



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 or www.urbanschools.org to view the eNEWS online. Back issues of the eNEWS are also available there.

NOTICES

NEW DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Arizona State University (ASU) and the University of Arizona (UA) are seeking applications from outstanding candidates who intend to become Professors of Special Education with expertise in Culturally Responsive Education for Students with Learning Disabilities (LD) or Emotional/Behavioral Disorders (E/BD). To find out more about this program follow this [link](#).

SPOTLIGHT

NEW DATA IN THE DATA MAPS

Check out our new 2004-2005 school year data. We have recently uploaded brand new data to the interactive data maps on our website at <http://nisi.eddata.net>. We now have an impressive collection of 6 years of comparative data from all over the nation. In this website, interactive maps and tables present the distributions of students with disabilities across various disability categories by ethnic/racial category and teacher qualifications to help practitioners

and policy makers at the local and state levels understand their own status in relationship to disproportionate representation in special education. As NIUSI and NCCREST help to uncover the various elements that converge to create local and state level conditions in which students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds may be disproportionately represented, the data maps and tables will become more complex.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

DR. ASA G. HILLIARD III

Dr. Asa G. Hilliard III is the Fuller E. Callaway Professor of Urban Education at Georgia State University, with joint appointments in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and the Department of Educational Psychology and Special Education. A teacher, psychologist, and historian, he began his career in the Denver Public Schools. He earned a B.A. in Educational Psychology, M.A. in Counseling, and Ed.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Denver, where he also taught in the College of Education and in the Philosophy colloquium of the Centennial Scholars Honors Program. Dr. Hilliard served on the faculty at San Francisco State University for eighteen years. During that time he was a Department Chair for two years, Dean of Education for eight years, and was consultant to the Peace Corps and Superintendent of Schools in Monrovia, Liberia for two years.



He has participated in the development of several national assessment systems, such as proficiency assessment for professional educators, and developmental assessments of young children and infants. He has been active in forensic psychology, serving as an expert witness on the winning side in several landmark federal cases on test validity and bias.

Dr. Hilliard is a founding member of the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations and serves as its first Vice President. He is the co-developer of a popular educational television series, *Free Your Mind, Return To The Source: African Origins*, as well as having produced videotapes and educational materials on African History through his production company, Waset Education Productions.

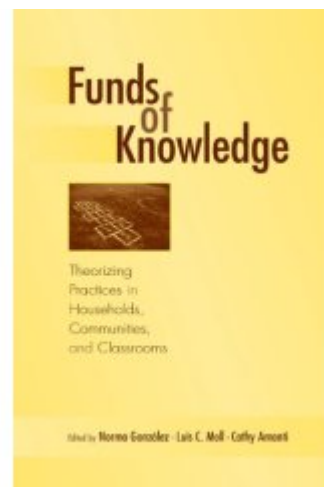
Dr. Hilliard has written numerous technical papers, articles, and books on testing, Ancient African History, teaching strategies, public policy, cultural styles, and child growth and development. In addition, he has consulted with many of the leading school districts, universities, government agencies, and private corporations on valid assessment, curriculum equity and teacher training. Several of his programs in pluralistic curriculum, assessment, and valid teaching have become national models. He has also been the recipient of numerous honors and awards.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms
Edited by Norma Gonzalez, Luis C. Moll, and Cathy Amanti

The concept of “funds of knowledge” is based on a simple premise: people are competent and have knowledge, and their life experiences have given them that knowledge. The claim in this book is that first-hand research experiences with families allow one to document this competence and knowledge, and that such engagement provides many possibilities for positive pedagogical actions.

The researchers have designed a methodology that views the everyday practices of language and action as constructing knowledge, the funds of knowledge approach facilitates a systematic and powerful way to represent communities in terms of the resources they possess and how to harness them for classroom teaching.



This book accomplishes three objectives: It gives readers the basic methodology and techniques followed in the contributors’ funds of knowledge research; it extends the boundaries of what these researchers have done; and it explores the applications to classroom practice that can result from teachers knowing the communities in which they work. *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms* is a critically important volume for all teachers and teachers-to-be, and for researchers and graduate students of language, culture, and education.

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

PRACTITIONER BRIEF

Disproportionate Representation of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students in Special Education: Measuring the Problem

By Martha Coutinho, East Tennessee State University
Donald Oswald, Virginia Commonwealth University

In this NCCREST Practitioner Brief Coutinho and Oswald trace the history of litigation regarding disproportionate representation, discuss regulations that target disproportionate representation, and describe the three most common ways of calculating disproportionality. They note that increased attention is now focused on racial/ethnic differences in the rate at which students are placed in relatively more restrictive settings. The authors conclude with suggestions for re-defining the problem.

To download this Practitioner Brief go to www.nccrest.org, click on resources and publications, then Practitioner Briefs or follow this [link](#).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODULE

Building Leadership Teams

Inclusive systems and schools unify teachers, staff, students, families, and communities and promote the practice of collaborative and shared leadership. Informed, competent, and distributed leadership is a critical requirement for successful, inclusive reform efforts and the central role of distributed leadership is to support and sustain implementation of reform that improves teaching and learning for every one in the school.

Leaders at all levels require knowledge of professional development design, the change process, research findings, standards based instruction and assessment, data-supported decision making, and an array of leadership and communication skills and processes. Effective leadership development supports participants in accessing and applying these knowledge bases. Finally, equity is a central concern of leadership. Leadership development initiatives should increase participants' understanding of equity issues and make special efforts to recruit diverse participants. The academies in this module promote inclusive systems and schools by coaching Building Leadership Team members in both leadership skills and team collaboration.

To download this module go to www.urbanschools.org then click on Professional Development then 'Module 1: Building Leadership Teams' or follow this [link](#).

RESEARCH BASED PRODUCTS

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM AND YOUTHS WITH DISABILITIES

This synthesis brief by Eve Muller summarizes key findings from five monographs produced by the National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice (EDJJ) and the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice (CECP). The barriers faced by youth with disabilities who are at risk of entering the juvenile justice system are complex. The process of building collaborative interagency relationships among education, mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice and health providers is challenging. Successful case or class advocacy for youthful offenders with disabilities requires a multi-pronged response that utilizes a variety of approaches.

To read the brief, visit www.projectforum.org or follow this [link](#).

FEATURED STATE WORK TENNESSEE

Fifty four districts were targeted by the Tennessee Department of Education for monitoring due to significant disproportionality in 2004-2005 as indicated in a review of system data of all 139 districts in the state. Five of these districts must use 15% IDEA funds for early intervening services. Tennessee used a weighted relative risk ratio of 2.0 or higher for Black students coexisting with a weighted relative risk ratio of .5 or less for White and/or Hispanic students plus a set of 5 additional indicators. The 5 districts with the highest risk ratios according to indicators listed above range from 4.38 to 5.19. Three year trend data in these districts shows substantial increases. Tennessee conducted statewide training of the Alternate Performance Indicators in fall 2005. The development of the Alternate Performance Indicators for alternate assessment has been instrumental in providing a template of expected outcomes for students who have significant cognitive disabilities, particularly for MR students, Tennessee's most significant disproportionate population. The Disproportionality Core Work Group is developing a document of best practices utilized by districts when decreasing disproportionate representation of students. Dissemination is planned for spring 2006. Tennessee is using the NCCRESt Self-Assessment Tool. The SPED spring conference was in early March and Elizabeth Kozleski was a presenter.

FEATURED DISTRICT WORK NIUSI'S NEW SITES...MEMPHIS AND MADISON

The National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI) would like to welcome Memphis City Schools and Madison Metropolitan School District to our growing NIUSI team. Celia Moore from

Memphis and Kathy Lyngaas from Madison are the new Site Liaisons. Both sites will be at the upcoming Synergy Site Meeting in Washington D.C. and we look forward to partnering with them to build more inclusive schools for ALL students.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"If we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities and so we weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place"

-Margaret Mead

FEATURED WEBSITE

www.4teachers.org

4Teachers.org works to help teachers integrate technology into their classrooms by offering FREE online tools and resources. This site helps teachers locate and create ready-to-use Web lessons, quizzes, rubrics and classroom calendars. There are also tools for student use. Discover valuable professional development resources addressing issues such as equity, ELL, technology planning, and at-risk or special-needs students.

DID YOU KNOW...

...that Edutopia Magazine featured an article in their March issue called *The Daring Dozen 2006: Twelve Who are Reshaping the Future of Education*. "Thousands of teachers, administrators, enterprising students, and other concerned thinkers are devoting themselves every day to finding creative ways to improve our schools. In an era of budget cuts and unprecedented challenges, there is no shortage of villains. But they are vastly outnumbered by the legion of heroes who make a difference. We could present a Daring Dozen in every issue for years to come and never come close to honoring them all. But we hope that this year's movers and shakers represent everyone who puts a shoulder to education's wheel." This article highlighted Zach Bjornson-Hooper, Jason Kamras, Carol Flexer, Jonathan Kozol, Mitchel Resnick, Brad Jupp, Barbara Rountree, Dennis Littky, Elliot Washor, Dean Kamen, Joy Hakim, and Wendy Kopp. To read this article follow this [link](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

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>

NIUSI'S SYNERGY SITE MEETING

Washington D.C., May 3-5, 2006

www.urbanschools.org

THE CENTER IS HOSTING

NCUST's First Annual Symposium: Lessons from High-Performing Urban Schools and Districts

San Diego- Mission Valley, May 5- 6, 2006,

<http://edweb.sdsu.edu/ncust/events/symposium.html>

BC MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Interactive Innovations: A Showcase of Learners and Learning

5 locations in B.C., May 25-26, 2006

<http://www.interactiveinnovations.ca>

THE 2006 CHINA-U.S. EDUCATION LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

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

www.globalinteractions.org

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