



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR  
URBAN SCHOOL  
IMPROVEMENT

# eNEWS



NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
Culturally Responsive  
Educational Systems



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## UPDATE

This eNEWS is sent formatted in HTML. If the graphics do not display properly, please go to: [www.nccrest.org](http://www.nccrest.org) or [www.urbanschools.org](http://www.urbanschools.org) to view the eNEWS online. Back issues of the eNEWS are also available there.

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## NOTICES

**NCCREST'S NATIONAL FORUM** The National Forum, *Creating Opportunities to Learn: A Forum for Addressing Disproportionality*, was a great success and an exciting event. Lynn Rhodes, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, said, "...it was one of the best conferences that those of us who were there have ever attended." There was a total of 450 higher ed, school district, and technical assistance personnel that attended. The keynotes and break out sessions were focused on culturally responsive practices. There was tremendous participant interaction inside of the sessions, culminating in a Town Hall at the end of the conference that will guide the continuing work of the PI's. We hope that those of you who attended enjoyed their experience and we are eagerly planning next year's forum. Check our website for dates and further information.

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## SPOTLIGHT

### ACCOMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE ASSESSMENTS: WHAT WORKS?

State testing directors, school administrators, guidance counselors, special education coordinators and instructors, and researchers are encouraged to attend this conference. It will be on March 19-21 in Savannah, GA at the Savannah Marriott Riverfront. The conference is co-sponsored by ETS, The College Board, Council for Exceptional Children, and the National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI). For more information about this conference please visit this link <http://www.ets.org/accommodationsconference> or contact Kathy Howell at [khowell@ets.org](mailto:khowell@ets.org).

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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

**BRENDA TOWNSEND** is a Professor in the Department of Special Education at the University of South Florida and Director of the CAROUSEL Center. In 1995, she developed Project PILOT, the first of several initiatives that prepared African American men for urban special education teaching careers. As a result of that initiative, 31 African American men have graduated and are teaching children with special needs. Dr. Townsend is also the director of a federal outreach and technical assistance project that enhances the urban school research capacity of faculty and graduate students in minority institutions. She co-authored a constructive behavior management text and has several book chapters and papers on schooling issues related to African American children. Her scholarship also centers on the disciplinary practices to which African American learners are disproportionately subjected, issues around ethics, power, and privilege, and strategies for African American students with academic gifts and talents. In sum, Dr. Townsend has delivered myriad presentations and workshops for teachers, administrators, and family members on enhancing African American students' success by affirming their individual and cultural differences and developing culturally responsive pedagogy.

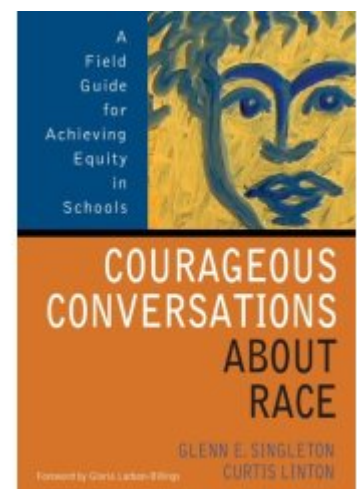


## RECOMMENDED READINGS

*Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools* by Glenn E. Singleton and Curtis Linton

Deepen your understanding of racial factors in academic performance and discover new strategies for closing the achievement gap!

Educators are acutely aware of the statistical gaps in achievement between different racial groups. Considering the rapidly changing racial composition of student populations, how can educators reach a level of cultural proficiency necessary to eliminate this



disparity?

Examining the achievement gap through the prism of race, this comprehensive text explains the need for candid, courageous conversations about race so that educators may understand why performance inequity persists, and learn how they can develop a curriculum that promotes true academic parity. To help guide policy analysis and instructional reform, the authors present a

Practical features of this book include:

- Implementation exercises
- Prompts, language, and tools that support profound discussion
- Activities and checklists for administrators
- Action steps for creating an equity team

Only when educators have established both a language and a process for addressing the intersection of race and achievement, will they be able to restructure their schools in ways which improve student performance and fulfill the promise that every child has a right to learn regardless of their race, culture, or class.

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## **TOOLS YOU CAN USE**

### ***NIUSI'S INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODULE***

This module introduces the inclusive model of education, which proposes that, with support structures in place, all students are able to successfully learn in the general education classroom. Rather than teach students with special needs separately, general and special educators collaborate to address the needs of all students to allow them to learn together.

Academy 1, *Understanding Inclusive Schooling*, defines inclusive education, offers exemplars and non-exemplars of inclusive classrooms, and invites participants to consider the degree to which their schools might be considered "inclusive." Academy 2, *Exploring Inclusive Practices in Schools*, describes school climates that facilitate inclusive education, and provides ways to approach the implementation of the inclusion model. Lastly, Academy 3, *Exploring Inclusive Practices in Classrooms*, identifies features of inclusive curriculum design, pedagogy, and classroom climates. [http://www.urbanschools.org/professional/mod\\_3.html](http://www.urbanschools.org/professional/mod_3.html)

### ***NCCREST'S RUBRIC IS NOW AVAILABLE FOR USE AND DISTRIBUTION***

This tool is designed to guide the examination of LEA practices once data suggests that serious and inappropriate disproportionate referral, identification and placement of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse may be occurring.

The tool is designed to examine knowledge, skills and dispositions as well as contextual factors that may lead to institutionalized practices that manifest themselves in disproportionate identification. This tool is grounded in a comprehensive review of the literature and the development of a conceptual framework that locates disproportionality in the intersection of context, policy, practice and knowledge. (Klingner, Artiles, Kozleski, Utey, Zion, Tate, Harry, Zamora- Durán, & Riley, 2005) Please see [http://www.nccrest.org/PDFs/core\\_principles\\_EPAA.pdf](http://www.nccrest.org/PDFs/core_principles_EPAA.pdf).

Action directed at changing results should be grounded in a thoughtful assessment of what is happening, the development of theories or hypothesis about what is triggering disproportionality, and careful planning to strategically address the areas of concern. This tool is designed to help guide and inform the assessment, hypothesis building and strategic planning process.

Designed as a rubric, the tool has been reviewed by practitioners and researchers across the country and is still a work in progress. As you use this tool, please feel free to communicate with NCCREST at [nccrest@cudenver.edu](mailto:nccrest@cudenver.edu) to help us improve this tool for everyone.

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## RESEARCH BASED PRODUCTS

### **THE WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE LAUNCHES NEW HELP DESK**

The What Works Clearinghouse of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences has recently announced the launch of an Evidence-Based Education Help Desk. The Help Desk's mission is to provide policymakers, practitioners and researchers with practical, easy-to-use resources to advance evidence-based education. Specifically, the Help Desk will provide resources to assist in conducting rigorous evaluations of educational programs, sponsoring such evaluations and identifying and implementing evidence-based programs. You can access the Help Desk through its website (<http://whatworkshelpdesk.ed.gov>) or via phone or email at 1-866-WWC-9799 (8am-8pm ET Mon-Fri) or by email at [info@whatworks.ed.gov](mailto:info@whatworks.ed.gov). Help Desk resources include how-to guides such as "**Key Items to Get Right When Conducting a Randomized Controlled Trial in Education**" and "**Identifying and Implementing Evidence-Based Educational Practices: A User-Friendly Guide.**"

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## FEATURED STATE WORK AT THE NATIONAL FORUM

All state liaisons recently received the NCCREST Luminaria Award for their efforts over the past year to eliminate disproportionality.

Particular recognition will go to the following states:

Connecticut- for being the early innovators in providing technical assistance to districts

Wisconsin- for comprehensive planning and professional learning

North Carolina- for connecting to and working with general education

New Jersey- for their on-going commitment to getting the data right

Tennessee- for establishing a dual agenda focused on both under and over representation

Virginia- for developing and supporting a network of committed individuals, schools, and districts

Louisiana- for perseverance and creativity in the face of adversity

Iowa- for developing and sustaining a disproportionality task force over distance and time, through innovative uses of technology

Ohio- for understanding and implementing a systems approach to this work

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## FEATURED DISTRICT WORK AT THE NATIONAL FORUM

Hacienda La Puente's representatives from Los Altos High School presented at the National Forum on "Co-Teaching in a Successful Inclusive Model". The presentation focused on successful collaborative teaching in a fully inclusive high school setting. To ensure accountability in schools, full inclusion is becoming an invaluable tool in education. The focus of the presentation was on how to prepare your school for transition to full inclusion: how to implement the practice; how to maintain effective learning communities; and how to deal with challenges that collaborative teachers might face. Student testimonials and supporting data were included to demonstrate the effectiveness of the collaborative model.

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## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"No one should make the claim of being educated until he or she has learned to live in harmony with people who are different."

-A.H. Wilson

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## FEATURED WEBSITES

**THE EXPANDING CANON: TEACHING MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE IN HIGH SCHOOL** This website has professional development workshops that include eight one-hour video programs and a print guide. The workshop features the literature of African American, Asian American, Native American and Latino writers examined through four pedagogical approaches -- reader response, inquiry, cultural studies, and critical pedagogy. In the video programs, teachers from across the country demonstrate innovative strategies for using these multicultural works with high school students. Integrated with the classroom footage is background information on featured authors and analysis of their works by leading scholars, educators, and the authors themselves. The Web site includes a wealth of resources about the authors, literature, pedagogical theories, and teaching strategies. The workshop guide includes discussion questions, activities for workshop participants, and short works of literature featured in the series. Use these components for professional development in two-hour weekly group sessions, or on your own.

<http://www.learner.org/resources/series178.html>

### **THE EXPANDING CANON: TEACHING MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

This video library includes nine 20-minute videos that give language arts teachers and other educators an opportunity to observe firsthand how their peers are successfully guiding students in grades 3-5 toward becoming more active and involved readers of literature. Observe new pedagogical techniques modeled with diverse students of all ability levels in a variety of school settings. Use the accompanying guide and Web site to develop professional development, outreach, or educational programs. The Web site also includes lesson plans and links to more information on the issues raised in the videos. This library is part of the *Envisioning Literature* series based on the research of Dr. Judith Langer, and can be used as a companion to the *Engaging With Literature* workshop.

<http://www.learner.org/resources/series182.html>

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## JOB OPENINGS

### **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY POSITIONS**

The School of Education and Human Development at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center announces two tenure-track, faculty positions in the School Psychology program beginning in the Fall of 2006. For more information follow this [link](#).

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION POSITION**

The School of Education at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center announces an open rank tenure-track faculty position in the Special Education program beginning in the Fall Term 2006. For more information follow this [link](#).

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**CO-SPONSORED BY ETS, THE COLLEGE BOARD, THE COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN,  
AND THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR URBAN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (NIUSI)**

Accommodating Students with Disabilities on State Assessments: What Works?

Savannah, Georgia, March 19-21, 2006

<http://www.ets.org/accommodationsconference>

**THE MID-ATLANTIC EQUITY CENTER**

Promoting the Achievement of Culturally Diverse Young Males

Washington D.C., March 24, 2006

<http://www.maec.org/conference2006.html>

**THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

26th Annual Excellence in Education Conference: Making Equity Work- Engaging All Students for High Achievement

Lincoln, Nebraska, March 29-30, 2006

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/cspd/Conference/index.htm>

**THE 2006 CONFERENCE FOR THE RELEVANCE OF ASSESSMENT AND CULTURE IN EDUCATION  
(R.A.C.E. 2006)**

Indigenous Issues and Voices in Educational Research and Assessment

Tempe, Arizona, April 27-29, 2006

<http://coe.asu.edu/ivera>

**THE 2006 CHINA-U.S. EDUCATION LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

Beijing, People's Republic of China, June 27-30, 2006

[www.globalinteractions.org](http://www.globalinteractions.org)

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