

What's New? Week of June 4, 2007

Important Dates

June 7 - Board Work Session, 5:30 p.m.

June 11 - Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

[Click here to view the Hoover City School District Calendar for June 2007](#)

Do Schools Kill Creativity? - posted 06/03/07

Why don't we get the best out of people? Creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson argues that it's because we've been educated to become good workers, rather than creative thinkers. Students with restless minds and bodies -- far from being cultivated for their energy and curiosity -- are ignored or even stigmatized, with terrible consequences. Robinson makes an entertaining (and profoundly moving) case for creating an education system that nurtures creativity, rather than undermining it. With ample anecdotes and witty asides, Robinson points out the many ways our schools fail to recognize -- much less cultivate -- the talents of many brilliant people. "We are educating people out of their creativity," Robinson says. "All kids have tremendous talents and we squander them." He goes on to say that he believes that creativity is as important in education as literacy, and we should give it the same status.

---(from the Public Education Network's Weekly News Blast for May 25, 2007)

[Click here to view Sir Robinson's message](#)

The Condition of Education - posted 06/03/07

High school students in the United States are taking more courses in mathematics and science, as well as social studies, the arts, and foreign languages, according to The Condition of Education 2007 report by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The general increases in credits earned since the early 1980s are, in large part, a product of more graduates taking more advanced courses. The Condition of Education is a congressionally mandated report that provides an annual statistical portrait of education in the United States. The 48 indicators included in the report cover all aspects of education, from student achievement to school environment and from early childhood through postsecondary education. The report shows that enrollment in U.S. public schools is becoming increasingly diverse. Minority students make up 42 percent of public school enrollment. Twenty percent of school-age children speak a language other than English at home. The rate of college enrollment immediately after high school increased from 49 percent in 1972 to 69 percent in 2005. About three-quarters of the freshman class graduated from public high schools on time in 2003-04.

----from the Public Education Network's Weekly News Blast for June 1, 2007

Does Performance Pay Work? - *posted 06/03/07*

The State Department of Education is conducting an online poll asking if you support Performance Pay for teachers. [Click here to go to the Poll.](#) Remember, your voice counts! Let your voice be heard by our State Department of Education.

Comparison of Four City School Systems' Stanford 10 Reading Scores 2005-2006 - *posted 06/03/07*

There was a bit of discussion on the al.com Forum comparing Trussville City and Hoover City Schools. Always up for a good data discussion, we have compiled a report showing the **Stanford 10 Reading Scores for 2005-2006** for four city systems: Auburn City, Homewood City, Hoover City and Trussville City. All four systems must follow the Alabama Course of Study, so the curriculum being taught is the same.

Mountain Brook City and Vestavia City were not included in the comparison.

The comparison breaks down the Percentile Rank by grade for All Students, White Students, and Black Students. It also includes the percent of Black students that were tested at each grade level.

Also included are the amounts spent educating each student in their respective system. The percent of funding that is from Local Revenue is also included.

While our report was derived from numbers posted in the System Report Card on the [State Department of Education website](#), we strongly believe the numbers are indeed from School Year 2005-2006, not from 2004-2005 as indicated on their website.

For more Financial Information on our city school system, see our [Financial Info](#) page.

Changes to Alabama Administrative Code with Respect to Special Education - *posted 06/03/07*

The State Board of Education is currently considering changes to the Alabama Administrative Code regarding Special Education rules and procedures. These changes have NOT been approved by the State Board, and are provided for information purposes. If you have questions or comments, please contact Mabrey Whetstone at the State Department of Education at (334) 242-8114

"What Parents Want" Award Given to Hoover City Schools

- *posted 06/03/07*

SchoolMatch has once again awarded Hoover City Schools with the What Parents Want Award. Only 25 of Alabama's 131 school systems were given this award.

[How to Fix No Child Left Behind](#) - *posted 06/03/07*

This Special Report from *Time* magazine, includes some interesting data and comments on the revolutionary education law first enacted in 2001.

[The United States government's website page on the Reauthorization of No Child Left Behind](#) (NCLB) contains information regarding the possible changes being considered.

[The National Education Association's position on the Reauthorization of No Child Left Behind](#) contains their recommendations for improving NCLB.

[The National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education \(NCPIE\) recommends changes to NCLB as well.](#)

[Engineering Academies Added to 16 Schools Statewide](#) - *posted 06/01/07*

The Birmingham News reported that 16 high schools across the state are adding Engineering Academies across the state as part of the State Department of Education's Engineering Academy Initiative.

[The Role of the Principal](#) - *posted 06/03/07*

Many things go into making a high school great, but a strong, effective principal is always at the top of the list. As part of Newsweek's survey of America's Best High Schools, they take a look at the many roles a head must play. [Click to read the article.](#)

[Where Education is a Matter of Prestige](#) - *posted 06/03/07*

Debates about improving student performance rarely take into consideration an important perspective of students, that is, how much they value an education and whether they see education as a path to success. In this Education Sector First Person, Abdul Kargbo gauges such perceptions in contrasting settings: the secondary school he attended in Sierra Leone, one of the world's poorest countries, and the suburban high school he attended in the U.S., one of the world's richest countries. Despite the poor condition of the facilities, getting an education was a privilege in Sierra Leone. But it was not free, and the only children who went to school were those whose parents could afford tuition fees. Still, education was so highly prized that even the poorest people, who daily had to do without basic amenities, strove to get enough money to send their kids to school. Discipline and competition were central elements of schooling in Sierra Leone. Corporal punishment was liberally meted out for infractions both major and minor. But the psychological consequences of academic underperformance were even more devastating than the physical because students competed against their peers for status. In every class, students' average grades were tabulated to produce a hierarchy in which everyone was ranked. Needless to say, nobody wanted to be last.

Upon moving to the U.S., Kargbo discovered that troublemakers had a disproportionately negative impact on teaching and learning. Teachers often spent as much time trying to enforce discipline as they did actually teaching. And most students seemed to not care about their actual grades. In fact, some of those with the lowest averages almost seemed proud of their bad scores.

---from the *Public Education Network's Weekly News Blast* for June 1, 2007

From our Parent Resources page

[Resources from the U.S. Department of Education - How to Help with Your Child's Academic Success - posted 06/03/07](#)

News Articles and Newsletters

[Theodore High's Organizer Makes Sure No Parent is Left Behind - June 3, Mobile Press-Register](#)

[Officials' Silence Keeps Parents at Arm's Length - May 7, Washington Post](#)

[Grants Give Young Engineers a Leg Up - June 1, Birmingham News](#)

[Poll Says State Teachers Favor Pre-K Program - June 1, Birmingham News](#)

[VOICES Survey Results \(on preschool education\) - June 1, Birmingham News](#)

[Lawmakers Approve \\$1.07 Billion Bond Issue - June 1, Birmingham News](#)

[Two Hoover Teachers in Teacher Hall of Fame - May 30, Birmingham News](#)

[Hoover Students Rake in Record Scholarship Offers - May 30, Birmingham News](#)

[A Slow Learning Curve - May 30, Birmingham News](#)

[Planning Must Start Now for Third High School - May 30, Birmingham News](#)

[Worth Noting: IB Good, Again - May 28, Birmingham News](#)