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Welcome to the "e-Connection" from the  
EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES, a weekly  
e-mail publication with links to key education  
information. Please give us feedback by replying  
to this e-mail.

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Highlights of this issue:

- \* WHAT STATES ARE DOING: Florida on-line high school,  
school construction
- \* GOOD READS: PDK/Gallup Poll on public schools, child  
poverty statistics
- \* ECS NEWS: Quality teaching/higher ed workshops,  
CLC officers
- \* UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS: NAEP online discussion,  
urban school reform
- \* OTHER USEFUL WEB SITES: School administrators,  
curriculum development

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WHAT STATES ARE DOING  
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FLORIDA has established a traditional governance  
structure for its new Florida On-Line High School.  
Click on:  
<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/session/2000/house/summaries/pdf/aec.pdf>  
Scroll down to: CS/HB 2063 - Florida On-Line High School.

For those Florida schools that are NOT virtual,  
and many others across the country, the problem of  
FACILITY CONSTRUCTION, maintenance and repair is  
significant. To address the issue in Florida, the  
legislature created a system to compile common  
designs (prototypes) for new construction.  
Policymakers also enacted SMART Schools (Soundly  
Made, Accountable, Reasonable and Thrifty) and  
required the state to maintain a clearinghouse  
of practices used by those designated SMART schools.  
The state also presents "thrift" awards to districts.  
Click on:  
<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/citizen/documents/statutes/search/index.cfm>  
Then type 235.2155 in the search bar and click  
on the "execute query" button.

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GOOD READS  
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The 2000 "PHI DELTA KAPPA/GALLUP POLL Of the Public's  
Attitudes Toward the Public Schools" shows a high

level of satisfaction with local public schools and increasing support of strengthening public schools (75%) over providing vouchers to pay for private schools (22%). A few other highlights:

\* The majority of respondents (52%) believe putting a qualified teacher in every classroom offers the greatest promise for improving schools.

\* Lack of money is seen as the biggest problem facing local schools.

\* Nearly seven in 10 people think schools should offer a balanced education rather than focusing on the basics.

\* Six in 10 believe teachers' salaries should be tied very or somewhat closely to student achievement.

\* The percentage of respondents who believe there is the right amount of emphasis on testing dropped five points from 1997, while the percentage who said there is too much emphasis on testing rose 10 percentage points.

To see the full results:

<http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/kpol0009.htm>

The CHILD POVERTY rate has improved in most states since 1993, according to a new study by the National Center for Children in Poverty, a nonpartisan research center at Columbia University. "Child Poverty in the States: Levels and Trends from 1979 to 1998" reports that nine states reduced their child poverty rates by one-third or more since 1993, six of those in the South. Gains, however, have not fully offset the longer-term increases in child poverty in most states since 1979. From 1979-1998, the study says, the rate increased significantly in 14 states and decreased significantly in only four.

<http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/cprb2txt.html>

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## ECS NEWS

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Twelve states will host policy workshops focused on QUALITY TEACHING, and another 16 have expressed interest. Funded with support from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds, the workshops are designed to help move states forward in their efforts to improve the quality of their teaching staffs.

Confirmed states include New Mexico (September 20-21), New Hampshire (October 20), Alabama, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Ohio, Maryland, Mississippi, American Samoa, Minnesota and South Carolina. Hawaiian policymakers took part in a workshop there in March and are now involved in follow-up activity. ECS can accommodate up to 30 states, including technical assistance following the workshops. For more information, contact [mallen@ecs.org](mailto:mallen@ecs.org). Also see:

<http://209.151.83.18/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/issue.asp?issueid=129>

ECS and the Education Policy and Leadership Center will host on September 27-28 a Mid-Atlantic regional meeting on "The Future of HIGHER EDUCATION AND K-12 ACADEMIC STANDARDS: Implications for Statewide and Regional Collaboration." The Philadelphia meeting will look at K-16 systems, teacher quality, leadership, standards, preschool and other issues of interest to states in that area. For more information, contact Katy Anthes at [canthes@ecs.org](mailto:canthes@ecs.org).

New officers for 2000-01 of the COMPACT FOR LEARNING AND CITIZENSHIP (CLC), ECS' service-

Learning project, are:

Chairman:

\* Dale Kinsley, superintendent of schools,  
Bellingham, Washington

Board Members:

\* Barbara Grohe, superintendent of schools,  
Kent, Washington

\* Marilyn Howard, Idaho state superintendent  
of public instruction

\* Paula Papponi, superintendent of schools,  
Jemez Pueblo, New Mexico

\* Inez Tenenbaum, South Carolina state  
superintendent of education

For more information about CLC, go to:

<http://209.151.83.18/ecsmain.asp?page=/html/projects.asp?am=7>

Then click on the Compact for Learning and Citizenship.

You also may contact Terry Pickeral at

[tpickeral@ecs.org](mailto:tpickeral@ecs.org) or Lou Myers at [lmyers@ecs.org](mailto:lmyers@ecs.org).

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#### UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

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Join in a live discussion on Thursday, August  
24, from 2-3 p.m. EDT, about the newest NATIONAL  
ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS report, "1999  
Trends in Academic Progress." The assessment  
examines long-term trends in 9-, 13-, and  
17-year-olds' performance in reading, math and  
science.

<http://nces.ed.gov/statchat/conference/>

The Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform  
is holding a National Working Meeting designed to  
stimulate URBAN SCHOOL REFORM efforts. The  
October 26-28 meeting in Baltimore will focus  
on equity issues and strategies for teaching  
and assessment that help urban students succeed  
in high school. Register by September 22.

<http://www.crosscity.org/announce/cuhs.htm>

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#### OTHER USEFUL WEB SITES

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AASA ONLINE gives you the latest from the American  
Association of SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS. Included is  
information about issues, publications, jobs and  
other areas of interest to district-level  
administrators and others.

<http://www.aasa.org/>

The Association for SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM  
DEVELOPMENT includes educators whose jobs cut  
across all grade levels and curriculum areas.  
The Web site includes resources, publications,  
training opportunities and more.

<http://www.ascd.org/>

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