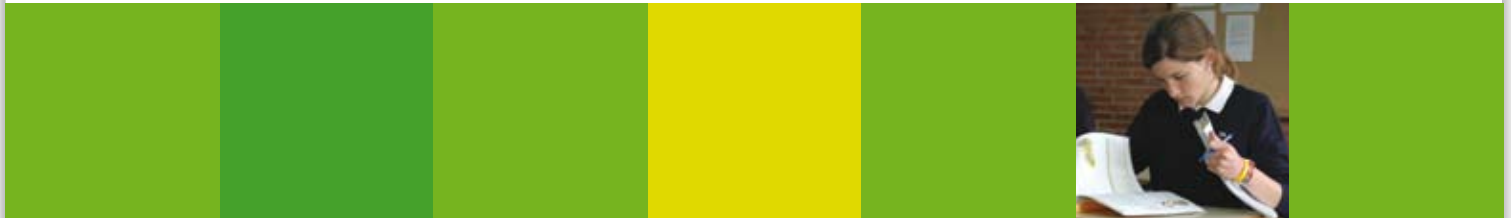




NUMBER 1 - FEBRUARY 2008

NEWSLETTER

european
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Editorial

EASSE is glad to send you the first number of its electronic bulletin. The aim of it is offering to schools, institutions and associates a resume of the principal single-sex education news, and gives to know the major interest events and projects of the Association.

As we already announced on the First International Single-Sex Education Congress organized by EASSE last year, one of the most compromised tasks we are working on is the study "Single Sex Education all over the world", which we hope will be published soon. The research has been a considerable effort during two years, enquires to the Education Ministries of most part of the countries around the world. Frequently, there are no official information about single-sex education (is not considered as an option), so this fact is a difficulty in finding data for the study.

However the difficulties we are having, we can do a first approximation to the work results we have: single sex-education –although we are minority- counts with people who work constantly in almost all countries and coincide with prestigious institutions, there are a lot of which are appreciated for parents and everybody. In some coun-

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tries it's starting to grow strongly.

We are working with EASSE Italy organizing the II International Congress which we expect to take place there during 2008. We have a special interest in consolidating this meeting of professionals and scientifics which started in Barcelona and was an important event for a lot of educational professionals, the most part of the communications presented by participants –some of them are edited in a volume with the speeches- help us to think that the interest about single-sex education is increasing everywhere.

We are also really happy for having the opportunity to work closely to the Latin Association Single Sex Education in the organization of different meetings.

We hope that this bulletin will be useful for all of you, and we also would like to thank – in order to improve the content- for the good suggestions and news that reflect the value of the good practice of single-sex education.

Josep M. Barnils
EASSE President



Single Sex Education

In Australia, achievements of children in single-sex environments were 15-22 percentile ranks higher than those of children in co-educational settings. Single-sex education allows students of both sexes to learn in a relaxed, sex-specific environment.

Situation: The push for single-sex education comes at a time when many are realizing that American boys in particular are in academic danger and are underperforming at record rates in the current day. In addition, single-sex education seems to benefit girls as it enfranchises and emboldens them. A number of studies starting in the 1990s are showing statistical data that children from single-sex schools are outperforming students from coeducational schools. Such findings corroborate the common wisdom that boys and girls learn best when their unique learning styles and dispositions are accommodated. Recent research pushes hard against the prevailing egalitarianism of the day which insists that girls and boys are just alike and may be taught and handled in the same way. Single-sex education, the historical mode of education, thus seems the wiser choice than the relatively recent attempt at "co-education".

Statistics: Statistics abound about the goodness of single-sex education. The strength of single-sex education shows itself in the education of boys.

According to Time magazine, the number of boys who said they didn't like school rose 71 percent between 1980 and 2001, according to a University of Michigan study. Nowhere is the shift more evident than on college campuses. Thirty years ago men represented 58 percent of the undergraduate student body. Now they're a minority at 44 percent.

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Faced with such a reality, one English educator decided to break his two-gender classroom into two single-sex classrooms. The students would take the same courses from the same teachers, but boys and girls would attend separate classes. Three years after making the change, the proportion of Shenfield boys achieving high scores on standardized tests had risen by 26%. The girls' performance improved only slightly less, by 22%.

In another English school, only one-third of boys had been earning passing grades in German and French prior to institution of the program. After the change to single-sex classes, 100% of boys earned passing grades.

You should care because for those who wish to improve the academic performance of both boys and girls, there is nothing better to do than to support the cause of single-sex education and to encourage teachers to be paired up with classrooms of their sex (women with girls, men with boys). As in so many cases, the establishment is wrong--here's your chance to say so.

Girls and boys learn in subtly different ways, in part because of those differences in the developmental trajectory of the brain.





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SOUTH CAROLINA

Students say single-gender classrooms boost self-confidence, ability to succeed

Girls and boys in South Carolina's single-gender classrooms say their classroom experiences have increased their confidence, class participation, desire to succeed in school and ability to succeed.

More than 1,700 students responded to a recent survey by the South Carolina Department of Education. Overall, three out of four student-respondents in grades 2 through 9 – students enrolled at 12 elementary schools, 18 middle schools and one high school – agreed that the single-gender approach was helping them in school.

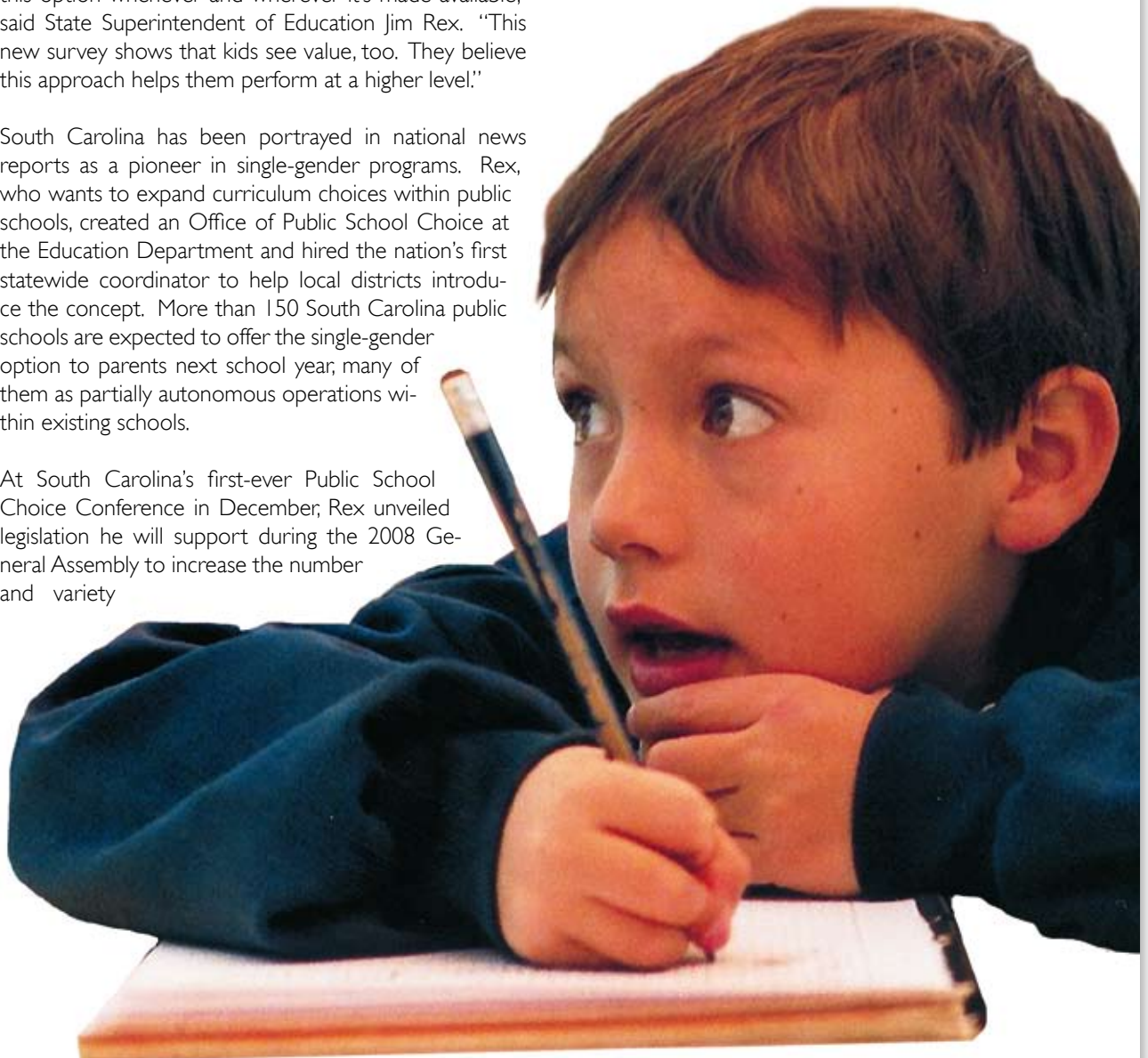
"More and more South Carolina parents are choosing this option whenever and wherever it's made available," said State Superintendent of Education Jim Rex. "This new survey shows that kids see value, too. They believe this approach helps them perform at a higher level."

South Carolina has been portrayed in national news reports as a pioneer in single-gender programs. Rex, who wants to expand curriculum choices within public schools, created an Office of Public School Choice at the Education Department and hired the nation's first statewide coordinator to help local districts introduce the concept. More than 150 South Carolina public schools are expected to offer the single-gender option to parents next school year, many of them as partially autonomous operations within existing schools.

At South Carolina's first-ever Public School Choice Conference in December, Rex unveiled legislation he will support during the 2008 General Assembly to increase the number and variety

of choices available to students and their families. The bill, sponsored by Lexington County Republican Ted Pitts, would create public school choice committees in the state's local school districts, each charged with creating new curriculum choices at the elementary, middle and high school levels within two years. Similar legislation was passed by bipartisan majorities last year in the House and Senate, but vetoed by Governor Mark Sanford.

Rex expects to hire a Montessori expert by the end of January, and he believes interest in that curriculum option also will be considerable.



► *Students say single-gender classrooms boost self-confidence, ability to succeed*

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"Public schools are looking for ways to offer more choices to parents and students," Rex said. "For most schools, it's just a matter of learning how to create these programs and make them effective. The Education Department can help in showing them how to do that."

Current curriculum choices across South Carolina include magnet programs, schools-within-schools, alternative schools, virtual schools and charter schools. Some of the state's public school choice programs include single-gender initiatives, middle college/early college, Montessori Education, evening high school, language immersion, academic academies, arts integration and international baccalaureate programs.

David Chadwell, the Education Department's single-gender coordinator, said the student survey is believed to be the first of its kind in the nation. Students were asked to agree or disagree with statements that said being in a single-gender program had increased or improved their self-confidence, desire to succeed in school, interest in trying new ways to learn, independence, participation during class, ability to succeed in school, attitude in school, behavior in school and grades.

Highlights of the survey results included:

- Roughly three-quarters of the students who participated in the survey believed that single-gender classes were contributing factors to their improvements in each category.
- Although both boys and girls gave positive reviews to the single-gender experience, the strongest endorsements came from girls. Four out of five girls said the classes had improved their confidence, indepen-



dence and participation, as well as both their desire and ability to succeed.

- Students' positive assessments crossed ethnic lines, with few significant differences among white, African-American, Hispanic and Asian-American students. For example, 78 percent of African-American and Hispanic students said single-gender classrooms increased their desire to succeed in school, compared to 73 percent of white students and 71 percent of Asian-American students.
- Elementary students responded positively at higher rates than middle and high school students, although majorities of students at all grade levels agreed that the single-gender approach had helped them in school.

Background on the survey

Chadwell said the survey was posted on the Education Department's website during November and early December. All schools with single-gender programs were informed that their students could participate, and 1,700 students filled out survey responses on line. Students were asked whether they agreed strongly with various statements, agreed, agreed somewhat, were neutral, disagreed somewhat, disagreed or disagreed strongly.

The Education Department released only statewide results because the numbers of responses from individual schools were too small to be of statistical value, Chadwell said.

He added that the state agency would do another survey of student opinion on single-gender classes later this year.

Tuesday, January 15, 2008



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From different places

USA. According to information posted on the Web site of the National Association Single Sex Public Education (NASSPE) as of November 2007, there are 366 public schools in the United States offering single-sex educational opportunities. 88 of these schools are totally single-sex and 278 offer some single-sex classrooms.

GERMANY. Two important "länder", North Renania-Westfalia and Berlin, have taken the option of numerous public schools by means of differenced classrooms with different objectives. On the first one, promoted by the Christian Democratic Party the model pretends to overcome the high level of male scholastic failure, especially in the reading comprehension, by strengthening the reading in class just for boys, and trying to reach with this method a basic resource for future subjects.

Ingrid Stahmer, a socialist minister of the Berlin state, pretends to benefit girls with separate classrooms because she has realized that at Secondary level girls are not good in mathematics and they are not able to reach boys at the same level to get into universities of technical degrees.

ESPAGNE. Cette année ont commencé 4 nouveaux écoles single-sex. Et il y a quelques un qui se préparent pour experimenter avec quelques matières seulement pour garçons ou pour filles.

WASHINGTON (USA). A recent survey published in Washington DC concludes that boys that study at elementary schools fail three more times than girls; they need twice support than their female school friends, and they have more reading problems (seven of ten), and of mathematics (eight of ten) than girls. With this problem, the city mayor Adrian Fenty with the public schools' network Director, Michelle Rhee have decided to close twenty schools with



disastrous results and they took the option to bet for more innovative programmes.

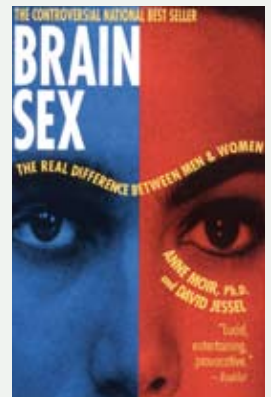
In a lot of these schools have decided to implement the single sex education system, schools just for boys or for girls. In the schools that have both sexes will be creating different classes to separate them according to the ages and the materials they have.

ITALIA. Scuole "monogenere" in ripresa negli Usa e in Giappone, si riapre la discussione anche in Francia e in Italia. Era un tabù. Ora l'idea che le ragazze debbano studiare in scuole senza ragazzi conquista i progressisti americani.

<http://www.easse.org/pdf/avvenire.jpg>

<http://www.easse.org/pdf/espresso.pdf>

BOOK



*Brain Sex.
The Real Difference
Between Men & Women*
MOIR, Anne
& JESSEL, David.
Carol Publishing Group.

At last there is an answer to the exasperated lament, "Why can't a woman be more like a man?" Is it only society that makes men more promiscuous? What is this thing called "female intuition"? Why are men better at reading maps, women at reading characters? Why does man so often find woman a mystery?

The answer to each of these questions could shatter our modern beliefs about sexual equality, development and behavior: The sexes are different because their brains are different. In *Brain Sex* geneticist Anne Moir and journalist David Jessel take you on an extraordinary journey from the sexual differentiation of the prenatal brain to the gender differences inherent in kindergarten playstyles, classroom abilities and adult attitudes toward love, sex and marriage.

A startling new perspective on one of the great puzzles of human nature this provocative work is fascinating reading for anyone who lives with, works with or is just curious about the opposite sex.



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Conferences around de world



Conference in Madrid about Brain & Education

EASSE Spain organised in Madrid a Conference about "BRAIN AND EDUCATION. Sexual differences and learning". 8 November 2007. You can find more information in our website.

15th Annual International Boys' Coalition Conference Sunday, June 22 to Wednesday, June 25, 2008

Theme: New Worlds for Boys

Hosted by Upper Canada College, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Conference Partner Schools: Brebeuf College School, Crescent School, Neil McNeil High School, Royal St. George's College, St. Andrew's College, and Sterling Hall School. Keynote Speakers include Stephen Lewis, David Booth, Jaimie Cloud, Mary Gordon, Brian Little, and Bill Lishman.

2008 NCGS Annual Conference (National Coalition Girls' Schools)

June 25-27 Cleveland, Ohio

We are assembling an exciting array of speakers, workshops and activities around the theme, Reinventing Girls' Education: New Models, New Paradigms. So please make plans to join us for the premier professional development and networking event on the girls' school community's calendar. Our host will be the Hathaway Brown School,

with additional opportunities provided by the Laurel School.

NASSPE IV

National Association Single Sex Public Education
NASSPE's Fourth International Conference,
Saturday and Sunday, October 11 and 12, 2008

Memphis, Tennessee. This conference will include sessions along three different dimensions: Best practices for the subject areas; Leadership for school heads, superintendents, and other administrators; A scientific foundation and ongoing scholarly investigation. All sessions are organized along these three elements, so that during every session: Classroom educators will be able to choose among workshops in the subject areas

School leaders can attend sessions led by school leaders and district administrators who have been successful in promoting and implementing the single-sex format
Researchers can attend sessions led by investigators who have studied single-sex education in formal investigations

GSA Conference 2008 (The Girls' Schools Association) 17-19 November 2008.

Norton Park Hotel – Sutton Scotney - WINCHESTER

