



**February 2008**

The ***Extended Learning Opportunities Network*** e-newsletter (ELON) is a monthly publication from CCSSO that provides timely information, research, and resources to support our members (chief state school officers, state education agency staff) in expanding and sustaining high quality Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs) to students in need of them. ELOs are initiatives that provide safe, structured environments for students outside the regular school day. ELOs include before- and after-school programs; Saturday, weekend, and summer programs; extended day/year initiatives, distance learning, and early education initiatives.

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## Publications and Reports...

**Arizona State University. *The Differential Developmental Trajectories of Rural High School Dropouts and Graduates*** – This study examines the developmental differences between high school graduates and dropouts from kindergarten to graduation. Findings suggest differences between the two groups exist prior to the beginning of kindergarten and become more divergent throughout adolescence and into graduation. Findings include

- kindergarten reading, writing, mathematics, spelling, and English course performance for high school dropouts are significantly lower than for high school graduates
- differences in absenteeism rates between graduates and dropouts appear as early as kindergarten
- differences in all course performances and absenteeism between graduates and dropouts become statistically more pronounced as students enter middle school
- significantly more core courses are taken by dropouts because of needed “remediation” than compared to graduates in the ninth grade year
- dropouts declined in their actual classroom performance and achievement on standardized tests over time, while graduates achieved with equal rigor in the classroom and on standardized tests

### Implications for practice

- given educational disparities that exist upon kindergarten entry, the quality of early educational experiences are critical for students’ future academic success
- rather than focusing on mandated compulsory attendance laws, policymakers should create strategies for improving student attendance in kindergarten through eighth-grade
- transitioning programs for at-risk students entering middle school may be beneficial but might be more effective for all students transitioning from pre-K to kindergarten as well as elementary to middle school
- requiring students to take “remediation” core classes in the ninth grade may be facilitating further academic failure and educators should allow those students to select non-core classes, such as music or art

The executive summary of this report is available at:

[http://www.west.asu.edu/rodel/assets/documents/executive\\_summary\\_of\\_dropout\\_study.doc](http://www.west.asu.edu/rodel/assets/documents/executive_summary_of_dropout_study.doc)

The following four publications from the James Irvine Foundation and Public/Private Ventures are part of a series of reports focused on the Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL) initiative, a \$58 million effort to improve student achievement through after school programs. The eight-year initiative began in 1999 and operated in five California cities.

**The James Irvine Foundation and Public/Private Ventures. *Advancing Achievement: Findings from an Independent Evaluation of a Major After-School Initiative*** – This report presents research findings over a two-year period of the Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL) after school

initiative. The eight-year CORAL initiative was funded by the James Irvine Foundation and was established in 1999 to help improve the academic achievement of children in five California cities – Fresno, Long Beach, Pasadena, Sacramento, and San Jose. The program served approximately 5,000 children from low-income families each year and over half were English Language Learners.

The research focuses on changes to the academic component of the CORAL initiative: specifically, the implementation of the literacy program. The program included activities based on core literacy strategies provided to participants three to four days a week, for sixty to ninety minutes each day. In addition, CORAL city directors and staff developed approaches for improving the quality of programming by

- employing a literacy director
- targeting trainings for team leaders
- monitoring and coaching regular activities
- utilizing data from observations to identify and address gaps in the consistency and quality of activities
- obtaining an adequate number of books for independent reading

Findings suggest participants

- improved in grade-level reading and on standardized tests
- acquired a strong sense of belonging to the CORAL programs
- developed a positive outlook toward reading and going to school
- had high levels of participation

Other findings indicate

- English Language Learners improved just as much as English-proficient students in grade-level reading and on standardized tests
- high satisfaction levels from parents of participants
- combined costs for both literacy and enrichment programming per child per day is slightly under twenty dollars

This report is available at:

[http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth\\_major\\_projects.asp?section\\_id=19&initiative\\_id=29](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth_major_projects.asp?section_id=19&initiative_id=29)

**The James Irvine Foundation and Public/Private Ventures. *What Matters, What Works: Advancing Achievement After School*** – This follow-on brief presents a summary of the findings and implications related to an earlier report, *Advancing Achievement: Findings from an Independent Evaluation of a Major After-School Initiative* (see description above). This brief presents recommendations for practitioners and for further research

- to improve the quality of literacy programming, programs need focused strategies, including additional training for staff under the direction of a literacy specialist
- programs should consider implementing the CORAL approach to benefit all children
- further study is needed to identify the factors that contributed to positive student outcomes in the CORAL evaluation

This brief is available at:

[http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth\\_major\\_projects.asp?section\\_id=19&initiative\\_id=29](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth_major_projects.asp?section_id=19&initiative_id=29)

**The James Irvine Foundation and Public/Private Ventures. *Supporting Success: Why and How to Improve Quality in After-School Programs*** – This report examines the program improvement strategies and describes the three-step continuous improvement cycle of Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning's (CORAL) after school programs. The three-step continuous improvement cycle developed in CORAL's after school programs include: 1) training staff, 2) monitoring program quality and coaching staff, and 3) collecting and analyzing data to track progress.

This report is available at:

[http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth\\_major\\_projects.asp?section\\_id=19&initiative\\_id=29](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth_major_projects.asp?section_id=19&initiative_id=29)

**The James Irvine Foundation and Public/Private Ventures. *Gaining Ground: Supporting English Language Learners Through After-School Literacy Programming*** - This brief discusses the potential of the Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning's (CORAL) after-school programming to support the language development of English Language Learners. It provides lessons learned to funders and policymakers interested in designing after-school programs that will offer similar experiences from the CORAL program.

CORAL programs provided an after school experience that offer safety, structure, supportive adults, and included a balance of academic, enrichment, and physical activities. Structured literacy lessons included read alouds, discussions, writing, vocabulary activities, and independent reading. Findings indicate English Language Learners achieved academic gains in equal measured to other children in the program. Implications for funders and policymakers in designing after-school programs include

- considering the benefits of serving children with varied language and achievement levels
- using a blend of academic and enrichment activities as the foundation for successful programming
- strengthening program quality by providing ongoing professional development for after-school instructors
- investing in resources necessary to provide quality, comprehensive after-school programming

This brief is available at:

[http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth\\_major\\_projects.asp?section\\_id=19&initiative\\_id=29](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/youth/youth_major_projects.asp?section_id=19&initiative_id=29)

**University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice Out-of-School Time Resource Center. *Promising Practices in Out-of-School Time Professional Development*** – This report focuses on professional development practices for out-of-school time (OST) practitioners. It provides a broad definition of OST professional development and summarizes promising practices in its design, implementation, and evaluation. OST professional development includes the activities, resources, and supports that assist OST practitioners work with or on behalf of children and youth.

Promising practices in designing, implementing, and evaluating OST professional development include

- establishing fundamental goals and objectives that integrate staff needs and input
- considering a set of standards or guidelines that include a range of learning styles, integrating theory and practice, and honoring participant's life experiences
- considering a range of formats for implementation, i.e. workshops, conferences, technical assistance, peer monitoring, small learning communities/peer networking, internships, apprenticeships, and observation
- evaluating professional development on multiple levels and using a range of formats, i.e. questionnaires, presenter self-assessments, online surveys, observer rubrics, workshop surveys, conference evaluations

This report is available at: <http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/ostrc/pdf/PPID.pdf>

### **Spotlight on State-Level Work...**

#### **Family and Community Involvement Standards**

The Kentucky Commissioner's Parents Advisory Council (CPAC) issued the report, *The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle* to the state's department of education. The report provides recommendations for involving families and communities in improving student achievement. It lists and describes six objectives with performance descriptors, which were developed in the *Kentucky Family and Community Involvement Guide to Student Achievement*. Objectives include

- Relationship-building: The school staff builds productive, personal relationships with parents of all their students
- Communications: Two-way information in many forms flows regularly between school staff and parents about students' academic achievement and individual needs
- Decision-making: School staff encourages, supports, and expects parent to be involved in school improvement decisions and to monitor and assist school improvement
- Advocacy: For each student, the school staff identifies and supports a parent or another adult who take personal responsibility for understanding and speaking for each child's learning needs
- Learning Opportunities: School staff ensures that families have multiple learning opportunities to understand how to support their children's learning
- Community Partnerships: The school staff engages and partners with community members to plan and implement substantive work to improve student achievement

This report is available at:

<http://www.education.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/45597738-F31B-4333-9BB9-34255F02BC6D/0/PACtheMissingPiecev2.pdf>

*If you have state specific resources and news to share on extended learning opportunities and other initiatives designed to support student achievement and educational attainment, please send them to [morakotm@ccsso.org](mailto:morakotm@ccsso.org).*

## Tools You Can Use...

This toolkit from the James Irvine Foundation and Public/Private Ventures provides tools and techniques for implementing quality after-school programming. It features the tools and strategies used by the Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning (CORAL) programs that increased the quality of literacy programming and improved student reading levels.

To access this resource, please visit:

[http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/228\\_publication.pdf](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/228_publication.pdf)

The Alliance for Excellent Education has identified and described ten elements that high schools should have in place to ensure every student succeeds. Those elements are

- challenging classes
- personal attention for all students
- extra help for those who need it
- bringing in the real work to the classroom
- family and community involvement
- a safe learning environment
- skilled teachers
- strong leaders
- necessary resources
- user-friendly information

To access this resource, please visit:

[http://www.all4ed.org/what\\_you\\_can\\_do/successful\\_high\\_school](http://www.all4ed.org/what_you_can_do/successful_high_school)

## Conferences and Events...

**ASCD** will be hosting its Annual Conference in New Orleans, March 15-17, 2008. The conference, *Reinventing Schools: Courageous Leadership for Positive Change*, will feature over 550 sessions exploring

- what it takes to create better schools
- how to improve programs for teaching and learning
- which education approaches are most likely to work
- what practices ensure all students are learning
- how to get results
- what to question about traditional practices

\*For more information, please visit:

<http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.9f45bc8553f12b1abfb3ffdb62108a0c/>

**Education Sector** will be hosting an event, *The Evolving Federal Role in Education: Past, Present and Future* in Washington, D.C., March 20, 2008. The event will feature a discussion with Christopher Cross, education consultant and former assistant secretary with the U.S. Department of Education; Samuel Haleprin, Founder and Senior Fellow, American Youth Policy Forum; Jack Jennings, President and CEO, Center for Education Policy; Kati Haycock, President, Education Trust; Fritz Edelstein, Principal, Public Private Action; and Andrew Rotherman, Co-director, Education Sector.

\*For more information, please visit:

[http://www.educationsector.org/events/events\\_show.htm?doc\\_id=663259](http://www.educationsector.org/events/events_show.htm?doc_id=663259)

The **Coalition for Community Schools** will be hosting the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary National Forum, *Community Schools for All* in Portland, Oregon, and April 30 to May 2, 2008. The event will feature an international community schools plenary, site visits, and more than eighty workshops. Keynote speakers include Susan Castillo, Oregon Superintendent of Public Instruction; Pedro Noguero, author, professor, and expert on education and diversity; Vicki Phillips, Director of Education, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Ira Harkavy, Coalition Chair and Director, Netter Center of Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania; and international community school leaders.

\*For more information, please visit: [www.communityschool.org](http://www.communityschool.org)

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools** will be hosting a workshop, *After School Programs for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Students*, in New Orleans, LA, April 23 and in Los Angeles, CA, May 21, 2008. Participants will be analyzing case studies and learn how to

- articulate program goals
- connect program goals to those of the school/district
- make learning real-world, exciting, and relevant to students
- enhance the lives of students and parents
- increase parent involvement
- make meaningful, real connections to the community – local, regional, or global

\*For more information, please visit:

[http://www.21stcenturyschools.com/After\\_School.htm](http://www.21stcenturyschools.com/After_School.htm)

## **Grants and Other Opportunities...**

### **Job Skills and/or Education**

The Staples Foundation for Learning will be accepting proposals to provide funding for local groups with programs and services that support or provide job skills and/or education for all people, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged youth. To be eligible for funding, groups must have a 501(c)(3) status, focus on job skills and education, and align goals to the mission and focus of the Staples Foundation.

**Deadline for proposals: March 14 and June 16**

[www.staplesfoundation.org/foundhome.html](http://www.staplesfoundation.org/foundhome.html)

### **Be the Change! Program Grants**

Peace Child International will provide funding and advice to support youth led sustainability development projects that serve the needs of the community.

**Deadline: March 31**

<http://www.peacechild.org/www/pci/index.php?id=72>

### **Community Health**

Kaiser Permanente Cares for Community will provide funding to support non profit organizations focusing on community and children's health. Requests are accepted year round.

[www.xnet.kp.org/communitybenefit/gep/grants.html](http://www.xnet.kp.org/communitybenefit/gep/grants.html)

## **In the News...**

### **February 3**

**Phoenix area schools competing for kindergarteners**

<http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0203phxschool-ON.html>

**February 4**

**ISTEP scores shake up assumptions on rankings**

**Some IPS elementary, high school charters are outperforming township peers**

<http://www.indystar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080204/LOCAL18/802040381/1006/LOCAL>

**February 5**

**Educators' return after retirement stirs pension fight**

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/0205smartschools0205.html>

**February 6**

**Charter-school plan rejected**

**District lobbyists decry idea as 'privatization of education'**

<http://www.argusleader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008802060313>

**February 7**

**Study recommends sweeping changes to student advancement**

**Report: Ariz. students should advance by skill levels, not grade levels**

<http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0207report0207-ON.html>

**February 8**

**A new way of grading schools**

**DPS system focuses on growth, value to students**

<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/news/2008/feb/08/a-new-way-of-grading-schools/>

**February 9**

**Zelman, state superintendent, disagrees with Strickland's proposed shake-up**

<http://www.cleveland.com/education/plaindealer/index.ssf?/base/isedu/120256744165770.xml&coll=2>

**February 10**

**Tax help is eyed to keep teachers**

**Effort to make up for lower pay scale**

[http://www.boston.com/news/education/k\\_12/articles/2008/02/10/tax\\_help\\_is\\_eyed\\_to\\_keep\\_teachers/](http://www.boston.com/news/education/k_12/articles/2008/02/10/tax_help_is_eyed_to_keep_teachers/)

**February 11**

**Dropout rate targeted**

**Panel recommends raising minimum age to quit school to 18**

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/annearundel/bal-md.ar.dropout11feb11,0,4548737.story>

**February 12**

**Comment: Let's take the digit out of digital**

<http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/comment/story/0,,2255739,00.html>

**February 13**

**Senate votes to boost teacher pay**

<http://www.argusleader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080213/NEWS/80213047/1001>

**February 16**

**XO Laptops Go Next to Haiti**

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/pcworld/20080216/tc\\_pcworld/142566;\\_ylt=A0WTcSaSJrdHIYUByR4jtBAF](http://news.yahoo.com/s/pcworld/20080216/tc_pcworld/142566;_ylt=A0WTcSaSJrdHIYUByR4jtBAF)

**February 17**

**Saturday school prepares students**

**Schools on the state watch list bring youths in on weekends to improve Md. assessment scores**

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/annearundel/balar.saturday17feb17,0,4134839.story>

**February 19**

**Measure requiring high school proficiency test awaits New Mexico governor's signature**

<http://www.abqtrib.com/news/2008/feb/19/measure-requiring-high-school-proficiency-test-awa/>

**February 20**

**Preschool funding cut from budget**

**HEAD START: House committee says spending plan was unclear.**

<http://www.adn.com/legislature/story/319143.html>

**February 21**

**California schools with high dropout rates listed**

<http://www.latimes.com/news/education/la-me-dropout21feb21,1,7853024.story>

**February 22**

**Beyond the Basics**

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/editorial/bal-ed.nclb22feb22,0,5690418.story>

**February 23**

**Dallas schools teacher ratings sometimes off mark**

[http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/education/stories/DN-disdcei\\_23met.ART.North.Edition1.460e28c.htm](http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/education/stories/DN-disdcei_23met.ART.North.Edition1.460e28c.htm)

**February 24**

**School cuts put our future at risk**

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-lopez24feb24,1,4554139.story>

**February 25**

**Reading and Math Curtailing Other Topics, Study Finds**

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/24/AR2008022401996.html>

**February 26**

**Nutritionists call for more money, better breakfasts**

<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=83539-sna-school-nutrition-children>

**February 27**

**In Puerto Rico, teachers march before Education Department as island petitions for order ending strike**

[http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/nationworld/orl-rico2708feb27\\_0,1948969.story](http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/nationworld/orl-rico2708feb27_0,1948969.story)

**About the Extended Learning and Development Opportunities Project**

The Extended Learning and Development Opportunities Project is housed at CCSSO and is supported through funding from the [Charles Stewart Mott Foundation](#). The project is designed to assist states in developing their capacity to effectively implement the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC), and Supplemental Educational Services programs, as well as other state-based extended learning initiatives.

To submit a news item relevant to extended learning efforts at the state or district level, provide feedback, or to subscribe/unsubscribe, send an e-mail to Morakot Masokas at [morakotm@ccsso.org](mailto:morakotm@ccsso.org). The PDF version of this newsletter is available at the following URL:

[http://www.ccsso.org/whats\\_new/newsletters/elon\\_news/index.cfm](http://www.ccsso.org/whats_new/newsletters/elon_news/index.cfm)

*The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.*

*Our mission statement: The Council of Chief State School Officers, through Leadership, Advocacy, and Service, assists chief state school officers and their organizations in achieving the vision of an American education system that enables all children to succeed in school, work, and life.*

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