

Hot Topics for OST Directors and Administrators

January 2015

“Policymakers Need to Increase Their Focus on STEM”

by STEM School

Overview: This article addresses both the progress achieved, as well as the further progress required, in the advancement of STEM-related fields. Last year in Washington, D.C., lawmakers gathered together to commend STEM advocates for their ongoing progress, while also discussing methods for future improvements. This meeting featured two panels, one made up of a total of four business and nonprofit leaders as well as academics. The other panel consisted of three high-school aged students who discussed their recent involvement and growth through the STEM field. Overall, this hearing was both positive and enlightening, and marks the recent heightened focus on the STEM field. While Congress has supported STEM through laws and declarations of a “National Science and Technology Week”, it is also necessary to provide additional resources to increase both education and promotion of STEM.

Where to Find It:

Go to the OSTRC Document Library, then click on the “Program Management and Administration” tab on the left. Find the report under the “Recruiting and Retaining Youth” section.

“Cultivating Influential Champions”

by Collective Impact Forum

Overview: This article addresses an important prerequisite for those using a collective impact approach in their OST pursuits - the presence of influential champions or catalysts. A person, or group of such of people, are needed to bring CEO-level leaders in a variety of sectors together and keep them engaged over the entirety of a community project. These leaders can come from a range of sectors, including leaders of nonprofit, business, public agencies, to name a few. Influential champions possess the qualities to persuade other leaders to join their efforts, have a passion for improving outcomes, and also allow participants to figure out answers for themselves. More details regarding specific case studies featuring the implementation of Influential Champions can be found at www.collectiveimpactforum.org.

Where to Find It:

Go to the OSTRC Document Library, and then click on the “Engaging Families, Schools, and Communities” tab on the left. Find the report under the “Community Partnerships” section.

Featured Information:

“Create Your PLN: 6 Easy Steps”

by Will Richardson

Summary:

Personal Learning Networks (PLNs) allow us to experience firsthand the opportunities and challenges of having a vast realm of human knowledge and resources at our fingertips. In an ever-changing and interconnected world, professional development is a continuous process, rather than a single event. PLN’s allow us to improve our own craft and diffuse ideas over a wide population, and luckily, PLN’s are not difficult to construct! Here are the 6 tips to get you started:

1. Pick your passion
2. Get a Twitter account
3. Do a blog search
4. Be a lurker...for a while
5. Share good stuff
6. Make it a habit

For more details on each step, please visit the full article, as detailed below.

Where to find the full article:

Go the OSTRC Document Library, and then click on the “Professionalism and Professional Development” tab on the left. Find the report under the “Professionalism” section.
