

September 2009 Advocacy Newsletter

Information gathered by the Education, Environment, Health and Wellness, Family, School and Community Engagement, Parenting and Family Life, Media Safety and Special Education Chairs to assist you in your advocacy efforts



Education

- Board of Regents Elects **David Steiner, Commissioner of Education** - July 27, 2009
<http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/BORElectsDavidSteinerCOE.html>
- **USNY Statewide Educational Technology Plan** <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/edtech/>
An educational technology plan is now under development for the University of the State of New York. This plan includes a mission and a vision of technology for teaching and learning, high-level action statements, and a proposed time frame for implementation. The Board of Regents discussed the USNY Statewide Educational Technology Plan at their May 2009 meeting.
- There are **Teaching with Technology** tools and resources available on the State Education website. For further information, go to:
<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/technology/resources/teaching.html>
- **21st Century Learning Skills** – this is a movement toward integrating technology and the skills that our children will need. ASCD (Association for Curriculum and Development) has some materials and resources available for teachers and parents to learn more about this effort. Go to:
http://www.ascd.org/research_a_topic/21stcenturylearning.aspx
- **MOYA** – the Month of the Young Adolescent. At the recent Middle Level summit gathering, a proclamation was shared from Governor Patterson's office, recognizing (for the first time in NY) for October to be the Month of the Adolescent. For more information on this event, go to: www.nmsa.org/moya/
- **NYSMSA** (New York State Middle School Association) has many materials, great information and resources that they want to share with parents of middle school children. Go to www.nysmsa.org for further information. The 7 Essential Elements is the focus of NYSMSA and they want to get the word out. There are posters that can be shared too. Check to see if one is up at your middle school. Please visit <http://www.nysmsa.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1>
- **Duncan to encourage reform in cities with school challenges** (Associated Press 8/14/09)
<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jVf6ZQg6sAIQ0H7BspbfOERBwtBAD9A2GVO04>
Education Secretary Arne Duncan will encourage struggling schools to improve their performance with the help of the Rev. Al Sharpton and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a Republican. The trio will travel to Philadelphia, New Orleans, Baltimore and other cities. "These are cities that have real challenges but also tremendous hope and opportunity," Duncan said.



Environment

- **EPA Administrator Makes Children's Exposure to the Chemical Perchlorate a Priority:** The US Environmental Protection Agency announced it is taking an important step to ensure children's health is taken into account when evaluating the chemical perchlorate. To enhance transparency, the agency is seeking public comment on its re-evaluation of the scientific information on perchlorate in drinking water. Under the previous administration, EPA made a preliminary decision not to regulate perchlorate. Administrator Lisa P. Jackson has directed EPA staff to review that decision and, as part of that review, the agency is putting special emphasis on evaluating the impact of perchlorate on infants and young children. For more information: <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/contaminants/unregulated/perchlorate.html>



Family, School, and Community Engagement

- **New National PTA Issues Briefs on Parent Involvement:** The current administration in Washington DC has called on PTA to provide information on best practices for parent and family engagement which led to two new issues briefs being written: **Model Practices** and **Seeing is Believing**. The briefs were presented at National Parent Information Resource Center Conference (PIRC) in July. At a meeting of National PTA and the US Department of Education, department officials indicated that these briefs will be beneficial to sustaining funding for parent involvement provisions under the reauthorization of ESEA/NCLB. PTA has worked to demonstrate to public policy officials the value and impact of family engagement on student success. These Issue Briefs provide a significant platform for your use with federal and state policy makers and educational leaders in your states. To access this important information, download the Briefs at: http://www.pta.org/IssueBrief-Model_Partnerships.pdf and http://www.pta.org/Issue_Brief-SeeingisBelieving.pdf



Health/Wellness

- **National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)**
1-800-729-6686 or www.health.org
- **National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)** 1-888-644-6432 or www.drugabuse.gov;
www.steriodabuse.org; www.clubdrugs.org
Educational materials, drug information and facts, curriculum guides, classroom tools, etc for parents and teachers. Educational resources and materials on drugs of abuse, marijuana, ecstasy, smoking, steroids, etc. developed specially for students and young adults.
- **Before your child begins school this year, get them off to a Healthy start. Check out these websites below for the latest information and guidelines on Immunization recommendation.** www.immunize.org/acip; www.immunize.org/aap;
www.immunize.org/childrules; www.cdc.gov/nip/acip



Media Safety

- **Advice and pointers on keeping kids safe on line from parents and administrators.**
<http://www.edutopia.org/digital-generation-children-online-safety>
- **Information and Tips: Manage your Facebook privacy and friends lists:**
http://www.usatoday.com/tech/columnist/kimkomando/2009-04-30-facebook-privacy_N.htm?csp=34&POE=click-refer



Parenting and Family Life

- **Helping Children with Dyslexia: Strategies for Parents and Their Child with Reading Disabilities.** When a child is diagnosed with dyslexia, he may be eligible for special services or accommodations at school. He may receive extra reading instruction or help with spelling. Parents can also help children with dyslexia at home in a number of ways. Read more:
http://specialneedseducation.suite101.com/article.cfm/helping_children_with_dyslexia#ixzz0ONJutwMa
- **Dyslexia in Children:** *symptoms*, causes and treatments
http://www.audiblox2000.com/dyslexia_dyslexic/dyslexia015.htm
- **What Is Dyslexia In Children?**
Most children have no trouble at all learning to read. At young ages they begin making connections between letters and sounds, sounds and words, words and thoughts. For these children, the process of reading is simple and natural. For more than one out of ten children, however, learning to read is a continuous struggle.
<http://www.dyslexiacenter.org/ar/000044.shtml>
- **Dyslexia Test for Children and Adults:** Direct Learning provides dyslexia testing, professional assessment and independent advice for both children and adults. We advise parents with concerns about their children's problems with spelling, reading and learning at school, and adults with difficulties at work or college. Go to: <http://www.dyslexia-test.com/>



Special Education

- **Demi Lovato Joins National Bullying Prevention Movement**
Music sensation announces partnership to support PACER Center's National Center for Bullying Prevention and TeensAgainstBullying.org
<http://www.pacer.org/about/releases/2009/nr20090806-1.asp>
- **Calling All Parents of Children with Special Needs:** You are strongly encouraged to regularly check this site:
<http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/timely.htm>