

WinkWorld August - September 2007

Hello Friends,

This month on *WinkWorld*, I am sharing (a) information on the Pine Ridge Educational Conference, sponsored by Little Wound School of South Dakota (b) a report on the Summer Leadership Institute sponsored by the National Council for the Social Studies by Valerie Doherty, fourth grade teacher in Turlock, CA (c) an announcement about the upcoming Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference, and (d) resources on the web. Please also see Ken Goodman's advice on NCLB. Notes from The Real World includes new pictures of my 3 weeks on the ranch.

Pine Ridge Educational Conference

www.joanwink.com

Click on Joan's Schedule over on the left

Report on the Summer Leadership Institute sponsored by the National Council for the Social Studies by Valerie Doherty, fourth grade teacher in Turlock, California. Valerie writes:

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) held its annual Summer Leadership Institute July 25-28, 2007 at the Sheraton Crystal City Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. Our appointments with representatives, senators, and their staff people were all held in Washington, D.C. The California Council for the Social Studies sent two delegates, and I was one.

No Child Left Behind is up for re-authorization in September of this year. Educators across the nation seek change in this bill, and the sooner the better. The National Council for the Social Studies has presented to our senators and representatives in Washington, D.C. the following recommendations.

- Core social studies disciplines be added to the academic standards;
- Core social studies disciplines be added to the requirements for assessment and accountability;
- Title II professional development fund requirements include alignment with the state standards and assessments.

Essentially, what is tested is taught. According to a July 25, 2007, news release from the Center on Education Policy the majority of the nation's school districts report that they have increased time for reading and math in elementary schools since NCLB Act became law in 2002, while time spent on other subjects has fallen by nearly one-third during the same time.

A Position Paper of the CA Council for the Social Studies states: The future of America and our democratic institutions depend on effective teachers who provide each new generation with knowledge of our history and government, skills needed to make informed decisions about complex public issues, attitudes that support democratic practices, and commitment to engage in civic life.

I urge all who are concerned about NCLB continuing as it has, to contact your

representatives and senators. Let them know they must act to make changes to ensure that our young people get the civics education they must have to participate fully in a democratic society.

In the words of Thomas Jefferson: If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.

Valerie Doherty

Teachers 4 Social Justice: 7th Annual Educators' Conference
Saturday, October 13th, 2007, Everett Middle School, San Francisco, CA
<http://www.t4sj.org>
Shared by susan.sandretto@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

Good Spanish & ESL Resources for the Classroom
Especially Español
<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/espanol/>

Marty Levine, Professor Emeritus of CSU, Northridge
<http://www.csun.edu/~hcedu013/eslbil.html>
<http://www.csun.edu/~hcedu013/eslplans.html>

Keep Kids Safe on the Web
www.wiredsafety.org

Forum on Educational Accountability
<http://www.edaccountability.org>

Advice from Ken Goodman on NCLB

Representative Raúl Grijalva, a member of the House Education Committee, held a briefing on NCLB in Tucson yesterday.

The most important thing he reported is that NCLB reauthorization will be on the front burner when Congress reconvenes in September. They purpose to have a draft of the revised NCLB in mid-September and send it to the House in early October. He promised to post the reauthorization bill on his website for comment and response as soon as it is available.

He spoke of three F's the committee is considering in revising NCLB: Fairness, flexibility and and finances. He indicated that he is part of a group of 4-5 Democrats on the committee pushing for serious changes in NCLB. He's particularly concerned about bilingual and minority students. He mentioned that the appropriations committee has recommended diverting 60% of Reading First money until the mess over mandated materials is cleared up. He's also concerned about the impact of NCLB on special ed programs and said that IDEA should always supersede NCLB.

What this means is that the next six weeks will be crucial . It looks like the committee wants to make some basic changes particularly around testing, punitive aspects of NCLB and flexibility for language learners and special education. The possibility still exists that they might just pass a continuing resolution which could continue NCLB as is and push the

whole thing off until after the Nov 2008 election. That would be a disaster for two more classes of school entrants .

My recommendations: Congress- particularly members of the House and Senate education committees need to be bombarded with email, letters and phone calls calling for major changes in NCLB. Be sure to contact your own members of Congress.

Here are the issues I would focus on:

- 1. Getting rid of the punitive aspects of NCLB. Making it support schools that need help rather punishing them.
- 2. Rewarding growth rather than punishing failure.
- 3. Providing 4 years of transition for English learners.
- 4. Accommodation for special ed students with IDEA having precedence over NCLB.
- 5. Getting rid of "highly" in judging who is a qualified teacher and providing funding to support the teacher education necessary to produce needed certified teachers. Emphasizing that certified teachers are qualified.
- 6. Narrowing of the curriculum under NCLB - bringing arts, phys ed, play back into the school day
- 6. Getting rid of AYP and using broader criteria for judging success under NCLB.
- 7. Punishing the crooks who used Reading First to force their own products and ideology on states and local districts.
- 8. Undoing the damage done by those crooks- Requiring state contracts with the Dept of Ed under NCLB to be renegotiated.
- 9. Invite your reps to see for themselves the damage done to kids and teachers.

Spread the word. This is the time that we can make a difference.

I'll provide the information on how to access the language of the proposed bill as soon as Grijalva makes it available.

Ken Goodman

Notes from the Real World

[Little Miss Hayseed](#)

[Grammie & 3 Lil New Mexicans](#)

[BopBop & Peanut](#)

[Dean & The Mamas](#)