

# Learning Circle Connection

Connecting you to events, resources, technology, curriculum, and instruction ...  
Creating a learning community that uses best practices to meet the diverse needs of all students.

## SAU 53 News and Reviews

December 2012  
Volume 4, Issue 1

### SAU 53 Learning Circle Presents

#### “ How Can School & Home Develop Motivation & Success for Kids?”

“We may have heard the utterance, *Today's youth are so unmotivated!* The good news is that there's a lot that we can do to change that.”



**Susan Fitzell**, M.Ed, CSP is a dynamic, nationally recognized presenter, author of nine books, and an educational consultant. Info: <http://susanfitzell.com/>

**January 23<sup>rd</sup> with 24<sup>th</sup>** as Snowdate  
**Pembroke Academy Auditorium**  
**6:30-8:30 p.m.**

*Please join us to learn:*

- ◆ What motivation is
- ◆ How do you motivate the unmotivated
- ◆ Strategies to promote motivation
- ◆ How to make homework fun
- ◆ How to empower students to reach their goals

### 2012 Inclusive Schools Week: *Social Inclusion: More than a seat in the class...*

The wish to belong is one that moves all of us on a personal level. The responsibility to expand inclusion beyond just 'a seat in the classroom' was the theme of the 12th annual Inclusive Schools Week held December 3-7th. Building authentic friendships may be challenging. Unless adults do something purposeful, meaningful friendships and social opportunities for students with disabilities are limited.

*Thanks SAU53 participants who responded to the question "What have you done as an individual or school to help with social inclusion?" Congratulations to Emily Vilca whose name was drawn for iTunes card.*

Much research has been done to identify the extreme importance of making a child feel a part of his/her 'classroom community.' As a way to include children with challenges or disabilities in a more social setting, I have observed AES do some positive things. Children just naturally are not going to step up to the plate and engage in conversations with a student that has a disability. It requires regular and consistent routines, positive teacher language, rules with logical consequences, classroom organization, and ongoing activities from teachers to support social inclusion. I have witnessed the lunchtime and social visits that occur frequently. During morning meeting a different child is offered/asked to spend lunch with their 'special' buddy. The child can of course decline, but most are extremely excited at being asked (rotating basis). While at lunch, the children engage in positive communication where interactive role modeling is displayed. The children spend time chatting about what they have done over the weekend. It creates trust, confidence, and displays a caring and nurturing feeling for both students. A big part relies on having teachers and peers collaborate together to create an emotionally secure classroom environment. Leslie Thomas

Patrick Connors reports “ECS welcomes support staff/community caregivers to our dances to help specific students.” In Lori Bryant’s K classroom, she changes groups frequently so that all kids get a chance to socialize with one another. “We also start the day with a special greeting that includes all children looking and talking to each other to build a classroom community. All children participate in songs and interactive games so that they get to know each other and accept each others differences.”

TRS includes students with various disabilities in the drama program. “They love to perform on stage, where they can be viewed as simply a member of the cast not by their labeled disability,” states Mark Richmond. Emily Vilca has a great deal of group activities. She pairs up a student with disabilities with a strong student in the class, helping them understand the material, while also strengthening his/her understanding at the same time. Students are also allowed extra time and assistance from peers.

At PA, students with disabilities are included in all extracurricular activities .

### Scoop of Events

**Jan. 7 & Feb. 4**, 2:45 Data Team  
**Jan.10**, 1:00 at SAU, Literacy  
2:00 Numeracy Task Force meetings  
**Jan. 12**, 9-2:00 @CCS Learning & Living with Technology in the 21st Century  
**January 15** , 3:15 SAU, Book Study  
**Open Minds: Using Language to Change Lives** by Peter H. Johnston  
**Jan. 15th & Feb. 12th** 5:00 Google Apps  
**Jan.23**, 6:30 PA Audi “ Motivation “  
**Feb. 4**, 8:30 a.m. SAU Behavior Task Force  
**Feb.7** , 1:00 Literacy Task Force

### FREE Workshops from ATECH

8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

#### January 8, ASKATECH

Perplexed by technology? Draw on the ATECH years experience

**Feb.12**, *Boardmaker ,BM Plus, Studio*  
<http://www.crotchedmountain.org/atechworkshops/>

### Pool of Resources

*SAU Resource Center at PA library-*

<http://www.sau53.org/lc/resource/lib.htm>

#### Responsive Classroom Books:

*The Advisory Book & PD Guide  
Classroom Discipline  
Tried and True Games  
Interactive Modeling, Yardsticks, How to Bully proof Your Classroom, Learning Through Academic Choice, Solving Thorny Behavior Problems, Doing Math in Morning Meeting, and 88 Energizers*

Responsive Classroom Kits with books and DVD on : Positive Teacher Language, Morning Meeting, Teaching Discipline

DVDS-*Responsive Classroom Overview, Guided Discovery, Time Out, Circle of Power & Respect*

### Exchange

BrainPOP® ( [www.brainpop.com](http://www.brainpop.com)) creates animated, curricular content that engages students, supports teachers, and bolsters achievement – in classrooms, at home, and on mobile devices. **This year Explore Brain Pop Free!** Log on as  
User: Pembrokeacad  
Password : brainpop



The purpose of this grant is to create a positive school climate and culture with the goal that all students will be educated in learning environments that are safe, drug free, and conducive to learning. The SAU grant activities will:

- ◆ raise awareness of mental illness and serious emotional disorders in SAU 53 and Community
- ◆ proactively identify students at risk of behavior concerns at a younger age
- ◆ provide a positive safe school climate so that all students learn to their fullest capacity
- ◆ forge a more collaborative effort to address the needs of students with behavioral needs
- ◆ align with state efforts to gain resources and support to meet student and staff needs.

### **SAU 53 activities approved by the Department of Education include:**

#### *Summer trainings on Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs*

The *Responsive Classroom* approach <http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/> is a widely used, research-based approach that increases academic achievement, decreases problem behaviors, improves social skills, and leads to more high-quality instruction. The grant sponsored Tim Vasconcellos (Vill), Jessica Buzzell (Hill), and Rebecca Powers (ECS) to take in-depth weeklong K-6 elementary training in Responsive Classroom. Responsive Classroom Kits to accompany this program were purchased with Linda Carlisle (AES), Rebecca Powers (ECS), and Jennifer Lewis (Village) becoming Kit Training Facilitators for their schools.

Developmental Design by Origins is RC for middle school level. Kathy Conway (ECS), Peter Levinchuk, Stef Blethen, & Cathy Vanbennekum from ARD, along with DCS team; Barbara Cook, Tom Marino, Sarah Chase, and Kira Peasley, attended weeklong trainings in DD1. Some of the things they learned were: how to use advisory time to build a strong, socially skilled learning community using the Circle of Power and Respect, how to guide students on a pathway to self-control, and ways to speak to students that encourages as well as corrects them.



On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 29 staff attended the *Responsive Classroom Sampler*, an overview of the Responsive Classroom approach. Mike Anderson presented on how Responsive Classroom practices can help foster trust and respect in the classroom; integrate the teaching of academic and social skills; and set clear, meaningful boundaries for student behavior.



### **Participants share how they will implement responsive classroom techniques.**

#### ***They are excited to use:***

*Morning meeting concepts as a warm-up to my PE class*

*Songs, greetings, and energizers that are specific and helpful.*

*“Timeout spot” for students to calm then rejoin class*

*Use of relaxing activities and the discipline strategies.*

*Hand signals and movement activities that support learning.*

*Introducing routine & spending 90% of teaching time in the “proactive realm”*

*Modeling & rehearsing of how I want children to be doing in and out of classroom.*

#### ***When asked how they might describe the workshop to a colleague, they say:***

*Great to do “hands-on” activities and see practices modeled via videotaping.*

*Also a reminder of evaluating teacher expectations and beliefs in student capabilities.*

*It’s a great way to build mutual respect between teacher and students and students with each other.*

*It was a great, positive, energizing experience and a good reminder of why I got into teaching in the first place.*

*A wonderful way to gain new perspective on classroom goals including routines, energizers, teacher modeling methods, & discipline techniques.*

*Wonderful way of engaging students to be part of classroom process to be a community and positive learning space.*

*Go! It’s worth every minute. It leaves you wanting to know more. You leave with ideas you can implement right away.*



## Workshops by NAMI ( National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)



“See the Person not the Illness” came to SAU 53. Its purpose was to eliminate the stigma of mental illness and help others be more aware of its impact on individuals, family, and community. “It was very helpful to hear firsthand from a parent whose life has been affected by mental illness.”

“Children and Adolescents: Serious Emotional Disorders and School” was held on November 19th at ECS with 24 present. SAU staff learned the importance of early identification and intervention, knowledge of symptoms, strategies to use in educational settings, and the early warning signs of suicide and how to connect with services. More information at <http://naminh.org/>

*“I have enjoyed working with your district leadership and personnel this past year. You are to be congratulated on the great work you are doing. Changing culture is a formidable task and you are courageous to take this on. Glad we could help jumpstart this for SAU 53 and continue to be available to support all your efforts.” Claudia Ferber, Director of Child & Family Service NAMI NH.*

### SAU 53 Builds BEST System of Care

19 SAU staff attended the “Building a System of Care for NH Children, a statewide leadership summit to support student behavioral health on April 17<sup>th</sup>. From that group a task force to address SAU needs was formed. Task Force Members include: Nancy May, Kasey Landry-Filion, Ruth Engel, Lacy Verrill, Karen Guercia, Cristle Gordon, Lisa Laflamme, Caite Linehan, Patrick Connors, Jan Sheen, Andrea Hammond, Ken Fuller, Vicki Therrien, and Judith Howe. At the initial meeting of the task force last spring, the mission statement was written.

The BEST Behavior Task Force adopted the mission:

**BRING TOGETHER** school, families and community support systems

Provide **EDUCATION** on how to support children displaying intensive emotional and behavioral challenges

Implement **STRENGTH-BASED** and **SUSTAINABLE** plans across natural settings

**TEAM UP** to support ALL students

At recent meeting, the team shared school policies and resources. Members received a copy of the Preschool & Elementary School Edition of the “2013 CASEL ( Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) Guide ([www.casel.org/guide](http://www.casel.org/guide)) which identifies 23 researched programs to help “all” students. Members also perused school needs assessment surveys. Future meeting topics will include: identification, data collection methods, scientific based interventions, solutions to rule breaking, resources, and relationships with students and families.



### Dan Habib and his new film “Who Cares About Kelsey?”

<http://iod.unh.edu/pbisfilm>

Filmmaker Dan Habib, who made the Emmy-nominated documentary, *Including Samuel*, screened his powerful new film *Who Cares About Kelsey?* on May 21st at Pembroke Academy. It was one of the first screenings anywhere in the country with 90 people in attendance.

The film is about Kelsey Carroll who has one goal – to graduate from high school – and plenty of reasons why she shouldn’t. She has dealt with homelessness, self-mutilation, and ADHD. “*Who Cares About Kelsey?*” is the story of Kelsey’s transformation from a defiant and disruptive student to a motivated and self-confident young woman. Along the way, critical figures in her personal and educational life shape her coming of age and play important roles in an education revolution that’s about empowering – not overpowering – teens with emotional and behavioral disabilities.

Kelsey Carroll joined Habib for the post-film discussion. When asked what action would positively affect outcomes for students with EBD, Kelsey shared: Do not be afraid to show you care. Listen and accept students. Don’t give up on students, be annoyingly caring and patient. Befriend a student. Get peers conversing. Speak to kids privately when there is an issue. Encourage students to not be afraid to ask for help. Continue to use behavior intervention plans.”

Habib says the screening and discussion will advance the work of SAU 53’s newly formed behavior task force to achieve better outcomes for youth with emotional and behavioral disabilities. Educational Kit and Film have been given to each building SAU 53.



- I thoroughly enjoyed the film and felt that it will help someone who doesn’t understand or work with emotional, behavioral students - an absolutely, wonderful film!
- I love Dan’s work, the way he touches personal levels, and is very thorough. Thanks for caring and sharing!
- Great program, Kelsey is very impressive! I am so proud of her and her tremendous growth. She is very lucky to have been involved in the Renew Program at school.

## What is a Collaboration Ring?

A *Collaboration Ring* is a group of teachers who are interested in working with other teachers and classes with similar focus or interest. There are 21 rings in NH so far.

*Collaboration Rings* have two parts:

**Web page** with links, projects, and other relevant info  
**Google Group** an email listserv with archived discussion between members

### How can I join?

Go to <https://sites.google.com/a/nheon.org/nhdrc-collaboration-ring/home> . Click the "join " button. You will need a gmail, Google EDU email or other email that is associated with Google to join.

Check out these rings developed by SAU 53 Staff.

**HS Science** - Celeste Best

**PK-1** - Maria Knee

**PK-8 Science Inquiry** - Ellen O'Donnell

**Inclusion Ring**-Vicki Therrien

**Autism Ring**- Jerrica Bradley

**Student Behavioral Health**-Ruth Engel



## THE BUZZ

### Award winner Jackie Perry

"She's phenomenal-she's always there for you!" These are the words of a parent describing Jackie Perry, Allenstown's Special Education teacher for grades 4 and 5, and the recent recipient of a 2012 Parent Involvement in Education Recognition Award, sponsored by the Parent Information Center and NH Connections.

Jackie's been a Special Ed. teacher in AES for 5 years. When asked what she likes best about her job, Jackie replied, "I love getting to know each and every student, and sharing in their successes." A student said, "She made me feel happy, by working with me when I needed her help. She was my favorite teacher...she made me smile."

In describing her relationship with parents, Jackie said she tries to be as available as possible and "I truly believe that they need to know that I care about their child...that I'm invested in their learning." Jackie tries to call families at least once a month, and she tries to accommodate parents' routines when scheduling meetings. She also lets parents and students know she cares by sending positive postcards home, pointing out something the student did well, and she sends them home before school starts, welcoming new and returning students. It's no surprise that the parent quoted, "I don't question anything she says. She cares about my child."



## Learning Circle Mission Statement



The Learning Circle exists to support General Educators, Special Educators, and Administrators in their fulfillment of the SAU philosophy of inclusion of students while promoting their educational gain. The Learning circle will: facilitate reflective practice groups around topics of interest, enhance knowledge of curriculum, instruction, resources, technology, assessment, and unify the SAU by establishing greater relationship with others. And serving the community. Adopted Dec. 2006 and Amended Nov.2012

### Learning Circle Members

**Facilitators:** Vicki Therrien & Asst. Jan Santosuosso  
SAU:

Helene Bickford (Assistant Superintendent SAU 53)

Patty Sherman (Assistant Superintendent SAU 53)

Karen Guercia (Director Special Services SAU 53)

AES/ARD: Anthony Blinn

CCS: Johanna Sanborn & Lisa Clark

DCS : Kathy Whittaker

ECS: Jan Santosuosso & Darcy May

HILL: Crystal Tilton

PA: Jan Sheen, Lisa Dowd, Kim Yarmo

TRS: Mark Richmond

VILLAGE: Mona Sandberg & Lisa Pellerin

## The BEACON PROGRAM stands for **B**alancing **E**ducation, **A**wareness, **C**onfidence and **O**ne's **N**eeds

The BEACON Program, standing for Balancing Education, Awareness, Confidence and One's Needs was started at Chichester Central School. It addresses the needs of children in Grades 1-5 with specialized needs including those who require individualized instruction across multiple settings; may have limited communication and/or cognitive impairment; may require development of self-help skills; and who may have sensory needs.

An integral component and goal of the BEACON Program is grade level inclusion with general education peers. When appropriate, students in the BEACON program will interact with peers in the regular education environment to encourage social growth and community involvement. Pam Stiles, school principal said, "Allowing the kids to learn near their home and alongside their peers is the core of the program." The staff meets regularly to assess the program needs for each student. Research-based techniques, technology, and a range of multi-sensory options will be included in the teaching practices. The majority of the staff members hold advanced degrees and all participate in relevant professional development so that new strategies can be brought into the team.

One must apply for admission to The BEACON Program at the cost of \$35,000 per student. CCS personnel will then visit the site of current placement. If the decision is to accept a child into Beacon Program, then a joint meeting between BEACON and the LEA from the sending school takes place and an entry plan is developed. As part of the IEP process, the BEACON team will convene at least yearly to discuss progress and determine if the BEACON Program continues to serve the child well.

*"Celebrating each student's individual learning style, qualities, and strengths through a comprehensive team approach. Inclusion is as much kids reaching their potential as it is about normal kids reaching their compassion potential."*