

THE DAKOTAS' OLDEST NEWSPAPER | FOUNDED 1861

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

SD Must Solve Teacher Shortage

ARGUS LEADER, Sioux Falls (Oct. 4): If our state's difficulty recruiting, hiring and keeping teachers hasn't reached a crisis state, we're quickly on our way.

South Dakota's teacher shortage is a many-tentacled problem. The arm that gets the most attention is our embarrassingly last-place national ranking in teacher pay. Our neighboring states of North Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota alone offer average teacher wages 21 percent to 43 percent higher than we do.

Clearly, pay puts us at a competitive disadvantage, but so does our geography. Recruiting lawyers, doctors, nurses ... basically any profession ... to live and work in rural settings is increasingly difficult. Add the aforementioned pay discrepancy, and when it comes to educating our children, we find almost a quarter of our school districts starting the year with teacher vacancies.

Then we find ourselves reaching for lesser, stopgap solutions such as hiring uncertified candidates or making current staff teach subjects they aren't certified to. We discuss adding a summertime tax to raise teacher salaries to halfway fill the gap to what North Dakota pays.

These systems of trying to make do are fine and even can lead to getting some real world expertise in the classroom as instructors gain their certification, but they are not a plan. They are not adequate. They are not going to move South Dakota forward.

If South Dakota were lagging so significantly in any other traditional economic development area, we'd form task forces, change laws, create tax breaks and more to combat the issue and bring business to our state. And rightfully so. And that is exactly what the governor's office and the state of South Dakota must do: address our teacher shortage with the same vigor and ingenuity as we attack traditional economic growth.

After all, the education of our youth is a definable piece of merchandise we are producing. Getting return on that investment is going to take more brain power and, yes, some more money.

We have the ability and political infrastructure to turn this around. We just need to decide to stop condoning sub-mediocrity.

SPEAK UP!

■ Share your thoughts with us. Write to the PRESS & DAKOTAN on a topic of the day or in response to an editorial or story. Write us at: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email to views@yankton.net.

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, Oct. 13, the 286th day of 2014. There are 79 days Day holiday in the U.S., as well as Thanksgiving Day in Canada.

Today's Highlight in History: On Oct. 13, 1914, the Boston Braves swept the World Series, defeating the Philadelphia Athletics 3-1 in Game 4 played at Fenway Park.
On this date: In A.D. 54, Roman

Emperor Claudius I died, poisoned apparently at the behest of his wife,

Agrippin. In 1307, King Philip IV of France ordered the arrests of Knights Templar on charges of heresy. In 1775, the United States Navy

had its origins as the Continental Congress ordered the construction of a In 1792, the cornerstone of the executive mansion, later known as the

White House, was laid during a ceremony in the District of Columbia. In 1843, the Jewish organization

B'nai B'rith was founded in New York City.
In 1932, President Herbert Hoover and Chief Justice Charles Evans

Hughes laid the cornerstone for the U.S. Supreme Court building in Wash-In 1944, during World War II, American troops entered Aachen,

In 1957, CBS-TV broadcast "The Edsel Show," a one-hour live special starring Bing Crosby designed to promote the new, ill-fated Ford automobile. (It was the first special to use videotape technology to delay the

broadcast to the West Coast.) In 1962, Edward Albee's fourcharacter drama "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" opened on Broadway. In 1974, longtime television host Ed Sullivan died in New York City at

age 73. In 1981, voters in Egypt participated in a referendum to elect Vice President Hosni Mubarak the new president, one week after the assassination of Anwar Sadat.

In 1999, the Senate rejected the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, with 48 senators voting in favor and 51 against, far short of the 67 needed for ratification. In Boulder, Colorado, the JonBenet Ramsey grand jury was dismissed after 13 months of work with prosecutors saying there wasn't enough evidence to charge anyone in the 6-year-old beauty queen's slaying.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush and Democratic rival John Kerry held their third and final debate in Tempe, Arizona, trading blows on the Iraq war, taxes, gun control, abortion and jobs.

Five years ago: The United Nations Security Council voted unani-

mously to extend the U.N. peacekeep-Industy to extend the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Haiti for a year. Singer Al Martino, who'd played crooner Johnny Fontane in "The Godfather" and "The Godfather: Part III," died in Springfield, Pennsylvania, six days after turning 82. Movie producer Daniel Melnick ("Straw Dogs," "Network," "Midnight Express") died in Los Angeles at age 77 Angeles at age 77

One year ago: Gunmen abducted six Red Cross workers and a Syrian Red Crescent volunteer after stopping their convoy in northwestern Syria. (Four of the seven were released by the next day.) The Boston Red Sox beat the Detroit Tigers 6-5 to even the AL championship series at 1-all. Dennis Kimetto broke the course mark in capturing the Chicago Marathon in 2 hours, 3 minutes, 45 seconds, leading 2-3 finish for Kenyan men.

Today's Birthdays: Playwright Frank D. Gilroy is 89. Gospel singer Shirley Caesar is 77. Actress Melinda Dillon is 75. Singer-musician Paul Simon is 73. Actress Pamela Tiffin is 72. Musician Robert Lamm (Chicago) is 70. Country singer Lacy J. Dalton is 68. Actor Demond Wilson is 68. Singer-musician Sammy Hagar is 67. Actor John Lone is 62. Model Beverly Johnson is 62. Producer-writer Chris Carter is 58. Actor Reggie Theus is 57. Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., is 56. Singer Marie Osmond is 55. Rock singer Joey Belladonna is 54. Formei White House press secretary Ari Fleischer is 54. NBA coach Doc Rivers is 53. Actress T'Keyah Crystal Keymah is 52. College and Pro Football Hall of Famer Jerry Rice is 52. Actress Kelly Preston is 52. Country singer John Wiggins is 52. Actor Christopher Judge is 50. Actor Matt Walsh (TV: "Veep") is 50. Actress Kate Walsh is 47. Rhythm-and-blues musician Jeff Allen (Mint Condition) is 46. Actress Tisha Campbell-Martin is 46. Classical singer Carlos Marin (II Divo) is 46. Olympic silver-medal figure skater Nancy Kerrigan is 45. Country singer Rhett Akins is 45. Classical crossover singer Paul Potts (TV: "Britain's Got Talent") is 44. TV personality Billy Bush is 43. Actor Sacha Baron Cohen is 43. Rock musician Jan Van Sichem Jr. (K's Choice) is 42 Rhythm-and-blues singers Brian and Brandon Casey (Jagged Edge) are 39. Actress Kiele Sanchez is 38. NBA All-Star Paul Pierce is 37. Singer Ashanti is 34. Christian rock singer Jon Micah Sumrall (Kutless) is 34 Olympic gold medal swimmer lan

Thought for Today: "Do you know the difference between education and experience? Education is when you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't." — Pete Seeger, American folk singer and activisť (1919-2014).

FROM THE BIBLE

But the fruit of the Spirit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness self-control; against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

YOUR LETTERS

Taking Action

Peter Rossiter, Yankton

Concerning Sally Welter's letter on Sept. 22, I don't claim to be a good Catholic. I am a sinner. I would never call someone a good Catholic or a bad Catholic. That is something only an arrogant and sanctimonious buffoon

A prominent member of Yankton's Catholic community spreads a false story about unaccompanied children being deported from Iowa. This is not about her or the made-up story. It is about Roman Catholics

being unaware of their church's teachings. The plight of unaccompanied children has not been discussed in a sermons or prayers in Sacred Heart Church. Catholics in Sacred Heart Parish may be silent, but the nation's Catholic Bishops have been loud and clear. Catholics are called on to support a broad legalization program and comprehensive immigration reform. We are not simply called to care about all children in general. We are called to care about these children in particular. Go to the USCCB.org.

Take action. Help these chil-



Capitol Notebook

Accidents Do Happen, **Even For U.S. Senate**

Bob

MERCER

BY BOB MERCER

State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — Former Gov. Mike Rounds was on

Then a bunch of national Democrats came pounding into South Dakota this past

They promised to spend \$2 million against him in these last four weeks before the Nov. 4 election.

Mike, if you're reading this, remember your manners. Send a thank-you.

They probably saved your candidacy — and they probably helped deliver the Republicans' dream of winning every statewide elected office in South Dakota.

Rounds is the Republican Party's nominee for the U.S. Senate seat that Democratic incumbent Tim Johnson is

A variety of public-opinion surveys in recent months consistently showed Rounds leading the four-candidate field to replace Johnson.

The surveys also showed Larry Pressler gain-Pressler is running as an independent. He was

a Republican when he served three terms in the U.S. Senate. Johnson beat Pressler in 1996.

Meanwhile this year's Democratic candidate, Rick Weiland, and the other independent candidate, former Republican legislator Gordon Howie, seem stuck.

Pressler had several points in his favor. He deliberately sought middle ground. He promised to serve one term. And the fastest growing bloc of registered

voters in South Dakota was the independent col-Rounds and Weiland exemplify the Republican-Democrat gridlock in Congress. Pressler's

quirky candidacy rejects that status quo. When the latest round of Survey South Dakota polling came out last week, Rounds still

But Pressler was within the margin of statistical error: Rounds 35 percent, Pressler 32, Weiland 28 and Howie 3.

The polling results happened to coincide with an announcement from a big political action committee that it would spend \$1 million against Rounds on Weiland's behalf.

The next day, the national Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee declared it would send \$1 million into South

Dakota to help Weiland. And guess what? Pressler immediately became the target of attacks from Republican and Democratic operatives

The Democrats' best hope of stopping Rounds was Pressler, not Weiland. South Dakota is part of a national battle for majority control of the U.S. Senate. Democrats have it. Republicans

Mike Rounds would never caucus with the Democrats. Rick Weiland would never caucus with the Republi-

But Larry Pressler might caucus with either side if he won.

That is a good part of Pressler's appeal for many voters in South Dakota this fall.

Being a swingman could put Pressler in position to wrangle important gains for South

But in attacking Pressler, in the strange hope that Weiland could overtake Rounds, the national Democratic forces might have guaranteed

a Rounds victory. This isn't the first time that Rounds has found

In 2002, when Rounds was running for the Republican nomination for governor, his two better-known rivals spent too much time and money attacking each other.

The insurance man with the black tee shirt and the wholesome family and the winning smile raced right past Mark Barnett and Steve Kirby for the victory.

Now it seems, here we go again. Many called him the accidental governor. This time he would be the accidental senator.

Michelle Malkin

Who's Data-Mining Toddlers?

BY MICHELLE MALKIN Creators.com

Attention, parents: Have your little ones been subjected to "TS Gold" in school yet? If you care about student privacy, data mining and classroom intrusions, you might want to start asking questions and protecting your children now before it's

What's happening here in Colorado with this onerous testing regime is happening everywhere. Informed families and teachers from all parts of the political spectrum agree: It's a Big Government/Big Business "gold" rush you don't want to

"TS Gold" stands for Teaching Strategies Gold. This "school readiness assessment system" was mandated in our state several years ago. It has already permeated private day-care centers and preschools; pilot testing in publicly funded preschools and kindergartens is currently taking place. More than 42,000 kids in Colorado alone have been subjected to the assessments.

Most parents have no idea the scheme is on track for full implementation by the 2015-2016 school year. The company already plans to expand assessments to cover children from birth through third grade. Competitors include California's "Desired Results Developmental Profile" system and the "HighScope Child Observation Record."

TS Gold's creators describe the testing vehicle as "an early childhood assessment system" that purportedly measures the "whole child." What that means is that the tests are not only for "literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies and the arts," but also for "developmental domains including social emotional, physical, language and cognitive development.

Aligned to the federal Common Core standards, which were designed and copyrighted by a small cadre of Beltway educrats, TS Gold received \$30 million in federal Race to the Top subsidies in 2012. The assessors have 38 "objectives" arranged under nine topics of academic learning, psychomotor data and social-emotional development. Students are rated and recorded on their ability to do things like "respond to emotional cues," "interact cooperatively" and "cooperate and share ideas and materials in socially acceptable ways.

TS Gold directs teachers to document student behaviors with videos, audio files, journals and photos — which are then uploaded to a central database cloud. Already overwhelmed by myriad testing burdens, teachers must undergo intensive training that takes scarce time away from actual instruction. Educators must gather disturbingly intimate and personal data every school day, collate and upload it, and then file lengthy "checkpoint ratings" on each child every 10 to 12 weeks.

Creeped out yet? This is just the tip of the datamining iceberg. Last spring, parent Lauren Coker discovered that TS Gold assessors in her son's Aurora, Colo., public preschool had recorded information about his trips to the bathroom, his hand-washing habits and his ability to pull up his

"When I asked if we could opt out of the sys-

tem," Coker told me, school officials told her no. She pulled her son out of the school and still doesn't know whether or how the data can be re-

Sunny Flynn, a mom with kids in Jefferson County, Colo., started raising pointed questions to her school officials about TS Gold last year. "Where exactly is this powerful, predictive and personal data on our children being stored?" she asked. "What security measures are being used to protect this data? Who exactly has access to this data? How long will the data be stored? What is the proven benefit of a kindergarten teacher putting all of this data into a database?"

The ultimate goal is not improved school performance. The real end is massive student datamining for meddling and profit. The Obama administration sabotaged federal student and family privacy protections through backroom regulation, allowing once-protected student data to be sold to private vendors for the creation of what one Colorado bureaucrat calls "human capital pipelines.

Edutech firms such as Pearson, Microsoft, Google and Knewton are salivating at the lucrative opportunities to exploit educational Big Data and sell "customized learning" products in the most data-mineable industry in the world. And the politicians who can hook them up are reaping rich rewards in their campaign coffers.

As the authors of the Pioneer Institute's invaluable report "Cogs in the Machine" explain: "Accompanying Common Core and national testing, and undergirding their influence, is a thickening network of student databases, largely pushed on states by the federal government." Federally subsidized "state longitudinal data systems" — all identical and shareable — have enabled "a de facto national database."

Cheri Kiesecker, a mom of elementary school kids in Fort Collins who has vigilantly tracked the student data mining initiative in Colorado, warns that the "data follows these children from preschool all the way through college and the workforce." Colorado educrats glowingly refer to the profiles as "golden records." While they smugly assure parents that the data is safe, Kiesecker told me: "We all know how frequent data breaches are. We also know that TS Gold allows teachers to share video and photos of children, as well as observations on children's general anxiety levels and behavior. Are parents aware of just how much information is collected and shared outside the classroom?

At a meeting of concerned parents in my community, grassroots activist Kanda Calef, a Colorado Springs mom, issued a call to arms last week that applies to primary educational providers here and across the country: "If we don't get parents to stand up, we will never win this fight." The battle never ends.

Michelle Malkin is the author of "Culture of Corruption: Obama and his Team of Tax Cheats, Crooks and Cronies" (Regnery 2010). Her e-mail address is malkinblog@gmail.com.