

EDUCATION WEEK

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John Zich for Education Week

ACADEMIC STRIDES: Ninth graders Kristin Brooks, left, and Andrea Neilson use the program Dance Revolution in a physical education class at Naperville Central High School in Naperville, Ill. A research project at the school has added to growing evidence that educators can leverage the benefits of exercise for the brain to improve learning. EYE ON RESEARCH, 14

Democrats Aim to Resist Bush Budget

No Major Education Increase Proposed in President's Plan

By Alyson Klein

Democrats in Congress say they are prepared to resist President Bush's level-funding budget proposal for education until the next president—who they hope will be more inclined to raise spending—takes office. That means the outcome of this year's budget showdown could hinge on the November election, not on a compromise between the White House and Capitol Hill.

Mr. Bush last week proposed \$59.2 billion in discretionary spending for the U.S. Department of Education in fiscal 2009. His plan includes a modest proposed increase in Title I spending, an effort to reverse a dramatic cut Congress made to the Reading First program, and yet another try for a school choice program that includes private school vouchers.

But Democrats, who control both houses of Congress, made it clear they intend to write spending bills that reflect their own priorities, including boosting funding for programs under the No Child Left Behind



ACADEMIC STRIDES: Ninth graders Kristin Brooks, left, and Andrea Nelson use the program Dance Revolution in a physical education class at Naperville Central High School in Naperville, Ill. A research project at the school has added to growing evidence that educators can leverage the benefits of exercise for the brain to improve learning. EYE ON RESEARCH, 14

Catholic Closures Linked to Growth Of City Charters

Planned White House 'Summit'
Raises Enrollment-Trend Issues

By Scott J. Cech

Whether the proliferation of charter schools in urban areas is fueling the demise of inner-city Roman Catholic schools is not a new question. But it came into sharp focus following last month's State of the Union address, in which President Bush said faith-based schools "are disappearing at an alarming rate in many of America's inner cities."

In his speech to Congress, the president called for a White House "summit" meeting on inner-city children and religious schools. Ironically, some analysts say charter schools, which the Bush administration has strongly supported, may have effectively helped undermine Catholic schools—the nation's largest provider of faith-based education.

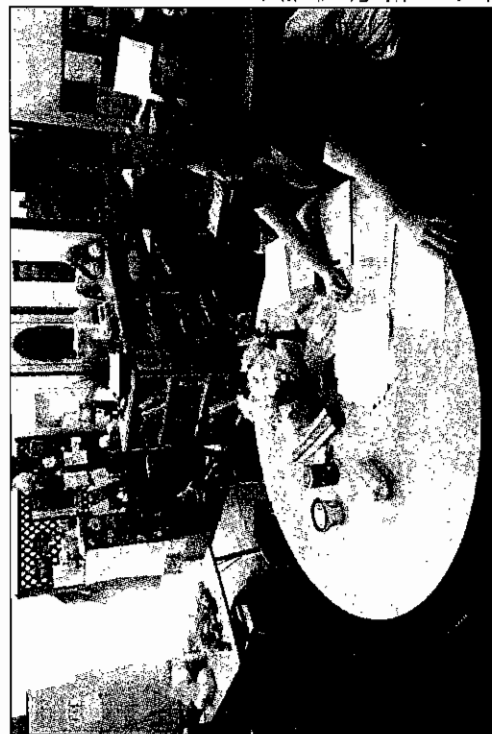
Among those listening to the speech from the House galleries was the Rev. Ronald J. Nuzzi, the director of the Alliance for Catholic Education leadership program at the University of Notre Dame, who has called charters "one of

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CHALLENGE FOR CHARTERS

Librarian Liz Tanner used to play racquetball in the converted athletic club that now houses the charter school where she works. Charter schools nationwide are struggling to find suitable facilities.

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Joe Jaszewski for Education Week

FOCUS ON: LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

Managers Help Principals Balance Time

By Christina A. Samuels
Stone Mountain, Ga.

Most principals probably hope that at least half their working day is spent in meaningful interactions with teachers and students.

But that's not likely.

Investigators who shadowed principals for a week showed that a crush of managerial duties allowed them to spend only a third of their day—or less—on tasks that involved interaction with students and teachers. And often, the contact that did occur was too short and unfocused to lead

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■ **SUSTAINING NAEP:** Sufficient funding is set aside for the testing program. PAGE 23 >

■ **'DASHBOARDS':** The Education Dept. offers comparisons of state achievement. PAGE 23 >

Promises of Money Meant to Heighten Student Motivation

By Katie Ash

Does motivating students to study harder with the promise of cash sound like innovation—or bribery?

That's a question educators and researchers have been debating, amid concerns that money-for-achievement programs actually decrease students' intrinsic motivation to learn and send mixed messages about studying.

But the idea is catching on, with new cash-incentive programs planning to give money to students this school year in the Baltimore school district and some schools in an Atlanta suburb. Last school year, the 1.1 million-student New York City school system began a program to evaluate the effect of paying students for academic performance, joining a growing list of those testing the idea.

"The possible outcomes from ... not

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School Managers Helping Principals Focus on Instruction

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the principals toward classroom work. Some of the principals are also receiving additional leadership training in constructive coaching techniques.

37 Districts

Launched with three schools in the 98,000-student Jefferson County, Ky., district, the foundation-backed initiative has now spread to more than 200 schools in 37 districts and seven states, with an eighth state set to join in July. A group of principals and SAMs gathered for the first time in this Atlanta suburb earlier this month to compare notes on their progress and to offer encouragement to districts considering the model, which has been called both transformative and challenging.

"I can't imagine life without this," said Kent Stock, the middle school principal of the 1,000-student Oak Ridge School in Marion, Iowa. His K-8 school has had a SAM since last March; she splits her time between working with him and with the school's elementary principal, Dan Ludwig.

At the same time, Mr. Stock said, it was hard to let go of some of the managerial jobs that had once taken up most of his time. Though such tasks as reconciling time sheets for classified school person-

nel were tedious, they offered immediate satisfaction.

"You would work and say, OK, I've got that solved. But it wasn't meaningful," he said. Since a SAM came to the school, the proportion of time he spends on instructional matters has tripled, from an average of 12 percent of his day to 36

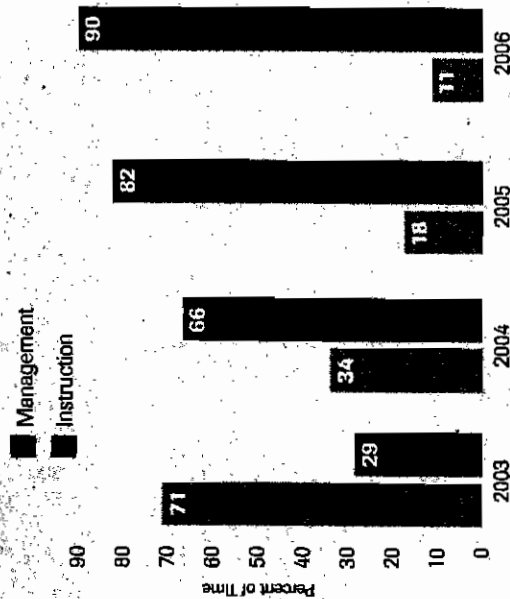
percent, and he's hoping to see more improvement as the program continues.

For her part, Janelle Steichen, the Oak Ridge SAM, said she's gratified to be helping the principals focus on student learning.

"The staff and our community got on board really quickly," said Ms. Steichen, a former teacher and an aspiring principal. Parents and teachers find her easy to reach, and

Changes Over Time

Phillip Poore, a principal in Louisville, Ky., has devoted an increasing amount of his workdays to instructional issues, as indicated by how he's spent his time each November for four years.



SOURCE: Wellies Foundation

issues, such as discipline, are diminished because the students see principals more often.

Katie Mulholland, the superintendent of the 6,300-student Linn-Mar school district, which includes Oak Ridge, said other principals in the district are "just waiting in line" for their chance to take part in the program.

"We want to change the whole concept of what it means to be a principal," she said. "We already were originally shadowed in the

crises that may arise.

Many principals like that job description, he said, because the rewards are quick and praise is immediate. But the pressure on principals to take responsibility for academic achievement has intensified. Schools need more than a "fixer" at the helm, he believes.

With the support of the Jefferson County district and the foundation, three of the principals who were originally shadowed in the

Then and Now

Martha McCarthy, the principal of Mojave Vista Elementary School in Victorville, Calif., describes the change in her practice after working closely with a school administration manager, or SAM.

Shedding Old Habits

- Giving up my calendar
- Giving up my e-mails
- Giving up my cellphone during instructional day; only two people are authorized to call me
- Giving up my computer
- Relying on executive secretary
- Delegating tasks to SAM

Learning New Routines

- Conducting classroom walk-throughs
- Leading student discussions
- Collecting data on classroom practices
- Offering feedback
- Coaching and evaluating teachers
- Providing staff development

YOUR KIDS' FUTURE

principal, Dan Ludwig. At the same time, Mr. Stock said, it was hard to let go of some of the managerial jobs that had once taken up most of his time. Though such tasks as reconciling time sheets for classified school person-

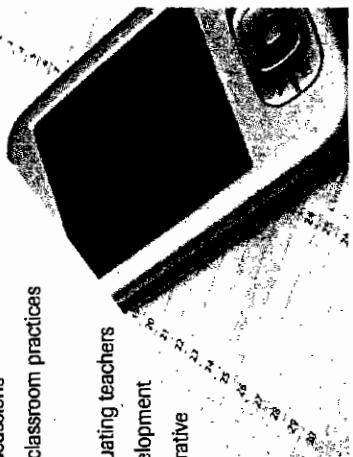


SOURCE: Wallace Foundation

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Learning New Routines

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- Offering feedback
- Coaching and evaluating teachers
- Providing staff development
- Fostering a collaborative culture



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see the change in kids."

Mark Shellinger, a former principal and the national SAMs expansion coordinator, said the initiative began in 2002 with a study of more than 20 principals in Jefferson County, which includes the city of Louisville. It is financed by the New York City-based Wallace Foundation, which underwrites coverage of leadership issues in *Education Week*.

5-Minute Increments

At the beginning of the process, trained observers kept track of principals' tasks in five-minute increments. The results were eye-opening: Most of the principals guessed that they spent half their day, or more, on instruction. The average, though, was more like 30 percent, Mr. Shellinger said.

The principal's job is "interrupt driven," he noted. Instead of focusing on one task for an extended period, principals are expected to supervise lunch shifts, manage transportation, deal with parents, dole out discipline, handle budgets, and juggle a number of minor

study each received a full-time school administration manager. The job description was based on the SAM position already in place in the 12,000-student Victor Elementary District in Victorville, Calif. That district has had SAMs since 1992, but had not tracked their effectiveness.

In just a year, the three Jefferson County principals with SAMs went through a time-tracking study again. They saw a dramatic increase in the time they spent in classrooms, which allowed them to do such tasks as teaching lessons or joining in classroom projects.

Phillip Poore, the principal of the Schaffner Traditional Elementary, was one of the first principals to receive a SAM when he was at the Cochran Elementary School. In his former school, the SAM was a full-time staff member. In his current placement, some of the SAM tasks have been added to an existing staff position.

In both Louisville schools, the SAM has done "a lot to help me keep my focus on instruction," Mr. Poore said. That's particularly important for him, he said, as a