Welcome to the May issue of CollabNews!

CollabNews is a monthly electronic newsletter for members and associates of the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, a network of special and general education leaders from the nation's urban school districts.

FEATURES THIS MONTH

- Member Update: Thank You Spring Meeting Participants, Welcome New Member Districts, Member referral opportunity, Save the Date
- Article: Elephants in the Room
- Partner Update: NDPC-SD Teleseminar materials available
- New Resource: Working with School Personnel
- Collaborative Help Desk

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO FORWARD THIS NEWSLETTER TO OTHERS

1. MEMBER UPDATE

Thank You Spring Meeting Participants
The Spring Collaborative Meeting, "General and Special Education: Partnering for the Benefit of ALL Students" which was held earlier this month in Dallas, Texas was a great success. A special thanks to the 12 member districts that conducted small group presentations: Akron Public Schools, OH, Austin Independent School District, TX, Brockton Public Schools, MA, Broward County Public Schools, FL, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, NC, Dallas Independent School District, TX, Deer Valley Unified School District, AZ, Katy Independent School District, TX, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, FL, New York City Community School District 75, NY, School District Philadelphia, PA, Pittsburgh Public Schools, PA
Copies of the presenters’ PowerPoints and handouts will soon be available for downloading from our Web site: http://www.urbancollaborative.org. Those members who were unable to attend the meeting will receive copies of the meeting handouts via mail in June.

Welcome New Member Districts
The Collaborative is pleased to welcome our newest members: Recovery School District and Sioux Falls Public Schools
Recovery School District in New Orleans was created in November 2005 and has the responsibility of rebuilding and improving the New Orleans schools in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. It has an enrollment of 10,000 and our member contact is Margaret Lang, Director of Intervention Services. For more information visit: www.nolapublicschools.net
Sioux Falls Public Schools in Sioux Falls, SD has an enrollment of over 20,000 and our member contact is Deb Mullenburg-Wilson, Special Education Director. For more information visit: www.sf.k12.sd.us
Member referral opportunity
Many of our member school districts joined the Collaborative based on a referral from a current member. Please help us expand the impact of the Collaborative by recommending one or more school districts that would benefit from membership. If a district you refer enrolls in the Collaborative, we will waive registration fees for one additional participant from your district at the next national meeting. Download a member referral form from http://www.urbancollaborative.org/login.asp

Save the Date: 2007 Fall Meeting
The Collaborative’s Fall Meeting will be held October 24-27, 2007 at the JW Marriott Buckhead Atlanta, in Atlanta, Georgia. A call for presentations and registration information will be sent out later this summer.

2. ARTICLE

Elephants in the Room: When mainstream media report on urban schools, the real story is often what goes unsaid
In his article, Elephants in the Room, recently published in Rethinking Schools Online, Gregory Michie addresses mainstream media’s treatment of our urban schools, specifically our member district Chicago Public Schools. Michie, a teacher and teacher educator in Chicago for the past 16 years, examines a variety of media and claims that not only do they focus primarily on the negative stories involving urban schooling, but that often the treatment of these stories glosses over the aspects that deserve the most attention.

The article argues that what is most telling about newspaper, television, and magazine treatment of public schools is not what they say, but what they don’t. Michie points out the choices made by the media concerning what to report about on the issue of public education, and he points out what those choices mean. Furthermore, he encourages the reader to take advantage of opportunities to bring attention to these omissions. Gregory Michie teaches in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Illinois State University, where he coordinates a student-teaching internship program in Chicago Public Schools. To view the article in its entirety please visit: www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/21_03/elep213.shtml

3. PARTNER UPDATE

NDPC-SD Teleseminar materials available
The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD), in conjunction with the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative, recently released free downloadable media files from their most recent teleseminar, "The Big Four: A Framework for Improving Instruction That Leads to School Completion." This teleseminar was held on February 13, 2007. The Presenter was Dr. Jim Knight, a research associate at the University of Kansas, Center for Research on Learning.

In this 1 1/2 hour teleseminar, Dr. Knight described a framework, The Big Four, which professional developers, coaches, and other educators can use to find a starting point for the challenge of school completion. The Big Four Framework of (a) Classroom Management, (b) Content Knowledge, (c) Direct Instruction, and (d) Formative Assessment provides a simple, yet sophisticated way of analyzing critical variables in teaching and identifying next steps in the important process of improving teaching practices. Individuals and groups looking for a starting point for instructional improvement should find this presentation extremely useful.
The event materials, including audio recordings (MP4s), PowerPoint slides and materials, PDF transcripts, and contact information for Dr. Jim Knight are available at: www.ndpc-sd.org/econnections/index.htm

4. EVENT

Strategies and More Strategies! Inclusive Practices at the Secondary Level
July 26-27, 2007 • College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA

Whether you are well on the road to building a more inclusive environment at the secondary level or you are just embarking on the journey—this institute will provide the ideas, strategies, and tools you will need to improve learning outcomes for all students. During the two-day institute participants will engage in lectures, learning activities, and facilitated action planning sessions. All participants will walk away with ideas, tools, and the motivation to implement innovative strategies in their school and/or classroom. Institute participants will gain knowledge and skill in the following areas:

- Relevant and practical co-teaching strategies for middle and high school classrooms, incorporating strategies for students with and without disabilities
- Strategies to promote social success among middle and high school students
- Progress monitoring strategies based on current trends in assessing and grading secondary students with disabilities
- Quick and easy strategies across the content areas to impact the learning of all students
- Curricular adaptations in a high stakes environment
- Culturally responsive educational practices
- Techniques for building stronger partnerships between general and special educators, as well as with students and their families
- Effective use of common planning time

Please visit http://www.urbancollaborative.org/inclusive.asp for more information.

5. NEW RESOURCE

Working with School Personnel

In its module addressing school nursing services, "Working with School Personnel: What School Nurses Should Do to Promote the Educational Success of Students with Disabilities," the IRIS Center provides an overview of school nurses' roles in serving both general and special education students. The module is centered around Mr. Logan, who has recently accepted a position as the school nurse at Carrington Middle School. While his previous career as a Life Flight nurse has prepared him to treat his students' health care needs in a variety of ways, Mr. Logan soon realizes he has a lot to learn about being a nurse in a school environment. Participants will join Mr. Logan as he interacts with Megan Giachelli, a student with cerebral palsy, and her mother, and in the process gain a better understanding of the role of school nurse.

According to IRIS, “as students work through this module, they will learn more about the role of school nurses in 504 plan and IEP meetings, about how to advocate for students with health care needs, about how to promote their services and their roles as school nurses, and about the importance of collaborating and establishing networks.” To view the module visit: http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/nur01_personnel/chalcycle.htm.
6. COLLABORATIVE HELP DESK

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Past CollabNews issues can be found online at:

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FYI: CollabNews is not a listserv or discussion list. Members cannot send mail to this list. If you have questions or concerns about CollabNews, or would like to contact staff members, please send all correspondence to: collaborative@edc.org.

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