

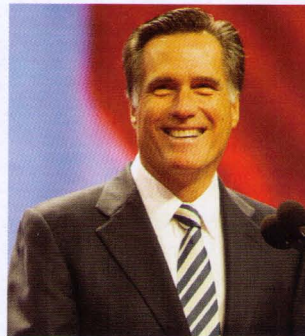
DA District Administration

SOLUTIONS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

October 2012

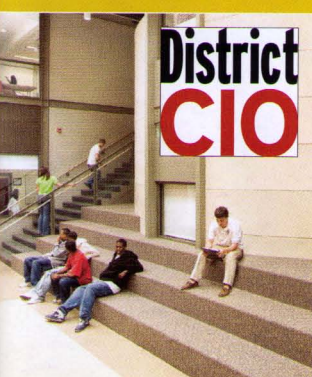
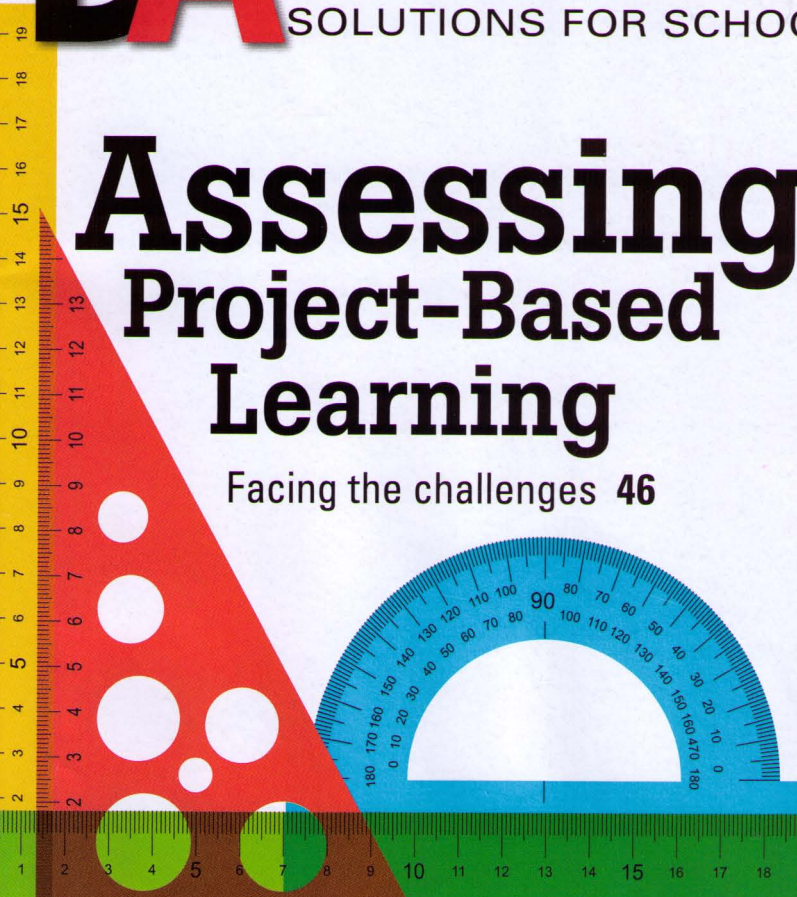
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NewsUpdate

PEOPLE WATCH

A TEXAS FIRST

Texas Gov. Rick Perry named **Michael Williams** the state education commissioner. He will build on improvements and ensure children are prepared for college and the workplace. Williams is the first African-American in Texas to hold such a post.

KEEP STUDENTS IN CLASS

Donna Lieberman, executive director of the N.Y. Civil Liberties Union, is one of many advocates fighting to keep New York City students in class when it comes to discipline. Students can no longer be suspended for one-time, low-level infractions.

AWARD-WINNING BOARD

The Socorro Independent School District's new leader, **Jose Espinoza**, looks forward to working with an award-winning Board of Trustees (2012 Region 19 Board of the Year) "to further the academic agenda" of one of Texas' top school districts.

DENIES FEDERAL FINDINGS

Ariz. Superintendent of Public Instruction **John Huppenthal** denied findings of a federal civil-rights investigation that the state incorrectly identified some students as proficient in English. A voluntary resolution requires schools to offer intensive language instruction.

INTERIM IN MD. DISTRICT

Alvin Crawley is interim superintendent of Prince George's County (Md.) Public Schools for the 2012-13 school year. Crawley was deputy chief of programming in the DCPS Office of Special Education and replaces William Hite, Jr., who now leads the School District of Philadelphia.

District Health Solutions Pay Off

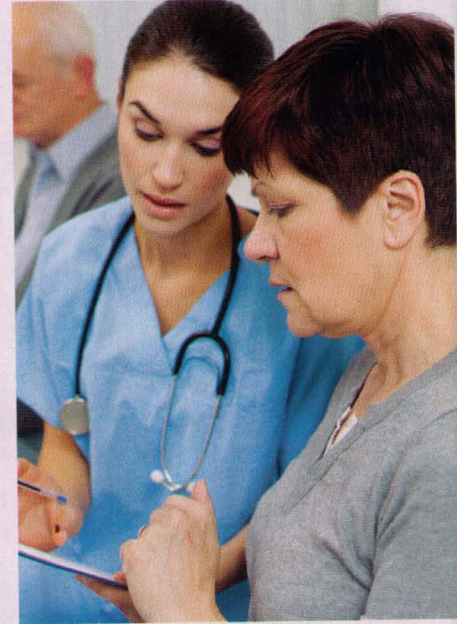
THE NATIONAL DEBATE OVER health care reform rages on, but some school districts are taking matters into their own hands and looking to employer-driven health care solutions to drive down costs and improve coverage. So far, the results are encouraging.

With health care costs ballooning nationwide, Florida's Pasco County School District has bucked the trend and cut health care costs for its 8,000 employees by 5 percent across-the-board over the last year. The district even managed to keep its prescription drug plan costs steady, even while costs of drug plans nationwide jumped by over 9 percent in the past year.

Pasco's success is due to a system of on-site wellness centers, opened last year at three strategically placed locations that make preventative care convenient for district employees. Staffed by a team of nurses, dietitians, and exercise physiologists, the centers offer a wide range of services, including x-rays and physicals, as well as comprehensive treatment for diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

"We have diverted a large portion of our doctors' visits through the wellness centers, which are cheaper and more efficient," says Mary Tillman, the Director of Employee Benefits, Assistance & Risk Management, at the Pasco County School District. As of June 2012, over 4,600 district employees have visited the wellness centers and the increased access to low-cost preventative care has driven down average healthcare costs.

The Pasco District's approach to health-care relies on rigorous data collection and analysis. In 2011, the district began working with Florida-based health care company Med-Vision, whose Med-View data analysis tool assesses health-records and helps streamline care. Med-Vision allows the Pasco District to ascertain the most common health problems among their employees and tailor



a health plan to fit those needs. Med-Health believes that successful health care delivery hinges on the employee-employer relationship. "Employers are positioned to empower employees to better health through a true organizational culture of wellness," says Connie Gee, vice president of Med-Vision.

In the case of Pasco County, Med-Vision's data-analysis was instrumental in achieving the cut in costs. "I use Med-Vision's data to inform my funding decisions; its really invaluable," says Mary Tillman. Thanks to rigorous data collection, Tillman has tweaked the services offered at wellness centers to better fit the needs of district employees. Last year, after data analysis revealed the district would benefit from a weight-loss initiative, district employees lost over 1,000 pounds.

Other districts that take a similar approach are also realizing substantial savings. For instance, Tampa Bay's Manatee County Schools has also partnered with Med-Vision and managed to keep health care costs stable for three straight years.

—*Avi Asher-Schapiro*