

## WinkWorld December 2008



Dear Friends,  
In this issue of *WinkWorld*, I will highlight:

- Two perspectives on teaching and learning: Graphic and Text
- BOGO
- ILEP
- Teacher Activist Groups
- A Vision of Schools
- Featuring a School
- FVR, Freemans' brand new book!

### **From My Classroom To Yours:**

2 perspectives on teaching and learning, experiences common to most of us.

Here is it in a graphic.

[Perspective](#)

And, here it is in text.

[Two Big Ideas and 5 isms](#)

Enjoy.

### **BOGO (Buy One Give One)**

#### **One Laptop Per Child**

[negroponete@laptop.org](mailto:negroponete@laptop.org)

<http://tinyurl.com/zimiolpc>

<http://equation.laptop.org>

#### **BoGo Solar Light**

<http://www.bogolight.com/ProductDetails.asp?>

[ProductCode=BoGoGeneral](http://www.bogolight.com/ProductDetails.asp?ProductCode=BoGoGeneral)

#### **ILEP**

<http://www.elladvocates.org>

Institute for Language and Education Policy

PO Box 5960

Takoma Park, MD 20913

Bar None: The best organization I belong to, and by paying our dues, we help kids everywhere have more access to literacy, language, and learning.

#### **A Vision of Schools**, by James Crawford

<http://www.elladvocates.org/blog/2008/12/03/advice-for-the-president-elect/>

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JWCrawford/>

1. The goals of education must encompass more than basic skills in the "3 Rs." They must include a well-balanced curriculum that features music, art, physical education, science, and social studies, a curriculum that teaches children to think critically and prepares them not only as future workers but also as future citizens of a democracy.

2. School accountability is essential. But accountability systems must stress school improvement -- targeting resources, professional development, and other assistance to address the needs of children -- rather than focus narrowly on punishing schools based on arbitrary achievement targets and standardized tests.

3. A central function of federal education policy is to ensure equal opportunity; this requires vigilant oversight of school districts, e.g., through mechanisms like the Castaneda test, as well as broader policies to ensure that resources are sufficient to provide all students an adequate education.

4. Yet attempting to micromanage schools through federal mandates, however well intentioned, inevitably leads to perverse consequences like those we've witnessed under No Child Left Behind: teaching to the test, narrowing the curriculum, pushing "low achievers" out of school, demoralizing dedicated educators, dismantling successful programs, and unfairly sanctioning schools.

5. American students are increasingly diverse: racially, culturally, linguistically, and economically. Thus providing all children equal opportunities often means providing different pedagogical approaches and levels of resources to some; there is no-one-size-fits-all.

6. English language learners, in particular, are an important and growing sector of the school population. They have unique needs -- in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment, program design, and parental participation -- that must be accommodated in ways that reflect the latest scientific research, rather than ignored or addressed through the whims of the political process.

In short, a successful Secretary must lead the country beyond the simplistic assumptions and rhetoric of recent years and articulate a broader vision of education that truly serves children, not corporate interests or ideological agendas.

By Jim Crawford

### **Teacher Activist Groups**

<http://teacheractivistgroups.org/>

It rejects the corporate influence that has come to dominate U.S. education policies and argues that public education should be a

fundamental human right rather than a profit-driven enterprise. It calls on President-Elect Obama to appoint as Secretary of Education a professional educator who is experienced in the issues and dedicated to eliminating inequities in the schools.

## **FVR (Free Voluntary Reading) Books for Teaching and Learning**

### **FmF (Featuring My Friends)**



*Academic Language for English Language Learners and Struggling Readers: How to Help Students Succeed Across Content Areas*  
by Yvonne and David Freeman

Too often intermediate and secondary students and teachers are omitted from the discussion of how to meet the needs of English Language Learners. Not so in this easily accessible text which highlights the academic language which recent immigrants and long-term English language learners need in different content areas. Recent demographic data provides clear portraits of real students and their academic struggles.

[Click here and go directly to Amazon to order](#)

Just in time to order for your spring classes.

### **Books for Pleasure Reading**

*The Secret Story of Sonia Rodriguez*, by Alan Lawrence Sitomer  
Alan is a secondary teacher by day, and an author by night. He writes for the very students he teaches. Success in life is tightly connected with high levels of literacy; Alan's writing draws in teenagers and those of us who love teenagers.

[Click here and go directly to Amazon to order.](#)

*Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution-and How It Can Renew America* by Thomas Friedman

This is a transformational book, which many of us are reading during a transformational time in our history. I believe this is a book, which will help our nation turn a corner, as Friedman so clearly articulates that we really have no choice: Green is no longer about being hip and cool; it is the new default.

[Click here and go directly to Amazon to order.](#)



[Academic Language for English Language Learners and Struggling Readers](#)

Yvonne Freeman, David Freeman



[Privacy Information](#)



[The Secret Story of Sonia Rodriguez](#)

Alan Lawrence Sitomer



[Privacy Information](#)

## Featuring a School, Austwell-Tivoli (A-T) Elementary in Tivoli Texas

An Exemplary Texas 7 Gold Star School Deep in the Heart of Texas

### Principal, Steve Maldonado

At times I wonder why I bother to write *WinkWorld*. However, almost every year, *WinkWorld* connects me with former friends or new friends, and we begin discussing great teaching and learning. Steve and I were classmates and friends in the 1960's when we were both Spanish majors at Yankton College. After this, we didn't stay in touch until a couple of years ago, when he found *WinkWorld* on the 'Net. It is such a please for me to be able to share this story.

**Austwell-Tivoli Elementary** is an award-winning school, deep in the heart of a more impoverished area of Texas. I am thrilled for the success Steve and the students have achieved, and think this story has relevance for others. Enjoy. I am including Steve's email for those of you who would like to connect directly with Steve. I am including only a small part of this story.

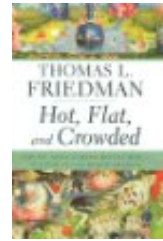
Austwell-Tivoli Elementary (K-6) is a small school (less than 100 students) located 65 miles north of Corpus Christi, Texas. The community is largely rural, agricultural, and Hispanic. Others might refer this area as ~at risk~ or even impoverished. Every teacher is required to be ESL (English as a Second Language) and GT (Gifted and Talented).

### IEPs to ISPs for ALL Students

The school applies the principles of the federally mandated special education IEPs (Individual Educational Plan) to all students. The process is known as the Individual Student Plan (ISP). All existing educational data on all non-special education students is carefully evaluated and data disaggregated at each grade level. The Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI), the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), the At-Risk criteria form, teacher assessments, and the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) as benchmarks for determining whether a student is a typical learner, an advanced learner or a struggling learner in each content area.

After creation of an ISP for each student, teachers collaborate and design appropriate educational strategies, which are documented in the ISP. Parents are actively involved in the process. Mandatory face-to-face parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for each semester. Teachers are required to communicate progress via a format, which tracks the success and/or lack of it for each student.

Texas has three ratings: *Acceptable*, *Recognized*, or *Exemplary*. In 2008 Austwell-Tivoli received, not only the **Exemplary**, but also seven **Gold Performance Acknowledgment Stars** for attendance and performance in reading, writing, mathematics, and science



[Hot, Flat, and Crowded](#)  
Thomas L. Friedman...



[Privacy Information](#)

Steve gives all of the credit to others. He wrote to me, "This achievement could not be possible without the commitment of the children, faculty, and parents. The faculty allowed themselves to be challenged and met every challenge with confidence. They are highly trained and confident of their ability. The children have learned to dream big. Last year our morning motto was borrowed by motivational speaker Jimmy Cabrera: **'If it is to be, it is up to me!'**"

This year the school community has a new motto:

**"I am important,"** symbolized by holding up one finger.

**"I can succeed,"** symbolized by holding up two fingers.

**"We will see victory,"** symbolized by holding up three fingers, the American Sign Language **W** (for winners).

Stephen Maldonado, Principal  
Austwell-Tivoli Elementary Redfish, Austwell-Tivoli Independent  
School District  
207 Redfish Street  
Tivoli, Texas 77990  
361-286-3222 Ext. 406  
[s.maldonado@atisd.net](mailto:s.maldonado@atisd.net)

## **Welcome to the World**

Raynee

## **Family Photos**

Garrett, age 3, literacy is everywhere.

He spelled it, read it, and spelled it again.

[Photo 1](#)

[Photo 2](#)

[Photo 3](#)

[Photo 4](#)