

# Of Interest to Teachers

## Poster Contest

The General Conference Risk Management Services proudly announces its fourth annual poster contest for all North American Division SDA schools.

*Theme:* Any safety-related topic (not health, ecology, or pollution) and can include, but is not limited to fire, bicycle, playground, sports, falls, water, vacation, pedestrian, lifting, seat-belt use, roller-skating, etc.

*Divisions:* K-2; 3-5; 6-8; 9-12.

*Identification:* Each poster must include the student's first and last name, grade, school, school address, teacher's name, and the local conference, printed legibly on the back.

*Prizes:* The awards for each division are as follows: First, \$100; second, \$75; third, \$50.

*Rules:* Each poster must be original artwork (limited to red and black colors) and must be submitted on 8 1/2" x 11" white art paper. The artwork must be clean and dark (to copy well) and may include a safety slogan.

The contest is limited to students currently enrolled in an SDA school in the North American Division. Entries will not be returned, and become the property of Risk Management, to be used at a later date. The artist will be given proper credit. Risk Management Services will not be responsible for any loss or damage.

Entries will be disqualified if (1) they use brand-name items, registered trademarks, or copyrighted figures; (2) they are not original drawings or have been published; (3) are not safety-related; (4) the student submits more than one entry; (5) they are submitted without complete

information; (6) are received after the deadline; or (6) are not on 8 1/2" x 11" white art paper.

*Judging:* All accepted entries will be reviewed by a panel of art professionals, safety specialists, and/or educational personnel. Judges' decisions

Picture  
Removed

are final.

*Deadline:* Entries must be postmarked by January 31, 1995. Send all entries to Poster Contest, Risk Management Services, P.O. Box 8007, Riverside, CA 92515 U.S.A.

## Spending and School Achievement Are Connected, New Study Shows

Higher spending on schools does produce higher student achievement, a new research report contends.

In fact, researchers at the University of Chicago argue, studies widely cited as proof that increased spending is not tied to improved student performance actually demonstrate the opposite.

Larry V. Hedges, Richard D. Laine, and Rob Greenwald, authors of the study, reported in the April 1994 *Educational Researcher* that the oft-cited findings of Eric A. Hanushek, an economist and political science professor at Rochester University, are not supported by the studies he analyzed.

Leading conservative critics of U.S. public schools have championed Hanushek's conclusion that no systematic relationship exists between school expenditures and student performance.

In their examination of Hanushek's research

sources, Hedges and his colleagues say strong ties are shown between student achievement and both per-pupil funding levels and teacher experience.

Other factors, such as class size, teacher education, teacher salary, administrative staffing, and facilities, show less connection to achievement. But the researchers note that none of the studies examined shows that improvements in any of the areas have a negative effect on student performance.

Hanushek found that no systemic relationship existed between resources and results after examining several dozen previous studies and finding that only 20 percent of them proved a significant correlation. The Chicago researchers, on the other hand, argue that a closer examination of the studies finds a greater connection, one that is far more than would exist by chance.

Hanushek defended his research by noting that recent years have seen both significant funding increases and lower test scores. He noted that

his work has argued for more sophisticated education policy rather than pouring money into the system to create improvement.

The money-achievement puzzle will likely be solved when researchers can trace the ways money and authority are best used within school districts and buildings, experts noted.

"In a gross sense, it is not how much you spend that matters, but how much you spend in the classroom," said Bruce S. Cooper, a professor of education and urban policy at Fordham University whose method of tracking school funds and accounting for costs has been used by schools and districts.

Hedges, author of the current study, alleges that the research has been used as a justification for not adding resources. He asserts that "money is related to outcomes, and the question is how do we wisely allocate those dollars."—Reported by *Education Week* XIII:26 (March 23, 1994).

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## **IQ Tests Versus Multiple Intelligence Theory**

IQ tests and standardized aptitude tests are not used as frequently in American schools as they once were, but about three-quarters of the nation's school districts give IQ tests two or three times during a child's school career. These tests exert their greatest influence at the high and low ends of the ability spectrum. They are used to allocate remedial services to the learning disabled and to identify students for placements in gifted and talented programs, which often feature fast-paced, stimulating curricula and are sought by parents who want the added resources for their child's education or the prestige of having a child in a gifted program.

Most school districts use a combination of teacher recommendations and tests—such as IQ or achievement tests—to admit students to these advanced programs, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Some states base eligibility for gifted programs on specific IQ threshold scores.

A recent U.S. Department of Education report noted that most school districts limit participation in gifted and talented programs to students with good school records and high general intelligence, as measured by such tests, "missing many outstanding students with other talents."

In his new theory of intelligence, Howard Gardner has launched an attack on IQ tests, charging that they "rarely assess skill in assimilating new information or solving new problems." While he conceded that high IQ scores do predict success in school, he argues that the tests are "remote from everyday life" and don't predict how well a person will do in the real world outside school.

According to a 1988 Department of Education survey of eighth graders, almost half of all gifted and talented students come from the nation's top socio-economic quarter. Critics allege that children from different cultural and ethnic groups are not given a fair chance by the tests.

Gardner's studies stress multiple intelligences, which in addition to measuring language and mathematical skills stressed in most IQ tests also include five other intelligences: spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal (the ability to know and understand others), and intrapersonal (knowing and understanding oneself).

Advocates of Gardner's programs seek out children whose giftedness has been masked, whether by poverty, a different culture, or learning delays and disabilities. The goal for teachers becomes not to identify "Who is gifted?" but "How is each child gifted?"—Reported by the *Washington Post*, Health Section (June 7, 1994).

## **Improving High School Journalism**

A recent report published by the Freedom Foundation offers the following recommendations for improving high school journalism:

1. A newspaper that publishes at least monthly.
2. A newspaper whose staff and coverage are diverse in race, ethnicity, and gender.
3. Well-trained and qualified journalism teachers and advisers.
4. Administrators, board members, and parents who recognize the educational value of student expression through journalism.
5. The moral and material support of the local professional press for the school newspaper.
6. Students who are taught the roles, rights, and responsibilities of free expression in a democratic society.
7. Journalism instruction that includes writing, editing, design, illustration, cartooning, photography, advertising, production, and distribution.
8. Newsrooms and journalism classrooms equipped with computers for production and education.
9. Adequate funding and materials to publish a good newspaper monthly.
10. A distribution system that sends the school newspaper to parents, feeder junior high schools, and the local community.
11. A broadcast media program that works with the newspaper to serve diverse student interests and talents.
12. Opportunities for students and teachers to work with state and national scholastic press associations.—from "Death by Cheeseburger: Journalism in the 1990s and Beyond."

## **Obstacles for Women Graduate Students**

Women graduate students, in many fields, are more likely than their male counterparts to drop out before completing their Ph.D.'s, to terminate their graduate education after obtaining only their master's degrees, or to consider withdrawing from graduate school before completing their degrees. This occurs in spite of the fact that women enter graduate school with higher mean undergraduate grade-point averages than men.

Various hypotheses have been suggested to explain these phenomena, but implicit in each is the assumption that women's graduate experiences differ from those of men. For example, some authors have argued that, unlike their male counterparts, women graduate students feel overlooked, neglected, unsupported, and even dismissed by faculty, especially outside the classroom. One researcher found that male doctoral students perceived more faculty support than did their female

colleagues. Similarly, another study found that, when asked whether professors in their departments took graduate women seriously, 21 percent of the male and 31 percent of the female doctoral students in the sample said that professors did not. Other authors have suggested that women graduate students are at a material disadvantage, compared with male graduate students. One study found that proportionally fewer women than men were offered authorships for their research participation, were asked to accompany a professor on a professional trip, or were asked to meet with scholars from other departments.

Some researchers have argued that it is beneficial to students' professional development to have same-gender faculty with whom to interact. However, female graduate students appear to have less opportunity than their male counterparts for interaction with same-gender faculty. Recent statistics indicate that only 27 percent of all college professors are women.—Reported by Debra S. Schroeder and Clifford R. Mynatt, "Female Graduate Students' Perceptions of Their Interactions With Male and Female Major Professors," *Journal of Higher Education* 64:5 (October 1993).

## **U.S. Enrollment, Spending Rise**

Americans will spend \$506 billion on education during the current school year. That will average \$5,900 for each child in public school, \$14,400 for those in state colleges, and \$25,700 for those in private schools.

In its annual back-to-school forecast, the U.S. Department of Education also said the number of high school graduates will rise significantly by next spring, the vanguard of larger graduating classes expected through the end of the century.

High school enrollment was expected to climb from 13.2 million in 1993-1994 to more than 13.6 million in 1994-1995.

At the same time, it was predicted that 14.7 million students—a record—would enroll in colleges and universities and a record number would also earn associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees.

Among the almost 50 million children in school this year, almost 32 percent are from minority backgrounds, an increase of 26.7 percent from 1984.

Almost 20 cents of every education dollar is spent by private schools, \$100 billion of the \$506 billion total.

While per-pupil spending K-12 is up nearly 3 percent over last year, it represents little change in this decade when inflation is taken into account.

By the same account, teachers' salaries won't rise much: \$35,958 average last year; \$37,200 this year.—Reported by the *Washington Post*, August 24, 1994. ✍