

Director's Notes

North Country High Schools continually face the challenges presented in a truly rural environment. These challenges include dwindling economic resources, diminishing student populations, geographic isolation and increased educational expectations for student achievement.

Many of our high schools cannot implement nor sustain highly desirable, rigorous academic courses due to exceedingly small numbers of eligible students and insufficient budgetary allocations to permit their inception.

A very strong grass roots autonomy of local high schools allows for unique schedule configurations that actually may inhibit sharing academic offerings and resources between and among schools including those in close proximity. Schedules vary from traditional seven period days, to four-by-four blocks, to alternating day blocks, etc., a virtual potpourri that also impacts the number of courses in which a student may be enrolled, and the number of credits that School Boards may require for graduation!

What if more high schools were to consolidate their schedules to permit sharing of both human and material resources, as well as courses with schools within reasonable travel distance; what would be the outcome?

What if North Country high schools were to agree on two to three specific courses that they currently can not, or do not offer, but would cherish as valuable learning experiences for their student population; what would these courses be?

What if less commonly taught foreign languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Russian that are currently in demand to address the issues of world politics and a global economy were to be offered, perhaps through the mechanism of long-distance learning to each local high school; would there be an effort made to provide teaching space, time and students?

What if "master teachers" from North Country high schools were engaged in presenting Advanced Placement courses, including second level courses that are now inaccessible to most schools: would you envision A. P. Calculus BC, A. P. Physics; A. P. Chemistry, etc.? Do you remember when virtually every high school offered Latin instruction for several years?

What if some of these courses could be implemented without major impact on local budgets; would there be buy in to assure success of such programs?

What if..., what if..., what if... Stay tuned as the chapters unfold.

Charles Thibodeau

Executive Director

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Professional Development Grants for K-12 Teachers of the Humanities

The New Hampshire Humanities Council seeks to fund high-quality, content-rich professional development for secondary and elementary school teachers and related educators (e.g., media specialists) in a variety of formats, such as:

- single or multi-session seminar
- in-service professional development with enrollment open to NH teachers
- job-embedded professional development specific to a single school or school district

There are two grant programs. A mini-grants program that awards up to \$1,500 and a major-grants program for grants over \$1,500. The desired outcome is to improve student understanding of the humanities by improving the knowledge and practice of those professionals responsible for its instruction. NHHC seeks to foster long-lasting relationships between universities, public elementary and secondary schools, and New Hampshire's many important historical and cultural institutions.

Grant applications are available on the NH Humanities Council website: www.nhhc.org or you can contact Susan Farber, NHHC Program Officer for more information at sfarber@nhhc.org or (603) 224-4071.

Essential Components of an Induction-with-Mentoring Program

- Are you concerned about recruiting and retaining quality educators?
- Do you currently have vacancies that are hard to fill?
- Does teacher turnover impact student achievement in your classrooms?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, you should join us for a discussion on TEACHER INDUCTION programs.

This free awareness workshop will help you understand the elements of a comprehensive teacher induction program and give you some tools to get started on building (or improving) your own program.

Presenter: UCLA School Management Program

Date: April 11, 2007

Time: 9:00 to 11:00 at NCES PD Center

Registration is required by contacting NCES.

PSU CAGS Course at NCES: Collaborative Leadership

The Certification of Advanced Graduate Studies course, EP 7020 Collaborative Leadership, will be offered at NCES July 9-12, 2007. Team-taught by Susan Auerbach and Charles Thibodeau, the course is an experience where faculty from diverse educational backgrounds, administration, special education and counseling help students develop critical skills necessary for collaboration in schools. Students will explore major concepts related to developing partnerships and a community of learners.

The course is the first in what is anticipated to be a North Country Cohort for the Plymouth State University CAGS program. Those interested in the course or applying to the CAGS program should contact Cheryl Baker at cbaker@plymouth.edu. Cheryl will be available to advise potential M.Ed. or CAGS students at NCES on the following dates: Tuesday, March 6, 2007, Monday, April 9, 2007 and Thursday, May 3, 2007. Appointments are typically 20 and 30 minutes and are available from 3:30 – 5:30. Those interested in advising should call Plymouth State Graduate Studies at 535-2636 to set up an appointment.

More information on the CAGS and M.Ed. Programs, including application information at www.plymouth.edu.

Science Tools for Learning

For: Teachers grades 4 to 12

Presenter: Kathleen McClaskey

Date: May 11, 2007 from 9:00 to 3:00 at NCES PD Center

Cost: \$20 per person, includes lunch. Call NCES to register.

Learn how to use technology tools that can empower your standards-based science instruction and engage all learners in your inquiry-based lessons. Activities will include an introduction to InspireData®, a new tool designed to improve data literacy skills by having students visualize, investigate and understand data. This workshop will also include how to use and leverage accessible desktop tools and web resources to support your science curriculum and to provide access to the curriculum by all learners in your classroom. Teams of teachers are encouraged to attend. Attendees will receive a CD with grade level science links, resources and activities presented in the workshop and a 30-day trial CD of InspireData®.

Science Matters: Forming an Online Education Community

Based upon readings from the classic book, *Science Matters: Achieving Scientific Literacy*, an online forum has been developed to discuss science topics in education. For more information on participating in this professional development opportunity, contact Betsy Stefany at BAStefany@aol.com. Supported by NHDOE and NHSTA.

Tools for Literacy Grades 5 - 8

Presenter: Kathleen McClaskey

Date: May 10, 2007 from 9:00 to 3:00 at NCES PD Center

Cost: Members \$125, Associates \$135, Nonmembers \$150

With limited budgets and increased accountability, teachers need accessible tools that can support and improve reading and writing and, in turn, create a foundation for independent learning skills for all students. In this hands-on workshop you will learn how to leverage accessible desktop and online tools that can remove barriers to learning, empower students to become independent learners and achieve results in literacy. Each attendee will receive a CD with extensive web links, resources and “no cost” readers that will support literacy in the classroom.

In this hands-on workshop, learn how to improve student literacy skills with MSOffice®, Inspiration8.0®, ReadPlease; Natural Reader; and WordWeb.

Contact NCES to register. Cost includes lunch.

DAS - II Overview

Presenter: Peter C. Entwistle Ph.D.

Date: April 13, 2007

Time: 9:00 to 12:00 at NCES PD Center

Cost: Free to staff from member and associate member districts. Others \$15.

Registration: Required by contacting NCES.

In this overview of the new DAS-II, the following will be covered:

- What subtests have been dropped from the DAS?
- What subtests have been added to the DAS?
- What subtests have been modified in the new DAS-II?
- Rationale of the DAS-II
- How the test relates to instruction?
 - Role of cognitive scores in providing understanding of the way an individual processes information
 - RTI problem solving method

Increasing Student Aspirations

Fostering Students' Active Engagement in Learning

Date/Time: March 12 from 8:30 to 12:00 at NCES PD Center

Students' academic growth will increase when students are actively engaged in their learning environment. Active engagement means that students become so involved in their own learning they lose track of time and space. At the end of a lesson they wonder, "Where did that time go?" Students who are actively engaged in their learning are also curious and creative. They are not afraid to ask "why?" or "why not?" about the world around them. Finally, engaged students have a spirit of adventure. They are not afraid to try new things, regardless of whether they might succeed or fail. With active engagement, learning—and therefore participation in learning—becomes important in and of itself.

Encouraging a Sense of Purpose

Date/Time: May 7 from 8:30 to 12:00 at NCES PD Center

Far too many students see no connection between school and who they are or who they want to become. In an effort to counter this trend, educators attempt to draw links between today's learning and tomorrow's careers, encouraging students to think about their education as tied to what type of job they want to one day hold. There is more to the picture than jobs, however. Schools must challenge students to think about the characteristics that accompany successful and rewarding work. They must challenge students to think about who they want to become as well as what they want to be. A sense of purpose involves developing a sense of responsibility, accountability, and confidence. Students must have leadership roles in schools that carry with them a real sense of responsibility for themselves and others.

Register with the NH Department of Education by contacting Carol Angowski at cangowski@ed.state.nh.us or call 271-8392.

Transportation Scholarships for North Country Teachers: VOTE! The Civil Rights Movement

The New Hampshire Humanities Council is offering workshops on voting history and contemporary issues in civics:

VOTE! The Civil Rights Movement

Monday, March 12, 2007 Claremont

VOTE! The 60s, the 26th Amendment & Youth

Voting Trends

Thursday, April 12, 2007 Manchester

VOTE! Democratic Simulations for the Classroom

Saturday, May 12, 2007 Durham

These content-rich workshops offer presentations by regional and national scholars, classroom connections from veteran teachers, and generous materials. Workshop content is linked to NH frameworks for American culture, history, geography, civics, and government, and will be of special interest to those seeking to strengthen content in their required Civics course. Details about the workshops and a registration form are on the NHHHC website, www.nnhc.org. The registration fee for each workshop is \$35, which covers lunch and materials.

TRANSPORTATION SCHOLARSHIPS are being offered by the NH Humanities Council to educators who live or teach in Carroll, Coos, or Grafton County. To ease the impact on these school districts' PD funds, the Humanities Council will pay transportation costs (34-cents/mile) from your home or school to one, two, or all three workshops. The scholarship fund is generous but limited, so make your request soon by contacting Susan Farber at sfarber@nnhc.org or (603) 224-4071.

Social Studies Curriculum Framework Overview

For: Social Studies Teachers

Presenter: Ken Relihan, NH Department of Education Social Studies Consultant, and exemplary teachers

Date: March 6, 2007 from 9:00 to 3:00 at NCES PD Center

Cost: Members free, Associates \$5, Nonmembers \$10.

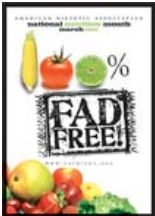
Ken Relihan will provide an overview of the newly revised Social Studies Framework. Educators from NH will share exemplary middle and high school social studies practices. Any remaining time will be available for self-guided work on curriculum revision and/or mapping.

Notes from the NCES Media Center

When standing in the grocery checkout line, I scan the magazines banners: Aerobic Exercise Basics, Sports Nutrition, Healthy Living, and Cooking Light. These phrases catch my attention as I unload leafy greens, skim milk, along with frozen tater tots and Oreos. The topics are as familiar as good manners; familiar habits that I don't always follow.

Since we live in one of the wealthiest nations on the planet, our lifestyles can and do undermine our healthy habits. There is an over abundance of readily available high calorie foods – calories that we don't need. The conveniences of modern living deter exercise. No need to till the earth for a garden with a grocery store just a 10-minute drive away. No handwashing laundry in a tub and hanging them on the line, just pop them in and out of a washer and dryer. No possibility for walking to work or school with most homes built in suburbs out of town.

With the stresses of work, meetings, classes, children – good health requires planning. Going an entire workweek without resorting to take out food can be a challenge; while going a week without a single aerobic activity is routine. I try my best with fun activities and healthy meals. But my family thinks I belong to some underground organization called the Food Police, led by mothers wielding broccoli and carrot batons who force whole grains on wary children and husbands. I know that I'm not alone and I'm sure that even a nutrition nut or a fitness buff needs encouragement and new ideas at times.



Perhaps that's why March seems to be dedicated to good health by many organizations. It has been designated National Nutrition Month by The American Dietetic Association (A Teacher's Guide, quiz, healthy recipes, and more can be found at their website www.eatright.org). For more personalized information on what to eat, go to www.mypyramid.gov. There are brochures and fact sheets that can be printed right from this website.

Other good health March events are: National Kidney Month, National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, National Multiple Sclerosis Education Month, and Save Your Vision Month. And, it's even National Peanut Month according to Kern County, California.

If your interested in sporting events, the Iditarod dogsled race in Alaska begins March 3rd and takes 10 to 17 days to complete. Follow the race's progress at www.iditarod.com.

O'course, I dun need to remind ye that March 'tis renowned for St. Paddy's Day on the 17th o' the month. Time tuh tell tales of the wee folk as we look forward tuh March 21st and the first day uh Spring.

A partial list of our March bibliography follows. If you're interested in looking at more links to easy and healthful recipes, finding out all the events and body parts to which March is dedicated, or, you'd like to receive a copy of the Media Center's entire March bibliography, please email me at Library@ncedservices.org.

March Bibliography:

15-6-215 Food Pyramid Bingo Game for grades 3 & up. Teaches players about food groups, serving sizes and more. For 2-30 players.

15-6-223 Pyramid Cafe Kit. For grades 2-3. Guide and handouts for 10 activities that introduce and reinforce key nutrition concepts: Nutritious foods and health; Five food groups; Milk group; Meat group; Vegetable group; Fruit group; Grain group; Body building lunch.

VCK-1357 Fit or Fat for the 90's. For grades 7-adult. Still relevant today, the entertaining Covert Bailey teaches you how eating right can be enjoyable and easy. He'll teach you to burn off your fat, and have fun doing it.

VCK-1358 Eat Smart. For grades 7-adult. PBS, [60 minutes] A MacNeil/Lehrer special program; discusses how Americans can make better choices in their diets in order to enhance their lives and health.

Coming soon: The Standard Deviants Learn Nutrition for grades 7-adult. [137 minutes, DVD]. Using fun, off-beat format, instructs in nutrition basics. Good resource for instructors of fitness, health, and nutrition. Topics discussed include six basic nutrients, RDA, food guide pyramid, body functions, weight control, and disease prevention.

Have a grand and healthy month!

Vicky McGillicuddy, Media Center Coordinator

Technology Tip

Manage your Pictures in Word

OK, so you import a piece of clipart or a picture from your digital camera and it just won't go where you want it without putting up a fight!! Well, there is a trick that'll make those images behave. Insert the picture and then click on it so that there are "handles" (little squares on the corners and the midpoint of each side).



If the picture tool bar is not visible on the menu bar choose View>Toolbars>Picture and the toolbar should show up.



Click on the "dog" and choose Tight. This allows you to move the picture where you want. Hint: to "nudge" your picture get off the mouse and hold down the CTRL key while using the arrow keys on the keyboard to place the picture exactly where you want it.