



Features

- Ask a Teacher
- Mentor's Musings
- Digital corner
- Field Advisory
- Current Research

Important Dates

- **June 1, Tu** Summer School Instruction begins.
- **June 30: W** Mentor paper-work due.
- **July 21, W** Instruction ends.
- **July 22-23, Th-F** Final examinations.
- **July 24, Sa** Summer Session ends.
- **August 23, M** Instruction begins.
- **August 25:** Deadline for newsletter submissions.

STEP=UP Co-Directors
Michelle Parker-Katz
Marie Tejero Hughes

STEP=UP Staff
Maria Earman Stetter
Donna Statkus

Special Teachers and Exceptional Pupils = Urban Promise

A Teacher's Year: Part 1

A teacher's year is broken into several milestones. We open the school year full of hopes, goals and plans we attempt to accomplish with our students. We close the school year with reflection on our accomplishments, our struggles, and even our failures. We would not truly be educators if we do not try to learn from our own mistakes, and attempt to plan for the next year as we close the current year. After standardized testing takes place, it is often difficult to keep students focused on learning for the remaining weeks of the school

Ask a Teacher

Q2: When should we take our subject area tests?—Neil Goldman

year. Often this is when teachers attempt to draw on students' interests as well as their own to create learning about sophisticated "big ideas." Teachers might expand on questions students had across the year, and create a few connected lessons across a few days. They might return to a topic that interested students, and ask more complex questions and do additional activities, e.g., how do stereotypes develop and what can we, here at ___ School, do to change them? What would need to change to support dinosaurs on earth today? Often teachers create learning opportunities around controversial issues that students can research and debate. Those are especially poignant when issues in the local community and/or in school can be discussed, e.g., what should we do about fighting in the hallways? Still other ideas for making the last few weeks rich times to learn involve connections between

school, family and community. While attending to instruction, teachers also need to assess students in terms of how they achieved their IEP goals, what to report to families, and how to report to the next teacher. At times, many of our students stay with the same teacher. In either case, the teacher needs to consider the IEP goals, and the curriculum that was covered. What is next for the student? What might the student do over the summer? Where might the student begin the school year – what topics, what tasks? Each school also has closing procedure which are slightly different which all teachers must follow. These include rules for accounting for books — both your own and the schools, keys, technological equipment, attendance, grading, and many other issues. The best way to end the year as a new teacher is to ask different teachers, your case manager, and administrators for clear expectations of what must be done.

A2: The program handbook you received at the program orientation lists the information. The ISBE website has information on testing at: http://www.isbe.state.il.us/teachers/certification_help.htm Study guides are available in 3015 EPASW. All questions about state testing should be addressed there, and their phone is 312-355-0714. The LBS1 test must be taken and passed before student teaching. The Illinois APT test is usually taken during student teaching. All students must now pass the Illinois Basic Skills Test before entering the College—Maria Stetter

Mentor's Musings: Spotlight on Liz Lombardo

> What population do you work with?
I currently teach at Burley School in Chicago. I teach a 6th through 8th grade cross-categorical Special Education classroom. I teach separate special education language arts and mathematics classes. My students join the regular education classrooms for science and social studies. I have 16

Field Advisory 2

Each semester of STEP=UP will have a theme for ifield advisories. This semester focused on getting to know students better. At the April field advisory, participants broke into three groups. Here, we discussed ways of better knowing students. We do this so

Digital Corner

Each month, *Teaching Exceptional Children* puts its magazine online. Each month generally centers around a loose theme. The month of May focuses primarily on the lower incidence disability of autism spectrum disorder. This can be quite a resource. The magazine

learning disabled students on my caseload. My students are from a variety of racial backgrounds and many come from low-income households.
> What do you like about your job?
There are many aspects of my job that I really enjoy. First and foremost, the best part of my job is my students. Most of my students join my class when they are in sixth grade. I have the

that we can better integrate our learning with what we are seeing in our field experiences. The group discussed the importance of looking at kids as individuals, getting to know them, knowing their ways, and knowing how they best learn. Participants com-

gives perspectives and new information in the field. Please go to: http://journals.sped.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=tec_toc

Another website that is basic and helpful can be found at the mining company. It offers insight, techniques, Information and links that are helpful to begining teachers, students and parents.

pleasure of being able to teach them for three consecutive years. I truly am able to witness their academic and personal growth. In addition to the wonderful students at my school, I am blessed to be working with an amazing staff. I am extremely lucky to work with such professional teachers.

[Http://www.uic.edu/orgs/stepup/lizlombardo](http://www.uic.edu/orgs/stepup/lizlombardo)

mented that SpEd 461 helped them understand the range of disabilities and characteristics in a classroom, students' needs, and varied methods of meeting the needs.

The website provides checklists and techniques. The website can be found at: <http://specialed/miningco.com>

The Council for Exceptional Children is also good. It has current news, conference information and much more. At: <http://www.cec.sped.org/>

Senate Passes IDEA Bill: CEC Disappointed with Full Funding Vote, But Pleased with Overall Bill May 13, 2004

After passing a final amendment today on paperwork reduction from Senator Rick Santorum, the U.S. Senate overwhelmingly approved S. 1248, its bill to reauthorize the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). With only three Senators voting against the bill (Jeffords, Stabenow, and Leahy), the Senate technically passed the House's IDEA bill, H.R. 1350, substituting S. 1248 as an amendment, and then voted 95 to 3 in favor of the bill. The Santorum paperwork reduction amendment approved by voice vote earlier this morning would allow up to 15 states to obtain waivers from the Department of Education to reduce paperwork requirements for dealing with students with disabilities. As CEC has reported many times, most special education teachers say paperwork and reporting requirements can be overwhelming, and are often the reasons they leave the special education profession. More at: http://www.cec.sped.org/pp/legislative_update/modules/news/article.php?storyid=62