

# Curriculum Matters...

## Transformative Work by the Faculty and Students of SAU 21

### Making the Shift to Common Core State Standards



Shift to Common Core

Teachers across SAU21 have been working towards Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for a couple of years now. We have focused our work on retaining our successful practices while identifying our needs to improve or shift to deeper and more substantial learning by our students. The Common Core Standards have a fair alignment to the NH grade level expectations, hence they were not completely new to our schools. However, this effort has brought teachers together across SAU21 to reflect, focus, coordinate curriculum objectives, and share effective practices that move students from simply learning new knowledge to authentic experiences where they are using their knowledge and skills to conquer challenges. In an era where information is readily available, students will need skills to read, research, synthesize information from a variety of sources, decipher complex situations, and work collaboratively to solve problems. Achieving these goals requires creativity, communication and persistence along with the foundational skills of effective written and verbal language, organization, and quantitation. Students will also need an attitude to go after it; a willingness to learn alternative strategies and understand varying perspectives. They will need to make choices and use their technological skills along the way. Our Vertical Curriculum Teams are practicing and targeting these attributes as they persist in identifying learning objectives for all students across SAU21. Teachers also have to choose the lessons and strategies that give their students the added leverage that prepares them for the future. This does not mean they will all use the same resources to achieve those benchmarks, but it does provide a common pathway that they use in analyzing student work and judging how well their students' perform. Overall, the Common Core State Standards are unifying our staff's commitment to student growth; aiming towards greater depth of knowledge and less breadth. Please take the time to read through this issue to learn more about the work of our faculty and students. You may also want to view the CCSS Crosswalk with the NH Standards, here are the links for the different grade levels.

- <http://www.education.nh.gov/spotlight/ccss/side-by-side-math.htm>
- <http://www.education.nh.gov/spotlight/ccss/side-by-side-english.htm>

SAU 21



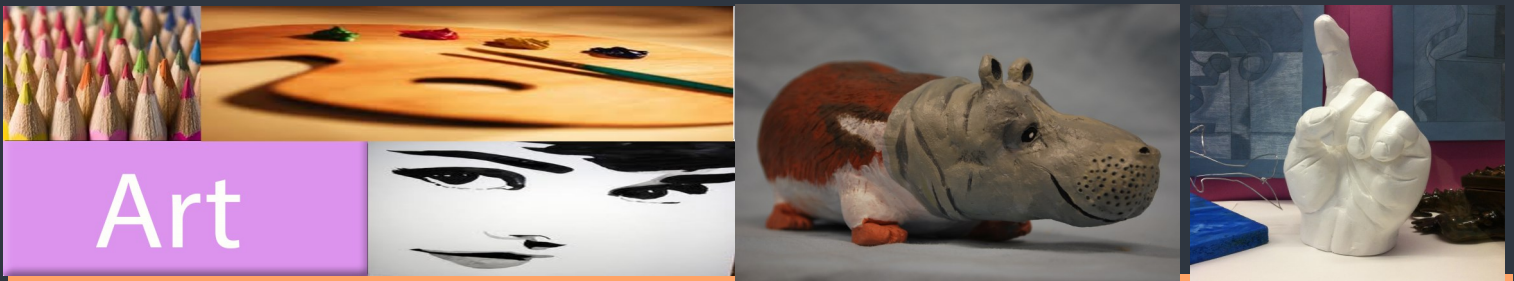
### Professional Learning



The Professional Learning Committee represents all of our teachers in the pursuit of improved professional learning that continues to develop the quality of our students' learning. Their focus on developing staff use of SMART (Specific & Strategic, Measureable, Achievable, Responsive, and Timely) goals will lead to and support Student

Learning Objectives across the subject areas and grade levels. This is a large shift in the way teachers' have communicated student learning and will be a significant part of the new Teacher Appraisal System also being developed. It requires a continued focus on student learning or growth over time.

The representatives of this SAU21 committee also work to improve our use of an electronic system called *My Learning Plan* that helps our staff to enroll in professional learning activities within and across our schools, eliminating unnecessary paper, printing, and human resource costs. The committee is currently working on the new 5-year Professional Learning Master Plan aligned to new state standards. They will be working tightly with the Teacher Appraisal Committee to be sure the two master plans work well together in the support of effective teaching throughout SAU21. See the last page of this issue for more information on the Committee's work.



# Art

During the early release day the Visual Arts Vertical Team concentrated on designing a means of establishing student growth indicators for the arts. Working with a model that Winnacunnet High School currently uses, we are focusing on four categories: Responsibility (be a positive member of this community), Process (be creative), Content Knowledge (learn art skills), and Product (care about the quality). Each of these categories has 5 areas the students will be evaluated on. We are working to create this document to be used by all the Art classes in the SAU.

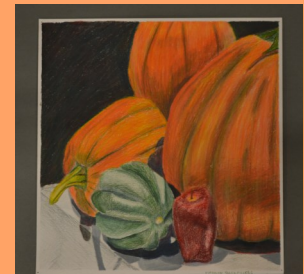
The document aligns with the NH and National Art Standards and supports the new curriculum we created in the last two years. We plan to use examples of student work to share and assist in the refinement of the rubric. The use of the rubric with actual student work pieces will also help to align our expectations at each grade level. As the rubric is implemented we will be able to chart student growth over time and continue to refine our curriculum and strategies to support students. The support of Common Core State Standards has been addressed in the new arts curriculum guide. Data for the student growth in those areas will be embedded in the descriptor areas being developed. Here is the introduction to our new SAU21 curriculum guide.

## The Role of the Visual Arts in SAU 21 - Pre K through grade 12 Schools

The Visual Arts are essential to a comprehensive 21st century curriculum. For students living in a rapidly changing world the arts teach vital modes of seeing, imagining, inventing and thinking. Leading theorist on art education and aesthetics in the United States, Elliot Eisner states “Learning in the Arts requires the ability and a willingness to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities...”

The Visual Arts:

- Promote critical thinking and problem solving
- Develop creative expression and innovation
- Cultivate the elaboration, refinement and evaluation of ideas
- Encourage initiative, collaboration and exploration
- Promote interpretation through analysis and critiques
- Develop motor skills, spatial relations and coordination
- Increase awareness through cross cultural and historical concepts
- Develop vocabulary to communicate an understanding of the Elements and Principles of Design



Student Art Work, WHS

**The Visual Arts fosters citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century who express humanity with the skills and confidence to contribute, interpret and navigate the world.**

The purpose of this document is to guide SAU 21 art educators in providing learning experiences that promote student achievement in the Visual Arts. This comprehensive art education curriculum outlines content across grade levels and aligns SAU 21, state and national standards. As a working and fluid framework this document is intended to be updated and assessed periodically by the SAU 21 Art Leadership Team (aka Vertical Team). As individual district teachers explore new teaching strategies, topics and skills development, they agree to share those trials with the team periodically to assist the improvement of arts education and provide equitable opportunities for all students.





## Culinary Arts

**Warrior Cafe** is the capstone course for the foods and nutrition program at Winnacunnet High School. Not all students have space in their schedule for the elective, but those that do enjoy the course, benefit from the real world applications, and often go on to fulfilling careers in the food industry.

Just ask Kirstie Musumeci, a Winnacunnet graduate attending Johnson and Wales University. Kirstie claims that "the program in high school has truly helped her throughout college and definitely influenced her in fulfilling her culinary dreams of one day opening a restaurant". Kirstie's interest in Foods and Nutrition started at the Seabrook Middle school with Donna Butcher at the helm. But, some might tell you her interest started at even an earlier age, as Kirstie's Mom was a student at Winnacunnet in the 80's and used the day care run by the Family and Consumer Sciences Department to care for her twin daughters. Kirstie has been around the Foods and Nutrition "Groupies" for a while. She has already obtained her associates in Culinary Arts and is now working on her Bachelors with a year and a half to go. Kirstie continues to attribute all of her success to the exposure she had throughout her schooling. Kristie is just one example of the many students that benefit from this course, and participation in the WHS Family and Consumer Science department.



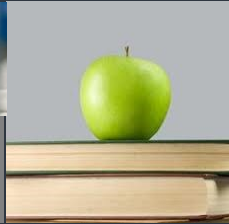
Specifically, the Warrior Cafe course gives students an opportunity to experience what it's like to set up and run a small culinary business. Students take on various culinary roles, planning, preparing and selling items to the staff and students during the morning break. Students are able to experience a true taste of working both "in the front and back of the house". They conduct weekly business meetings to plan for the week and balance the books.



In addition to Kristie, the success stories of students who have come through the ranks of our culinary program here at Winnacunnet are widespread. Many of our alumni have done very well for themselves for example, by opening up a bakery in town. We have one student who owns and operates a cupcake and wedding cake business out of their home. Students have had great success after participating

and completing the programs we offer. We hope to expand this program in the future as well as continue to make a positive impact, creating opportunities for our students in the real world once they graduate.





## Faculty Profiles

Born: Nashua, NH, grew up in Bethlehem, NH in the shadow of the beautiful White Mountains  
Education: Dartmouth College B.A., Plymouth State University, M.Ed.

### **Kelley Richards French Teacher Winnacunnet High School**

Kelley Richards, during her sophomore year of college, studied abroad in Toulouse, France. It was there that she said her love and proficiency of French really took hold. Kelley became a world traveler after college. She worked in hospitality and traveled to all 50 states. She lived in Alaska, Washington, Colorado, Florida, Vermont and Massachusetts. She spent 5 weeks backpacking in France on a budget of \$50.00 per day! She continued her passion for travel and adventure in Spain, Switzerland, Canada, England, Columbia and the Brazilian Amazon. Her dream is to visit Francophone Africa!

Since earning her degree in Education and becoming a teacher Kelley has returned to Spain twice, France twice, and Canada six times. She has led 4 consecutive trips to Quebec for French students to participate in the annual Winter Carnival celebration. When Kelley is not traveling or teaching she enjoys hiking, biking, running, gardening and fixing up her 300 year old house with her husband. Kelley is a mother of two, Ella, 8 and Chloe, 6. Kelley loves sports. She participated in 10k road races, bi- and triathlons, has raced up Mt. Washington twice and ran in the Seattle Marathon! Kelley and her husband enjoy music and theatre and love to see live performances whenever they can. The family enjoys part of the summer at Squam Lake together each year.



Even though Kelley's life is very busy, she loves teaching French and "would not give it up for the world". Kelley's professional development through UNH has impacted her classroom through the use of technology that she integrates via interesting websites and applications that she has been using in daily classroom instruction. She enjoys the benefit of technology in lifelong applications for French learning and the resources available so that students can stay engaged well after high school.

Kelley is currently on the Grading and Assessment Committees as well as the World Language Vertical Team. In the past she has served on the Curriculum Committee and the NEASC Community Resources Committee. Kelley is also the founder of "Culture Matters": annual international performance venues for Winnacunnet High School.

Kelley's favorite part of teaching involves the "Human Connection" she says. "There are amazing teachers, students, and staff here at WHS. I have received as much as I have given to this community."

### **Lori McCullough First Grade Teacher Seabrook Elementary School**

Born: Littleton, NH  
Education: B.A. in Psychology, UNH  
M.Ed. in Elementary Education, UNH

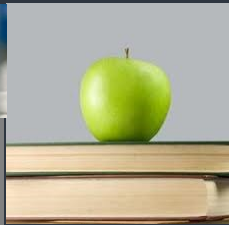
which includes 13 at Seabrook Elementary School. She began her teaching career at the Child Study and Development Center at UNH, where she taught both pre-school and kindergarten.

Lori enjoys spending time with her family. They enjoy camping, going to the beach and watching hockey together. She also enjoys running.

Lori says, "I truly enjoy teaching. It is very rewarding. My goal is to have children develop a love of reading. I love when they first realize that they can read and want to "show off" their accomplishments to everyone. I also enjoy integrating artistic endeavors into the math curriculum. The hands-on approach is important for children and it enables them to grasp concepts through differentiated instruction." Through Professional Learning Lori has grown following a presentation by Fred Wolff who came to Seabrook Elementary last year and discussed the six traits of writing. "His ideas have led to a smoother integration of literature into writing. The connection between the two is more tangible for me, as well as the children." Lori also had the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers in the district to discuss Common Core Standards and to share ideas and pool resources. She is looking forward to iPad training this month so that she can enable the children to utilize another familiar resource to acquire important skills and concepts.



Lori is currently a member of the Data Committee and the PeaceBuilders Committee at Seabrook Elementary. The PeaceBuilders committee helps to develop activities for students that foster kind words and actions toward others. In the past, she has been a Team Leader Committee member and has served on the Artist in Residence Committee. Her favorite part of teaching is knowing that she can help make a difference in a child's life.



## Faculty Profiles

**David Heath**  
**STEM & Woodworking Teacher**  
**Technology & Engineering Dept.**  
**Winnacunnet High School**

Born: Rockville Centre, New York.  
He lived in New York State until the age of 29.

Education: State University of New York at Oswego, B.S. and M.S.,  
Industrial Arts & Technology,  
Specialty- Woodworking



David has traveled extensively for pleasure mostly, but also pursuing his deep interest in bird study. His travels have included: Tahiti, Cook Islands, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Hong Kong, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Japan, Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Virgin Islands, and Kenya. He has travelled throughout the U.S. as well, including Alaska. David worked on three different bird studies. The first was with Long Point Bird observatory in Ontario, Canada. He learned to mist net, band, measure, and census birds. That provided him with the skills to become involved in a research project in Yucatan, Mexico gathering data for a Smithsonian study on the effects of deforestation on neotropical migrant birds on their wintering grounds. It was a wonderful six month opportunity to live in the jungle of the expansive Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve. Another interesting research project he worked on over a summer was in Papua New Guinea. This project, sponsored by National Geographic, studied some of the most spectacular birds in the world, The Birds of Paradise. It was an amazing opportunity to work and learn from the lead scientist, Dr. Bruce Beehler, who also happened to be the author of the Field Guide to the Birds of Papua New Guinea! "If I had to pick one country to re-visit and spend more time in, it would have to be New Zealand. The combination of the friendly, laid-back people, spectacular scenery, climate, and wildlife is truly magical."

Before moving to New Hampshire in 1989, David taught for 5 years in New York State. His first teaching job in New Hampshire was at the middle school in Bow where he taught for 11 years. Following Bow, David taught at a private alternative high school in Deerfield, the Longview School, for 10 years. David has been at Winnacunnet for 4 years.

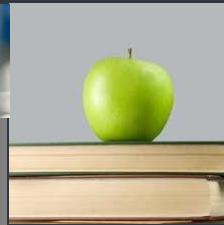
David is a passionate telemark skier, mountain biker and woodworker. He is a current member of the Guild of NH Woodworkers, New England Association of Woodworking Teachers, New England Association of Technology Teachers and New England Mountain Bike Association.

David, through a professional development project last year, co-authored a STEM Capstone course that is now part of the course catalog at WHS. The idea began as part of a WHS University course on STEM education. David applied and received a grant for two mini lathes through the Friends of Winnacunnet Foundation for the woodworking program. Student interest escalated so he has added 4 more lathes this year. David designed a course, Creative Wood Enterprise, that hopefully in the future will use the lathes to produce products to sell at the school store.

Currently, David is enrolled in a UNH course, Integrating Technology in the Classroom. It has opened his eyes to a variety of educational technologies that can be directly incorporated into his classroom. The course has allowed him to reflect on his philosophy of technology in education, explore and evaluate appropriate technology for his needs, and create curricula for the classroom. David has completed several WHS University courses that have been especially worthwhile in expanding his professional learning. David is a member of the Curriculum Standard Committee for the schools accreditation review.

His favorite part of teaching is "The kids! I genuinely enjoy getting to know, interacting with, and teaching the kids at WHS. I love teaching and have fun doing it everyday."





## Faculty Profiles

Born and raised in New Hampshire  
Education: B.S. Elementary Ed., Stonehill College  
Masters of Ecological Teaching & Learning, Leslie University

Chris Asbell has traveled across the country through escapades as a college football player. He worked part-time at The Kittery Trading Post (in the fishing dept.). Chris has been teaching for 13 years. His interests include playing music, carving wooden spoons, fishing and spending time with his wife, Sarah, and son, Peregrine.

Chris says, "Seeing children come back and relay their success with you is certainly the most rewarding and affirming experience. Having to consistently be a quality educator and balance family life is the most challenging aspect of the job."

Earning his Master's degree through Lesley University was transformational. "It opened my eyes to the benefits of project-based learning." His involvement with "*Forest For Every Classroom*" has helped him realize the importance of the school and community acting as partners. "*Forest For Every Classroom*" is a year long professional development program that has teachers use backward design to build a unit that focuses on project-based, experiential, place-based learning where students participate in a service project. His class involvement with this project is focused on collaborating with the community to build a nature trail in the town forest.

<http://www.nps.gov/mabi/forteachers/forest-for-every-classroom.htm>

Chris also participates on the SAU21 Science Vertical Curriculum Team. His favorite part of teaching is coaching students through a problem until a solution can be found. Building students' persistence in problem-solving transcends all subjects.



### **Jessica Bagley** **First & Second Grade Teacher** **Lincoln Akerman School**

Born and raised in Montana  
Education: B.A. in Elementary Education, University of Montana

Jessica moved to Oregon after graduation and taught for two years. She decided to move back to her home state of Montana and worked on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation for three years teaching second grade. Her next adventure was teaching fourth grade in West Yellowstone, Montana, which is on the west entrance of Yellowstone National Park. One of her biggest challenges was working on the reservation. "The dynamics of the culture and the issues the native people face, impacted my classroom every day. The experience opened my eyes to the many roles I play as a teacher. The successes were rewarding but there were many defeating situations I had to deal with. Overall, it helped me to become a much better teacher." She is currently embarking on her latest adventure, living in New England with her husband who grew up in this area.

This is Jessica's third year in SAU 21 and her thirteenth year teaching overall. She likes to cook, read, and hang out with her family. She loves watching college basketball with her husband since they both used to coach. Jessica is a member of the Seacoast Education Association and the International Reading Association.

"The graduate courses that I completed while working toward my masters degree have helped me improve my reading instruction." Jessica has also received a significant amount of training with reading instruction, reading curriculum, and Response to Instruction (RTI) in the previous schools where she was employed. These trainings provided her with the techniques that she uses on a daily basis to support her students in the classroom. In SAU21, Jessica has been involved with the K-2 collaborative team and the Lincoln Akerman Student Assessment Team.

Her favorite part of teaching is the kids! "I have moments when I stop in the middle of the day and think to myself, How fortunate I am to work with kids' discovering and growing each day. They are such individuals and I also learn from each of them almost every hour!"





## Faculty Profiles

Born and raised in Nashua, NH  
 Education: B.A. Spanish Area Studies, Kenyon College  
 M.Ed., Education, Notre Dame College  
 C.A.G.S., Literacy K-12, University of New England

**Denise Morrill**  
**Eighth Grade Spanish Teacher**  
**Seabrook Middle School**

Denise attended the Derryfield School in Manchester, where she first became interested in Spanish, thanks to Sr. Prouty! She continued her education at Kenyon College, where as a junior, she studied at the University of Seville, and completely fell in love with all things Spanish. However, Denise states that "if you had told me 20 years ago that I would be teaching middle school Spanish, I would have said you were crazy. Yet now, I can't imagine doing anything else."

Denise has traveled to: Spain, France, Portugal, England, Austria, Switzerland, Slovenia, Germany, Canada, Mexico, Aruba, Jamaica, Bahamas, and a number of states within the United States. She says highlights include the Aztec and Mayan ruins in Mexico and the city of Salzburg, Austria!! Denise was also recently married and hopes to travel to Ireland this summer on her honeymoon!



Denise has taught in SAU21 for 21 years. Her interests include young adult literature, most notably Harry Potter, and jewelry making. The challenges she shares "are finding the time to do everything I want to do and getting students to believe in themselves and to want the best for themselves."

Her successes include "seeing the "light bulb" go off when a student gets it!!!! Earning my C.A.G.S. has proven to be more beneficial than I ever could have imagined. Aside from the technological aspect of learning to be an online learner, the literacy concepts and practices presented are invaluable. I learned that in addition to being a Spanish teacher, I can also help my students become better critical thinkers."

Denise has been involved currently with the SAU21 Professional Learning/Development Committee and the SAU21 World Language Vertical Team. Denise also serves as Yearbook Advisor for SMS. She shares, "My favorite part of teaching is connecting with students and colleagues on a daily basis!!"



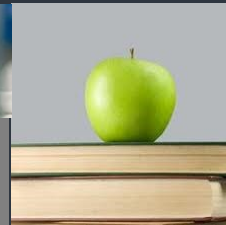
## Common Core State Standards



## The Issue of Text Quality and Coherence in Text Selection

Selecting texts for student reading should not only depend on text complexity, but also on considerations of quality and coherence. The Common Core State Standards emphasize that "to become college and career ready, students must grapple with works of exceptional craft and thought whose range extends across genres, cultures, and centuries. Such works offer profound insights into the human condition and serve as models for students' own thinking and writing." In addition to choosing high quality texts, it is also recommended that texts be selected to build coherent knowledge within grades and across grades. Considerations of quality and coherence should always be at play when selecting texts for any subject area. Also, as we learned with Tom Newkirk, author of *The Art of Slow Reading*; changing up the reading from technical to more story-like can help students to better understand the relationships or process at hand. Students meeting the standards can:

- Demonstrate independence
- Build strong content knowledge
- Value evidence
- Use technology & digital media strategically and capably
- Understand other perspectives & cultures
- Respond to varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline
- Comprehend as well as critique



## Faculty Profiles

Born: Hancock, NH  
Education: B.S. in Physical Education; M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction,  
Plymouth State College

### **Pat Yeaton Physical Education Teacher North Hampton School**

Pat Yeaton grew up in Hancock, NH a very small town with 500 residents at the time. While attending elementary school she had 9 students in her class with shared classrooms. Pat attended ConVal High School and graduated from Plymouth State College in 1976. After graduation there were no teaching jobs so she sold lumber wholesale for 4 years before starting her family. She lives in Hampton with her husband Charlie (who graduated from WHS) and they have two children, Tom and Sarah, who also graduated from WHS. Pat's entire 25 year teaching career has been in schools within SAU 21. She started at Barnard School, continued on to Centre School and finally ended up at North Hampton where she has been teaching for 21 years. Pat has been fortunate to travel to many states in the U.S. as well as Italy, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Turks and Caicos, Mexico and Scotland. Her hobbies include: gardening, reading for pleasure, crafts, writing for professional journals and other publications and coaching field hockey. Pat belongs to SEA, NHAHPERD and AAHPERD.

Pat stated that her challenge has been to create a program that fully includes ALL students in regular Physical Education classes. Her goal is for every student in class to be integrated easily into the group. She feels fortunate to have students from PreK-8. "I access the curriculum in a way that works for them by creating a structure for the students that establishes trust and whereby they become successful. The more successful they are, the more they can fully participate. They move along with supports such as visual schedules, social stories, video modeling and previewing. By the end of elementary school, many students can participate without those supports as they are comfortable with the protocols that are set for class. To see a student, who in Kindergarten would just run on the bleachers, end up in 8<sup>th</sup> grade changing in the locker room and fully participating in class is truly gratifying. A great investment of time and knowledge, in addition to efforts by specialty staff (OT, PT, EA's, classroom teachers, case managers) have made our program a successful one."

Last fall, Pat was able to travel to Edinburgh, Scotland for a week with Dr. Michelle Grenier from UNH. Their research includes a focus on students with Autism in regular Physical Education classes. They decided to conduct research in countries outside the U.S. Dr. Grenier had a connection with a professor at the University of Edinburgh where they visited and attended several undergraduate classes dealing with inclusion in PE. They were also able to observe several elementary schools in Edinburgh. Additionally, Pat attended an international workshop on using technology to enhance student learning. At the workshop robots available for students with autism were introduced for the first time. Pat said, "It was amazing to see them in person and watch how the robots interacted with students. During my stay I was able to reflect on my program at NHS. I am pleased that we are on target with including students of all abilities in regular PE classes."

Pat has co-authored two books that were recently published. One focused on Cooperative Learning in Physical Education and the other about Including Students with Autism in Regular Physical Education. Pat feels privileged to meet with other PE professionals from all over the world to collaborate on these books. By working with professors from Germany, New Zealand and Britain, she is amazed to see the similarities in struggles as well as successes in their jobs. This experience has helped her to validate her work at NHS as a PE teacher. It has enhanced her understanding of her students. She says, "I always learn something new from a colleague that I can try with my students at NHS." Pat is the chairperson of the Wellness Committee at NHS, a member of the Playground Committee (they created a playground rules video this summer for the students and it is on our school website), SEA Building Representative and PE Vertical Team Leader.



Her favorite part of teaching is finding ways to reach those students that dislike PE or feel it has nothing to offer. "We have created a curriculum that hopefully offers something that a student will be able to do as a lifelong pursuit. For example, I take my 8<sup>th</sup> graders surfing in the fall to Jenness Beach. We meet Dave Cropper from Cinnamon Rainbows Surf Company and his instructors at 8 a.m. and surf until 9 a.m." She offers this in conjunction with the North Hampton Recreation Department. Many students who have never had the chance to try surfing have found a lifetime sport that they can enjoy. Pat believes that without this opportunity during PE class they probably never would have tried to surf. "It makes my day when a student comes up to me and tells me they just bought a board and a winter wetsuit! "





## Reading / literacy

### From the Reading Specialists' Vertical Team

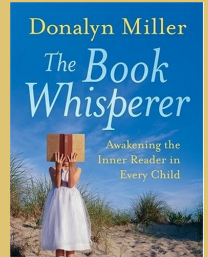
Author Tom Newkirk wrote in *The Art of Slow Reading*, "Reading and writing are cultural practices, not just technical proficiencies. They are embedded in rituals, cultures, institutions and histories.... They are value laden."

Our team of nine district reading specialists continues to explore *how* students learn to read and write and also what makes them *want*, even compels them to read and write. Inherently, we stay current with research and assessment results to help manage the daily learning challenges of students who struggle with literacy. Yet we also wonder how our roles as reading/literacy specialists might be changing... or not. How are we viewed, consulted and assessed in the age of the Common Core?

*Literacy needs* have expanded more than ever into other domains – the content areas – so we see a growing need to coach and share resources with classroom teachers who teach specialized literacy skills. *Standards* will continue to rise, and yet basic *foundational literacy skills* must be mastered in order for students to access rigorous text. *High-stakes reading and writing assessments* require keyboarding skills and much more as *technology* presents a challenge to everyone.

As reading specialists we must keep one eye on 21<sup>st</sup> Century standards, assessments and technology. Just as important, our other eye must keep looking at cultural practice. We need to see the faces and body language of students as they key into the magical and practical worlds of print... or not. How can teachers nudge students to become hungry for stories and for the depth and breadth of information found in print? How do we get each student to *want* to read and write?

To explore these questions, our goal as a vertical team this year is to meet throughout the winter and spring to discuss the title: "The Book Whisperer" by Donalyn Miller.



"This book reminds anyone - who is lucky enough to have loved a book – what classrooms and kids have lost in our frenzy to 'cover' content and standardize student performance in the name of reading. This is a primer of the heart on how to make reading magical again."

*Carol Ann Tomlinson, William Clay Parrish Jr. Professor of Education, University of Virginia*



## Health Education

## Physical Education

The Physical Education and Health Vertical Teams met on November 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss student learning and data collection. Both vertical teams are interested in researching activities that students are doing outside of school in terms of physical activity, healthy eating and the amount of sleep they are receiving. To that end, we created a SMART (Specific & Strategic, Measureable, Achievable, Responsive, and Timely) teaching goal that we can all adopt over the next three years. We are looking to obtain knowledge in the area of student wellness to increase students' healthy lifestyle choices by two additional healthy choices per week from September to June each school year. Dan Singer (Professional Learning Chair, NHS Music teacher/Band Director) attended our meeting to help us create the goal. Our SMART goal will translate to a Student Learning Objective as we begin to collect our student growth data. The online survey will be available to all SAU 21 students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. We will use the student survey to determine a baseline and then students will be able to respond regularly through their school website with their cell phone or a computer. It should only require a minute or two each week to complete. This will allow each PE/Health teacher to interpret the choices their students are making for a healthy lifestyle. Our goal is to someday have all students use the FitnessGram software which is currently being used at Winnacunnet and will begin at Seabrook through their Safe Routes to School grant. Information that we gather will help us analyze our impact on students' decision making pertaining to healthy eating, sleeping and physical activity. We will also look at how our data translates to the YRBS data used at the high school. We are excited to collect this data and we look forward to learning from the results.



# Social Studies



# MATH

The Social Studies Vertical team reviewed

- The SAU21 curriculum and alignment across districts
- Common Core State Standards as they apply to social studies
- A sample probe for one writing standard that could be compared across districts

The team agreed upon the following for the 2013-2014 academic year:

~To **research current materials and approaches** to achieve a greater depth of understanding for the social studies standards. This includes:

- evaluating writing samples
- rubrics tied directly to common core skills
- smarter balance assessment tasks
- quality performance assessments
- and suggested pathways to common core

~To more closely **reflect on a few common core writing standards** by choosing a couple of standards to explore in depth with student work. This would inform an evaluation process for our programs and chart student growth and performance.

~Use the resources and processes above to **develop an assessment tool** that answers the 'how do we know' the standard is being addressed (by teachers and our curriculum) and mastered by students so they are able to perform using those skills and knowledge.

**Curriculum Matters** is a communication tool for SAU 21 teachers, parents, and community members. It provides a mechanism for the Vertical Curriculum Teams to share their efforts to build a coordinated curriculum that enhances the learning opportunities and performance of all students. Please learn with us as we embark on these efforts and look for opportunities that align across disciplines. We encourage our larger community to follow some of the **web** links to see how our work is influenced and to help students understand how to do their very best in their learning and achievements. Please direct any questions or suggestions to the SAU 21 office at 926-8992 x105. We appreciate your input as we learn together.

The Math Vertical Team is compiling different samples of student work in reading and writing in mathematics. Reading and understanding in the discipline of mathematics is integral to more complex problem solving. This aligns with Common Core State Standards and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, which states:

*The widespread adoption of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM) presents an unprecedented opportunity for systemic improvement in mathematics education in the United States. The Common Core State Standards offer a foundation for the development of more rigorous, focused, and coherent mathematics curricula, instruction, and assessments that promote conceptual understanding and reasoning as well as skill fluency. This foundation will help to ensure that all students are ready for college and careers when they graduate from high school and that they are prepared to take their place as productive, full participants in society.*

This year, we are planning to highlight different projects and learning activities that are taking place in mathematics classes throughout SAU 21. For example, at North Hampton, students just completed a project on systems of equations. The project involved writing four different system word problems and solve them by graphing, substitution and elimination. This activity speaks to the following 8<sup>th</sup> grade CCSS standards:

[CCSS.Math.Content.8.EE.C.8](#) Analyze and solve pairs of simultaneous linear equations.

**a** Understand that solutions to a system of two linear equations in two variables correspond to points of intersection of their graphs, because points of intersection satisfy both equations simultaneously.

**b** Solve systems of two linear equations in two variables algebraically, and estimate solutions by graphing the equations. Solve simple cases by inspection.

**c** Solve real-world and mathematical problems leading to two linear equations in two variables.

Here are some sample problems the students wrote, give them a try!

Lauren and Abby have separate babysitting businesses. Currently Lauren has \$0. Lauren charges \$5 per hour for babysitting. Abby also charges \$5 per hour. After 3 hours of babysitting Abby has \$15. How many hours of babysitting will it take for Lauren and Abby to have the same amount of money?

Gavin and Alyssa are trick or treating. Gavin is trick or treating in North Hampton and Alyssa is trick or treating in Hampton. They decided that they wanted to have the same amount of candy at the end of the night. Gavin already has 5 pieces of candy and Alyssa has 7 pieces. They each get 10 pieces of candy every hour. How many hours will it take for them to have the same amount of candy?

Rebecca is selling baked goods. She is selling each cookie for \$2 and each brownie for \$3. She sold a total of 36 baked goods and made \$72. How many cookies did she sell? How many brownies did she sell?

Nicholas and Jim are taking photos for the school yearbook. Nicholas has already taken 6 photos and Jim has already taken 4 photos. It takes Nicholas 1 hour to take 5 nice photos, while it only takes Jim 1 hour to take 7 photos. If they want to take the same amount of photos for the yearbook how many hours will it take them? How many photos will they take?





# SCIENCE

"As in all inquiry-based approaches to science teaching, our expectation is that students will themselves engage in the practices and not merely learn about them secondhand. Students cannot comprehend scientific practices, nor fully appreciate the nature of scientific knowledge itself, without directly experiencing those practices for themselves."

-Introduction to *Next Generation Science Standards*

We are excited for the inquiry experiences our students have already had and will continue to have during the 2013-2014 school year. Students are separating mixtures using physical properties, designing and constructing towers to withstand earthquakes, designing and constructing fish that fly, experimenting with pendulums and how they swing, separating water using electrolysis, exploring leaves and how and why they change color, and so much more. We continue to look for ways to inspire our students to question, engage, explore, and be curious about their world.

Inspired by Thomas Newkirk's "The Art of Slow Reading," we are looking at how students utilize and engage with a variety of texts in science. By examining the texts we use with our science students we can look to enhance their reading experience as they continue through the grades. Reading is just one of the ways in which students are exposed to science content and it can enhance their understanding tremendously when paired with authentic, meaningful discussion and inquiry. For example, Primo Levy's "The Periodic Table" offers a series of descriptive short stories about the elements and "The Periodic Kingdom" by P.W. Atkins offers a "journey into the land of the chemical elements." Both of these books provide narrative stories that embody the elemental characteristics and relationships, often connecting them to everyday life.

In our quest to advance students' knowledge and understanding consider this excerpt from "What Is Education?"..."there's a lot more to being able to think than naming objects. Such an exercise is too cut-and-dried. It judges assertively rather than tentatively or questioningly. It doesn't launch inquiry; rather, it puts an end to further investigation. Once something is named, it stands ready to be shelved and put away" (Jackson, 2012).



# LANGUAGE ARTS

"So I would like to propose some strategies for slowing down and reclaiming the acoustical properties of written language—for savoring it, for enjoying the infinite ways a sentence can unfold—and for returning to passages that sustain and inspire us. Many of these strategies are literally as old as the hills."

*Thomas Newkirk*

Our focus for this year continues to be the larger transition to the *Common Core States Standards Initiative*, in terms of curriculum development, student growth and assessment and teacher practice. We will have a focus on teacher practice and how it impacts student growth and learning. In a sense, we would like to "slow down" and focus on what we can control and shift our practice in ways that support the needs of our students. We will bring samples of student work, rubrics, and readings that might inform the discussion and push all of us forward in our practice. We also decided as a group that we would focus on the *Common Core* through the lens of writing: Narrative, Argument and Informative. We are planning on taking each of our meetings to focus on one type of writing. We decided to focus each of the meetings with a few guiding questions:

- ➔ What are the **challenges** that we face (with teaching each of the types of writing) as we make the shift to the CC?
- ➔ What are the **assessments** that we are using to capture growth and learning? How are we tweaking the assessments/**rubrics** that we have?

We also had the exciting opportunity to listen to Thomas Newkirk, the author of *The Art of Slow Reading* with the larger audience of the SAU and then enjoyed a smaller, more personal Q&A discussion. We were reminded to "slow down" and savor what we read, not just the texts that we share with our students but in our own lives as readers. This is an article from *Educational Leadership* (<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar10/vol67/num06/The-Case-for-Slow-Reading.aspx>) that explains the focus of his book and highlights the strategies for reading instruction that he suggests for educators: performing, memorizing, centering, problem finding, reading like a writer, and elaborating. There is also an SAU21 wide book group running all year that is focusing on *The Art of Slow Reading*.





## Library / Media

The SAU 21 librarians met for the first time this year on November 8<sup>th</sup>. The group discussed changes in Lexile levels. Winnacunnet, North Hampton and Seabrook schools have Lexile levels available from their Destiny automation systems. Discussion also included ebooks and how they are being used at the schools. It was noted that it may be beneficial to have the town

librarians come to the schools to show students how to access the vast number of ebooks available for check out through Overdrive, a service provided through the New Hampshire public libraries.

Linda Sherouse from North Hampton School stated that the teachers and students in her school are using BookFlix. BookFlix is an online literacy resource that pairs fiction and nonfiction books. Betsey Ross from Seabrook Elementary School used Storia, an eReading app from Scholastic, and Tumblebooks with her students.

Winnacunnet High School and Lincoln Akerman School have been purchasing Chromebooks. With the addition of Chromebooks to the Winnacunnet Hawley Library and Chromebook laptop carts available for the English and Social Studies departments, students and teachers at WHS are utilizing the suite of Google apps available through their Google Drive. Students create documents and PowerPoint presentations which they can then share (email) to their teachers. This has significantly cut down on printing at the high school. However, students can still print when necessary. Google drive includes many apps, as well as email, available for students to enhance their learning, utilizing 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills.

Seabrook Middle School students now have access to Google Apps for education, also allowing students and teachers a range of online tools to enrich communication, content creation, and collaboration. Sue Harter from Seabrook Middle School has been working with sixth grade students on using Google Drive to create and share documents.

Barnard School staff and the South Hampton Public Library are joining forces to connect their resources for electronic searches using the Destiny software. This is a win-win-win as costs are shared and students can more easily search for resources housed in either location.

Linda Sherouse at North Hampton School is working with fourth graders on mini-debate teams. This is in conjunction with the Literacy.W.4.1 common core standards. Teams meet and search out details on a topic of their choice. Then they work to use good debating manners to discuss the two sides of the issue. This persuasive essay practice is meeting with enthusiasm. Once the team is fully prepared they debate in front of the entire fourth grade. The other students are then surveyed to see if their position, if they had one, on the topic has been supported or changed. In future meetings we will discuss mechanisms for measuring and tracking student growth related to the goals the team set earlier in 2013.

### **David Hobbs, English Teacher WHS Winner of the 2012 Christa McAuliffe Sabbatical**

It's been a great start to the year and we're making some substantive changes in the way we work & communicate at Winnacunnet High School.

For one, we've provided UNH graduate credit/ CEUs for 18 WHS staff members in classes around technology integration. We're also facilitating the transition into GAFE (Google Apps for Education) for staff at WHS (students are already 100% there), and providing periodic training for staff around the platform.

I've been in a number of classrooms as a helping hand (student blogging, interactive presentations, video creation/ editing and working with platforms for assistive technology). I've also assisted a variety of school-wide projects. Specifically, we've improved the efficiency of computer cart/ lab sharing and data collection methods for the WHS Advisory Committee and National Honors Society. WHS also recently hosted a visit from NASA through a program called Orion's Quest. They came in to share some opportunities around STEM education for high schools.

With respect to grants, we were awarded a Cloud Computing grant for the Warrior Trading Post (Keep your eye on this as they continue to expand their access to customers outside of school hours). We also submitted three grants through Samsung for hardware and classroom projects (Jim Muthig, Charlotte Scott & Cindy Cummings' classes). We also submitted a *Friends of Winnacunnet* Grant for improved wireless infrastructure at WHS.



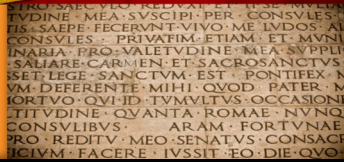


## WHS October 2013 Live music performance & dance



**Inca Son from Peru**

# World Languages



School	Curriculum	News Regarding Curriculum Programs
<b>Lincoln Akerman School</b> Hampton Falls	Spanish	New extended access for elementary students: One lesson each week for Grades 1-3, Twice weekly for grades 4-5 Three times a week for grades 6-8
<b>North Hampton School</b>	Spanish	New Kindergarten Course with One Spanish lesson a week Grades 1-5 continue to meet 3-4 times a week Grades 6-8 continue to meet 3-4 times a week
<b>Hampton Academy</b>	French/ Spanish	NEW 6 <sup>th</sup> grade World Language Exploratory course (1 quarter French, 1 quarter Spanish) Expanded French/Spanish program (2 full year commitment in one language/ 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade) Students will travel to Quebec in April, 2014 for a 3-day cultural tour
<b>Seabrook Middle School</b>	Spanish	8th Grade – full year of 50 minute blocks daily
<b>Barnard School</b> South Hampton	Spanish	Enrichment Grades 1-8 Classes are combined 1+2, 3+4, 5+6, 7, 8 80 min. blocks each week for each grade area
<b>Winnacunnet High School</b>	Latin, Spanish & French	Interdisciplinary field trip with Social Studies dept. to Museum of Science (Boston) to view the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit National Latin Exam results (2013): 15 students, 8 recognized for achievement 6 WHS French students will travel to Quebec in February 2014 for Winter Carnival 12 WHS Spanish students: will travel to Costa Rica for a 10 day trip in February 2014. (includes 5 day homestay/2 day internship at local shops) Future hopes of arranging trip to Italy for Latin students



Students were taught traditional dance 'La Marinera' and learned the significance of the costumes, as hats protect from the sun and skirts to represent waves of the ocean, etc.

The Music Vertical Team discussed a proposed set of Core Competencies for all SAU 21 music programs. Everyone agreed that they could use a proposed framework of core competencies that included: Performance, Notation, Composition, Evaluation, Relation, and Responsibility. Each school had ideas for how they might adapt the descriptors of each competency and which competencies would apply to general music or to performance classes.

Daniel Singer shared some information about Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and how those might guide our work as a Vertical Team. This tied in with discussion regarding national music standards and the Common Core. Pat Moore and Tony Cyrus shared several rubrics they have designed for the Winnacunnet students, primarily regarding performance assessment. The K-8 staff is looking at how they can adapt these rubrics to create more consistency of assessment throughout SAU21. While the scope of the work to be accomplished is overwhelming, the team decided to break into a subcommittee of elementary/middle level teachers to look at common projects and common assessments that could be used with all music students in SAU 21.

One of our goals for future meetings is to look at anonymous samples of student work and have all music teachers use the performance assessment rubric to score the sample. Discrepancies in assessment can be examined and discussed to develop a more unified interpretation of student assessment.

At the next team meeting the primary topic will be SLOs and Quality Performance Assessments (QPAs).



# MUSIC

## Work-to-Date on the New Teacher Appraisal System



The SAU21 Teacher Appraisal Committee has been meeting for almost a year to develop a new Evaluation/Supervision Master Plan. Recently the team reviewed about 200 teacher, administration and board member survey responses about the first draft of the new Master Plan. The goal was to understand what each of the stakeholder groups were thinking and where the team needed to put time and energy in terms of communications and training. Our work has been focused on reinvigorating our current system by moving to a more rigorous and regular coaching model that helps our schools continue to learn and improve our students' learning. The plan has been informed by the recommendations of our state's Task Force on Educator Effectiveness and our group's reflection on what works and where time is well spent. Our group consisted of teachers, Seacoast Educator Association (SEA) reps, administrators, and school board members that enable voice from our schools.

Our discussions have been candid and at times difficult, but according to the feedback most respondents agreed with our chosen direction. We realize that the majority of you have not been part of our discussions. However, we are making progress with representation of the various stakeholders, including the Seacoast Education Association. We still have much work to do in clarifying how certain mechanisms will function in the plan. We appreciate the responses we have received and we will continue to share our progress with you.

Listed below are a couple of main features that demonstrate the coaching part of this plan followed by some of the new features that will be included:

- **Peer Review & Feedback** are encouraged between buildings and yes, even grade levels. Reviewer comments will only be shared between teachers. Supervisors will only get an acknowledgement from the reviewer that the review occurred. We want honest feedback to occur, not just a rubber stamp. Teachers on the committee share that they advance their skills by experiencing other's classrooms and by receiving suggestions from colleagues. Our plan encourages this objective.

- **Multiple Observations over Time** will be shorter, but meaningful and written feedback will be almost immediate after the observer and teacher convene. These observations are focused on the third year of teachers on a continuing contract. Multiple observations provide a more accurate picture of educator effectiveness. Observations can occur at any time and teachers may also request a visit from their evaluator when embarking on a new strategy for feedback. New teachers will continue to have multiple observations each year.

- **Rubrics** are used throughout the process; some will be adjusted for non-classroom teaching positions such as nurses or guidance counselors. Some of these specialty departments are currently working on the rubrics for those positions.

- **Student Surveys** to assist teachers and schools with honest feedback from those we service. This has not yet been developed, but if you are interested in serving on a team that works on this please let us know. Our plan is for teachers and schools to use student feedback to improve instruction and student engagement, not as an indicator that affects an individual's evaluation.

- **Student Growth Data** will constitute 20% of the summative evaluation (that means your SMART Goals will carry some weight along with school goals). We are in the middle of this discussion now and have the survey feedback in mind. We will be meeting on January 14<sup>th</sup> to complete our discussion. The 20% was decided at the state level by the AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) Waiver. We have not yet decided exactly how this will play out.

Here are some of the outcomes from the almost 200 responses we received on the Feedback Survey. Please stay tuned to our next CM issue for more details as the plan evolves. The plan will be approved by the School Boards and must be submitted to the New Hampshire Department of Education for review and approval by June, 2014.

What are some of the things that you would like to see improved in the current plan?	% Disagree	% Agree
More opportunities for engaged dialogue with teaching peers	12.4	87.6
More regular opportunities for supervisors to engage with staff in classrooms or the work setting (depending upon the position)	20.1	80.9
A greater ability to self-design improvement opportunities through independent study, action research or team/school-focused opportunities	9.1	90.9
The ability to self-assess along with my supervisor	21.3	78.7
An opportunity to be observed by someone other than my direct supervisor	8.1	91.9
The ability to use research-based, student feedback surveys to improve student engagement	37.5	62.5