

THS BEAR TRACKS



April 9, 2011 Volume I

Welcome to THS!

We have been happy to welcome 11 new students and their families to THS in the past 8 weeks. This has been an exciting time for all of us, and created more positive energy than ever on our campus. We are definitely growing in the most wonderful ways, looking forward to even more new school members in the fall. Please make them feel welcome to our community!

“THE MUSIC MAN”

MAY 11 & 12 AT THE RAVEN THEATER/HEALDSBURG

Tickets will be on Sale for this event soon

The Music Man is a musical with book, music, and lyrics by Meredith Willson, based on a story by Willson and Franklin Lacey. The plot concerns con man Harold Hill, who poses as a boys' band organizer and leader and sells band instruments and uniforms to naive townsfolk before skipping town with the cash. In River City, Iowa, prim Marian the librarian sees through him, but when Hill helps her younger brother overcome his fear of social interactions due to his lisp, Marian begins to fall in love with Harold. Harold, in turn falling for Marian, risks being caught to win her.

In 1957, the show became a hit on Broadway, winning five Tony Awards, including Best Musical, and running for 1,375 performances. The cast album won the first Grammy Award for "Best Original Cast Album". The show's success led to revivals and a popular 1962 film adaptation and a 2003 television remake. It frequently is produced by both professional and amateur theater companies.



Now watch the THS performance!

Happenings in Kindergarten....

Kindergarten recently went on an outdoor adventure to Pepperwood Preserve. The clouds drifted away for the entire day and we enjoyed wonderful the weather while hiking and exploring around the Preserve. We planned the field trip to coincide with our Unit of Inquiry on Plants and we were able to learn about different plants as well as getting quite close to some animals. We started our trip in their new Dwight Center classroom where we made Art projects and had a snack. Then it was off to turtle pond where we found newts, turtles and frogs...OH MY! It was quite an exciting time for the class! We ended the day with a scenic class photo and lunch on the Preserve! Thank you Pepperwood for a great time!

-Mrs. Inness and Mrs. Garcia



Global Education at the Elementary Level

by Clay McLeod

Global education is an approach to educating that encompasses teaching students about social justice, human rights, equality, and ecological sustainability, as well as peace and harmony between people. This approach provides elementary school teachers with opportunities to teach students content, skills, and attitudes that will help them to become critical thinkers, cooperative team members, life-long learners, and socially conscious and aware participatory citizens who think globally and act locally.

Moreover, global education allows elementary school teachers to do all this while addressing provincially prescribed learning outcomes in several subject areas in an integrated fashion and involving students in authentic learning tasks that develop fundamental skills. Global education can be used to teach social responsibility, including:

- Contributing to the classroom and school community,*
- Solving problems in peaceful ways,*
- Valuing and defending human rights, and*
- Exercising democratic rights and responsibilities.*

A critical feature of global education involves taking authentic action in the real world of problems encountered by students in their studies; global educators encourage students to shape the future in positive ways through their actions. I have used the subject of fair trade chocolate to inspire my students to learn about the world around them and the interrelationship that they share with children in other parts of the world; they used this understanding as a springboard to take action to make the world a better place. Their consumer awareness campaign gave them practice communicating about an engaging topic and gave them an opportunity to be leaders in their school community.

· Students read about, research, and study the origin of the cocoa that goes into their chocolate, finding out about other cultures, poverty in the South, child labour and slavery, and their relationship to these things as consumers of chocolate.

· Students use their understanding of the topic to communicate to others the benefits of Fair Trade certified chocolate for harvesters in the South, creating posters and other campaign materials to communicate with peers and writing letters to chocolate producers, local stores, local newspapers, and others involved in the chocolate industry.

At THS we bring the world into the classroom. The premise here is that the study of the world can be divided into three main themes: global issues, global culture, and global connections. These three themes cross all academic disciplines—geography, history, world languages, health, the sciences and the arts and identify essential ideas that should be pursued through questions that relate to the daily life of students. Among the skills that students can develop are issue analysis, problem solving, interpretation, reasoned persuasion, and research/investigation. Students are encouraged to be actively involved at the local, state, and national levels practicing their civic duty through relationships with our economic, social and political systems.



State of the Nations Schools

Most Public Schools May Miss Targets, Education Secretary Says

By SAM DILLON, Published: March 9, 2011

More than 80,000 of the nation's 100,000 public schools could be labeled as failing under No Child Left Behind, the main federal law on public education, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan told Congress on Wednesday.

Mr. Duncan said the estimate, based on an analysis of testing trends and the workings of the law's pass-fail school rating system, was the latest evidence of the law's shortcomings and the need to overhaul it.

Even many of the nation's best-run schools are likely to fall short of the law's rapidly rising standardized testing targets, Mr. Duncan said.

"This law is fundamentally broken, and we need to fix it this year," he told the House education committee.

If Mr. Duncan's estimates prove to be right when state exams are given this spring, they will represent an astonishing jump in the number of schools falling short of the law's requirements.

Eighty-two percent of schools could miss testing targets, Mr. Duncan said, compared with 37 percent last year.

Some analysts who have closely followed the workings of the law expressed skepticism about the estimates.

"I find it hard to believe that the percentage would rise that much in one year," said Jack Jennings, president of the nonpartisan Center on Education Policy in Washington. "Maybe they are right. If so, it's certainly a mind-blower."

The No Child Left Behind Act, introduced in 2001 by President George W. Bush and passed by Congress with bipartisan support, requires that all schools bring 100 percent of their students to proficiency in math and reading by 2014. Mr. Duncan has called this requirement "utopian."

Critics of the law say it is a bit like requiring all city police forces to end certain crimes — like burglary and drug trafficking — by 2014. They have also long predicted that the law will, over time, determine that all but a handful of schools are failing — a label that would demoralize educators, lower property values and mislead parents about the instructional climates in their schools.

President Obama, Mr. Duncan and many Republicans would like Congress to rewrite the testing and other much-criticized provisions of the law in a broad overhaul this year.

The sprawling federal law requires all public schools to conduct annual testing of reading and math skills among students in third through eighth grades and one high school grade. They must publish the average results for all students, as well as the results broken down by ethnic groups and other subsets.

When it took effect in 2002, the law required states to outline the 12-year statistical path they would follow in bringing all students to proficiency by 2014.

California, for example, had only 14 percent of students proficient in reading in 2002, but it promised to raise that level in every school by a few points each year. The state vowed to have 35 percent of students proficient by 2008, 57 percent by 2010 and 100 percent by 2014.

But like most other states, California has had trouble keeping up. By 2009, 39 percent of the state's elementary schools had missed the targets; last year, 60 percent of California's elementary schools fell short.

If students in any ethnic group miss the targets, the entire school is put on probation. Schools that miss targets two years in a row are labeled “needing improvement,” and face escalating sanctions that can include staff changes or shutdowns.

In virtually every state, schools designated as needing improvement include chaotic ones that may need a total overhaul but also many others where only one or two groups’ scores — perhaps the results of disabled students — have fallen short.

Over the previous four years, the percentage of schools nationwide that have fallen short of the law’s testing targets has risen only gradually, from 28 percent in the 2006-7 school year to 37 percent last year.

But officials said that the number of schools missing targets was reaching a tipping point, and that many schools that had worked hard to meet their targets would be unable to meet them this year.

Margaret Spellings, Mr. Bush’s secretary of education, called it unwise to change the accountability system just when states were feeling the heat.

“These are the achievement targets they promised,” Ms. Spellings said. “It’s been stall, stall, stall, and now what, we’re going to hit the reset button on the accountability clock?”

She added: “They’re overstating the numbers to make a political point for reauthorization.”

Peter Cunningham, an Education Department spokesman, said Mr. Duncan’s intention was to inform Congress of the dynamics of the law this year. “States are now facing very steep goals under the law, and they are not going to meet them,” Mr. Cunningham said. “Arne is just telling the committee that is charged with rewriting this law what’s coming.”

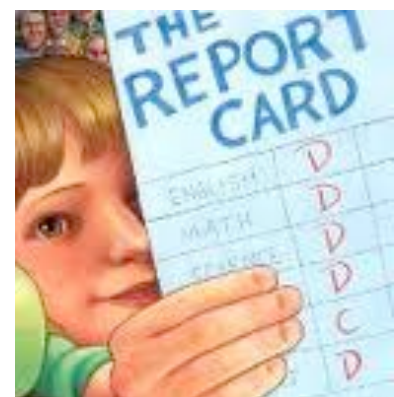
The Obama administration’s blueprint for rewriting the law, released last year, would retain many features of the Bush-era law, including its annual testing requirements.

But it proposes far-reaching changes, including replacing the pass-fail school accountability system with one that would measure individual students’ academic growth and judge schools on other indicators like graduation rates, not just test scores.

The administration’s proposal would replace the 2014 goal with a new national target, raising standards so that all students who graduated from high school by 2020 were prepared to succeed in college and a career.

Department officials said Mr. Duncan’s estimates were not even based on very harsh assumptions on improvement. Rather, it was assumed that all schools would improve scores this year at the rate of the fastest-improving 25 percent of schools in their state in the past four years. That assumption would probably underestimate the number of schools likely to miss the testing goals, the officials said. The department’s calculations did not take into account other possible events, however, that could reduce that number, the officials acknowledged.

For instance, the law gives states considerable leeway to manipulate their testing systems to help more schools meet goals. In South Carolina, about 81 percent of elementary and middle schools missed targets in 2008. The State Legislature responded by reducing the level of achievement defined as proficient, and the next year the proportion of South Carolina schools missing targets dropped to 41 percent.



APRIL 23, Annual Easter Egg Hunt

Time: 8am

Price: free to children

Where: Fitch Mt. Elementary School

Address: 520 Monte Vista

Annual Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by Healdsburg Rotary. Thousands of dyed Easter eggs to be provided free to kids under 12. In addition, other free prizes including gift certificates, candy, and 3 bicycles will be raffled off. Parents bring your cameras as the Easter Bunny will be there for hugs and pictures.

Contact: Kent Mitchell, Phone: 433-2475



APRIL 9, Saddle Up For Kids- Boys & Girls Club Dinner & Auction

Time: 6Pm to 10PM

Price: \$100

Where: Villa Chanticleer

Address: 1248 North Fitch Mountain Road

Please come spend your evening at an old fashioned western event to benefit Boys & Girls Clubs in Healdsburg and Geyserville, featuring live and silent auctions and great food! Dinner by Ken Rochioli-KR Catering. Contact Emilie King at (707)433-447 or eking@bgccsc.org to learn more or to purchase tickets. Period costume encouraged!

Contact: Emilie King, Phone: (707) 433-4479



**BOYS & GIRLS
CLUB**

THS FREE FRIDAY BBQ

New date for our BBQ! Please mark your calendar for April 22nd after school from 3:00-5:00pm, weather depending!



Please send inquiries in regards to Bear Tracks to bettinga@thehealdsburgschool.org. We'd love to hear from you!