

May, 2005

Poor Students Lose Battle for Access to Education



A chasm is growing between policy and reality regarding access to education. According to Thomas Mortensen of the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, the best colleges and universities have been turning away from serving the public interest and are now focused only on profit and prestige. In the opening plenary session of this year's New England Regional Forum of the College Board, he called for private schools on this path to have their tax exempt status removed or public schools to have their state support reduced.

After 1973, there is a bigger gap between those with a bachelor's degree and those without. At the same time, income for high school drop-outs has gone down 35% and high school graduates' income has gone down 24%. The human capital economy has been brutal on males. Farming and manufacturing jobs, which were held mostly by males, are in death throws. Females are doing better—there have been big gains income for women with degrees.

Half the kids that start college actually get a bachelor's degree. The number of white

high school graduates is declining. Minority group numbers are increasing, but they have lower income and are less able to go to college. There is an increase in the number of students living below 185% of the poverty level (the test for receiving a subsidized lunch). In almost every state the number on free or reduced lunch is up—nationally, between 1992 and 2003,

the increase went from 37.0 to 42.9 percent. At the same time, Federal student financial aid based on need decreased. When Federal policy changed money was

diverted from low income to middle income families. Tax credits don't help poor families.

Also, we ignore the decline in purchasing power of the Pell Grants. In the 1980's the Pell Grant would cover 70% of college costs, and today it's only 35%. To keep up, the

Private colleges that don't serve the public interest should lose tax exempt status. Public colleges should lose state support.

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grant would need to be over \$8,000 now. States have been giving higher priority to prisons and medicaid, thereby reducing money for higher education. This move away from the progressive policies of the 1960's and '70's, has resulted in a cost shift from state taxpayers to students. This puts a greater burden on lower income students, which is where the greatest population growth is. Higher income families are shrinking. The shift from need-based to merit-based financial aid means that the rewards are going to those with the higher income. Ironically, the money comes from the poor because they are more likely to play state lotteries, which is the source of the scholarships.

Four year colleges are becoming more selective. Because SAT scores go up with higher income students, as schools become more selective, they gain in profit and prestige, but they don't serve the public interest. They focus on a

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shrinking part of our population, not the minority population that is growing. Poor kids are forced into community college. Only 17% of the students in the 50 best U.S. News colleges are on Pell Grants. Although California has the highest commitment to low income students, most of the best schools in the country are not interested in serving these students, they are increasing the enrollment of students without Pell grants.

There is a greater inequality of education attainment now than 30 years ago. Of students in the bottom income quartile, only 6% will complete college by age 24. In contrast, over 50% of the students in the top income quartile will graduate. Because the chances of graduating are better at highly selective colleges, poor kids should be encouraged to go to the toughest school they can get into. Mortensen's data is useful to identify schools that are friendly toward low income students. For schools in the northeast, Rensselaer had the highest percentage (19%) of students on Pell Grants for National Universities, while Smith scored high (24%) for National Liberal Arts Colleges.

If you would like more details about Mortensen's speech go to: <http://www.pellinstitute.org/presentations.html> and click on the link under "Presentations".

College Planning in Kindergarten

High school counselors who work with college bound students deal with a lot of issues around paying for college--helping students and their parents understand how to apply for grants, loans, and scholarships. Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) is a huge help in this area. But did you know that there is one part of financial aid with which elementary counselors could be a big help, and it would take relatively little time or effort to do? Invite Richard Westman from VSAC to come to your school to talk to parents of your kindergarten students about the Vermont Higher Education Investment Plan. Anyone can open one of these educational savings plans for a student--parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc. They don't even need to live in Vermont. For example, Wayne opened an account for his niece, Maria, who lives in NH, and another account for his niece, Molly, who lives in Ohio. The younger the student the better because the money has the best chance to grow. Rich doesn't do his presentation for parents of high school aged students.

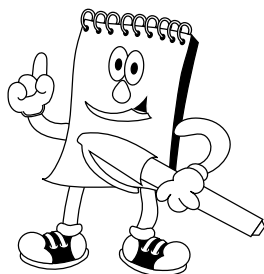
Call VSAC's toll free number, 1-800-642-3177, and find out when Rich might be available. If you can't find the time, maybe you could get a PTA president to help out. Your parents will thank you. Go to www.vsac.org for more info.

Data-Based School Counseling

Third Annual School Counseling Leadership Institute July 11-15, 2005 “Evidence-Based Practice in School Counseling”, at the Center for School Counseling Outcome Research at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst The following article is about a presentation given by the director of the Center.

John Carey from the National Center for School Counseling Outcome Research at UMASS-Amherst opened his presentation at the College Board New England Forum with a cartoon. The title of the slide was “Impact of Standards-Based Education” and it showed a dinosaur who was giving a lecture to a large group of other dinosaurs. It said, “The situation is this: a meteor has hit the earth, the climate is changing, the mammals are taking over, and we all have brains the size of walnuts.”

His message was that accountability has narrowed the list of sanctioned outcomes and that everything needs to be focused on increased student achievement. School counselors must not let themselves be



seen as peripheral to the mission and function of the schools. We have to develop our own accountability mechanism as a profession and set up outcomes and ways to measure them. In other words, we need to show that what we do makes a difference and we need to be able to present this information in a compelling way to show that we make a valuable contribution to improving student performance. He used ASCA’s National Standards and the National Model for reforming school counseling programs as the basis of much of his talk. The National Model emphasizes the impact of the school counseling program on academic outcomes.

As for the National Standards, in his view the academic developmental outcomes must take priority over career development or personal/social development. For example, we know that students who take challenging math and science courses in middle school are more likely to graduate from college. Helping students overcome any personal or social roadblocks to taking these classes will help them to be more successful academically. Career development activities might help students see the need for taking challenging math and science classes. He wants to see us use data “to describe problems, plan programs, and target

interventions to help students and to change systems.” We need to create school counseling program reports designed around what people want to know, and we must answer the question, “How are students different because of what school counselors do?”

He continued his presentation by talking about evidenced-based practice which he defined as combining professional wisdom with empirical evidence. He raised the following questions: “Which School Counseling practices are validated by strong empirical evidence that demonstrates gains in academic achievement, reduction in the achievement gap, increases in attendance, increases in graduation rates, and increases in school safety? Which career and personal/social outcomes lead to improved academic outcomes? By what standards does the profession judge the strength of empirical evidence?” For example, he used a curriculum called Student Success Skills as an example of personal/social curriculum that can have a positive affect on academic performance. Students develop personal and social skills, for example, getting along better with the teacher, that helps them improve the academic outcome.

More information about the Center and the summer workshop is available at <http://www.cscor.org>.

Summer Workshop



July 13 - July 16, 2005 19th Annual High Schools That Work Staff Develop- ment Conference

High Schools That Work is the largest and oldest of the Southern Regional Education Board's school-improvement initiatives for high school and middle grades leaders and teachers.

High Expectations + the Three Rs = High Performance for All Students

Rigor, Relevance and Relationships

Gaylord Opryland Resort and Conference Center
Nashville, Tennessee

If you are looking for a way to connect with colleagues, there are a number of excellent workshop possibilities that are happening this summer.

May 24, 2005 Creating Pathways Between Learning and Earning: A Career Planning Conference for K-12 School Professionals - Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center. 8:30am - 3:00pm This free Career Planning Conference for K-12 School Professionals is co-sponsored by Vermont School Counselors Association is designed for counselors at all grade levels. It is a unique opportunity to share your concerns, successes, and ideas about career development in Vermont schools. The deadline for registering is May 16, 2005. Check out the conference brochure (pdf) at VSAC's web site. Register by e-mail at joyal@vsac.org, telephone 1-800-642-3177 ext. 410, or mail the brochure registration form to Shari Joyal, VSAC Outreach Program, PO Box 2000, Winooski, VT 05404.

Why attend this conference?

*Learn how counselors and teachers are implementing career development activities.

*Exchange ideas and talk with colleagues working with primary, middle, or secondary school students around effective career development strategies.

*Learn about state and

regional agencies and initiatives that support school-based career development.

Agenda

8:30-9:00 a.m. Breakfast and registration

9:00-9:15 a.m. Introduction

9:15-10:15 a.m. Panel discussion: A panel of K-12 educators will explore creative solutions to implementing career development activities. Discussion will include balancing roles, time constraints, and available resources.

10:30-11:30 a.m.

Roundtable discussions by grade level: Participants will have the opportunity to share and explore career development with colleagues in their grade levels throughout the state.

11:45 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Lunch, followed by panel discussion: Enjoy a complimentary lunch, followed by presentations from statewide organizations about ways to obtain greater access to career planning resources.

1:15-2:30 p.m. Topic workshops: Presenters will conduct workshops to introduce career development resources, tools, and best practices.

2:30 p.m. Evaluations and raffle



Possibilities for 2005

June 26-29, ASCA 2005 Annual Conference, "School Counseling: A Model of Success" at Disney's Contemporary Resort in Orlando, Fla.



Countdown to Orlando: It's not too late to meet ASCA in Orlando! You can still register for ASCA's 2005 Annual Conference, June 26-29, which promises to be chock-full of educational and networking opportunities. From educational sessions to networking events, pre-conference and intensive-training workshops to inspiring keynote speakers, ASCA's conference helps you meet your professional development needs. The Disney Contemporary Resort is already sold out, but attendees needing a room should still call the regular hotel reservation number, (407) 824-3869, and you will be assigned to an overflow hotel. For more information or to register, visit www.schoolcounselor.org.

Level Sharing Sessions Go Paperless At ASCA's Annual Conference this year, the level sharing sessions will focus on how school counselors are implementing the ASCA National Model(R) at the various levels. Rather than

bringing hundreds of copies of your materials as in years past, this year simply bring one copy of your material (electronic copy on disk preferred) and hand it off to the volunteer hosting the session. After the conference, ASCA staff will post all materials to the Resource Center, giving everyone access without anyone having to cart around so many papers.

July 11-15, 2005 Third Annual School Counseling Leadership Institute, "Evidence-Based Practice in School Counseling", at the Center for School Counseling Outcome Research at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst www.cscor.org

July 12,13 and 14, 2004 NEACAC's newly created Advanced Secondary School Counselor Summer Institute (ASSCSI), will be held at Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont. Because the institute has been designed for experienced secondary school counselors, the focus of the three days will be on collaboration, professional revitalization and in-depth consideration of current topics facing our profession. The theme of the Institute for 2005 will be "College Admissions: Moving Beyond the Name". Jay Mathews, a highly regarded

columnist for the Washington Post, will be the keynote speaker and will lead a discussion of his recent book, "Harvard Schmarvard: Getting Beyond the Ivy League to the College That Is Best for You", a required read by all participants. The program includes some informal time with the author aboard the Spirit of Ethan Allen III cruising Lake Champlain. The intent of the program is to allow for meaningful dialog amongst participants and to stimulate provocative ideas and creative problem solving. There will be free time to share with new acquaintances and friends, and wide access to the vibrant and dynamic city of Burlington. www.neacac.org

July 17 – 22, 2005 NE School Counselor's Practitioners Institute at Lyndon State College, Lyndonville, VT

August 1-4, 2005 NEACAC Summer Institute 2005 for new or nearly new Guidance or Admission Counselors

Where: Saint Michael's College, Colchester, VT

For whom: Guidance and Admission professionals with 2 or fewer years of experience.

Cost: \$495 Registration materials will be mailed out to members in mid May.

Go to <http://www.neacac.org/> for more information.

EDUCATION BOARD PROPOSES END TO CLASS SIZE LIMITS AND WEAKER RULES FOR PROFESSIONAL MENTORING

(This article was used by permission of VT-NEA - news article dated 4/18/05.) The Vermont State Board of Education, as part of its revision of "School Quality Standards," proposes to remove Class size Limitations and substantially weaken current rules for Professional Mentoring. Read the Board proposals in their entirety at www.state.vt.us/educ/new/pdfdoc/board/rules/public_comment/sqs_version_b.pdf Class size proposals are on page 11. Mentoring proposals are on page 8.

"In effect, our State Board of Education is saying that class size and professional mentoring do not matter," says Vermont-NEA Organizer Tom Walters, adding: "We know better. It has been scientifically proven that class size affects individual student achievement. It has also been proven that new teachers, without professional support, are likely to leave the profession."

**YOUR VOICE IS
NEEDED!**

Fortunately, the Board is seeking input on these rule changes. Please, as a professional educator, attend one of the hearings listed below, and contact Tom Walters at twalters@vtnea.org or Sherry Gile at sgile@vtnea.org to get a

packet of information containing "talking points" and statistics relevant to the discussion.

All hearings are 4-6:00 p.m.
Tuesday, May 3,
2005

— Essex High School
cafeteria, 2 Educational Lane,
Essex Junction

— Lyndon Town School
cafeteria, 2591 Lily Pond
Road, Lyndonville

Wednesday, May 4,
2005

— Rutland City School
District Board Room,
Longfellow Building, 6 Church
Street, Rutland

Thursday, May 5,
2005

— Montpelier High
School Library, 5 High School
Drive, Montpelier

— Riverside Middle
School Auditorium, 13 Fair-
ground Road, Springfield

Friday, May 6, 2005
— Vermont ILN (Vermont
Interactive Learning Network),
all sites. Visit www.viln.org
for a list of sites.

Comments also can be
emailed to
SQSComent@education.state.vt.us.
The public comment period
closes May 17, 2005. (You can
access the revised rules (Version A-
text and Version B- annotated) on the
DOE website by following this path:
www.state.vt.us/educ;
*What's New? March 23 entry re
public comment opportunity*)

Proposed Changes That Affect School Counseling

(Strike outs show words to be
deleted. Underlined words
show new text.)

2112 Definitions

Strikes the definition of "school
counselor". No new text.

2120.8.1.3.2.4 School Counse- lors

(a) A guidance school counsel-
ing program shall be available
to all students in grades K-12.
At the elementary level, there
shall be no more than 400
students per school counselor.
Schools with fewer than 400
students shall employ a counse-
lor ~~in~~ at least ~~an approximate~~
proportionate to of the ratio of
the number of students to 400.
At the secondary level, there
shall be no more than 300
students per school counselor.
~~At all levels, the school should
strive to meet the ideal
ratios recommended by the
American School Counselor
Association.~~ For purposes of
this rule, the term "school
counselor" includes the term
"guidance counselor."

(b) The ~~comprehensive~~ school
counseling program shall
conduct programs that facilitate
address students' academic,
career, personal and social
development. ~~Further, it~~ Such
programs shall be designed to
encourage counselors to col-
laborate aligned with the work
of other professionals in
the school setting, as well as
those in other educational and
human service agencies.

UVM SUMMER COURSE ON DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY OFFERS GRADUATE CREDIT

“Integrating Literature, History, Media & Social Sciences: Focus on American Diversity and Identity” is a graduate course offered at UVM from June 27-July 1, plus one follow-up session in the fall. The course offers graduate credit in Education or History and is approved for 3 HQT credits in Language Arts or History for teachers at all levels. The cost is \$550 for 3 graduate or HQT credits, \$250 for 45 hours relicensure in history or language arts.

Elise Guyette is one of several instructors. She says: “Diversity and identity are concepts central to the American story. We will build bridges among history, literature and media while pondering questions drawn from Vermont’s standards. Successful integration of these disciplines will enable our students to develop both their literacy and analytical skills and a deeper understanding of American history and culture. “

For more information and a registration form, go to www.vermontsocialstudies.org/events.html. *(Used by permission from VT-NEA)*

New England Summit on School Counseling

On March 29, seven school counseling leaders met at the College of the Holy Cross to begin the process of examining the state of school counseling in New England. The meeting was coordinated by the New England Association for College Admission Counseling's (NEACAC) Human Relations Committee and Government Relations Committee. Also at the table were representatives of the American School Counseling Association (ASCA), the Connecticut School Counselors Association (CISCA), the Massachusetts School Counselors Association (MASCA) and the Rhode Island School Counselors Association (RISCA).

The goals for the meeting were to learn about the status of school counseling in each state, what legislative agenda was in place in each state (if any) and what future steps this group could take to positively impact change in each state. The group agreed on the following common issues facing school counselors today:

- * Large counselor caseloads
- * Lack of counselors in many schools
- * Counselors being replaced by non-certified staff
- * Counselors performing non-counseling duties
- * Lack of respect for/understanding of what counselors do
- * Limited power to change the system

The next step will be to survey the school counseling association leaders in each state to learn more about the legislative process and opportunities that exist to impact change. We will gather more support (especially from those states not able to attend) and more information to help us with our next steps. Information from other states that have been successful in promoting school counselors will also be gathered. We then plan to meet again in the fall to continue the discussion and take specific action steps. Suggestions thus far include working with state legislatures to pass legislation that positively impacts school counselors, setting up advocacy groups in each state, engaging the state department of education in more dialogue and gathering data and research to show the impact from school counselor interventions.

We recognize that this is a large challenge, but one that we are ready to accept. We hope that others will join us. For more information or to become involved with this effort, please contact Bob Bardwell, Monson High School, 413. 267.4589x1107 or bardwellr@monsonschools.com.

Summary of Year's Activity

Annual conference:

Spotlight: Protecting Children, with programs on Bullying / Harassment, collaborative programs to prevent sexual abuse, and mandatory reporting of abuse.

Developed new website for Vermont School Counselor Association www.vtsca.org,

Forty percent of Vermont school counselors are members of VTSCA

Endorsement revision with VT Dept of Education includes references to national ASCA standards, and TV Framework of Educational Standards, graduation from CACREP accredited counselor education programs and ASCA code of ethics.

Increase area meetings of school counselors for professional development and local networking.

Advocacy / Public Policy

Activities

Met with new Commissioner of Education

Identify specific liaison within the Department of Education for school counselors

Maintain quality standards which advise ratios of 300:1 at secondary and 400:1 at elementary levels

Summary of Future Plans and Goals of the Association for the year:

Sponsor annual conference October 2005

Increase memberships

Send a representative to the ASCA annual conference

Send president elect to Leadership Development Institute

Use website to communicate with VT counselors,

register for conference, and manage memberships

Recommend through the Governor's office that School Counseling week is recognized state wide

Advocate for school counselors in the schools

Begin work on Comprehensive School Guidance Program at the state level

Summary of Issues / Needs confronting counseling in your state:

Define endorsement differences between counselors, social workers and Substance Abuse Professionals, Student Assistance Personnel

Support hiring school counselors in public school for a comprehensive school counseling program

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