

## Roundtable News, April 13, 2016

Greetings!,

**As the Roundtable continues to grow, we welcome our new members and look forward to seeing everyone at our meetings in San Francisco and Washington, D. C. later this year. Meanwhile, here's a round up of developments in education:**

- Harvard sets out to redesign schools for new times
- All publicly funded schools in England to be privatized
- 10 surprising reasons kids don't go to school
- Reach of PARCC and SBAC falls sharply
- Job growth remains slow
- Japanese school lunches put ours to shame
- Schools as prison camps? An immigrant father's surprising take on American schools

### Harvard Sets Out to Redesign Schools for New Times

**Paul Reville, the former Massachusetts Secretary of Education,** has established a new school redesign effort at Harvard to connect schools with communities. Reville's program, ["By All Means: Redesigning Education to Restore Opportunity,"](#) seeks to create a comprehensive plan to address the full range of problems poor children face, both in and out of school.

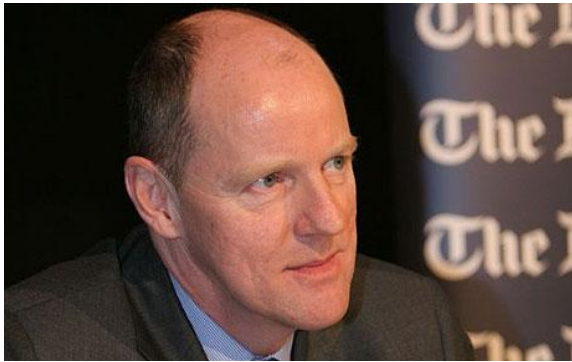


Paul Reville

Reville will be a keynote speaker at the Roundtable's July meeting in San Francisco. Others on the program include Henry Braun, Boisi Professor of Education at the Lynch School, Boston College, and Irwin Kirsch, Director of the Center for Global Assessment at Educational Testing Service, who will discuss their groundbreaking research on the dynamics of opportunity in the United States; Michael Kirst, president of the California State Board of Education; and

Hydra Mendoza, director of the San Francisco mayor's Office of Children, Families, and Youth.

## All English Publicly Funded Schools to be Privatized



Schools Minister Nick Gibb

When the Roundtable visited England in 2012, the government was set on privatizing 50% of secondary schools by turning them into "academies," which are funded from London and not by local authorities. They are overseen by local charitable "trusts" and often by academy chains. Substitute "charter" for the word "academy" and you won't

go far wrong. The proportion now sits at 60%, with plans to privatize all schools, including primary schools in six years. Is this the shape of the American future?

When Nick Gibb, the Secretary of State for schools in England, [recently visited a conference of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers](#), he argued the change would create a "profession-led system," create more autonomy, and increase transparency, a position that was greeted with jeers and heckling. Teachers threaten to hold a vote on whether to strike. Meanwhile local officials complain about the justification for taking capital assets owned and developed locally and turning them over to academies. It represents the ["biggest land grab since the dissolution of the monasteries"](#) said an official in Camden, London, referring to Henry VIII's actions amidst his 16th-century dispute with the Vatican.

## 10 Surprising Reasons Kids Don't Go to School

**We might tend to think truant students are lazy or self destructive, but perhaps they're sick, hungry,** or looking after younger brothers and sisters. Communities in Schools created this graphic to explain the circumstances that keep kids from attending class.

# 10 SURPRISING REASONS STUDENTS DON'T GO TO SCHOOL

1

## THEY'RE HUNGRY

When a child is hungry, he or she can't focus on school, extracurricular activities or the future.



6

## THEY'RE IN POOR HEALTH

Chronic illness made worse by the lack of medical care or proper medication keeps many kids out of the classroom.



2

## THEY CAN'T SEE THE BLACKBOARD

Students may give up on their school work rather than admit they can't see what the teacher is writing on the blackboard.



7

## THEY NEED SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Some students can't afford a simple backpack to carry their books let alone the basic school supplies they need at school.



3

## THEY DON'T HAVE SHOES OR CLOTHES

Clothes that fit, shoes without holes or a warm winter jacket are luxuries for some students.



8

## THEY NEED TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILY

The burden of caring for a sick parent or the need to hold down a part-time job to pay for groceries can lead to frequent absences.



4

## THEY'RE HOMELESS

Not knowing where they are going to sleep at night may make going to school seem unimportant in comparison.



9

## THEY FEEL LIKE THEY DON'T FIT IN

Kids struggling with personal identity or physical appearance suffer from low self-esteem and may become the targets of bullying.



5

## THEY CAN'T GET THERE

If students must walk through a dangerous neighborhood or lack reliable transportation they may stay at home.



10

## THEY NEED A CARING ADULT IN THEIR LIFE

If a parent dies or is absent from the home, kids lose the emotional support they need to succeed in school.



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# Reach of PARCC and SBAC Falls Sharply

A [recent analysis](#) concludes that the percentage of students living in states administering the PARCC or Smarter Balanced tests has dropped significantly. Only 32% of U.S. public school students live in states using the federally funded PARCC or SBAC assessments statewide. In 2014-15, 46% of students did so.



In the same time period, the percentage of students living in states that administer the PARCC and SBAC tests to all students dropped from 18% and 28% to 11% and 21%, respectively. The percentage of students living in states which use alternative tests increased from 51% to 61%.

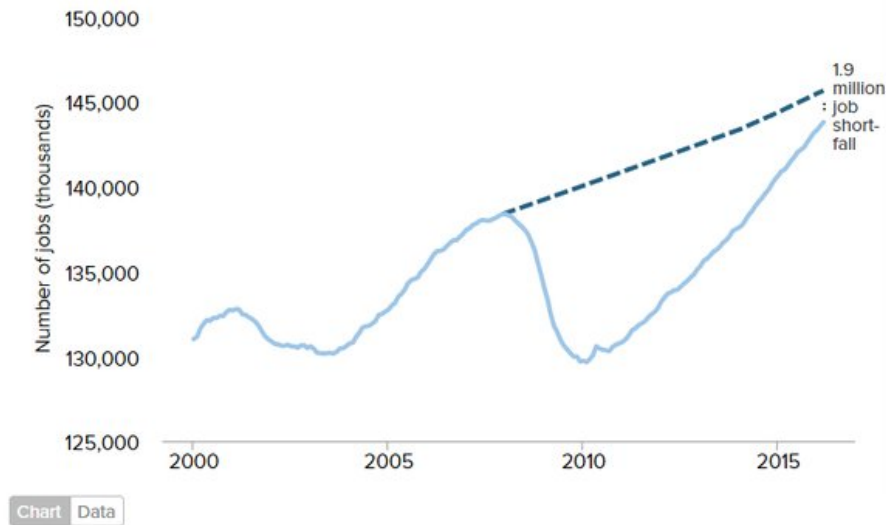
In a surprising development, [the SAT and ACT are gaining acceptance as substitutes for Common Core tests](#). There's no evidence either test bears any relationship to the Common Core standards, but the development makes sense politically as PARCC and SBAC have become toxic brands and policymakers try to reduce testing demands.

## Job Growth Remains Slow

According to an [analysis by the Economic Policy Institute](#), it's taken 10 years for the number of U.S. jobs to climb back to where they were in 2005, and the number is still 1.9 million jobs short of keeping up with the corresponding increase of the labor force over that time period.



## Payroll employment and the number of jobs needed to keep up with the growth in the potential labor force, 2000–2016



**Note:** The potential labor force is the actual labor force plus the "missing worker," potential workers who, because of weak job opportunities, are neither employed nor actively seeking a job. How EPI calculates missing workers can be found here: <http://www.epi.org/publication/missing-workers/>.

**Source:** EPI analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Employment Statistics public data series and Current population Survey public data series

Economic Policy Institute

## Japanese School Lunches Put Ours to Shame

**Obesity in American school children is a public health challenge and school lunches contribute to the problem.** Although it is common for American students to be rushed through a 20-minute lunch period with processed and fatty meals of questionable nutritional value,



Japanese schools teach children to appreciate food, even helping them grow vegetables and prepare their own meals at an early age. [See the difference in meals and nutrition education in the U.S. and Japan.](#)

## The Downside of Technology?

**All the undoubted benefits of technology are accompanied by some downsides.** The students below are working on a school assignment, using an application provided by the museum. Still, it's disconcerting to see students encouraged to divert attention from Rembrandt to their phones.



## Immigrant Father's Surprising Take on Our Schools

Sometimes a fresh set of eyes provides a different take on what we think we're doing. [Here the "Crazy Russian Dad" discusses](#) superintendents, the Common Core, and his sense that American schools are so rigid, compared to Russian schools, that they remind him of prisons.



## Roundtable's Semi-Annual Meetings for 2016

**Getting Organized to Help Kids** -- The Roundtable's "Iceberg effect" report indicates that the U.S. has the largest proportion of low-income children in the developed world. They live with remarkably high levels of stress and little support for families. This July 15-17 meeting will gather near Union Square to foster greater collaboration with units of general purpose local government.



**School Governance** -- October 7-9 will find the Roundtable in Washington,

D.C., to examine school governance. What do superintendents, boards, and unions need to do to get their act together to improve outcomes for students? The meeting will be held near the national capital's historic Rock Creek Park.



## New Members

**We are pleased to note several new members who have joined the Roundtable for 2016. They include:**

- Jeffrey Baier, Los Altos, California
- Yvonne Caamal Canul, Lansing, Michigan
- Charles Dumais, Woodbridge, Connecticut
- John D. Ewald, Caroline County, Maryland
- Mary Kay Going, Moreland, California
- Laura Kagy, Attica, Ohio
- Salah Khelfaoui, Lowell, Massachusetts
- John Kopicki, Altoona, Pennsylvania (new assignment)
- Tammy Mangus, Monticello, New York
- Ralph Marino, Jr., Hewlett-Woodmere, New York (new assignment)
- Thomas McMorran, Easton-Redding, Connecticut
- Mark Miller, Dillonville, Ohio
- Thomas Parker, Ecorse, Michigan
- Alan Peterson, Merced, California
- Elizabeth Polito, Woodside, California
- John Ramirez, Salinas, California
- Theresa Rouse, Joliet PSD-86, Illinois (new assignment)
- Sarah Shubel, East Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Kathleen Smith, Brockton, Massachusetts
- Matthew Wendt, Oswego, Illinois
- Nikki Woodson, Indianapolis, Indiana
- Paul Zinni, Avon, Massachusetts

Welcome!

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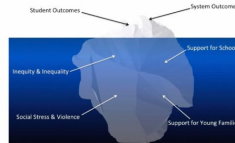
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### School Performance in Context: Indicators of School Inputs and Outputs in Nine Similar Nations

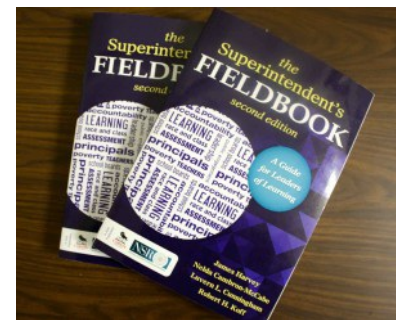


January 2015

The National Center for Education Statistics



**Iceberg Effect Report**  
Free downloads or purchase copies [here](#).



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