



National Alliance of State Science and Mathematics Coalitions NASSMC Briefing Service (NBS) Funding Prospectus

NASSMC Briefing Service Vision and Mission

The volume of information available right now is overwhelming: What are individual states doing about achievement and dropout rates? What trends are emerging in assessment and accountability? What policies are being created, debated, and implemented? How successful are they? What is the degree of public understanding and engagement? What other entities are involved with and invested in the U.S. education system?

The National Alliance of State Science and Mathematics Coalitions (NASSMC) Briefing Service (NBS) is a unique Internet-based information resource that provides brief, timely, crisply formatted summaries of important science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education issues addressed in the national press. Through the NBS you can receive daily, concise email summaries of major news stories related to science, mathematics, engineering and technology education.

Started in 1999 with initial start-up funding for the NASSMC Briefing Service came from the ExxonMobil Foundation and the National Security Agency, the NASSMC Briefing Service (NBS) was designed to track important STEM education related stories in the national press and distribute information about them to subscribers with the belief that an informed populace can make better decisions. NASSMC constructed the NBS to sort the news into several categories:

- + Assessment and Accountability
- + Business Role in Education
- + Content Standards
- + Curriculum Materials
- + Education Policy
- + Opinion/Editorial
- + Postsecondary Education
- + Professional Development
- + Public Understanding and Engagement
- + School Staffing and Governance
- + Studies and Reports
- + Teacher Preparation (including recruitment and mentoring)

Although the service draws upon several national newspapers (e.g., *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Post*) and popular periodicals (e.g., *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Education Week*, *Life*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*), the service is highly selective, issuing at most three briefs per working day. A living archive of NBS briefs has been created at the NASSMC website to sample and find briefs.

ABOUT NASSMC

The National Alliance of State Science and Mathematics Coalitions (NASSMC) is an alliance of state coalitions of business, education, and public policy leaders working to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education for all students.

NASSMC works state by state in pursuit of its vision that

1. All U.S. Students will have the necessary knowledge of, understanding of, and skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, so they can be productive in their personal, work, and civic lives; and
2. The nation will have a competent and competitive workforce that continues to meet the challenges of the global economy.

www.nassmc.org

Statement of Need

America faces a challenge of crisis proportions in mathematics and science education that will impact business and industry for decades and affect the nation domestically and internationally. A growing array of reports and findings suggest an urgent need to address these problems with viable solutions through collaborative efforts of business, education, and public policy leaders. Given the tremendous interest in and anxiety about science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education in the United States, a daily service to review, distribute and archive news, reports, and trends is necessary. **The NASSMC Briefing Service is the only STEM education related service of this kind in existence now.**



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NASSMC offers a variety of sponsorship opportunities for the NASSMC Briefing Service. An added bonus of your sponsorship is having your organization's name posted on the NBS webpage and distributed with every NBS brief in the footer of each email. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor or would like to discuss sponsorship options, please contact NASSMC Executive Director Jim McMurtray at 703-516-5973 or jmcmurtray@nassmc.org.

Statistics and Impact

The NASSMC Briefing Service currently has 500 regular subscribers. Surveys indicate that as many as 25,000 actually receive NBS Briefs either directly or as a result of redistribution by the original subscribers. A new survey is under development to determine how many people receive redistributed NBS Briefs.

www.nassmc.org/nbs.html

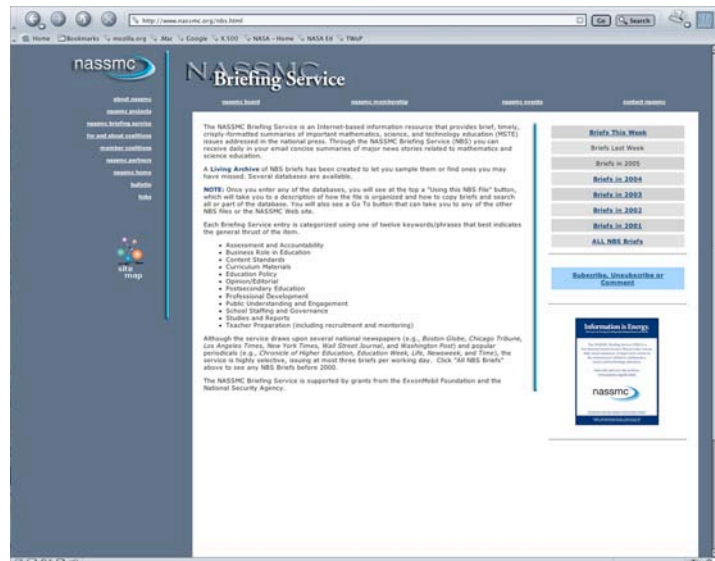
Next Steps

Expanding on the success of the NASSMC Briefing Service, we have developed plans to serve a wider readership and enhance the user interface. Plans call for:

- more advanced and user-friendly mechanisms and tools,
- expanding the list of publications scanned for the service, and
- guest commentary that would offer readers and invited experts to react to recent briefs.

Proposed next steps to expand the service will include a readership and redistribution survey to help us improved user search and analysis, create a mechanism for user-generated reports, and an enhanced user database.

Contact NASSMC to discuss sponsorship options.





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ATTACHMENT A: Examples of NBS Briefs

News Brief #3106 Category: Weekly Wrap-up of Opinion

1) "The Evolution of Creationism"

The New York Times calls the latest battle over Darwinism in Kansas an evolved form of earlier attempts by creationists to reshape the teaching of biology. The Kansas Board of Education first tried eliminating all mention of evolution from state science standards, but voters responded by ousting the members responsible. Now, the anti-evolution crowd has returned with a more politically palatable pitch: intelligent design theory. Before the Kansas board votes on state science standards this summer, "one can only hope [they] will come to their senses first," the Times says.

SOURCE: New York Times, 17 May 2005 (p. A20)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/17/opinion/17tues2.html>

2) "School Boards Want to 'Teach the Controversy.' What Controversy?"

Lawrence Krauss, chairman of the physics department at Case Western Reserve University, argues that evolution and creationist theology can coexist quite happily. He points out that Pope Pius XII hailed the Big Bang theory as proof of Genesis. "One can choose to view chance selection as obvious evidence that there is no God...or to conclude instead that God chooses to work through natural means," Krauss says.

SOURCE: New York Times, 17 May 2005 (p. F03)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/17/science/17comm.html>

3) "Learning to Lead? In Preparing Principals, Content Matters"

Frederick Hess and Andrew Kelly, education policy analysts at the American Enterprise Institute, outline the findings of their review of more than 200 core-course syllabuses from a national sampling of principal-preparation programs. Few programs paid any attention to the use of data to guide management decisions, or how to make tough personnel decisions. Given that new principals are likely to be "ill equipped" to tackle the real challenges of school management, the researchers say, "districts should make every effort to provide access to high-quality professional development that focuses on these critical areas and includes management lessons from outside education."

SOURCE: Education Week, 18 May 2005 (p. 32)

WEBSITE: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2005/05/18/37hess.h24.html>

4) "For Immigrant Students, Math Is One Road to Success"

Columnist Michael Winierip tries to figure out why the math club at Quincy High, a predominantly white school outside of Boston, is 94 percent Asian. He discovers that some immigrant children find comfort, confidence and camaraderie in a subject that doesn't require as much English knowledge. Their participation is reinforced by cultural backgrounds that emphasize the importance of mathematics. For these Asian students, Winierip concludes, math is "their best shot to excel in a new land."

SOURCE: New York Times, 18 May 2005 (p. B09)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/18/education/18education.html>

News Brief #3095 Category: Education Policy

TITLE: "Petition Asks Congress to Take Action on Dearth of Women in Science, Math, and Engineering"

A petition signed by 6000 scientists, engineers and educators asks Congress to examine how Title IX of the Education Act can be used to expand opportunities for women in the sciences, mathematics and engineering.



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U.S. senators Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) and George Allen (R-Virginia) accepted the petition. The men led hearings on the issue of women's limited involvement in science and math in 2002.

The petition requests an "in-depth investigation of the problem" that not only considers the factors affecting women in these fields but also comes up with "specific actions that may help increase opportunities for women."

Enforcement of Title IX and other anti-discriminatory laws is a key element in addressing women's lower salaries and unequal access to resources, said Jocelyn Samuels, vice president for education and employment at the National Women's Law Center, which helped organize the petition.

According to Wyden, Education Secretary Margaret Spellings is setting up a panel to look at Title IX's relationship to academics.

SOURCE: Chronicle of Higher Education (Daily News), 12 May 2005

WEBSITE: <http://chronicle.com/daily/2005/05/2005051201n.htm>

News Brief #3020 Category: Education Study Report

TITLE: "Math Emerges As Big Hurdle For Teenagers"

Math appears to be a major stumbling block for high school students. In a United Negro College Fund survey of 62 high school dropouts from West Virginia, a majority cited math as the factor that made them quit school.

The students surveyed gave many reasons why they had trouble with math, ranging from being "pushed along" without having mastered the basics to being taught by teachers whom they didn't consider "smart."

"The problem is this: We have lots of kids coming into high schools who are not yet ready to take rigorous math coursework," said Michael Cohen, president of Achieve.

NAEP test scores indicate that "African-American students do tend to experience mathematics in school in a qualitatively different way" than other students, said Danny Bernard Martin, an associate professor of math education at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

Experts say improved training for math teachers is crucial to raising achievement among all students. However, opinions still diverge on what constitutes good math instruction.

Neither do experts agree on whether expanded testing requirements in high school will improve the situation. Robert Moses, founder of the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Algebra Project for minority students, says intensive test prep gives students less time to delve deeply into the subject. But the Education Trust supports increased testing as an accountability measure for high schools serving minority populations.

SOURCE: Education Week, 23 March 2005 (p. 01)

WEBSITE: <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2005/03/23/28math.h24.html>



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ATTACHMENT B: NBS Advertisement run in Education Week in 2004

Information is Energy.

And we put a lot of energy into finding and providing information you can use.

The NASSMC Briefing Service (NBS) is a free Internet-based resource that provides concise daily email summaries of major news stories in the national press related to mathematics, science and technology education.

Subscribe and view the archives:

www.nassmc.org/nbs.html

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The National Alliance of State Science and Mathematics Coalitions (NASSMC) is an alliance of state organizations working to improve mathematics, science and technology for all children.

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