at

<http://www.kyvl.org/html/kids/homebase.html>

Math Wheel of Fun at

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/mathsfile/gameswheel.html>

Why Do Civilizations Fall Apart at

<http://www.learner.org/exhibits/collapse/>

Explore Western Europe: A Travel Activity E-book at

http://www.icdlbooks.org/icdl/BookPreview?bookid=bibiwes_00440001&summary=true&route=simple_134_o_o_English_11&English&msg=

The Write Site: A Journalism Website for Kids at

<http://www.writesite.org/html/oti.html>

You can check out Renzulli Learning at <http://www.renzullilearning.com/>

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