

# 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

Winter 2011  
Volume 2, Issue 2

### Scoop of Events

### Cultivating our own Expertise

*SAU Staff Gear up for SAU 53 Professional Development Day on March 25, 2011*

Highly motivated, inspired, just filled to the brim with great knowledge were the certified staff who attended the 2010 SAU- wide Professional Development Day. In the halls and at lunch, there were energized conversations as staff shared what they learned about great instructional practices happening across the SAU. Hot topics last year were technology integration and numeracy.

**PD 2011** Although some outsiders will be brought in for the day, SAU staff have already signed up to present, building on the expertise in our buildings, enhancing teacher leadership, and cultivating the success of last year's SAU- wide day. By collaborating and sharing knowledge, skills, and experiences, we all contribute to SAU-wide improvement. It is the expertise within the SAU that provides richness, synergy, and supports our work over time.

**Changes for 2011:** This year, to keep travel to a minimum, the sessions will be held at PA, Three Rivers School, and the Pembroke Library. The day begins at 7:30 a.m. with coffee, muffins... Workshop sessions will run **only** from 8:00-12:30. Staff will have the opportunity to choose from a full-morning session that runs from 8 to 12:30, OR a 3- hour session, OR 3-80 minute sessions. Register by email by March 18 . Sessions must to have a minimum of six participants to run. Some workshops have limited number that can participate. Following lunch there will be time for SAU wrap-up, school building celebrations, and evaluations.

Sampling of workshops however see information sent via SAKAI for full details

Full morning sessions, only register for one of these for the day:

- Fred Wolff: Writing in the Content Areas ( 65 limit)
- Keys to Literacy: Writing Open Responses –Grades 3-12 ( 35 limit)

3 hr. session ( You may sign up for one of these and also have time for 1-80 Min. session)

80 minute sessions: (You may register for 3 of these sessions)

**NH Connections:** Overview of how to get parents involved in schools

**iPad :** Apple Rep will show basics and there will be a session for SAU staff to show how they use the iPad in their classroom.

**Lost in Laconia Film Showing :** Gordon Dubois, film producer will introduce the *Lost in Laconia* documentary film about Laconia State School, NH's first institution for people labeled "feble-minded".

**World Café Conversations Protocol about "Lost in Laconia" film:** Discussions will be held regarding the film and personal experiences with the state school while traveling from table to table picking up new conversations and meeting others.

**Lynn Lyons: Bullies , Mean Girls , and Friends: Drama, Emotions, and Solutions**

will focus on navigation of social relationships and the skills needed to shift the behavior of bullies/mean girls.

**Sexting, Liability, & Public/Private** by Todd DeMitchell of UNH

### Lynn Lyons Roars

Over 100 people attended the Lynn Lyons workshop on **Worried Kids in a Stressed-Out World** on November 30, 2010. The community event was sponsored by the Learning Circle in order to provide skills and information to any interested parent, educator or social worker on how to manage and prevent anxiety. Lynn is a "how to" licensed social worker and psychotherapist in Concord, NH who specializes in the treatment of anxiety related disorders in adults and children. Her energetic presentation of anecdotes and strategies dealing with anxiety kept the members of the audience captivated. She explained her Four B's: body, brain, bravery and bridge and the Three X's of expect, externalize and experiment. Many compliments were heard as attendants left the auditorium with the hope that there would be a follow-up workshop! A video and power-point of the presentation is in the Resource Center.

### Literacy and Numeracy Task Force

3/10 1:00 Num 2:00 Lit  
4/14 1:00 Lit 2:00 Num  
5/12 1:00 Num 2:00 Lit

### 6 Trait School Visits by Fred Wolff :

3/24 ECS Grades 1,4,8  
4/13 Hill Grades 2,3,4  
5/20 ARD Grades 6-8

**Book Club** 3/15 , 4/19, 5/17 3:00 at SAU  
365 *Thank You's* by John Kralick

**Learning Circle** 4/15, 8:30-11:30 at SAU

**SAU Data Team** 2:45

3/21 in own building work session  
4/4 at SAU, 4/18 in building  
5/2 at SAU, 5/16 in building

**SAU PD Day** March 25 8:00 register by  
March 18

### Pool of Resources

#### SAU Resource Center at PA

**Freeing Your child From Anxiety:  
Powerful, Practical Solutions to Over-  
come Your Child's Fears, Worries, and  
Phobias**  
by Tamar Chansky

**No Fishing Allowed: Reel in Bullying Kit**  
is a violence prevention program that  
teaches students and adults what they can  
do to prevent bullying! by Carol Gray &  
Judy Williams

**Worried about Your Worrier** DVD and  
power-point from SAU presentation with  
Lynn Lyons.

### Exchange

#### RTI websites

[www.educationevolving.org](http://www.educationevolving.org) (type in  
"response to intervention" in the search  
box)  
[www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org).  
Lisa Clark, CCS

**Free flashcard maker**  
[http://www.kitzkiz.com/flashcards/  
pdfsettings.php](http://www.kitzkiz.com/flashcards/pdfsettings.php)  
Paula Stroberg, ECS  
**www.mathslice.com**  
free worksheets & games for gr. 1- HS  
on every topic (math millionaire, Sudo-  
ku, hangman) Mark Richmond, TRS

## Good News- PACE Career Academy Will Move Forward !

The citizens of Pembroke, at the school district meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup>, voted to go forward to obtain state money for the PACE Career Academy. The warrant article was the last hurdle to make PACE Career Academy a reality for students who need and deserve an alternative educational environment that meets their learn needs and life goals.

### PACE Career Academy- What's it all about?

You may have heard about the proposed PACE Career Academy. This district charter school is the outcome of a search over many years to find a solution to the issues of student dropouts and disengagement in the educational process at the high school level.

In the fall of 2009, a group of concerned stakeholders including teachers, guidance personnel, administrators and community members began to meet to develop a vision of an alternative high school program that would serve the needs of our population. This group understood that district administration had tried for years to obtain the financial support for an alternative high school, to no fruition. Last spring, as this group grappled with finding a funding source to support such a program, we were introduced to the idea of a district-sponsored charter school by Roberta Tenney and Paul Leather from the Department of Education.

A smaller group met throughout the spring and summer to put forward an application to the state for a district charter school. The State Board of Education approved the application in December 2010 and granted the district \$613,000.00 for the school's implementation and support over a period of 5 years.

PACE Career Academy will be run by an independent board of trustees. It will be open in the Fall of 2011 to all high school students and offer a technology rich environment that will be based on individual student learning plans and goals. Students will attend "class" at PACE for half of the school day and spend the other half in extended learning opportunities or internships for high school credit.

For further information, please contact Karen Guercia at kguercia@sau53.org.

### The mission and goals of PACE are as follows:

"PACE Career Academy is dedicated to the promise and success of students who have struggled in more traditional school structures through offering a rich and focused education founded in students' attainment of the Common Core Academic Standards and their evolving awareness of and preparation for the myriad career and educational possibilities open to them; an understanding of how their unique talents, abilities and aspirations complement those possibilities; and a depth of preparation in the technological, interpersonal, attitudinal and practical aspects of successful integration into the business and entrepreneurial realm.

#### Goals:

1. To support students' development of self-confidence, personal responsibility, work ethic, and a life plan.
2. To utilize both Common Core and cross-cutting competencies to provide students with a concrete, focused and practical pathway to graduation and their adult lives.
3. To emphasize the use of authentic assessment in the evaluation of student's attainment of competencies.
4. To provide a rich and varied background in the uses and manipulation of various technologies, which will supply students with the foundation to apply and evolve their expertise with these tools in any career setting.
5. To work collaboratively with students, school personnel, parents and community members to create a highly personalized and inclusive education and career plan for each student."

## Competency-Based Assessment at Pembroke Academy

We know what students know because we test that; however CBA (Competency Based System) conveys what students are actually able to demonstrate and convey in a reliable way.

Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, Pembroke Academy implemented competency -based assessment. Competencies are the content, concepts, and skills that are to be mastered by students. Typically there are between four and six competencies for each course.

PA educators developed the competencies for each course within a department. Once teachers defined the competencies that constitute each course, they developed competency summative assessments that measure students' attainment of each individual competency. These assessments take a wide variety of forms and include writing assignments, projects, portfolios, presentations and exhibitions as well as more traditional "paper and pencil" tests. It should also be noted that any given assessment might be used to measure more than one competency. The assessments that measure any particular competency will be averaged together to determine a student's status for that particular competency. Student credit for any course is based upon a numerical average of the competencies that make up each course.

### Competency- Based Assessment for Students with Special Needs.

IEPSs will continue to play an important role in facilitating the success of students with identified learning needs. Modifications will not be made to the competencies themselves but rather to the assessments and proficiencies used to measure those competencies, especially through utilizing alternative forms of assessment. Special education teachers at PA work to provide accommodations for some students with Learning Disabilities and tiered modification for students with significant needs.



Lisa Dowd presents competencies at UNH workshop.

*One Special Education Teacher, Lisa Dowd, worked with PA colleagues in a Professional Learning Team to develop modifications for Algebra to meet the needs of students with various disabilities. Lisa presented examples of competencies and modified assessments at a Workshop for Inclusion Facilitators organized by the UNH Institute on Disability.*

## New Hampshire Alternate Learning Progressions (ALPS)

**What and why ALPS?** Federal and state laws (NCLB & IDEA) require that we set a “grade-linked” academic performance standard even for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities. Test scores must be based solely on evidence of academic progress. NH has entered into a compliance agreement with the federal government to deliver a state-of-art alternative assessment, beginning in 2010-2011, called the Alternative Learning Progressions Assessment (ALPS).

### ALP Participation Requirements

Students must have an IEP, limited communication, very low levels of academic achievement and adapted behavior skills, highly specialized instruction across all settings, and require supports such as a Paraprofessional, technology and individualized instruction.

### Collaboration needed:

Educators **MUST** participate in teams that include at least one general and one special educator from the same school. Teams determine the highest challenge levels the student is working on in various learning progressions within content areas. They then plan for evidence collection and gather videos and works samples to support student performance.

### New ALP Assessment Process Timeline

**Sept./Oct. 2010:** NHDOE information sessions prompted teams from ECS, Pembroke Hill School, and PA to participate in field trials of procedures for the new ALP. State coach, Allyson Vignola, guided the piloting teams through the process. Teams experienced a steep learning curve as they prepared for the new expectations. They learned how to determine a student’s academic level based on learning progressions, develop lessons to demonstrate skills, collect appropriate work samples, use flip cameras, edit videos, and make transcripts for evidence collection.

**Feb. 2011:** Teams of general educators, special educators, related service providers, and administrators from around the state attended full day trainings for the new NH ALP.

**February 22-May 5, 2011:** State-wide ALPs data collection period. After determining a student’s present level of functioning within the GLEs, teams collect highest and best work following state data collection guidelines. While traditional work samples must be collected, a new video component is now required for certain content areas.

**May 10, 2011:** UPS will pick up ALP Portfolios. They will be scored during the summer and standards will be set.

**September 2011:** Official scores from new NH ALP Assessment will be released.

### Content Area Requirements

**Reading:** videos representing all reading strategies used when reading Literary and

Informational text, **copies of text** read, and **transcripts** of educator/student exchanges during lesson.

**Writing:** **work samples** of first draft and later edited draft plus **transcripts** of writing conferences

**Math:** **videos and transcripts** for each math progression (Concepts of Rational Numbers, Operations, Equality, and Patterns & Change)



Robin Donovan & Claire Flannery , ECS collaborate for alternate assessment portfolio

### Comments about Assessment and Process

- “The collaboration, creativity and cooperation was fabulous and the end result of the 2009-10 portfolio assessment was remarkable,” Parents were so proud of the progress demonstrated by their child and said “... You put so much time and work into this portfolio... thank you!” ~Hill Staff
- “While the editing and transcribing may be difficult and tedious for some, the idea of a learning progression matches exactly what we should have for all students. This looks for strengths and weakness areas as we bring each student forward in all of the sub-categories of the NECAP assessments.” ~Pat Connors, ECS Principal
- “I thought training was helpful but overwhelming. I would definitely want on site help to organize ourselves this spring or summer for next year.” ~New portfolio developer
- “I think the key is working closely with the general education teacher.... not so much with a focus on the portfolio, but on collaboration, co-teaching, and/or modifications to promote inclusion to the best of our capabilities. Sometimes this means focusing on a lower level task such as *locating key words within text to find an answer*. The great thing about co-teaching is that the Sp. Ed. Teacher being in the classroom as much as possible makes data and work collection so simple. You're already there, with minds active on what needs to be done to present the information in the portfolio. It doesn't mean creating something new for the portfolio, but rather remembering to take the photos, organize the data collection process, and collect the work after completion in the classroom. The portfolio is just a kind of, "This is one we should put in the portfolio." Our collaboration is ongoing. We meet regularly, plan/discuss modifications and accommodations ahead of time and the special educator can sit in the class to oversee the data collection process for the entry, such as in Science.” ~Val Leuchter, Special Educator, DCS

## SAU 53 Science Grant presented at 2010 Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference

Lucille Constantine (4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at PHS), Laurie Hardt( 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at AES), Liz Pearson (1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher at AES), and Diane Bourke (Technology Integrator for the Science Grant) demonstrated and shared Vernier Science probe-ware to an enthusiastic crowd at the CMTC, which was held at the Radisson Hotel Expo Center in Manchester in November, 2010.

Vernier probe-ware sensors were some of the equipment purchased through the ARRA Title IID Technology funds. The teachers showcased how to use temperature, voltage, gas pressure and heart monitor sensors and explained how probe-ware can be integrated into the curriculum to address specific grade level standards.



Christa McAuliffe Conference, Photo left to rt: Liz Pearson, Laurie Hardt, Diane Bourke, and Lucille Constantine

## Learning Circle Help-line

Learning Circle has started a "Help-line" where Educational Friends offer to call, email, answer questions or help others. Here are examples of educational friends sharing with others.

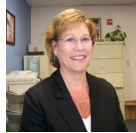
**Jackie Perry**, Resource Rm. Teacher 4/5 at AES, has taken a lead role assisting her grade levels as well as 3rd grade in identifying Power Standards and creating formative assessments for each grade level. She also started the Continental Math League, an after-school enrichment opportunity with 35+ 4th and 5th graders attending on a regular basis. Mrs. Perry completed her Wilson Level I and 2 certification which enables her to deliver intensive instruction to students.

### The Buzz

Julie Heon, Curriculum Coordinator at PA has accepted the position of Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Litchfield School District. In her 8 years at PA, she is recognized for her involvement in a myriad of new initiatives. Julie has developed Professional Learning Teams at PA, facilitated the use of differentiated instruction, promoted project based learning, and spearheaded work involving competencies and RTI initiatives in math and literacy. A complex intervention model, which includes the use of Read 180 Literacy Workshop courses, has been implemented under Julie's leadership.

Not only has Julie been dedicated to PA but to the whole SAU 53 as evidenced by her leadership at Triad meetings and participation in Literacy and Numeracy task forces. Her expertise and leadership will be greatly missed.

"It has been my pleasure to work with highly professional colleagues from all schools in the SAU to help facilitate greater student achievement." Julie Heon



### ASK LEARNING CIRCLE

**Question :** Can AIMSweb Progress Monitor Data be included in Performance Pathway?

**Answer:** Anthony Blinn is working with NHDOE, AIMS-WEB, and Performance Pathways to have the AIMSWEB progress monitoring data imported into the Intervention Module of Performance Pathways. He is awaiting an update from the NHDOE and will let us know.

## PBIS –Positive Behavior Intervention System at Hill & Village Schools

PBIS is a data proven, systematic approach to reducing inappropriate behaviors in school. Commonly used as a response to behavioral intervention, PBIS is about building a continuum of support that includes consistent proactive systems, comprehensive data, and regular practice of social skills, as a vehicle for improving student behaviors. Our focus includes behaviors that are Respectful, Responsible, and Safe. In order to be truly successful, everyone involved with the school, certified and non-certified staff, needs to be committed to the program.

Over the past two years, administration and staff members at Hill and Village schools have attended workshops and done research on the effectiveness of this program in other schools. During the 2009-10 school year, the initiative was revisited with the hope of incorporating PBIS into the Hill and Village Schools. All employees were given the opportunity to attend a workshop, view a video, or observe a school which utilizes the PBIS practices throughout this academic year.

In April of 2010, all employees of the Hill and Village schools voted on whether they would support the inclusion of PBIS into the school. The vote was 99% in favor of adopting PBIS into the schools. During the next stage, the core behavior team met with Eric Mann, PBIS trainer to develop the target behavior goals. The implementation of the PBIS system has started during this, the 2010-11 school year. Be looking for more information on PBIS at Hill and Village Schools as we move forward.

*The Pembroke Village and Hill Schools adopted a 'pride' of lions as their mascots. The Hill School is home to Hank (ruler) who likes to read and write while his cub sister Valentine (love) finds comfort with the younger students at the Village School. Both Hank and Val can be found dancing around and having fun with the staff and students during school events and special activities. This fall they have helped remind students to line up doing the right thing which is the targeted behavior goal.*

## Chichester's RtI Focuses on the Whole Child with CASES

Chichester Central School introduced a Response to Intervention (RtI) instructional model for the 2008/2009 school year with extensive ongoing professional development provided for all staff members. This initiative arose from recent provisions in federal education laws (IDEA and NCLB) encouraging school districts to provide additional support for struggling students within general educational settings. Response to Intervention (RtI) is a multi-tiered process in regular education that provides targeted instruction to students, based on a variety of research-based assessment information. Fall-Winter-Spring benchmark assessments are administered K-8 to determine individual student needs and to track growth. Progress monitoring occurs for students biweekly or weekly, according to academic need. Initially, the team of interventionists met to discuss academic progress but, beginning in the fall of 2010, the focus shifted to include Children's Academic, Social, and Emotional Standing (CASES). This expansion of the literacy RtI model now encourages teachers to determine the success of each child, not only in the content areas, but in the socio-emotional realm as well. Each "CASE" is examined every five weeks, making it possible to put a new intervention in place and allow for enough time to implement before revisiting. As a result of this scrutiny, the Child Study Team (Pupil Personnel Team) has had far fewer meetings this year and referrals to special education are down. The establishment of these professional learning communities has created a collegiality among the staff, as we all recognize that it is the responsibility of the team to bring each child along, not just one lone teacher in a classroom. Here at the school, we thank Sky King for being our first RtI coordinator and working through all of the "bugs", and to Laurie Jaquith, the current coordinator, who sets a standard of expected intervention, is constantly analyzing data, and communicates effectively with staff. To all of our teachers for their willingness to try something new and do it so beautifully—Bravo!



Jennifer Jones with mascots, Hank and Val who say:  
"Always do the Right Thing!-  
Be respectful, responsible, and safe"