



Roundtable News, March 15, 2016

Greetings!, Roundtable membership continues to grow and we have meetings scheduled in San Francisco and Washington, DC for 2016. In other news:

- What principals wish they knew when they started
- System failures let some abusive teachers back in classroom
- A San Diego school focuses on childhood trauma
- 106-year-old woman dances in the Oval Office
- The "whole child" approach is gaining steam
- Testing times for testing advocates
- Is coding for all really such a good idea?
- Thought for the day: Can I borrow a pencil?

What principals wish they knew when they started



Education DIVE interviewed seven principals to learn what they wished they had known when they first started. The [insights provided](#), gathered during a conference of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, are terrific

and well worth a look.

The principals shared their initial concerns about suddenly being a school-wide center of attention, being afraid to admit mistakes, and the benefits of having a mentor and building strong relationships with your staff.

One principal discussed the ramifications of being a school's lead human relations director: "[T]he emotional toll this job takes is enormous because you have so much information about people and you know their private lives and their personal struggles and secrets, and then you have to keep that all to yourself. I wasn't prepared for that when I walked into the job."

System failures let some abusive teachers back in

classrooms

USA Today's recent investigation of deficiencies in the national teacher misconduct database revealed troubling holes in the system. The database operated by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) did not include the names of some 1,400 teachers whose license had been permanently revoked, including at least 200 revocations prompted by allegations of sexual or physical abuse. Without inclusion in the database, teachers whose licenses have been revoked can find a job in a new state-and some have, according to the USA Today story.



NASDTEC's Phillip Rogers

Now, **NASDTEC plans to require all participating state education agencies to audit their past submissions** to ensure they are accurate and validate all future submissions to the database, according to executive director Phillip Rogers. In the meantime, several states have taken the initiative and plan changes to make sure their reporting systems are accurate.

San Diego Principal Takes on Childhood Trauma



Godwin Higa and a young collaborator

A San Diego principal is tackling childhood trauma head-on by building a trauma-informed school for children challenged by threats, domestic violence, gangs, and depression.

Principal Godwin Higa of Cherokee Point Elementary is striving to make his school a safe place for children whose experience with diversity outside of school may leave them at a disadvantage in learning.

The school managed to not suspend a single student last year, as teachers are trained to react to disruptive children by thinking about what might be causing that behavior and how to help them. "The big message," Higa says, "is that we cannot be punitive in education." View a brief, informative video about the school [here](#).

106-year old woman dances in the White House

In what may be the [greatest video ever](#), a 106-year old woman dances with the Obamas in the White House. One can only imagine what Virginia McLaurin's eyes have seen since 1910.



"I am so happy to be here!" Ms. McLaurin told the President and Michelle Obama, during a visit to the Oval Office as part of Black History Month. "You have made our day!" responded the First Lady, admiring the centenarian's elegant turnout and nail manicure.

"Whole child" approach builds up head of steam

Education
Redesign
Lab

By **All** Means

The **Broader, Bolder Approach to Education** group and **Harvard's EdRedesign Lab** have [produced the latest manifestations of the "whole child" approach](#), intended to provide coordinated and collaborative approaches to meet students' educational, social, and emotional needs.

The [BBA group](#), which formed in 2008, has relaunched itself to promote integration, community input on schools, funding equity, expansion of pre-K and non-school-hours programs, and efforts to improve health and nutrition.

The [EdRedesign Lab](#) project, "By All Means: Redesigning Education to Restore Opportunity," reflects the belief that performance gaps between student groups cannot be closed through standards-based reform, alone. "[S]chools alone, as currently conceived," says Lab director Paul Reville, former chief state school officer in Massachusetts, "are insufficient to do the job of educating all students for success."

Testing times for testing advocates

For testing advocates in the **Common Core world**, these are days that try men's souls, to borrow a phrase from Thomas Paine. With a vision relying heavily on computerized administration of Common Core assessments, PARCC and SBAC, the two principal Common Core consortia, have run into an unanticipated challenge. The school world was surprised to learn in February from Benjamin Herold in [Education Week](#) that students who took the PARCC exams via paper and pencil tended to have a substantial score advantage over those who took it via computer. The differences draw into question the validity of the PARCC results. SBAC officials are still examining possible "mode" effects on their scores.

The mode effect also comes into play in assessment results used for accountability purposes at the district level. Michael Molnar, director of educational services for Amherst schools in Lorain County, Ohio, examined district-wide results on 428 of Ohio's 610 districts. School districts that tested students online "were whacked with F grades" nine times as often as those using paper and pencil, according to Patrick O'Donnell of the [The Cleveland Plain Dealer](#). Fully 85% of districts that tested on paper receive an A. Online? Just 17%.

The times are trying women's souls as well. Amy Frogge, a mother in Tennessee wonders if the people who developed these tests have children - "or have even spent time around real children." In a [Facebook post republished by Valerie Strauss of The Washington Post](#), Frogge complains about the amount of time her third grader will spend preparing for and taking standardized tests. She also takes issue with requiring small children to sit and take tests for more than 2 hours in one sitting. She estimates that the average school in Nashville will spend 6-8 weeks preparing for the tests and that her 9-year-old will spend more time taking the tests than she did taking the LSAT in preparation for law school.



Amy Frogge

Is coding for all really such a good idea?



Douglas Green

Most of us applauded when the White House called for coding for all, but an experienced teacher questions the wisdom of attempting to teach coding to all students.

For starters, [says Douglas Green](#), who first started teaching computer science in 1976, the teachers are simply not available. According to Green, the average starting salary of computer science majors is \$61,300, as opposed to \$34,900 for teachers. Where are teachers with any experience going to come from, he wonders?

In addition, Green says, "Just having to learn the ins and outs of a real programming language would bore and frustrate most students. In short, it isn't easy and isn't fun, at least at first."

While Green agrees that we should be making students more computer-

literate, he argues that there are more interesting and practical ways to do that. There are plenty of ways to, as he says, "rub up against concepts associated with computer programming."

Thought for today: Can I borrow a pencil?

Student: Can I borrow a pencil?

Teacher: I don't know. Can you?

Student: Yes. I might add that colloquial irregularities occur frequently in any language. Since you understood perfectly my intended meaning, being particular about the distinction between "can" and "may" is pedantic and arguably pretentious.

Teacher: True. Colloquialism and the judicious interpretation of context help us communicate with nuance, range, and efficiency. And yet, as your teacher, my job is to teach you to think about language with care and rigor. Understanding the shades of difference between one word and another, and to think carefully about what you say, will give you greater power and versatility in your speech and writing.

Student: Point taken. *May* I have a pencil?

Teacher: No, you may not. We do not have pencils since the state cut our funding again.

Roundtable's Semi-Annual Meetings in 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

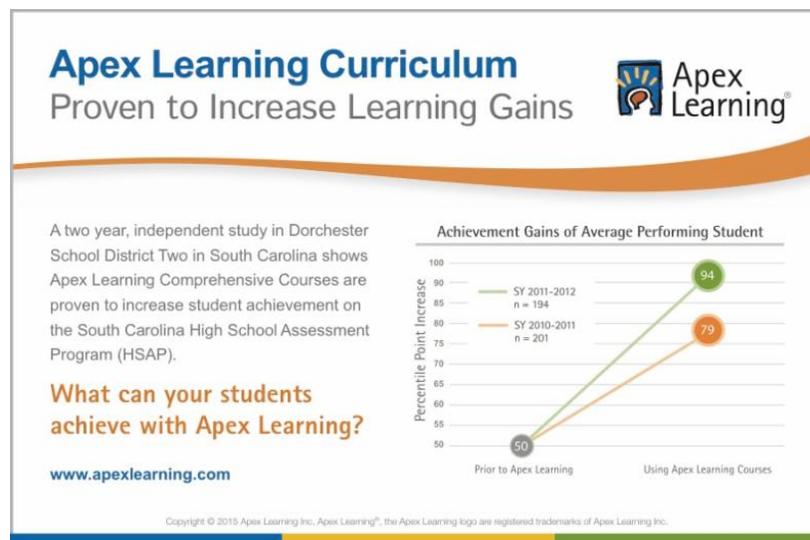
We are pleased to note several new members who have joined the Roundtable for 2016. They include:

- 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 E. 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
- Demond Means, Mequon, Wisconsin
- Mark Miller, Dillonvale, Ohio
- Lisa Palmer, Wallingford, Pennsylvania
- Thomas Parker, Ecorse, Michigan
- Alan Peterson, Merced, California
- Elizabeth Polito, Woodside, California
- John Ramirez, Salinas, California
- Kenneth Rota, Fort Lee, New Jersey
- Sarah Shubel, East Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Kathleen Smith, Brockton, Massachusetts
- Julie Vitale, Homeland, California
- Matthew Wendt, Oswego, Illinois
- Nikki Woodson, Indianapolis, Indiana
- Paul Zinni, Avon, Massachusetts

Welcome!

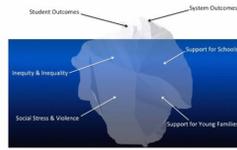
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School Performance in Context:
Indicators of School Inputs and Outputs in Nine Similar Nations

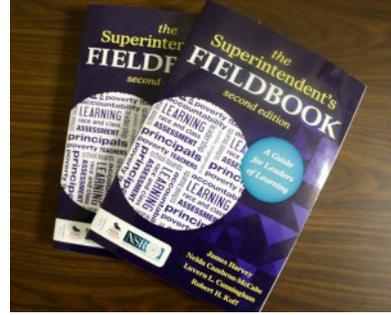


January 2015

The Brookings Institute



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



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