



HORIZONS

Midwest Equity Assistance Center

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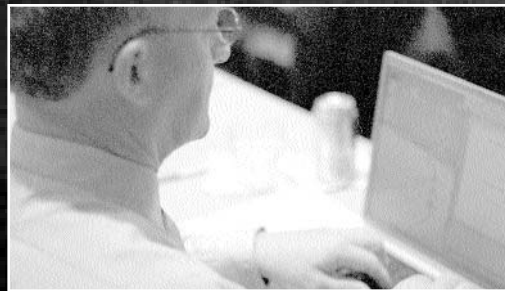
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Equity Update Brown, NCLB in 2003

Rogie Dorpinghaus
Horizons Editor

The Midwest Equity Assistance Center held the 2003 Equity Update in Kansas City, Mo. at the downtown Marriott.

Kathy King, occupational information coordinator at Highland Community College, said attending the Update was personally extremely beneficial.

"I feel that before attending I was somewhat ignorant of the *Brown v. Board* case," King said. "Cheryl Brown Henderson definitely got me excited about *Brown v. Board*."

Henderson, president of

Brown Foundation, spoke about where our society is and where it needs to go to respect the Supreme Court decision of 1954.

Another speaker at the conference was Wayne Sakamoto, lead coordinator for the department of safe schools. Sakamoto spoke at the Update about bullying, harassment, and hate crimes.

King also said she enjoyed the resources she obtained at the Update.

"All of the handouts were pertinent to my current employment," she said. "I am really thankful for the resources found at the Equity Update and I know they'll definitely be a benefit to me."



"The Equity Update takes a look at the minority groups involved in education. The reason why No Child Left Behind was created was to provide accountability and close

the achievement gap, where minority groups are performing below the gap. Students cannot hide behind averages anymore. We have to be accountable for not just groups of students but for every student."

Dr. Mary Cohen

Secretary's Region VII Representative

On the cover: background: Dr. Mary Cohen, the secretary's regional representative for Region VII, commenced the Equity Update 2003 with a speech on the current and future status of No Child Left Behind. Clockwise from the top middle: Superintendent Marlin Lode types notes on his laptop during the Update. Director of Instruction Dan DePasquale types notes on his personal digital assistance device during the conference. Far left: Participants listen intently at the Kansas City Marriott to Dr. Wade Boykin from Howard University. Boykin spoke about closing the achievement gap.

Photos by Rogie Dorpinghaus

'Diversity by choice'

Integration by income proving unpopular

Karla Scoon Reid
Education Week

Saying they support "diversity by choice," members of a task force led by three local mayors are urging the Wake County, N.C., school district to abandon a student-assignment plan that aims for economic integration and adopt a neighborhood-schools approach instead.

The 30-member committee wants the district to revamp its nationally recognized assignment plan this year as it considers attendance-zone changes to accommodate seven new schools set to open next fall. The schools are expected to have a total capacity of roughly 6,700 students.

In 2000, Wake County, which includes Raleigh, replaced its race-based assignment plan with one that integrates schools on the basis of students' family wealth. The change was designed to head off potential legal battles, while maintaining socioeconomic balance in schools.

But some residents have found the 109,000-student district's plan hard to digest. They claim that parents fed up with the district's student-assignments rules are pulling their children out of the public schools.

"We want to tend forced busing against parents' wishes," said Cynthia Matson, a task force member and the president of Assignment by Choice, a local parent group. "We want people to have the right to choose what's in their best interests of their children."

Many of the same parents voiced their displeasure with the wealth-based assignment plan last year. But others argue that returning to neighborhood schools would mean a return to racially imbalanced schools.

"In every county that we are aware of and looked at that had an unbridled choice plan, the schools have resegregated," said Michael R. Evans, the sen-

ior director of communications for the Wake County schools. "Creating a system of haves and have-nots does not produce the high academic achievement that we've enjoyed."

Mr. Evans said 91 percent of the district's students in grades 3-8 were performing at or above grade level on state mathematics and reading tests. About 59 percent of the district's students are white, 29 percent are black, 6.5 percent are Hispanic, 4 percent are Asian, and fewer than 2 percent are multiracial.

'Losing Market Share'

Concerned that the county schools were "losing market share" that could ultimately harm the town of Cary's quality of life, Mayor Glen D. Lang called on his counterparts in the towns of Apex and Garner in northwestern Wake County to form a task force last year. Cary, which has about 107,000 residents, is one of the county's wealthiest communities.

Mayor Lang, whose term ends next month, estimates that 75 percent of Wake County's school-age children attend public schools, compared with 93 percent in the mid-1980s. Parents complain that their children are being bused to schools 45 minutes away, he said.

The district's lack of long-term planning has led to attendance-zone changes that forced children to change schools several times, he added.

Ms. Matson contends that the school system's focus on students who struggle academically has left the needs of high-achieving students neglected.

"The number-one factor above educating students is diversity and, as a result, everyone is suffering" she said.

The task force plans to make a presentation to the school board in January.

"They've got their heels dug in," said Mr. Lang. "How can they say the system is working if you have people abandoning the school system?"

Samuel L. Bridges, the mayor of Garner, wrote in a letter to the local newspaper that he wants the board to consider different options for student assignment, but that he supports the goal of having "fully integrated" schools.

But proponents of a change in policy express little optimism that he board will change the plan. Assignment By Choice is turning its focus to school board elections, and it supported a candidate who was elected last month.

Cyndi Soter O'Neil, the director of communications and research for the Wake Education Partnership, located in Raleigh, said she believes that most county residents support the district's commitment to both diversity and high academic standards.

Keith A. Sutton, the president of the Triangle Urban League, argued that those who advocate neighborhood schools are largely affluent white parents who believe that because they live in wealthy communities, they can choose where their children attend school.

"Frankly, it doesn't work like that," he said, "for poor kids or for rich kids."

Most students actually attend the "nearest or second-nearest" schools in their neighborhoods, according to Mr. Evans. He added that 35 of the district's 127 schools have magnet programs, and that another 15 have year-round programs, providing parents with ample choices.

The district will complete a series of 11 community meetings this month on the issue. A countywide committee appointed by the school board will present its own recommendations in January on diversity, academic achievement, and other issues.

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<http://www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=11Wake.h23>

NCLB Blue Ribbon Schools award

Two Iowa schools, four Kansas schools, seven Missouri schools, and one Nebraska school received the award

Rogie Dorpinghaus

Horizons Editor

Blue ribbons are rewards or honors given for excellence, according to www.dictionary.com.

Rod Paige, U.S. Secretary of Education, named 233 public and private schools Blue Ribbon Schools.

Under No Child Left Behind, the Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels.

Schools are selected based on two criteria.

The first criterion was that the school must have at least 40 percent of students from disadvantaged backgrounds dramatically improving their performance to a high level on state assessments.

The second way schools are selected to be Blue Ribbon Schools is when the students, regardless of background, in the school achieve in the top 10 percent on state tests.

"We qualified under both criteria," said Sierra Jackson, principal of Custer Hill Elementary School of Fort Riley, Kan. "Seventy-six percent of our students who took the tests considered for the award were from disadvantaged backgrounds and our students also scored in the top 10 percent on state tests."

Paige said recognizing Blue Ribbon Schools is rewarding schools based

on student achievement results, not the process.

Rod Smith, principal at Mill Creek Elementary School in Shawnee Mission, Kan., said his school met regularly to diagnose and analyze testing data to see which areas of the curriculum needed attention.

Solid instructional methodology and adherence to the five tenets of reading (fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, phonics) are two changes Mill Creek made to insure goals were met.

"Teachers at Mill Creek know exactly where their students are at academically in each curricular area," Smith said. "Year after year the teachers, students and parents have shown great gains in the testing and student achievement. It has unified the community in an even greater way. It has brought appreciation and recognition to those who work so hard to make a difference in the lives of students."

Dowling Catholic High School of West Des Moines, Iowa received the award for being in the top 10 percent in the state, said Dr. Jim Dowdle, principal of Dowling Catholic.

"Only two schools in Iowa were chosen," he said. "It is a huge honor to be a Blue Ribbon School."

On October 30 and 31, the 2003 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools were honored at an awards ceremony with Paige in Washington, D.C.

The school districts paid the

expenses for a principal and a teacher from each recognized school to attend the ceremony.

"Having the opportunity to collaborate and teach others about the process we have undergone not only validates our work, but allows us the opportunity to learn from others," Jackson said. "By this affirmation of our efforts, we are rejuvenated and eager to continue our journey to ensure that all students have the same opportunity to achieve the highest level of performance possible."

Below is a list of Blue Ribbon Schools in Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska.

" By this affirmation of our efforts, we are rejuvenated and eager to continue our journey to ensure that all students have the same opportunity to achieve the highest level of performance possible. "

Sierra Jackson
Principal of Custer Hill
Elementary School
Fort Riley, Kan.

Dowling Catholic High School
West Des Moines, Iowa
Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn Community School

Marcus, Iowa
Custer Hill Elementary School
Fort Riley, Kan.

Ellinwood Elementary School
Ellinwood, Kan.

Mill Creek Elementary School
Shawnee Mission, Kan.

Sumner Academy of Arts and Science

Kansas City, Kan.

Campbellton Elementary School
New Haven, Mo.

Columbia Elementary School
Joplin, Mo.

Eugene Field Accelerated Elementary School
St. Joseph, Mo.

Fordland Elementary School
Fordland, Mo.

Glenridge Elementary School
Clayton, Mo.

Lone Dell Elementary School
Arnold, Mo.

Pierre Laclède Elementary School
St. Louis, Mo.

Creighton Elementary School
Creighton, Neb.



Photo by Rogie Dorpinghaus

Dr. Charles Rankin, director of the Midwest Equity Assistance Center, traveled to Columbia, Mo. in November to speak at a teachers inservice about how educators and parents can work together to teach children.

KS school finance law violates constitution

Lawmakers have until July to fix Kansas's school funding, a district judge ruled in December.

Judge Terry Bullock found Kansas's school finance law in "blatant violation" of the state and U.S. constitution because of inadequate funding and unfair distribution.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and lawmakers need to increase the school funding by \$1 billion a year, according to Bullock's ruling. Four years ago the case was filed and claimed minority, poor, and disabled students are victims of discrimination under the Kansas school funding law.

"This case involves the fundamental law of our land, and this court has no discretion whatsoever in whether it will be enforced and preserved," Judge Bullock wrote.

There is no such thing as "a little bit pregnant" and there is no such thing as "slightly unconstitutional," he said. Statistics that showed the wide achievement gap which leaves minority and low-income students behind influenced Bullock's decision, he said.

The Midwest Center would like to congratulate the 2003 National Distinguished Principals:

Congratulations to Don Ortman of Starkweather Elementary in Rock Valley, IA; Ronald Brown of Heller Elementary in Neodesha, KS; Nancy Colbaugh of Eugene Field Elementary in Springfield, Mo.; and in Hastings, NE, Andrew Heady of Abraham Lincoln Elementary.

McGrath CyberSchool presents "Sexual Harassment: Minimize the Risk"

- Self-paced distance learning course
- Two graduate credits are available through Baker University School of Professional Graduate Studies
- Contact Doris Scott 626-403-4144

The following resources are available from the Midwest Equity Assistance Center Library. If interested in checking out any materials listed below or other learning resources, call 1-800-232-0133 ext. 6408.

Reading Materials

Boeve, Eunice

The Summer of the Crow

This novel is set in the drought-stricken farmlands of the Midwest during the summer of 1935. The main character of "The Summer of the Crow" is thirteen-year-old Brady Lee Foster. Brady is as typical a thirteen year old as any boy of any era; he loves baseball and his dog Taggart, who is "so big his dad once said it was like having a yearling calf in the house." What makes Brady Foster atypical, however, is that he must face hardships and challenges most children his age will never know. His summer will be filled with adventures that include dust storms, tornadoes, rabbit drives, bootleggers, hoboes and riding freight trains. And he will make a new friend - a boy with a pet crow.

Middle School

Pfister, Marcus

Somos Como Somos

Rainbow Fish creator Marcus Pfister has crafted a novel ode to self-acceptance in *Somos Como Somos* (Just the Way You Are). Tired of their normal appearances, the animals want to look special for the big party but come to realize that they are special just the way they are. Die-cut pages offer glimpses of each animal's dream transformation. Lion would like to have Toucan's beak, Toucan would like to be as big and strong as Elephant. But in the end, the animals accept their individual qualities. Spanish language edition.

Elementary

O'Brien-Palmer, Michelle

How the Earth Works

Earth science comes alive for children 6 to 9 through 60 engrossing games, activities, and experiments. Kids "core sample" a filled cupcake and discover plate tectonics by floating graham cracker continents on a molten mantle of molasses. They learn how heat changes rocks by seeing how separate ingredients disappear when they bake Rice Krispie Treats. More activities show what causes earthquakes and what kinds of buildings resist their force. Growing sugar and salt crystals, "fossilizing" plastic insects, and modeling a variety of volcanoes add to the learning and the fun. Eight of the activities are tasty as well as informative. Silly songs help children remember new words and concepts, and a resource section gives inexpensive sources for rocks, minerals, and fossils. All the projects have been tested in homes and schools to make sure they are safe, effective, and fun.

Elementary

Tatum, Beverly Daniel

"Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" and Other Conversations About Race

Anyone who's been to a high school or college has noted how students of the same race seem to stick together. Beverly Daniel Tatum has noticed it too, and she doesn't think it's so bad. As she explains in this provocative, book these students are in the process of establishing and affirming their racial identity. As Tatum sees it,

blacks must secure a racial identity free of negative stereotypes. The challenge to whites, on which she expounds, is to give up the privilege that their skin color affords and to work actively to combat injustice in society.

Adult

Byrd, Rudolph P. and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, eds.

Traps: African American Men On Gender and Sexuality

This book is the first anthology of writings by 19th- and 20th-century African American men on the overlapping categories of race, gender, and sexuality. Monolithic constructions of gender and sexuality, reinforced by sexism and historical sanctioned homophobia, are the "traps" that give this book its focus and its title. Authors include: Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, Bayard Rustin, Manning Marable, Derrick Bell, James Baldwin, Charles Johnson, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Huey Newton, Cornel West, and Kalamu ya Salaam.

Adult

Gurian, Michael

A Fine Young Man: What Parents, Mentors and Educators Can Do To Shape Adolescent Boys Into Exceptional Men

The author explores the unseen problems and marvels of male adolescents, showing parents, teachers, and mentors how to shepherd boys through the challenging ages of ten to twenty.

Adults

Audiovisual Materials

A Tale of O

The program explores the consequences of being different in a wide number of ways -- age, sex, race, language, occupation, status or even such matters as hair style or length -- in other words, X's and O's. "A Tale of 'O'" is for anyone who works with people who are socially distinct from one another -- it can help them understand what is happening to them and to feel more comfortable in dealing with each other. *Adults*

The Men Who Killed Kennedy: The Truth Shall Make You Free

Did Robert Kennedy know his brother's assassins? This is just one question explored in "The Men Who Killed Kennedy." It is an original line of inquiry into America's greatest mystery. Featuring interviews with a highly decorated Army colonel who speaks specifically of how he was trained to eliminate key assassination witnesses, Lee Harvey Oswald's widow, Marina, and scientists who employ the latest image processing techniques to prove that autopsy pictures were faked to support the lone gunman theory. The investigation leads one conclusion: the case on Kennedy's murder is far from closed. *Adults*

A Tale of Two Schools

Across the country, schools are struggling with their most basic job: teaching kids to read. Thirty-six percent of all fourth graders read below the "basic" level, meaning they can't understand a simple story, or they can barely read at all. What does it really take to turn our schools around? In this PBS special, A Tale of Two Schools, Morgan Freeman tells the intimate story of a tumultuous year at two vulnerable schools. It's a tale of hope, of faith, and of the power of committed adults to help shape the life of a child. *Teachers/Administrators*

Just A Little Red Dot

The storyline is based on a South Asian child but is reflective of anti-racism and it is inclusive of various ethnicities of children in the film. When Parvathi, a new immigrant from Sri Lanka, enters the fifth grade class wearing a little red dot on her forehead, some classmates are curious while others express their racist attitudes. The tide changes when Parvathi gives her teacher a package of red dots or bindis (a South Asian cultural symbol) as a birthday present. Fascinated by the symbol on their teacher the other children rush to adorn themselves with their own little red dot only to be faced with the insensitivity

and negative attitudes of their peers in the schoolyard. Realizing the hurt and the pain felt by discrimination, those children decide they must educate their peers. Together they create an ingenious solution and set out on a mission to challenge prejudice and spread the message of respect and understanding for people of all backgrounds. *Elementary*

Bowling for Columbine

This movie takes aim at America's love affair with guns and violence. Humorous animation and candid interviews are included with everyone from the NRA's Charlton Heston to shock-star Marilyn Manson. *Adults*

Salt of the Earth

This movie was made by filmmakers who were blacklisted when the film was made in 1953, during the anticommunist witch-hunts that plagued Hollywood (and the entire country). This is a powerful social-realist drama about a strike by Mexican American zinc miners in New Mexico. The story intensifies when the strikers are forced to stop picketing and their wives take up the cause. It focuses on one struggling couple to illustrate its themes of individual dignity and human rights. *Adults*

Director
 Charles I. Rankin, Ph.D
 Administrative Assistant
 Ronna Olivier, M.S.
 Technology and Evaluation
 Specialist
 Chandima Cumararatunge, Ph.D
 Program Planners
 Marcela Parra, M.ED
 Be Stoney, Ph.D
 Graduate Associate
 Bo Yang
 Program Intern
 Tina Henderson
 Office Assistant
 Kathleen Kelly
 Library Staff
 Valerie McKain
 Lacy Kruse
 Horizons Editor
 Rogie Dorpinghaus

785-532-6408
 800-232-0133 ext. 6408



401

Midwest Equity
 Assistance Center
 401 Bluemont Hall
 1100 Mid-Campus Drive
 Manhattan, KS 66506-5327

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 Manhattan, Kan. 66502

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Calendar of Events

Midwest Equity Assistance Center

Learning Brain Expo 2004

Jan. 18-21, 2004
 San Diego, Calif.
www.brainexpo.com
 800-325-4769

31st International Conference: The Big Apple - Jazz to the Core

Jan. 21-24, 2004
 New York, N.Y.
 785-776-8744

Relevance of Assessment and Culture in Evaluation: RACE '04

Feb. 13-14, 2004
 Tempe, Arizona
 Arizona State University
 480-727-6591
<http://coe.asu.edu/race>
race@asu.edu

ATE 2004: Promoting Quality and Professionalism

Feb. 15-18, 2004
 Dallas, Texas
 214-651-1234

2004 Iowa Culture and Language Conference (ICLC)

Feb. 18-19, 2004
 Des Moines, Iowa
 800-255-0405, ext. 4635

Association for African American Historical Research and Preservation Inaugural Conference

Feb. 27-28, 2004
 Seattle, Wash.
 206-547-5394
www.aaahrp.org

The Legacies of Brown v. Board: Law, Education, Public Policy, and the Media

Mar. 15-17, 2004
 Lawrence, Kan.
 888-863-6515

Unfinished Business of Brown v. Board of Education

Mar. 18-21, 2004
 Frederick, Md.
owhite@hood.edu
 301-696-3573

2004 KATESOL/BE Conference "Advocating for Language Learners in the Era of NCLB"

March 12-13, 2004
 Hays, Kan.
www.fhsu.edu/katesol/spring2004