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**Studies in the News:
Education Supplement**

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Introduction to Studies in the News

Studies in the News is a current compilation of items significant to the Legislature and Governor's Office. It is created weekly by the California State Library's [California Research Bureau](#) to supplement the public policy debate in California. To help share the latest information with state policymakers, these reading lists are now being made accessible through the California State Library's website. This

week's list of current articles in various public policy areas is presented below. Prior lists can be viewed from the California State Library's Web site at www.library.ca.gov/sitn

- When available, the URL for the full text of each item is provided.
- California State Employees may contact the State Information & Reference Center (916-654-0261); csinfo@library.ca.gov) with the SITN issue number and the item number [S#].
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The following studies are currently on hand:

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EDUCATION

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Improving Academic Success For Economically Disadvantaged Students. By Stefanie Fricano, California Legislative Analyst's Office. (The Office, Sacramento, California) January 6, 2009. 20 p.

Full text at:

http://www.lao.ca.gov/2009/edu/academic_success/academic_success_0109.pdf

["California spends more than \$9 billion in state and federal money to help poor disadvantaged students, but the programs don't show evidence of improving academic achievement.... The LAO did not recommend cutting funds from any of the 45 programs intended to help poor students. Instead, it calls for folding together state-funded portions of the programs into a single block grant and giving districts discretion over how to spend the money. The report calls for looking at barriers to academic achievement, such as rates of parent education and teen pregnancy, when allotting funding." The Riverside Press-Enterprise (January 6, 2009) 1.]
[Request #S09-4-3257]

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Improving Educational Outcomes for Poor Children. By Brian Jacob, University of Michigan, and Jens Ludwig, University of Chicago. (National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, Massachusetts) December 2008. 51 p.

Full text at: <http://www.nber.org/tmp/72218-w14550.pdf>

["This review paper considers the ability of different education policies to improve the learning outcomes of low-income children in America. Disagreements on this question stem in part from different beliefs about the problems with our nation's public schools. In our view there is some empirical support for each of the general concerns that have been raised about public schools serving high-poverty student populations, including: the need for more funding for those school inputs where additional spending is likely to pass a benefit-cost test; limited capacity of many schools to substantially improve student learning by improving the quality of instruction on their own; and the need for improved incentives for both teachers and students, and for additional operational flexibility."]

[Request #S09-4-3207]

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Benchmarking for Success: Ensuring U.S. Students Receive a World-class Education. By Craig D. Jerald, Break the Curve Consulting. (National Governor's Association, Washington, DC) December 2008. 52 p.

Full text at: <http://www.achieve.org/files/BenchmarkingforSuccess.pdf>

["The report provides states a roadmap for benchmarking their K-12 education systems against those of top-performing nations. The report explains the urgent need for action and outlines what states and the federal government must do to ensure U.S. students receive a world-class education that provides expanded opportunities for college and career success.... Research shows that education systems in the United States tend to give disadvantaged and low-achieving students a watered down curriculum and place them in larger classes taught by less qualified teachers -- exactly opposite of the educational practices of high performing countries."]

[Request #S09-4-3225]

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

American Civil Rights Foundation v. Los Angeles Unified School District. California Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District. B205943. December 19, 2008. 22 p.

Full text at: <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions/documents/B205943.PDF>

["Los Angeles can continue to seek racial balance in assigning tens of thousands of students to specialized magnet schools despite California's voter-approved ban on race preferences in government programs.... The court said a judge's order in 1981 that required the district to consider the race of students applying to magnet schools in Los Angeles -- the culmination of a discrimination case that began in 1963 -- remains in effect and allows the program to continue under an express exemption in Prop. 209.... Lawyers in the case disagreed on whether the ruling could also affect a lawsuit against the use of race in Berkeley school enrollments." San Francisco Chronicle (December 22, 2008) 1.]
[Request #S09-4-3182]

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COMMUNITY COLLEGES

High School to Community College: New Efforts to Build Shared Expectations. By Matthew Rosin and Kathy Wilson, EdSource. (EdSource, Mountain View, California) November 2008. 26 p.

Full text at: http://www.edsource.org/pub_transitions11-08.html

["These two sets of public institutions share responsibility for the futures of a vast number of California's young people, including 30% or more of new high school graduates who each fall enroll at one of the state's 110 community colleges. Yet K-12 schools and community colleges operate under separate governance systems, pursue distinct missions, and gauge their success based on different measures. This report focuses on where California's K-12 and community college systems meet and explores some of the potential opportunities currently under discussion for building better bridges between them. These include utilizing common approaches to assess student readiness and enabling K-12 and community college educators to jointly plan for the successful transition of students from high school to community college."]
[Request #S09-4-3327]

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EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Changing the Game: The Federal Role in Supporting 21st Century Educational Innovation. By Sara Mead, New America Foundation, and Andrew J. Rotherham, Education Sector. (Brookings Institution, Washington, DC) October 2008. 73 p.

Full text at:

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/1016_education_mead_rotherham/1016_education_mead_rotherham.pdf

["The authors suggest that the federal government should create a new federal Office of Educational Entrepreneurship and Innovation within the Department of Education. The general premise behind such a policy idea is that such an office would 'expand the boundaries of public education by scaling up successful education entrepreneurs, seeding transformative educational innovations, and building a stronger culture to support these activities throughout the public sector.'"]
[Request #S09-4-3181]

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The Future of Educational Entrepreneurship. By Frederick M. Hess, American Enterprise Institute. (The Institute, Washington, DC) November 2008. 6 p.

Full text at: http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.28970/pub_detail.asp

["The history of school reform is a tale of clashing recipes and absolutes. For conventional reformers, it is a question of professional development, instructional leadership, curricula, and 'best practices.' Advocates have overlooked the enormous difficulties inherent in trying to turn around established organizations. For those skeptical of district-based reform, the proffered remedy is typically parental choice or market competition. Advocates of this approach have given short shrift to the challenges of deregulation and the institutions and resources needed to foster a vibrant educational sector. These opposing camps suffer from a shared shortcoming -- a failure to recognize that transformation will require consciously refashioning the world of schooling into a world that encourages and supports change."]
[Request #S09-4-3074]

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Transforming and Improving American Education: A Memo to President-elect Obama. By Dan Lips and Jennifer A. Marshall, The Heritage Foundation. (The Foundation, Washington, DC) December 8, 2008. 5 p.

Full text at: http://www.heritage.org/Research/Education/upload/obamamemo_7.pdf

["The crisis in American education persists despite decades of increasing federal intervention and taxpayer funding.... combined federal spending on K–12 education has increased by 138 percent. Major federal initiatives like No Child Left Behind....have demonstrated the limits and dangers in the overextension of federal policymaking authority. Your Administration should pursue the following actions: 1) Reform federal K–12 education programs to facilitate greater parental choice; 2) End ineffective, wasteful, or duplicative education programs; 3) Protect and expand school choice in Washington, DC; 4) Fix ineffective early childhood education programs rather than adding new ones; and 5) Call attention to.... the power of parents and successful reform models at the state and local levels."]
[Request #S09-4-3188]

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ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Educating Homeless Children in Chicago: A Case Study of Children in the Family Regeneration Program. By Amy Dworsky, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. (The Hall, Chicago, Illinois) 2008. 57 p.

Full text at:

http://www.chapinhall.org/content_director.aspx?arid=1479&afid=448&dt=1

["This report highlights the results of a study that examined the educational needs of a group of homeless children in the Chicago Public Schools. The research involved both qualitative interviews with key informants familiar with the problems facing homeless families with children and quantitative analyses of administrative data from an agency that provides services to chronically homeless families. The educational experiences of these children were characterized by high levels of school mobility, academic difficulties, and special education needs. The implications of these findings for how public schools and homeless shelters can work together to better address the educational needs of homeless children are discussed."]
[Request #S09-4-3173]

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The School Environment and Adolescent Well-Being: Beyond Academics. By Pilar Marin and Brett Brown, Child Trends. (Child Trends, Washington, DC) November 2008. 11 p.

Full text at: http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2008_11_14_RB_SchoolEnviron.pdf

[“This research brief looks at schools more comprehensively as an environment affecting multiple aspects of adolescent development. The brief is designed to be of particular interest to school principals, district staff, and individuals responsible for school functioning, and others who want a better sense of how their concerns fit into the larger environment. The brief presents national estimates from a variety of sources on the school environment of adolescents in the areas of health, safety, social support, academics, and civic engagement.”]

[Request #S09-4-3194]

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HIGHER EDUCATION

University Eligibility Study: Class of 2007. By the California Postsecondary Education Commission. (The Commission, Sacramento, California) December 2008. 11 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cpec.ca.gov/completereports/2008reports/08-20.pdf>

["Latino and black students lag behind whites and Asians in becoming academically eligible to enter California's two public university systems. The study also showed female high school seniors do significantly better than males in earning grades and test scores that could gain them admission to the University of California and California State University systems. Factors holding down eligibility rates for black and Latino students include.... shortages of the necessary courses and inadequate counseling at high schools that often predominate minority areas. The study also suggested that California's high school exit exam, required since 2006, cut out weaker students and may have affected eligibility rates." Los Angeles Times (December 10, 2008) 1.]

[Request #S09-4-3233]

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Rewarding Persistence: Effects of a Performance-Based Scholarship Program for Low-Income Parents. By Lashawn Richburg-Hayes and others, MDRC. (MDRC, Oakland, California) January 2009.

["Two New Orleans-area colleges operated a performance-based scholarship program with counseling in 2004-2005. The program targeted low-income parents. Colleges offered students \$1,000 for each of two semesters (\$2,000 total) -- distributed in three separate payments... Students had to meet two conditions: Enrollment in college half time and an average grade of 'C' or better.. Counselors monitored whether students met benchmarks, and physically handed the students their checks at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester. Analyses shows that the program encouraged more students to register for college.... increased persistence...increased the number of credits students earned and had positive impacts on a range of social and psychological outcomes."]

[Request #S09-4-3289]

Report. 167 p.

<http://www.mdrc.org/publications/507/overview.html>

Executive Summary. 14 p.

<http://www.mdrc.org/publications/507/execsum.pdf>

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2009-10 Budget Analysis Series: Higher Education. By the California Legislative Analyst's Office. (The Office, Sacramento, California) January 29, 2009. 68 p.

Full text at: http://www.lao.ca.gov/analysis_2009/highered/highered_anl09.pdf

["The Governor's budget proposal includes \$11.5 billion in General Fund support as well as \$5.7 billion in other core funding for higher education in 2009-10. The proposed budget would increase university fees by almost \$300 million while it would reduce state financial aid programs by \$88 million. It also could reduce higher education enrollment by tens of thousands of students. We offer alternatives that would increase funding for state financial aid programs, increase enrollment targets well above the Governor's levels, and better account for student fee revenue."]

[Request #S09-4-3318]

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READING

The Enhanced Reading Opportunities Study: Findings from the Second Year of Implementation. By William Corrin, MDRC, and others. (Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC) November 2008. 308 p.

Full text at: <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/503/full.pdf>

["A majority of ninth-graders in low-performing high schools begin their freshman year with significant reading difficulties. Poor reading ability is a key predictor of academic disengagement and, ultimately, dropping out. This report presents findings from the second year of the Enhanced Reading Opportunities (ERO) study, a demonstration and random assignment evaluation of two supplemental literacy programs that aim to improve the reading comprehension skills and school performance of struggling ninth-grade readers.... On average across the 34 participating high schools, the supplemental literacy programs had a positive and statistically significant impact on students' reading comprehension test scores."] [Request #S09-4-3057]

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SCHOOL FINANCE

The Value of School Facilities: Evidence from a Dynamic Regression Discontinuity Design. By Stephanie Riegg Cellini, George Washington University, and others. (National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, Massachusetts) December 2008. 50 p.

Full text at: <http://www.nber.org/tmp/1900-w14516.pdf>

["This paper analyzes the impact of voter-approved school bond issues on school district balance sheets, local housing prices, and student achievement. We find that bond funds indeed stick exclusively in the capital account, with no effect on current expenditures or other revenues. Our housing market estimates indicate that California school districts under-invest in school facilities: passing a referendum causes immediate, sizable increases in home prices. These effects do not appear to be driven by changes in the income or racial composition of homeowners, and the school bond impact on test scores cannot explain more than a small portion of the total housing price effect. Our estimates indicate that parents value improvements in other dimensions of school output (e.g., safety) that may be not captured by test scores."] [Request #S09-4-3167]

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SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Impact of High Schools on Student Achievement Within the Los Angeles Unified School District: A Value-Added Approach. By Marisa Saunders and others, UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education and Access. (The Institute, Los Angeles, California) November 2008. 28 p

Full text at: <http://idea.gseis.ucla.edu/LSEAT/pdfs/ImpactofHighSchools.pdf>

["Different rates of success hugely depends on which high school a student attends. In collaboration with the LAUSD, this study analyzed district data to examine the effectiveness of district high schools in enabling various groups of students to move from the 9th grade to on-time high school graduation four years later, and to graduation with the successful completion of the college preparatory courses. The study looks at what happens to these students and how the experiences of students differ across district high schools."]

[Request #S09-4-3142]

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Relationships, Rigor, and Readiness: Strategies for Improving High Schools. By Janet Quint and others, MDRC. (MDRC, Oakland, California) October 2008. 56 p.

Full text at: <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/498/full.pdf>

["In many communities, particularly in our cities, upwards of half of all high school students drop out, and too many of those who finish high school are not ready for higher education, training, or the workplace. This report offers lessons from the last in a series of three high school reform conferences ... Many of the strategies urban districts are employing are based on the insight and experience of educators and have not been rigorously tested. A challenge for both practitioners and researchers is to build a shared learning community in which researchers are responsive to the needs of district and school leaders and practitioners are committed to taking lessons from research and to building knowledge as they innovate."]

[Request #S09-4-3180]

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SPECIAL EDUCATION

California Department of Education: Although It Generally Provides Appropriate Oversight of the Special Education Hearings and Mediations Process, a Few Areas Could Be Improved. By the California Bureau of State Audits. (The Bureau, Sacramento, California) December 2008. 46 p.

Full text at: <http://www.bsa.ca.gov/pdfs/reports/2008-109.pdf>

["The report addresses how Administrative Hearings has conducted its operations since taking over the special education hearing process from the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law during fiscal year 2005–06. This report concludes that when we compared the costs incurred by McGeorge to conduct hearings and mediations to the costs incurred by Administrative Hearings, we found that the average cost per case closed had increased by 14 percent since Administrative Hearings began managing the hearings and mediations process. We also found that the average time McGeorge took to close cases was 185 days, whereas, Administrative Hearings took an average of 118 days."]
[Request #S09-4-3231]

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Students with Disabilities and California's Special Education Program. By Stephen Lipscomb, Public Policy Institute of California. (The Institute, San Francisco, California) January 2009. 45 p.

Full text at: http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_109SLR.pdf

["Students with disabilities are entitled by law to free, appropriate special education services, and in 2006–07, more than 10 percent of California's total school enrollment used these services, at a cost of about \$9.3 billion. This report provides basic information about California's students with disabilities and its special education programs. It examines disability rates and trends, the educational environment, student performance on state assessments, and California's financial commitment to special education, including detailed information about spending activity and the funding process."]
[Request #S09-4-3323]

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TEACHERS

Unbearable Burden? Living and Paying Student Loans as a First-Year Teacher.
By Neal McCluskey, Cato Institute. (The Institute, Washington, DC) 2008. 24 p.

Full text at: <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/PA629.pdf>

["There is a widespread belief that public school teachers are underpaid and student loan burdens are too high. Unfortunately, the only major analysis of teacher salaries and student debt is based largely on borrowers' subjective feelings about debt manageability. This paper assesses first year teachers' ability to pay back college loans given their actual salaries and expenses. The findings reveal that first year teachers in even the least affordable of the 16 districts.... can easily afford to pay back their debts.... This does not mean that current teacher salaries or student debt burdens are 'right'.... it does mean that there is no need for policymakers to intervene in teacher pay or student aid to assure that college graduates can afford to become public school teachers."]

[Request #S09-4-3158]

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Teacher Turnover, Tenure Policies, and the Distribution of Teacher Quality: Can High-Poverty Schools Catch a Break? By Raegen Miller and Robin Chait, Center for American Progress. (The Center, Washington, DC) December 2008, 28 p.

Full text at:

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/12/pdf/teacher_attrition.pdf

["Because teacher quality is so critical to students' success in school, gross inequity in the distribution of highly effective teachers should trouble policymakers. Progress on this issue requires a careful look at the composition and dynamics of the teaching workforce. A school's teaching staff is not static. Teachers come and go, and the patterns of their movements between schools and into and out of the profession have undergone radical changes over the past 50 years. Researchers have begun to get a grip on these patterns and their relationship to teacher quality. This report focuses on three pieces of the puzzle: the distribution of teacher quality, teacher turnover, and tenure policies. In other words, who teaches where, who stays and who leaves, and how do tenure policies affect the decisions of teachers and the school districts that employ them?"]

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