



Welcome to the October Issue of CollabNews!

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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.

Member Update

New Member

The Collaborative is pleased to welcome our newest member district, Milford Public Schools. [Milford Public Schools](#) is located in Milford, MA, and has a total enrollment of 4,300 students. Our Member contact is B.J. Cataldo, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Services.

Fall 2008 Meeting and Plans for Spring Member Meeting

Thanks to all our member districts, presenters, Partners and Sponsors for making the Fall member meeting in Denver such a success. The informative and lively discussions around our topic - *"Identifying and Meeting the Needs of English Language Learners"* - were enhanced by the participation of so many of our colleagues from the bilingual/ELL departments of our member districts.

Ethical Dilemmas

During the meeting, we also had the opportunity to begin a conversation regarding "Ethical Dilemmas of Urban Special Education Leaders." Participants completed a survey on aspects of their work that may lead to concerns of conscience. The preliminary results of the survey were shared at the closing session of the meeting on Saturday. More complete results of the survey will be posted in our Member Exchange section of the Collaborative's website once they have been more fully reviewed. There is also a plan to continue this thought-provoking conversation online and at future meetings.

Topic for Spring Meeting in Phoenix



Our Spring meeting is scheduled for May 6-9, 2009 in Phoenix Arizona. The topic will be ***"Improving Achievement Among Students with Disabilities through Data-based Decision Making."*** At this meeting, we plan to explore how urban districts are successfully collecting, managing and using their student data to improve achievement for students with disabilities and how they have addressed the challenges of making data accessible, understandable and useful to administrators and teachers. We encourage our members to begin thinking about submitting proposals for concurrent sessions.

Member Exchange

Fall Meeting Materials

Copies of Powerpoint presentations from our keynote speakers and concurrent session presenters are now available in the Member Exchange section of our website. You can access the Member Exchange by logging in at the [Collaborative's website](#) and navigating to the page by clicking the button on the left column. If you need help posting or retrieving items on the Member Exchange, please contact Ron Felton at rfelton@edc.org.

Special Event - Dropout Prevention Strategies

The Collaborative is pleased to be a partner with [The National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities](#). On Wednesday, December 10, 2008 the Center will be sponsoring a teleseminar **"Research-based Strategies for Dropout Prevention"** from 1:00 - 2:30 pm EST. Dr. Russell W. Rumberger, Director, California Dropout Research Project, University of California, Santa Barbara will present background information about the recently released IES Dropout Prevention Practice Guide and discuss, in detail, each of the six evidence-based recommendations for reducing dropout rates that emerged from the authors' evaluations. You can get additional information [here](#) and can register [at this link](#).

Resources

Just Released: Report on Special Education in America

The Editorial Projects in Education (EPE) Research Center is a division of the non-profit organization that publishes the weekly newspaper Education Week. This week EPE released a report online entitled ***Special Education in America - The state of students with disabilities in the nation's high schools***. This report examines a number of key issues facing students with disabilities ranging from the demographics of the population, educational settings, over-representation of certain student groups, achievement, high school completion, and transitions to adulthood. The report is available for viewing and download at the [EPE Research Center website](#).

Website of the Month

Blog - "On Special Education"

Education Week's website hosts a blog entitled [On Special Education Education](#) written by Education Week reporter Christina A. Samuels. In her blog, Ms. Samuels tracks news and trends of interest to the special education community.

Inclusive Schools Network

Share Your Inclusive Schools Week Celebration Plans!



The Inclusive Schools Network is hosting the [8th Annual Inclusive Schools Week](#) this **December 1-5**, celebrating the theme, "**Together We Learn Better: Inclusive Schools Benefit All Children**". Since its inception in 2001 under the auspices of the Collaborative, the Week has been a celebration of the progress families, schools, and communities have made in promoting inclusive educational practices, and an opportunity for discussion about quality education for all children. As in past years, Collaborative Members are considered Partners of Inclusive Schools Week, and are integral to the success of the Week. Collaborative Members can help to make this year's Week a success by:

Sharing your [Celebration Plans](#) for Inclusive Schools Week! Each year, Inclusive Schools Week participants from all over flood the [ISN email box](#) with details about their exciting Celebration Plans, and once again you are invited to submit a short description of the events and activities you have planned for the Week to: inclusiveschools@edc.org. In November, ISN will begin posting Celebration Plans from selected schools, districts and communities on the website. Also in November, look for the opportunity to begin sharing your Celebration Plans with others online in the ISN Discussion Forum!

Purchasing Inclusive Schools Week [Products](#) for each of your schools from: <https://fcsn.org/inclusiveschools/orderform.html>. Items such as ISN pencils, pens, bookmarks, posters and stickers are a great way to let educators and families know about Inclusive Schools Week while helping to support the Week and ISN. This year Members are eligible for discounts on stickers, Celebration Ideas CDs, and the 2008 Celebration Ideas Sampler, so place your orders now while there's still plenty of time to plan your 2008 Inclusive Schools Week celebration!

Spreading the word about [Inclusive Schools Week](#). Let school leaders, staff, students and families know about Inclusive Schools Week by listing the dates (December 1-5, 2008) on your school district's website, and in your newsletter and email communications. Use ISN's [Celebration and Awareness Materials](#), which can be downloaded from <http://www.inclusiveschools.org/content/celebration-and-awareness-materials>, to organize and promote your events and activities for the Week.

Participating in [Inclusive Schools Weeks Events](#). ISN is hosting a webinar on December 3rd from 3:00 to 4:30 pm EST on the topic "Reflecting Upon the NCTM Focal Points and the Role of the Special Educator in Today's Mathematics Classroom" with Dr. Hank Kepner, President of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), and Dr. Lisa Dieker, Professor of Exceptional Education at the

University of Central Florida. For more information, and to register for this event, go to: http://www.inclusiveschools.org/Events_Registration.

Thank you very much for your participation in the 2008 Inclusive Schools Week and for your past support of this important initiative. If you have any questions about Inclusive Schools Week or the Inclusive Schools Network, please contact Tom Beer at tbeer@edc.org.

Including Samuel



Including Samuel DVDs are now available through ISN!

Collaborative Members who attended the Fall 2008 Meeting had the opportunity to view a [short clip](#) from the award-winning documentary *Including Samuel*. Shot and produced over four years by filmmaker Dan Habib, the film follows Dan's son Samuel who has cerebral palsy, and chronicles the Habib family's efforts to include Samuel in every facet of their lives. The film also portrays the experiences of four other individuals with disabilities and their families.

Including Samuel DVDs are now available for sale through the ISN website at: https://fcsn.org/inclusiveschools/including_samuel_orderform.html. The DVD comes with a 24-page Viewers Guide that includes dozens of excellent discussion questions about the film and about major issues in inclusive education. This resource is ideal for districts to use in Professional Development and in fostering discussion district-wide about the benefits and challenges of inclusive education.

From now through November 25th, order by credit card and you will receive free shipping! To use a Purchase Order, download the PDF Order Form from the sidebar of the order website and submit the completed form by fax or mail. Remember: A portion of the money from your purchase goes to support ISN and the Week. If you have any questions, please contact [Tom Beer](#), ISN Program Coordinator.

Collaborative Help Desk

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