



Data & Dialogue

A Newsletter of the Woodrow Wilson Early College Network

May 2007

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Even students who read well at the elementary and middle school levels must develop new skills and techniques for high school reading. Explicit literacy instruction helps all students, at all levels, understand increasingly difficult content, comprehend a variety of academic texts, documents, and data displays, and write at progressively more complex levels. This issue of *Data & Dialogue* offers examples from Woodrow Wilson Early College partnerships and other resources to support literacy development.

• **DIALOGUE:**
Making Meaning



Students at University High School of Science and Engineering (partner University of Hartford) teamed up with American School for the Deaf students at a regional robotics competition this spring. The team balanced the dual challenges of communicating with each other and solving science and technology problems, earning the Rookie All-Star award, reaching the quarterfinals, and qualifying for national competition. [More info](#)

The next issue of *Data & Dialogue*, scheduled for June/July 2007, will explore assessment issues in early college.

Please feel free to [send us](#):

- your assessment-related resources or highlights
- other news from WW Early College partnerships, and
- feedback on ways to make this

Although college readiness requires more than basic literacy skills, many students who enroll in early college schools score below grade level in reading and writing. Woodrow Wilson Early Colleges face the challenge not only of building students' basic reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills but also of

newsletter more useful

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Woodrow Wilson Early College Network

A list of partnerships in the Woodrow Wilson Early College Network is available [online](#).

helping them develop critical and creative ways of thinking within each discipline. Internet literacy, information literacy, and facility with multi-media are also important skills for college and work that require explicit instruction.

Since 2004, the Kellogg/ECHS Literacy Network directed by Jobs for the Future (JFF) works to research best practices, support schools as they adopt new practices, and advocate for improving literacy outcomes in all Early College schools. Two Woodrow Wilson Early Colleges have been involved in the literacy network since it began.

Teams from Wallis Annenberg High School (partner Cal State L.A.) and STAR Early College High School (partner Brooklyn College) have attended the network's literacy institutes, including the most recent session this past March in New York City.

Catherine Cota, chair of the English and Social Studies department at Wallis Annenberg High School, appreciates the networking that occurs at the literacy institutes. Discussing high-quality readings with a group of expert and experienced faculty "added to my understanding of where we are and where we want to be," said Ms. Cota.

In addition to the initiative-wide faculty dialogue, Ms. Cota described her partnership with Marilyn Elkins, Cal State L.A. English faculty member, as invaluable. "She gave me a different framework for my teaching. She helped me see how what happens in the seventh and eighth grades reverberates into high school and high school into college." Under this new framework, Ms. Cota recognized that students at Wallis Annenberg need better preparation for writing an argument using textual evidence. The school is now working on the curriculum to scaffold the necessary writing skills from seventh grade on up.

The literacy coordinator at STAR Early College High School, Rachel Axinn, values the literacy institutes as a platform for in-depth collaboration with her college faculty partner, Martha Jane Nadell of the English department at Brooklyn College, and with her colleagues at STAR and other early colleges. "You feel like your work is so isolated, but to be able to share it and talk about it, and then to learn from other people, I think that's incredibly gratifying," said Ms. Axinn.

Ms. Axinn and Dr. Nadell meet regularly during the school year. With the support of the principal, Henrietta Coursey, and the participation of the high school's English department, they created an English curriculum for ninth through twelfth grades. "We came up with a viable curricular map that did echo college-level syllabi," said Dr. Nadell. The new theme-based curriculum matches college courses, which also tend to be theme-based, and provides increased options for interdisciplinary projects.

Based on the work of the Kellogg/ECHS Literacy Network and

the Woodrow Wilson Foundation's English/Language Arts curriculum project for the Pennsylvania Department of Education, five recommended practices for building adolescent literacy in an early college emerge:

1. A **lead teacher** or **literacy coach** at a school pushes the agenda. Someone who can train teachers across content areas is most effective in this role
2. The school-university partnership, especially faculty dialogue, addresses **content area literacy**
3. All teachers at a school are provided with ongoing **professional development** and mentoring on literacy issues
4. Teachers collaborate on **school-wide practices**. For example, a school selects three strategies that all teachers agree to promote in a given year
5. A school understands and attends to any unique needs of **English language learners**

- **DATA:**
Literacy in Context

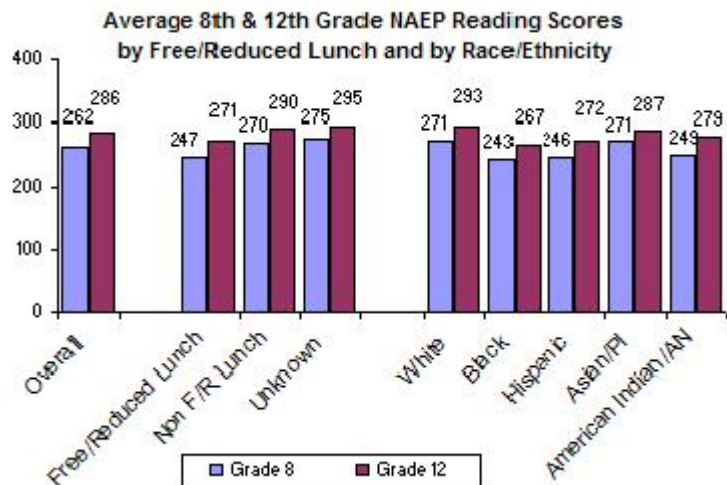


Chart Data Source: US Department of Education National Assessment of Educational Progress, [The Nation's Report Card: Reading 2005](#) and [The NAEP Data Explorer](#).

What does the national literacy landscape look like? The chart above highlights most recent results on the NAEP reading assessments for students in Grades 8 and 12. In both grades, students who were not eligible for free/reduced-price lunch programs scored higher on average than eligible students. Differences were recorded by race/ethnicity in both grades. The Grade 12 average score was 286 (scale: 0-500), varying from 293 for White students to 267 for Black/African American students. The Grade 8 average score was 262, varying from 271 for White and Asian/Pacific Islander students to 243 for Black/African American students.

With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, schools in the Kellogg/ECHS Literacy Network are using the Northwest Evaluation Association's [Measures of Academic Progress, or MAP](#), to assess students' reading and language use skills. The computerized MAP tests adjust to each student's responses to measure student performance accurately. The tests are aligned to each state's standards, provide results within 24 hours, and evaluate growth over time.

"We can identify kids early on through MAP, [and because] MAP is more formative, we can change instruction," explained Catherine Cota of Wallis Annenberg High School. Reports for individual students, groups of students, and school-wide results enable schools to consider personalized goals for individual students as well as classroom and school-wide goals for instruction based on students' strengths and needs.

- **PROMISING PRACTICES:**
Exhibitions @ East Palo Alto
Schoolwide Literacy @ University Park



Ninth graders at East Palo Alto High School create autobiography masks in art class in preparation for their Autobiography exhibition.

Exhibitions have become integral to the college-going culture at East Palo Alto High School, in partnership with Stanford University and Canada Community College. One graduate of the school reported, *"Exhibitions really prepared each student for exactly what they needed in the future.... My reading got much better than it was before. My writing: my essays are better, more detailed."*

For an 80% English language learner population, exhibitions encourage disciplinary thinking through reading, writing, speaking, multi-media presentations, and conversation with a panel of judges; a school-wide set of expectations; and high standards that all students must reach. Learn more about the exhibitions in a brief report summarizing the set of [promising practices that build student efficacy at East Palo Alto](#).

[The University Park Campus School's Literacy Program](#)

outlines the school-wide instructional and organizational practices and aspects of the school culture that produce dramatic results for neighborhood students, many who enter reading several years behind grade level. In addition, [the UPCS Institute website](#) offers information about strategies and lessons, including writing to learn, teaching reading, literacy in the content areas, and literature circles.

Although UPCS is not an Early College, it has served as a model for the Kellogg/ECHS Literacy Institute facilitated by Jobs for the Future. UPCS and its partner Clark University also participate in the Nellie Mae Education Foundation's [Partnerships for College Success](#), a program run by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation.

• **FUNDS and SCHOLARSHIPS**

- An [Academic Competitiveness Grant](#) from the Federal Student Aid Office of the U.S. Department of Education offers full-time Pell Grant eligible students up to \$750 for the first undergraduate year and up to \$1,300 for the second year. Students must have completed a "rigorous high school program." Rigorous programs are determined by the number of years taking courses in core subject areas and/or passing two AP or IB courses. More information on the process for designation as a "rigorous high school program" is available on the FSA website.
- The "Tu Voz My Venture" project (see www.genv.net or www.mtv3voces.com) will award \$1,000 to student teams to develop an organization or business to help Latino students graduate from high school and college. Five of the selected teams with the "best" ventures will receive a \$5,000 scholarship to share. "Tu Voz My Venture" is sponsored by Youth Venture, in partnership with the Gates Foundation and MTV Tr3sVoces.
- Lists of funding resources are provided by the [National Council of the Teachers of English Adolescent Literacy](#) and [Scholastic's READ180](#) websites.

• **NEWS and NOTES**

- Marquita Hardy of Friendship Collegiate Academy's Early College program (UDC) and Jason Jones of STAR Early College High School (Brooklyn College) were selected as Gates Millennium Scholars. The scholarship distinguishes Ms. Hardy and Mr. Jones as Leaders for America's Future and provides financial aid for undergraduate study, renewable annually, with potential for covering graduate studies in certain fields.
- Offers of admission from colleges across the nation are coming in to graduating seniors at East Palo Alto HS (Stanford), Wallis Annenberg HS (Cal State L.A.), Manhattan Hunter Science HS (Hunter College), STAR ECHS (Brooklyn College), and Friendship Collegiate Academy (UDC). In addition to Woodrow Wilson Early

College partner universities, colleges offering admission include several campuses of the University of California, California State University, and the State University of New York, as well as Mills, Smith, and St. Mary's colleges; Columbia, Cornell, Johns Hopkins, and Ohio Wesleyan universities; and the universities of Illinois and Michigan. **Congratulations to the students and their schools -- these are tremendous successes!**

- On April 4, the Woodrow Wilson Early College team met with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Jobs for the Future for its annual review in New York City. During the meeting, Woodrow Wilson Early College staff provided updates on the state of Woodrow Wilson partnerships, progress of the network, and a proposal for future work.
- STAR Middle and Early College High School (Brooklyn College) was one of three Early College sites selected to be featured in a short video that will be shown by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation at the [National Summit on America's Silent Epidemic](#) held May 8-9 in Washington, DC. The summit is sponsored by MTV, TIME, the National Governors Association, Civic Enterprises, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. A crew was at the school and college on April 17 & 18 filming students, teachers, and staff.
- **RESOURCES:**
 - **Literacy**
 - [Rigor Plus Support: How Science Teachers Use Literacy Techniques to Get Students Ready for College](#) is an Early College High School Initiative report by Katie Bayerl of JFF (March 2007).
 - STAR Early College School Freshman Year College Preparatory Program on [University Library Based Research Project](#) is a collaborative effort involving faculty from the Brooklyn College library and the social studies and English departments at STAR.
 - [Reading Next](#) and [Writing Next](#), two reports by the Alliance for Excellent Education, focus on middle and high school students' literacy.
 - [Coaches in the High School Classroom: Studies in Implementing High School Reform](#), from the Annenberg Institute, portrays six literacy coaches in Houston and Boston, and provides a self-assessment for literacy coaches and a collaborative coaching guide.
 - Resources from the National Council of the Teachers of English Adolescent Literacy website include [teaching strategies and funding resources](#), a [literacy program matrix](#) to aid schools in selecting instructional materials, and [Pathways for Advancing Adolescent Literacy](#), NCTE's

research-based online professional development program (fee required).

- [Scholastic's READ180](#) maintains an online adolescent literacy resource center with publications, news, and a list of funding opportunities.
- [The Lesson Plan Checklist](#) (scroll down to Appendix) for the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, available from the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, helps teachers incorporate both content learning and language development objectives into their lessons.
- [Double the Work: Addressing the challenges and solutions to acquiring language and academic literacy for adolescent English language learners](#) from the Alliance for Excellent Education identifies nine research-based instructional practices (pp. 34-38).
- [NCELA, the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition](#) produced guides for preparing secondary teachers to develop content area literacies of English language learners in language arts, math, science and technology, and social studies.
- WestEd's [Quality Teaching for English Learners \(QTEL\)](#) offers various professional development opportunities around teaching adolescent English language learners.
- WestEd's [Schools Moving Up](#) initiative is hosting several literacy related free online events in May, June, and one in October.
- Useful professional texts, resources, and technology supports are summarized in [Annotated Bibliography: Resources for Teaching and Assessing Writing](#) from the Kellogg/ECHS Literacy Institute (July 2006).
- A [Bibliography of Adolescent Literacy and College Readiness](#) was developed by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation for policy makers and education leaders.

Data & Dialogue Extras

- **RESOURCES:**

- **General Early College**

- [Meeting the Five Critical Challenges of High School Reform: Lessons from Research on Three Reform Models](#) by MDRC provides some research-based guidance on five challenges of secondary reform: (1) creating a personalized and orderly learning environment, (2) assisting students who enter high school with poor academic skills, (3) improving instructional content and practice, (4) preparing students for the world beyond high school, and (5) stimulating change in overstressed

high schools.

- [The Knowledge Exchange Exhibition and Presentation \(KEEP\) Toolkit](#) is a free service from the Carnegie Foundation available to educators and students to "document, share, and reflect on some of the critical aspects of their efforts in transforming teaching and student learning." This multi-media platform is one tool to make teaching a public endeavor and increase collaboration and learning among colleagues. Visit the website for a tour of its features and examples of how it may be used.

[Data & Dialogue Extras](#)

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