



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
URBAN SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT

eNEWS



NATIONAL CENTER FOR
Culturally Responsive
Educational Systems



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UPDATE

Welcome to the new and improved eNEWS! We revamped our look and refurbished our content. eNEWS reflects the collaborative relationship between the National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI) and the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCREST). NIUSI has led the way in urban school improvement and inclusive schooling since 1997. Started in 2002, NCCREST is the leading national organization in reducing the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education. By pooling the resources and expertise of both projects, eNEWS can communicate with the broadest audiences and provide the most innovative, vital and current information on issues in education, school reform, cultural diversity, disproportionality, inclusive practices, and much more. eNEWS will keep you informed of the work of these projects as well as other news and information in related fields.

NOTICES

The NIUSI web address has changed to www.urbanschools.org Please update any links to the site that you may have, or add it as a link to your site!

If you would like to submit an idea for the content of this eNEWS, including events, resources, and websites, or featured work, please email kate.templeton@cudenver.edu

SPOTLIGHT

NCCREST'S NATIONAL FORUM ON DISPROPORTIONALITY Join some of the top educators, policy makers, advocacy groups, parents, and community members from across the United States on February 15th-17th, 2006 in Denver, CO for three days of presentations/discussions, workshops, panels, and roundtables. Topics will focus on creating culturally responsive educational systems to assure equity in educational outcomes for all students and become the vehicle for eliminating the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education. Keynote speakers include Joe Johnson, Peggy McIntosh, Glenn Singleton, Alfredo Artiles, Beth Harry, Janette Klingner and Elizabeth Kozleski. There will be over **75** concurrent sessions from a diverse range of perspectives. Presentations will be given by school, district, and state department teams; and Universities and TA Centers.

Make sure to visit NCCREST's website at www.nccrest.org to register for the National Forum, *Creating Opportunities to Learn: A Forum for Addressing Disproportionality*. And remember to register before December 1st to get the early bird registration rate of \$125. Watch our site for updates that will include additional keynote speakers, pre conference workshops, and National Partners, including The National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI), and other National Technical Assistance Organizations.

Please spread the word about this exciting conference and disseminate this information to any interested parties in your network. We are looking forward to seeing you there and appreciate your help in making this an extraordinary event.

Questions? Email nccrest@cudenver.edu

ACCOMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ON STATE ASSESSMENTS: WHAT WORKS? This conference is co-sponsored by ETS, the College Board, the Council for Exceptional Children, and the National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI). It will be on March 19-21, 2006 at Historic Mills House in Charleston, SC. The purpose of this event is to provide a forum for practitioners and leading researchers in the disabilities fields to discuss the latest issues. State testing directors, school administrators, guidance counselors, special education coordinators and instructors, and researchers are encouraged to attend.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

DR PEGGY MCINTOSH: Peggy McIntosh, Ph.d., associate director of the Center for Research on Women at the Wellesley Centers for Women, is also the founder, and co-director with Emily Style, of the [National S.E.E.D. \(Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity\) Project on Inclusive Curriculum](#). The SEED Project helps teachers create their own year-long, school based seminars on making school climates, K-12 curricula, and teaching methods more gender fair and multi-culturally equitable.



McIntosh directs the Gender, Race, and Inclusive Education Project, which provides workshops on privilege systems, feelings of fraudulence, and diversifying workplaces, curricula, and

teaching methods. Dr. McIntosh has taught English, American Studies, and Women's Studies at the Brearley School, Harvard University, Trinity College (Washington, D.C.), Durham University (England), and Wellesley College.

She is co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Women's Institute, and has been consulting editor to *Sage: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women*. In 1993-1994, she consulted with women on 22 Asian campuses on the development of Women's Studies and programs to bring materials from Women's Studies into the main curriculum. In addition to having two honorary degrees, she is a recipient of the Klingenstein Award for Distinguished Educational Leadership from Columbia Teachers College.

Peggy McIntosh will be presenting as a keynote speaker at NCCREST's National Forum on Disproportionality on Thursday, February 16th, 2006. She will be discussing issues of power and privilege in schools. To register for this conference go to...

<http://www.nccrest.org/events/disproportionality.html>

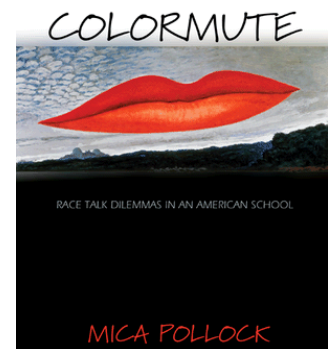
RECOMMENDED READINGS

Color Mute by Mica Pollock; Ph.d.

This book considers in unprecedented detail one of the most confounding questions in American racial practice: when to speak about people in racial terms. Viewing "race talk" through the lens of a California high school and district, *Colormute* draws on three years of ethnographic research on everyday race labeling in education. Based on the author's experiences as a teacher as well as an anthropologist, it discusses the role race plays in everyday and policy talk about such familiar topics as discipline, achievement, curriculum reform, and educational inequality.

Pollock illustrates the wide variations in the way speakers use race labels. Sometimes people use them without thinking twice; at other moments they avoid them at all costs or use them only in the description of particular situations. While a major concern of everyday race talk in schools is that racial descriptions will be inaccurate or inappropriate, Pollock demonstrates that anxiously suppressing race words (being what she terms "colormute") can also cause educators to reproduce the very racial inequities they abhor.

The book assists readers in cultivating a greater understanding of the pitfalls and possibilities of everyday race talk and clarifies previously murky discussions of "colorblindness." By bridging the gap between theory and practice, *Colormute* will be enormously helpful in fostering ongoing conversations about dismantling racial inequality in America.



TOOLS YOU CAN USE

NCCREST'S ASSESSMENT TOOL Equity in Special Education Placement: A School Self-Assessment Guide for Culturally Responsive Practice by Herald V. Richards, Alfredo J. Artiles, Janette Klingner, and Ayanna Brown is now uploaded to our website www.nccrest.org. This tool is an instrument that allows schools to conduct a self-assessment of their programs and practices in five domains: (a) School Governance, Organization, Policy and Climate, (b) Family

Involvement, (c) Curriculum, (d) Organization of Learning, and (e) Special Education Referral Process and Programs.

We are making this tool available now, but are also currently conducting a pilot study of this tool to ensure its reliability and validity. We are seeking elementary schools to participate in this pilot. For more information, or to nominate a school to participate, go to <http://www.nccrest.org/publications/tools.html>

FOUR NEW NIUSI ONPOINTS! NIUSI's OnPoint series are brief discussions of critical issues in urban education. These publications have been written by a variety of researchers, practitioners, and family members about specific practices that support inclusive schooling. These OnPoints should help everyone link theories and practices and develop a framework for exploring or informing practice as well as examples of how the theory is translated into practice that is effective and produces learning results for students. All OnPoints are distillations of research, so all references are listed at the end if you want to read more about a particular topic.

NIUSI has recently produced four new OnPoints, [Mental Health in Urban Schools](#), [Understanding Culture](#), [Principals of Inclusive Schools](#), and [Cultural Identity and Teaching](#). All of these OnPoints are uploaded onto our website at www.urbanschools.org. We have revamped the OnPoint look and developed two different formats. One, the online reader version, is for easier viewing at your personal computer and for printing an 8 ½ x 11 size document. The other, the printer ready version, is for organizations to be able to create professional quality materials simply by sending this document to a professional printer.

We are excited to share these new products and look forward to any feedback you may have.

RESEARCH BASED PRODUCTS

“Witnessing Brown: Pursuit of an Equity Agenda in American Education”

By Anne Smith and Elizabeth Kozleski

in the September/October issue of *Remedial and Special Education*.

Abstract:

The 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision provides a critical opportunity to reflect on *Brown's* importance, impact, and the lessons it provides on achieving racial desegregation and its relationship to the progressive inclusion of students with disabilities into public schools across the United States. This article explores the parallels and intersections between the racial desegregation of America's public schools and the inclusion of students with disabilities in these schools. This article can be found in the September/October issue of *Remedial and Special Education*.

Smith, A. & Kozleski, E. B (2005). Witnessing Brown: Pursuit of an Equity Agenda in American Education. *Remedial and Special Education*, 26, 270-280.

FEATURED STATE WORK **NORTH CAROLINA**

Disproportionality Training was held in August for approximately 70 people, including special education consultants, general education consultants, and district leaders. The workshop was cosponsored by the Exceptional Children Division of the NC Department of Public Instruction and NCCRESt. Teresa Dais, Research and Evaluation consultant for NC, organized the training, distributed the risk ratio data, by district, to the participants and identified the major disproportionality issues in North Carolina. NCCRESt conducted a five hour workshop on culturally responsive systems and characteristics of good technical assistance for school improvement.



A report entitled, *Raising achievement, closing the gap*, documents North Carolina's successes with the reorganized state education department and its new emphasis on disproportionality.

FEATURED DISTRICT WORK **HACIENDA LA PUENTE, CALIFORNIA**

A two day cognitive coaching workshop was held at Los Altos High School in August. Training was provided to five district level coaches, the school's faculty, and the Director of Special Education for the district. A follow-up session with the district coaches and building level faculty was held on October 19th. A total of 10 co-teaching teams in Math, Social Studies, English, and Science have been coaching together since the beginning of the academic year. Student data suggests that students with and without IEP's have improved their content area performance.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"...inclusive ways of knowing and living offer us the only true way to emancipate ourselves from the divisions that limit our minds and imaginations."

-bell hooks

FEATURED WEBSITES

www.just4kids.org This is a great site for educators, policy makers and parents. Their school data are a powerful tool to help schools identify how they are performing compared to other schools in the state with similar or more disadvantaged student populations. These reports are based on information obtained from the state department of education in each state and provide an unbiased, data-based view of a school's academic achievement.

[*I Have Tourette's, but Tourette's Doesn't Have Me*](#) This site showcases an HBO documentary on children with Tourette's. The movie demystifies and humanizes what it's like to have Tourette's by

giving a voice to children eight to 13 who have the disorder. The children speak frankly about living with Tourette's and discuss the impact of being ostracized by some of their fellow students. School systems across the country are adopting curricula to teach acceptance of diversity, as well as the tools to bring about positive conflict resolution. At a time when children with disabilities are mainstreamed and no longer kept on the sidelines, it is vital for others to hear their voices. Through an open and honest discussion of their differences, these children show just how similar everyone is. *I Have Tourette's but Tourette's Doesn't Have Me* is produced in collaboration with the Tourette Syndrome Association (TSA) and Ellen Goosenberg Kent who also directed it. The documentary will be showing four more times on HBO in November. The dates and times are the 24th at 8:30pm, the 27th at 2:45pm and the 30th at 12:15pm and 8:30pm.

DID YOU KNOW ...

... that the Anti-Defamation League and the We Are Family Foundation is releasing a DVD called *We Are Family: A Musical Message for All*. The DVD brings together for the first time over 100 beloved television characters to sing "We Are Family". This will help children learn about different kinds of families and the importance of appreciating cultural diversity. During the week of March 7th every elementary public school district in the United States will receive a DVD package that includes a discussion guide. For more information on the project please visit <http://www.wearefamilyfoundation.org/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

NCCREST STATE TA MEETING

Denver, Colorado, Dec. 1-2, 2005

THE NATIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (NSDC)

37th Annual Conference - A Declaration of Professional Learning: The Revolution Begins!
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Dec. 3-7, 2005

8TH ANNUAL ALLIANCE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Our Combined Voices: Making a Difference for Children with Disabilities
Washington DC, December 25-28, 2005

NCCREST'S NATIONAL FORUM ON DISPROPORTIONALITY

Creating Opportunities to Learn: A Forum for Addressing Disproportionality
Denver, Colorado, February 15-17, 2006

NIUSI PHONE: 303.556.3990
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