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RSU 22 • Hampden • Newburgh • Winterport • Frankfort 24 Main Road North, Hampden, ME 04444 March 2015

Ruey Yehle to retire Aug. 31 after 12½ years as HA Principal, 38 years in education

Ruey Yehle, principal at Hampden Academy for the last 12½ years, will retire on August 31 after 38 years in education.

Mrs. Yehle came to HA in November 2002 after serving for a little over three years as director of curriculum and special education director in Orono.

“It’s been a wonderful, wonderful career,” she said. “To top it off by helping build this school [the new Hampden Academy] makes it even more special. It’s been a blast—I’ve enjoyed everyone I’ve worked with, especially the students.”

Mrs. Yehle started teaching in 1977 as a special education teacher in Old Town. She first came to RSU

22 (then SAD 22) in 1987 as the community resource coordinator.

“It was the neatest job,” she said. “It was funded by a grant, and it involved setting up places for students with disabilities to work. I was also able to set up programs for the district at large—it was really fun.”

In 1990, the special education director resigned in October, and Mrs. Yehle was asked if she would step in as the interim director because she had the necessary certification. At that point, she wasn’t interested in becoming the permanent replacement, but when the district couldn’t find a suitable candidate that the board and superintendent agreed on, she con-

tinued in the position until spring. Then she decided that she enjoyed the job after all, and was asked to stay on.

In 1994, RSU 22 established a half-time curriculum coordinator position. Mrs. Yehle took that job and also taught middle school reading. That lasted for a year. As a result of budget cuts the following year, she continued to carry out her half-time curriculum coordinator responsibilities in addition to the full-time special education director responsibilities. This combination lasted until 1999.

At that time, she took the opportunity to work as director of curriculum in Orono, but during (Please turn to page 11)



Ruey Yehle

HA wins EM title in Unified Sports Basketball

Hampden Academy is one of 17 schools in Maine that is competing in unified sports basketball, a new varsity sport that has been sanctioned by the Maine Principals Association.

The sport is designed to provide opportunities for students with developmental disabilities (called “Unified Student Athletes”) to play varsity basketball in partnership with students who don’t have developmental disabilities (called “Unified Student Partners”).

The rules say that teams must have three Unified Student Athletes on the court at all times with two Unified Student Partners. The Unified Student Athletes must score at least 75% of a team’s points.

Unified Student Athletes must have individual education plans (IEPs) that allow them to stay in school until age 20.

The Hampden Academy unified basketball team is coached by Andrea Lee, physical education/adapted physical education teacher at Reeds Brook and Special Olympics Head Coach for RSU 22. She is being assisted by Linda MacDonald.

Team members are: William Huston, Drew Kelso, David Manzo, (Please turn to page 8)



Zachary Ewing (15) runs down the court after the Broncos score a basket.

Congratulations, Class A State Champion Broncos!



CLASS A STATE CHAMPS—The Hampden Academy Broncos celebrate after winning the Class A State Championship, defeating Portland High School, 70-50, at the Augusta Civic Center on February 27. Front row (l. to r.): Jackson Gilmore, Zach Boss, Brendan McIntyre, Jake Black, Nick Gilpin, Nick Chasse, and Billy Campbell. Back Row: Phil Mateja (Trainer), Drew Kelso (Manager), Gary Colson (Assistant Coach), Max Moore (Manager), Ben Huston, Mike Labun, Ian McIntyre, Branden LaHaye, Caleb Lord, Ian Gehrke, Russ Bartlett (Head Coach), and Tyler Ross (Assistant Coach). Team photos of more RSU 22 championship teams on p. 8.

2 HA Robotics teams qualify for VEX World Championships

Both Hampden Academy Robotics teams qualified for the 2015 VEX Robotics World Championships in Louisville, KY, April 15-18, by winning the Maine State VEX Championship February 21 at Hampden Academy.

The two teams were part of a three-team alliance that also included the Cape Robotics B team from Cape Elizabeth High School, which also qualified for the VEX World Championships.

The Hampden B team includes Catherine Trojecki, Captain; Zack Perry, Driver; and Dylan Noyes.

The Hampden A team includes Crystal Grant, Captain; Nick Hashey, Driver; Nate Haiden, and Nate Cust. (Please turn to page 3)



Robotics Team members (l. to r.)—Nate Haiden, Nick Hashey, Nate Cust, Dylan Noyes, Zach Perry, and Krystal Grant. Not present for photo: Catherine Trojecki

Proficiency-Based Education in RSU 22: Update to the Community - March 2015

By Mary Giard, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, RSU 22

To paraphrase Aristotle, “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” RSU 22 is a high achieving, highly efficient, and effective school system. However, we always strive to improve our practices and the successes of our students. An enacted Maine state law has put forth a directive that all Maine high school students will graduate with a standards-based diploma by 2018.

Proficiency-based education stories are popping up all over the state and country. Although there are common threads, each district approaches the work in a slightly different way. RSU 22 is building its own student-centered proficiency-based system.

RSU 22 has created a kindergarten through grade 12 graduation standard sequences for all

eight content areas. We believe in supporting our students K-8 (and 9-12) by providing clear learning targets, expecting high quality and explicit instruction and by developing valid/reliable assessments. The entire system approach is meant to shore up the student-centered proficiency based foundation for our high school, Hampden Academy.

In addition to content standards, our teachers have also been involved in training to help students achieve proficiency in Maine’s educational guiding principles/21st Century Learning Skills. Teachers from grades K-12 have participated in Complex Reasoning training (training in how to teach higher level thinking and how to raise rigor). In addition, some educators have contributed to a bank of training materials created to teach students how to develop habits of mind skills (skills such as persever-

ance, managing impulsivity, setting and monitoring goals, etc.). The Complex Reasoning and Habits of Mind trainings have supported teachers as they create experiences, providing opportunities for students to meet the Guiding Principles standards. Those standards are:

- A. A clear and effective communicator
- B. A self-directed and lifelong learner
- C. A creative and practical problem solver
- D. A responsible and involved citizen
- E. An integrative and informed thinker

In December of 2014, the School Board and Administrative Council reviewed, refined and added to our district’s strategic plan.

Careful and thoughtful planning contribute to our on-going student-centered proficiency-based work.

RSU 22 Strategic Plan, 2013-2016, Updated 12/2014

Goal #1—Student Learning and Outcomes: To improve individual student engagement and achievement

Vision goal a: Develop and implement rigorous, proficiency-based curricula that are guaranteed, viable and measurable

Our K-8 schools (McGraw, Weatherbee, Smith, Wagner and Reeds Brook) have identified common priority curriculum learning targets in English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Visual and Performing Arts. We are currently in the budget planning process and will likely be reintroducing foreign language to our middle schools. The high school has identified common priority standards in all content areas, including World Languages and Career Education.

Our district is using curricula and scoring guides created by a number of districts working together to support our student-centered proficiency-based work. Kindergarten through grade five teachers are using student tracking software to score students’ levels of proficiency and to group and regroup students to meet individual student academic needs. Grades six through twelve are using the same standard sequences but are piloting another student tracking software program.

Our educators’ professional development is aligned with our initiatives. We work by grade levels and in content areas to align standards and to create assessments. The entire district has aligned its curriculum, supervision and evaluation system, assessment and rigor expecta-

tions to our common instructional framework. Proficiency-based work has been scheduled during early release days, during staff meetings and small group meetings, during full in-service days, after school, and/or during the summer.

Vision goal b: Develop a system of learning experiences that are engaging and ensure customized, proficiency-based learning

We are just beginning to create learning opportunities that could allow students to select more than one way to demonstrate their knowledge. Students may all take a similar assessment or they may show mastery in other ways that have been developed with their teachers.

We have established our own in-house Google site (RSU 22 Standards Repository), which houses our standards, curriculum support materials, and resources for our teachers. We have included a variety of higher level thinking resources as well as guiding principle resources for all K-12 teachers to access.

The entire district is working towards the same long-range goal of having a K-12 student-centered proficiency-based system. Each school is unique and has tailored its work to meet the needs of the age spans and learning needs of all students.

Following are some short updates from each of our six buildings.

Leroy H. Smith School

At Smith, teachers group and regroup learners according to standards to better target the students’ learning. Groups are flexible and change as students demonstrate proficiency on a standard. Grade

level teachers work together to review the standard’s expectation and then plan their lessons. Pre- and post-assessments are given to help determine what skills need to be addressed. Teachers set clear learning targets. Learners track their progress and work diligently to meet their individual goals.

Earl C. McGraw School

At McGraw, students are learning how to be reflective of their own learning. They are able to assess what they know and what they still need to learn. Students are demonstrating ownership and pride at how far they have come. Individuals track their learning and create their personal goals based on the specific learning targets that need to be reached by the end of the school year.

George B. Weatherbee School

At Weatherbee, this means that teachers have teamed up and grown their content area expertise. Teachers have special training or advanced degrees in literacy, numeracy and writing. This limited content area allows teachers to design and implement more in-depth lessons that are tailored to individual student needs. For example in math, reading and writing, teachers offer a mini lesson and present new content. They then instruct small focus groups that are flexible and crafted around specific student needs. Teachers have set the goal of a minimum one year’s growth for every child. Pre- and post-tests are used to establish what students already know and where support or enrichment is needed. The struggling learner, advanced learner, and every child in between should get the instruction they require to move forward at least one year.

Wagner Middle School

At Wagner Middle School, content area teams in grades 6-8 have been aligning instruction to defined content area standards during the current school year. This has been a collaborative effort between grade/content level teams at Reeds Brook Middle School. Presently, content standards have been identified in both core curriculum and specialist content areas. ELA, math, science, and social studies standards are posted in PowerSchool and teachers have been piloting assessments in order to track student

progress toward these standards. This work is progressing and RSU 22 middle school expectations are to begin reporting out to parents during the 4th quarter of the current school year. The Wagner 5th grade team has also been collaborating with other elementary staff in other RSU 22 schools. The Wagner 5th grade team began reporting out during the first quarter of the current school year on content area standards in ELA, math, and physical education.

Reeds Brook Middle School

Reeds Brook teachers have worked together both in grade level teams and as content teams to address instructional standard alignment, common assessment development and to review results from recent student assessments. Reeds Brook students are encountering the newly developed assessments in their instructional programs as a means to show evidence of having met benchmarks in each of the academic areas. The Reeds Brook school schedule was developed this year to prioritize a new instructional block dedicated to writing instruction. A new math curriculum was also introduced this year in an attempt to align our math instruction with the rigorous expectations of the Maine Learning Results.

Hampden Academy

Graduation requirements at Hampden Academy are now a combination of earning credits (22) and demonstrating proficiency in the target standards in each of the eight content areas. This year’s freshmen are the first group of students who will need to meet these new graduation expectations.

Common assessments have been developed in each of the required courses for freshmen and, although different educators teach the same course (i.e. 6 different teachers have a responsibility for English 9), all students will experience some of the same assessments. Students are given multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency throughout each course. If, upon completion of the course, the student has not yet demonstrated proficiency s/he will be provided with other opportunities (different course, online instruction and assessment, extended school day/year) to complete those requirements.



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Curriculum Office Update

By Mary Giard, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, RSU 22

MEA (Maine Educational Assessment) Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy Spring 2015 (Smarter Balanced) and Alternate Assessment

Starting this spring, Maine will use the Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) for Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy as its annual statewide assessment.

The new MEA for Mathematics and ELA/Literacy, which was developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, replaces the previous state assessments the NECAP (grades 3-8) and the SAT (the third year of high school).

In the past, Measured Progress, a company from New Hampshire, developed and maintained our state assessments and also supported Maine's science assessments at grades 5, 8, and 11.

This year, a new company, American Institute for Research (AIR), has been contracted to administer the reading, writing

and mathematics assessments for grades 3-8 and students in their third year of high school. The Science assessments will continue to be maintained by Measured Progress.

The new MEA developed by Smarter Balanced will measure Maine's recently updated math and English Language Arts standards. In addition to being used by stakeholders to improve instructional practices, the results will be reported for state and federal accountability purposes.

The Department of Education requires that Maine's assessments be administered between March 16 and May 29, 2015.

In RSU 22, the testing dates are scheduled as follows:

- Reeds Brook Middle School,

March 30-April 10.

- George B. Weatherbee School and Wagner Middle School, April 5-17.

- Leroy H. Smith School, April 27-May 8.

- Hampden Academy, May 11-29 (the last week is for makeups).

Unlike the NECAP assessment, the new MEA is computerized, and students take it using laptop computers. Both the math and ELA/literacy components of the MEA include computer-adaptive tests that are customized to each student.

During the test, the difficulty of the questions changes based on student responses. In this way, Smarter Balanced says the adaptive tests provide more precise information about student achievement in less time than a "fixed-form" test in

which all students see the same set of questions.

Students in grades 3-8 are already familiar with computer-adaptive tests, which are a feature of the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) tests that they take in the fall.

The new MEA also has a "performance task" component, in which students are tested on a classroom activity that is closely scripted and presented by the classroom teacher a day or two prior to the test. Smarter Balanced says performance tasks challenge students to apply their knowledge and skills to respond to real-world problems. They are meant to measure capacities such as depth of understanding, research skills, and complex analysis.

Frequently Asked Questions regarding the new MEA

What technology tool will my child use to take the new assessments?

Students will use either an Apple laptop or a Chrome Book. Both have keyboards and students are practicing on them now. No paper/pencil tests will be administered in RSU 22 for spring 2015.

What if my child has been identified as a special education student? How will s/he

take the assessments?

RSU 22 has uploaded accommodations for students who have IEPs (Individual Educational Plans) or 504 (non-special education identification) plans. Accommodations will be provided, if needed, based on the individual plans.

Will there be any tools for all students to access while taking the tests?

Yes. The following universal tools will be available for any students to use: highlighting, math tools, spell check, an online notepad, expandable passages (make the print larger), strikethroughs, a zoom tool and an English dictionary and glossary to use for the math segment of the assessments.

Who has been trained to give and proctor the tests?

All teachers in RSU 22, as well

as many educational technicians, have taken a mini course to familiarize themselves with the testing format and to learn more about the assessments.

Please visit the Maine State Department of Education's web site for more information. Here is a link to frequently asked questions: <http://www.maine.gov/doe/assessment/math-ela/faqs/index.html>

2 HA Robotics teams qualify for VEX World Championships

(Continued from page 1)

Both teams meet after school with Hampden Academy technology education instructors Todd Moore and Charlie Huff.

"I'm really proud of our kids," says Mr. Moore. "Both teams made huge strides since the beginning of the [robotics] season."

The next challenge for the Hampden robotics teams will be to raise funds to compete in the world championship event.

"We have to raise about \$9,000 in the next month," said Mr. Moore. "Registration is \$850 per team, and we'll need to cover transportation and lodging expenses."

The Hampden B-Hampden A-

Cape B alliance lost only one match en route to winning the tournament championship. The elimination rounds are all best-of-three matches, and the Hampden B-Hampden A-Cape B alliance prevailed 2-0 in the quarterfinals, 2-1 in the semifinals, and 2-0 in the championship round.

In the championship series, they beat an alliance of teams from York High School, John Bapst Memorial High School, and Waldo County Homeschoolers.

Their opponents in the other two elimination rounds were alliances that included Cape Elizabeth, Biddeford, and Westbrook high schools in the quarterfinals and Yarmouth, John Bapst, and Greeley high schools in the semifinals.

In addition to winning the tournament championship, the two Hampden teams also received special awards as a result of their performance. The Hampden A team received the Amaze Award, which is presented to a team with "an amazing, well rounded and top performing robot." The Hampden B team received the Sportsmanship Award, which is voted on by all of the teams participating in the tournament.

In the qualifying rounds, the Hampden B team placed third out of 30 teams with a 5-1-1 record, while the Hampden A team placed 7th with a 5-2 record.

In robotics competitions, each team has one robot, but the matches involve two robots facing off against two other robots.

In the preliminary rounds, the



Members of the Hampden Academy Robotics Team compete in the VEX Robotics state tournament.

teams and robots are paired together by computer, with different pairings for each match.

However, for the elimination rounds, the teams compete in three-team alliances. The top eight teams get to be alliance captains and select lower ranking teams as alliance partners. The teams pick in rank order, and the Hampden B team, which picked third, selected the Hampden A team as its first alliance partner. Later, when the time came to select a third team for the alliance, they decided that the Cape B robot could score in ways that would complement the scoring abilities of the Hampden robots.

When the teams get to the World

Championships in Louisville, they will compete as individual teams, not as an alliance. They will be paired with other teams by computer in the preliminary rounds. If they reach the elimination rounds, they'll compete as a member of a three-team alliance.

In addition to the Hampden and Cape Elizabeth teams, two other teams from Maine qualified for the VEX World Championships—a team from the Maine School of Science and Mathematics in Limestone, which received the Excellence Award at the Maine State VEX Championship, and a team from Yarmouth High School, which received the Design Award.

Benefit Supper for Serena Morris

A Spaghetti Dinner to benefit Hampden Academy teacher Serena Morris is being held on Saturday, March 28, from 4:30 to 6:30 at Hampden Academy.

Serena has recently been diagnosed with Stage 2 Breast Cancer. She has given so much to the community and school system over her years. Please help her by showing your support.

The cost of the dinner is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children 12 and under, and \$15 for families.

The Story about School Lunch . . .

By Chris Greenier

Director of School Nutrition
Regional School Unit #22

School Lunch has always faced harsh criticism - "Mystery meat, too high in fat, too high in starch, over cooked, under cooked, too hot, too cold, too much salt, too little salt, unhealthy chocolate milk every day, and in most recent years, the leading cause of childhood obesity. So, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the federal agency that helps fund the nation's School Nutrition Programs, and Congress set out to reform the National School Lunch Program and make it, and our children, slimmer and healthier.

In 2010, Congress passed the Healthy and Hunger-Free Kids Act, which calls for healthier foods and age-appropriate portion sizes. The new school meals focus on more whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, only low-fat or non-fat milk, and less sodium and fat. It is very difficult indeed to dispute the value of these. Now, cut to the cafeteria!

I'll use RSU 22's School Nutrition Program to discuss these regulations. For over a decade, our program has promoted and expanded the use of whole grains (WG), using only WG brown rice, mostly WG bread, adding whole wheat flour to most of our school baked products, WG cereals, WG pancakes, and on and on. New regulations now require that ALL grains served or sold must be WG rich. This means, the crust on pizza, the breading on chicken nuggets and fish sticks, the cookies and snacks we sell in a la carte lines and all pasta must be whole grain. It didn't take long to realize that changing so many kid-friendly foods was not going to be well-accepted by the kids. They are not. Many of our menu items look and taste different from what the kids were used to - not always bad,



just different, and the kids don't like it. Many times I have to agree.

Our Nutrition Program has always included mostly fresh fruits and vegetables. We have large and diverse salad bars in our middle and high schools. We have a USDA funded Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program at the Leroy Smith School, and devoted parents, staff, and students working to expand our school garden and apple orchard. We buy from local growers during the season as much as we can. We want our kids to eat fruit and vegetables!! All school meals include 5 meal components - 2 servings of fruit/vegetable, 1 serving of meat/meat alternate, 1 serving of bread/grain, and 1 serving of milk. Added to that is a weekly legume requirement and a weekly dark green or yellow/orange vegetable requirement. We've introduced things like hummus and beans to the menus. The bright colored vegetables was easy - we have always served them. Students may refuse 1 or 2 of those components when they get a meal. This has never changed. What has changed is that ALL students MUST have a serving of fruit or vegetable on

VS.



their lunch and breakfast tray - no exceptions. What happens to that fruit or vegetable if the student does not want to eat it? You guessed it - into the trash - very costly trash!

That brings us to the financial piece. In a perfect world money would not be a factor in providing what we know is best for the health of our children. The RSU 22 School Nutrition Program is a self-supporting "business." We rely on food sales and federal and state reimbursement, which is based on the numbers of free, reduced, and paid meals we provide. It becomes a vicious cycle. When meal participation is down, revenue is down. That revenue, or income, pays for all our food, labor and benefits, equipment, etc. District budget/taxpayer monies do not help fund our program. It's children's participation that does. Our programs are not seeking to make profit, but rather, just like all of us, to make ends meet.

As the Director of the RSU 22 School Nutrition Program and a Registered Dietitian, my biggest challenge and goal is to feed children so they are equipped to learn and to be healthy people. The

challenge of meeting regulations and keeping our program financially solvent is a slippery slope to be sure. We are continually trying new items and recipes to find foods that hit the marks. Some work, some don't. Please work with your children to help them understand these changes. I listen to the kids and to you. Our meal participation is most definitely down. If "breakfast for lunch" is what the elementary kids want, I'll menu it more often. If chocolate (skim) milk means the kids will drink some of their needed calories and nutrients, we'll serve it every day as a choice. Hungry kids can't learn!

We all want the same things. Please encourage your kids to take school meals. It is still the healthiest and best bargain in town. Studies, one from JAMA Pediatrics, recently examined lunches brought from home, of 337 students, K-8. They contained almost double the amount of sodium, 40% less fruit, and 88% fewer vegetables as National School Lunch Program meals. Additionally, 90% of packed lunches included desserts, chips or sweetened beverages - not permitted in our program meals. And it costs a lot of money and time to pack lunches!

I am determined to make RSU 22's School Nutrition Program the best it can be. I don't agree with all the regulations - some hurt our program in ways that were not foreseen. I know the students don't understand why we have made so many changes. I believe children and adults should make healthy choices, to eat all foods with variety and moderation and to be active in their lives. I am very proud of our School Nutrition Program and Staff!

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Advances in knowledge about concussions prompt RSU 22, many other

"We know a lot more about concussions today than we did even a couple of years ago," says RSU 22 school nurse Barbara Parent.

And that, she says, is why RSU 22, along with many other school districts in Maine, have adopted now policies that are changing the way we deal with concussions.

"It used to be that when you were hit in the head during a game, as long as you seemed to be oriented and didn't have a severe headache, you'd go back into the game," she said. "Now, we know that you can still have a concussion even if you don't have those classic symptoms—and that even when those symptoms go away, you're not necessarily ready to return to competition."

Mrs. Parent says the new policy, which was adopted in November 2012, tells coaches to watch out for a list of symptoms after a player has been hit on the head.

"If a student gets hit and has any of those symptoms, he or she is done playing that day," she said. "The student is taken out of the game or practice immediately."

At the high school level, the

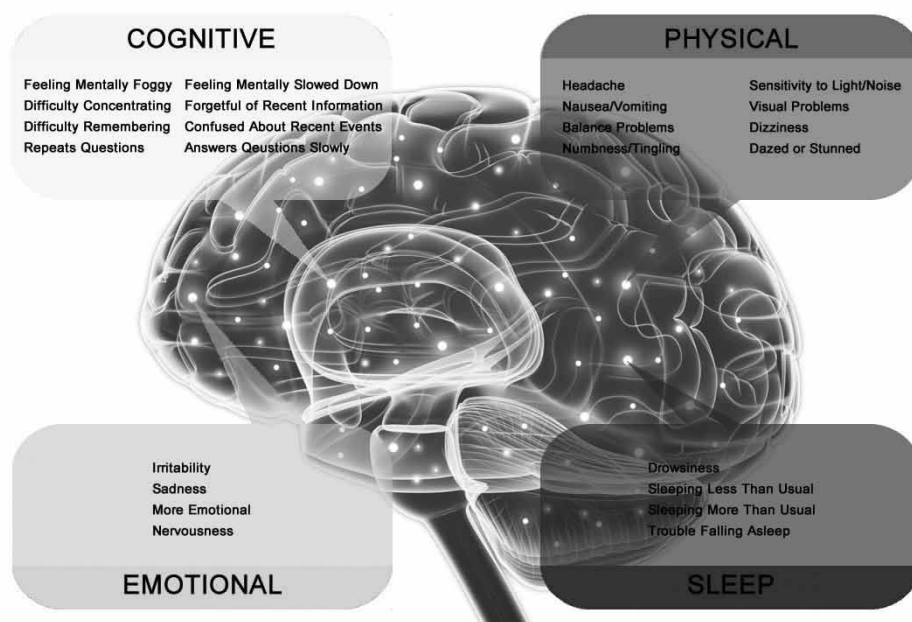
district uses a program called "ImPACT" (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) to determine when a student with a concussion can return to play.

ImPACT includes a computerized test that measures verbal and visual memory, processing speed, and reaction time. Athletes who play a contact sport take a baseline ImPACT test when they start playing the sport. If they get injured, they take the test again after their symptoms have gone away to see how their score compares to their baseline.

"If the ImPACT score isn't back up to baseline, the athlete doesn't play," Mrs. Parent says. "They don't do any activity until they've returned to baseline, no matter how long that takes. We have a physician who looks at the results and tells us whether the athlete is ready to return to athletics."

She says some students whose symptoms have disappeared still score well below their baseline on the ImPACT test.

"What we now know is that their brains can still be impacted from the concussion even though



the physical symptoms have gone away," she says. "These are kids who would have been back on the field just a few years ago. They would have been at risk for second-impact syndrome, which is extremely dangerous and can even be fatal."

Studies are currently being done to assess whether the ImPACT system is accurate with middle-school-

age children. However, students who get a concussion don't return to the playing field—or the practice field—until their primary care physician clears them to play.

Mrs. Parent says the new policy allows for academic accommodations for students who have a concussion.

"Students who have been impacted by a concussion are often

HA working with students, families who are pursuing alternatives to traditional school programs

Hampden Academy has forged relationships with students and families who are pursuing alternatives to our traditional school program. A case in point is Sadie Webb, a sophomore with a passion for dance.

Sadie made the decision to aggressively pursue her dreams, which meant that she couldn't attend Hampden Academy full time.

She initially looked at signing up with a virtual charter school, but after talking with with HA Principal Ruey Yehle and her guidance counselor, Sadie found that Hampden Academy could offer her the flexibility that she needed to carry out her plan.

To say that Sadie's schedule is crowded—and rigorous—is an understatement, as she devotes 25 to 40 hours a week to dance in one form or another.

Every other weekday morning, she dances for three hours with the Bossov Ballet Theatre at MCI.

Every evening, she dances with the Robinson Ballet and Thomas School of Dance, taking classes in ballet, pointe, pas de deux, contemporary, and modern. Her evening classes range from two to four hours each night.

On weekends she rehearses with the Robinson Ballet Company and the Bangor Ballet (the company attached to Thomas School of Dance). Rehearsals on the weekends range from three to eight hours a day, depending on the season and what the groups are rehearsing for.

While carrying out that rigorous dance schedule, Sadie takes College Preparatory Biology at Hampden Academy 7 out of every 10 school days, and she takes online classes in English and math that are provided by Hampden Academy. She also home schools in U.S. History

with her mom and step dad.

Sadie says a lot of people are helping her make that schedule work.

"I definitely owe a big thank you to my various academic teachers for their flexibility, and to my dance schools, as well as my mom, Alegra, and my step dad, Bill, for supporting me and creating endless opportunities for me this year," she says. "Thanks to everyone's patience and understanding, I have been able to

HAMPDEN ACADEMY



continue dedicating my time to my passion without compromising my academics."

Mrs. Yehle reports that other students and their families take advantage of accessing one or more courses at Hampden Academy while

participating in homeschooling and community opportunities. She encourages families who homeschool their children to reach out to the age/grade appropriate school to learn about partnership options.

AP Statistics teacher at HA receives \$3,200 grant after number of female students with passing scores increases by 6

Mike Ditzel, who teaches AP Statistics at Hampden Academy, has received a \$3,200 grant from the AP STEM Access Program, an initiative to increase opportunities for women and underrepresented minorities in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields funded by a \$5 million grant from Google.

Mr. Ditzel was awarded the grant because he had six additional female students enrolled in his AP Statistics course in 2014 than in 2013.

Because the enrollment of women increased by at least five, Mr. Ditzel earned \$100 for each one of the 32 students in his class who received a passing score (3, 4, or 5) on the 2014 AP Statistics exam.

The College Board, which operates the Advance Placement system, noticed that the number of women taking Mr. Ditzel's course had increased by six and sent an email to Hampden Academy Principal Ruey Yehle last fall saying that HA qualified for the grant and asking if the school wanted to accept it. Of course, the answer was yes.

Mr. Ditzel said he didn't do anything special to attract female students.

"It was just luck," he said. "We just happened to have an increase of six women in the class."

Mr. Ditzel said AP Statistics has been offered at HA for nine years, and female students have generally comprised between 50 and 60 percent of the class.

"We've always had a driven population of females here who aren't afraid to extend themselves," he said. "They're very willing to take a risk in a challenging course."

The grant came in the form of 32 gift codes worth \$100 each at DonorsChoose.org, an organization that operates a website that seeks to match projects posted by public school teachers with donors who are willing to fund them.



Kerry Quigley (left) and Rachel Kocik (right) both took AP Stats with Mr. Ditzel last year and were 2 of the 26 females that helped Hampden Academy qualify for the grant. The picture does not capture everything that was ordered but it does some of the items.

school districts to adopt new policies

not able to resume normal academics," she says. "If necessary, we may limit their homework load to a minimum and delay taking any class tests or quizzes until they've returned to their norm. We have a list of possible classroom accommodations."

Mrs. Parent says the focus on proper recognition and treatment of concussions isn't limited to athletes.

"We're also concerned about students who receive concussion injuries in gym class or at home," she says. "The protocol is that we give their parents an information packet about concussions, which includes a form to give to their doctor. When the doctor feels the student is ready to resume normal activities, he or she can sign the form and send it in. Until we get that, the student doesn't participate in gym class, go out to recess or participate in any physical activity at school." The policy applies to students of all ages. "We're as concerned about the 2nd grader who falls on the playground as we are the soccer player who gets knocked on the head," she says.

Mrs. Parent says the changes in the way physicians and schools look at concussions occurred in part because some athletes complained that although their symptoms had gone away, they were still struggling in the classroom or at their job—getting confused more easily or having trouble concentrating.

"They started doing intelligence tests on people who had concussions, and discovered that they weren't kidding—they really were impacted," she said.

Another thing that's changed about concussions is the recommended treatment, which is totally different from what it used to be.

"The brain needs complete blackout rest," she says. "We instruct them to lie in a dark room with no use of electronics of any kind—no cell phones, no TV, no computer, and no iPad. Just sleep as much as possible. When you're sleeping, your brain is healing."

Not surprisingly, Mrs. Parent says most teens don't like it.

"It's horribly boring for teens," she says. "After about 8 hours, they've had it with the black room. They hate it, but it's worth it. Sometimes a student will come back to school prematurely, and I'll have to call his parents and send him back to the black room. It's amazing the difference I see in the kids who follow it. They recuperate much more quickly."

It is important that people understand that you don't have to lose consciousness to have a concussion and that you may still be impacted by it for a time even after the physical symptoms resolve. Concussions can range from mild to severe but all should be taken seriously.

Hampden Academy National Honor Society Tutoring Available



**for students in grades 2-5
Edythe Dyer Library
Mondays and Wednesdays
(when school is in session)
4:30 to 6:30 p.m.**

National Honor Society students from Hampden Academy will be available to tutor 2nd to 5th grade students attending RSU 22 schools. Tutoring will be offered Mondays and Wednesdays from 4:00 to 6:30 at the Edythe Dyer Library in Hampden when school is in session.

Parents should schedule half-hour appointments with the library one week in advance. Tutoring is free of charge.

To schedule an appointment, please contact Mary Beckett, Youth Services Librarian at Edythe L. Dyer Community Library at 207-862-3550 or by email at mbeckett@edythedyer.lib.me.us.

'Skating machine' Justin White earns three medals at Special Olympics

"He's a skating machine. He gets on the ice and he just goes."

That's how special education teacher Ira Weissman describes Justin White, a junior in the Life Skills program at Hampden Academy.

Justin uses a walker to get around school, but when he's on the ice, he uses a sit-skate, which is like a sled with two skate blades on the underside. Justin sits on the sled, gets buckled in, and propels himself around the ice using a pair of short hockey sticks with metal teeth on the end.

When the class makes its regular trip to the ice rink at Sawyer Arena on Fridays, Justin uses his sit-skate to do laps around the rink with the other skaters.

"He does a really great job," says Brett Leavitt, educational technician in the Life Skills program. "This is his third year at Hampden Academy, and every year he's able to do more and more laps during our time at Sawyer. This year, he's been doing laps right up to the end of the session."

Justin took his sit-skating to another level at the Maine Special Olympics State Winter Games Jan. 25-27 at Sugarloaf, where he com-



Justin White on his sit-skate.

peted in the 100-meter, 300-meter, and 800-meter skating events, winning two gold medals and a silver medal.

"We practice on an indoor rink [Sawyer Arena], but Sugarloaf is



Justin with medals.

an outdoor rink," says Mr. Weissman. "It's a lot harder to skate on an outdoor rink—it's slower and you have to deal with the wind and the cold. Justin can skate much faster at Sawyer, but he has to work a lot

harder on the outdoor rink."

When Justin competed in the 300-meter event at the Winter Olympics, he actually did an extra lap.

"He didn't want to stop at three laps, he wanted to do four," Mr. Weissman said. "When we go skating at Sawyer arena, Justin is the only one who's going from the minute we start to the last minute of ice time. He skates the whole time."

When Justin started using the sit-skate during his first year at HA, it was a challenge to keep it going in a straight line.

"It's very slippery, and if you push just a little bit harder with one arm than the other, you go off to one side

or the other," Mr. Weissman said. "You have to balance it just right to go straight. It didn't take very long to figure it out, and he's good at it now. He doesn't need anyone to help steer it."

HA Drama Club performs 'Once Upon a Wolf' March 19, 20, 21 at PAC

What would happen if the Big Bad Wolf in Little Red Riding Hood decided he didn't want to eat anyone any more and wanted to find a way to be a hero instead of a villain?

That's the theme of the children's play, *Once Upon a Wolf*, by Steff DeFerie, which was performed by the Hampden Academy Drama Club for elementary and middle school audiences March 19 and 20 at the Performing Arts Center.

Two performances were held on March 19 for students from Wagner Middle School, Smith School, Hermon Elementary School, and Etna-Dixmont Elementary School, along with some students from the Hampden Academy Life Skills program.

Two more performances were held for McGraw and Weatherbee Schools on March 20.

In addition, a public performance was held on Saturday, March 21. Admission was by donation, and all proceeds will benefit the Hampden Academy drama program.

Freshman Nick Parker played

the title character, while senior Meredith Prescott played Granny Stinkyfeet, the rather irascible narrator.

The various fairy tale characters were played by seniors Jayme Bickford, Sam Biddlecom, Mikayla Burrige, Becca Miller, Tien Misler, Megan Morin, and Dan Rice; juniors Patrick Kearns and Yvonne Marshall; sophomores Justin Hatch, Paige Malkow, and Ruby Ramsay; and freshmen Jack Burrige, Alexandra Buzzini, Garrett Soule, and Orion Zydlewski.

The student directors were Kelly Hart, a senior, and Krystal Grant, a junior. Junior Lydia Tilley designed and operated the lights and sound.

The play was directed by Jenn



Tien Misler, Mikayla Burrige, Nick Parker, and Meredith Prescott rehearse a scene from "Once Upon a Wolf."

Guare, English teacher at HA, who described it as a "fractured fairy tale."

She said the story line was that the Big Bad Wolf decides that he is a

vegetarian, doesn't want to eat anyone, and doesn't want to be the bad guy any more. He goes through a number of different fairy tales looking for a way where he can be a hero instead of a villain.

She said the play has a happy ending, because it was written for children, but she doesn't say what fairy tale the Big Bad Wolf winds up in "because part of the fun for the audience is seeing how he finds his way."

Ms. Guare noted that *Once Upon a Wolf* was published in 1997. It premiered at the Theater at Monmouth, so it has some Maine roots.

Jill Goff wins Hampden Academy 'Poetry Out Loud' competition at PAC

Senior Jill Goff won the Hampden Academy Poetry Out Loud competition December 23 at the Performing Arts Center.

Jill recited "The Daring One," by Edwin Markham, in the first round of the school-wide competition and "To an Athlete Dying Young," by A. E. Housman, in the second round.

Freshmen Danielle Barrett and Orion Zydlewski placed second and third, respectively, in the Hampden Academy competition.

Also competing were: Meredith Prescott, Avery Maietta, Jacob Michaud, Lydia Tilley, Megan Morin, Bryanna Mooers, Kati Gardella, Ruby El-Hajj, Lily Salfi, Elizabeth Willard, Cassandra McKay, Harmony Stetson, Daija Misler, Cassie Staples, Justin Hatch, Nick Parker, and Katie Wilbanks.

HA English teacher Sam Manhart was the master of ceremonies

at the HA Poetry Out Loud Competition.

By winning the HA competition, Jill qualified for the Northern Maine Regional Finals, which were held February 27 at the HA Performing Arts Center. She represented the school well but did not advance to the state finals.

An unusual feature of the HA competition, which was held the day before Christmas vacation, was that Reed Farrar, English teacher at Reeds Brook Middle School, brought several hundred students to watch and listen to the performances. As a result, the HA competitors were able to recite their poems in front of a large audience.

Now in its 10th year, Poetry Out Loud encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance, and competition.

Poetry Out Loud is organized by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Poetry Foundation, and is administered at the state level by the Maine Arts Com-

mission. Participating high schools select school champions, who compete in two regional finals at which 10 students are selected to participate in the Maine State Finals.

Over 50 swimmers participate in HA Swimathon

Over 50 swimmers ranging in age from 4 to 60 participated the Hampden Academy swim team's annual Swimathon, which was held December 23 at the Lura Hoit Memorial Pool.

Swim team coach Sam Manhart said funds are still coming in, but the total will be over \$1,500.

"We reached out to youngsters in the district, and every school in RSU 22 was represented," he said.

He said one of the swimmers was a 4-year-old from Highland Preschool. Other swimmers included local students who swim for

the Hurricanes and Barracudas, members of the HA swim team, HA swim team alumni, and academic instructors from HA.

Funds raised by the Swimathon are used to support swimming lesson scholarships, the Hampden Academy Swim Team, and the two Susan Abraham Senior Swimmer Scholarships that are presented each year at graduation.

If you didn't do the swimathon this year, get in touch with Sam Manhart at Hampden Academy or via e-mail at smanhart@rsu22.us to take part next year.

16 in grades 3-6 perform in Readers Theater sponsored by HAPPY, Library, Adult Ed

Sixteen students in grades 3-6 participated in a Readers Theater production of three short plays on January 24, thanks to a team effort by the Adult Education program, the Edythe Dyer Library, and the Hampden Area Players youth theater program.

The program was run by the Hampden Academy Players and their faculty advisor, HA English teacher Rob Kissinger.

The program started at 9 a.m. with a couple of dramatic warm-up exercises. Then the students were divided into three groups, based roughly on age, and each group learned a little bit about theater, acting, voice projection, and stage movement.

Each group worked with the high school students on a different play. They practiced vocalizing the play, reciting the lines while adding a little more drama to their voices.

The library provided pizza for lunch, and from 1 to 1:45 p.m., parents were able to watch their



Readers Theater performance.

children perform three reader's theater shows—similar to regular theater, but with the actors reading their lines instead of memorizing them.

The three productions were:

- "The True Story of the Three Little Pigs," which had the youngest cast, with three 3rd graders and a 4th grader. The cast members were: Caleb Moody, Lucy Eschman, May Theriault, and Skylar Manhart.

- "Master Maid," a Norwegian play about a super woman. The cast included: Braeden Soule, Gracie Farrar, Ali Nason, and Lily Woodside.

- "40 Fortunes," an Iranian play about a young man who poses as a fortunate teller with some unpredictable results. The cast included: LilyAnne Keeley, Renee Drake, Anita Oebel, Olivia Ferriter, and Sophie O'Clair.

The Hampden Academy students who worked with the youngsters were HAPPY theater company members Mikayla Burrige, Jack Burrige, Mikayla Patel, Tien Misler, Daija Misler, Rosie Frost, Justin Hatch, Josie Lawrence, and Lydia Tilley.

Tutors at Writeous Writing Center to offer on-line tutoring starting this spring

Tutors at the Hampden Academy Writeous Writing Center want to do everything they can to help students become better writers, and they're trying to make the process as convenient as possible.

Starting this spring, they're even offering on-line tutoring for students who aren't able to come to the Writing Center.

Abigail Elkins, a junior tutor who completed the Advanced Writing Seminar class during the fall semester, said students can send a paper to the Writing Center on Google Docs by sharing the piece with writingcenter@rsu22.us.

"We'll read the paper and provide comments about what we like about it and how it could be improved," she said.

Writing Center tutor Xander Karris, also a junior, said on-line tutoring is consistent with the overall theme of the Writing Center, which is to improve the writer, not necessarily the piece.

"Obviously, we want to help the writer to improve the piece he's working on, but the whole purpose

is to help the student become a better writer," he said.

Writing Center faculty advisor Jenn Guare said students can access the Writing Center via Google Docs if they don't have study halls or if they don't feel comfortable coming into the center for some reason.

"We're looking forward to having a new way for students to make use of our tutoring services," she says.

Ms. Guare says on-line tutoring is still new to the Writing Center, but the idea was brought up during the Advanced Writing Seminar class last fall.

She said the idea for on-line tutoring came from Keenan Soule, who took the class last year.

On-line tutoring has advantages and disadvantages.

Xander points out that there aren't any time constraints with on-line tutoring. On the other hand, on-line tutoring doesn't allow for social interaction between tutors and students, which is often an important part of the process.

"We're primarily a face-to-face tutoring center," says Ms. Guare.

"We're happy to offer on-line tutoring if for some reason writers can't come into the Writing Center, but we would prefer that their first op-

tion would be to come to the Center and have a face-to-face session. We do think the sharing component is really important."

News from RSU 22 Adult and Community Education

Health Career Training Programs:

We are, again this year, excited to be able to offer our residents access to a wider variety of career training courses through partnerships with Orono Commons and OHI such as Certified Nurse's Aide (CNA), PSS, CRMA, and MHSS. We are now able to also offer a series of new health occupations courses that will allow students to pursue careers such as Pharmacy Technician, Dental Assisting, Medical Coding & Billing, Electronic Health Records, Phlebotomy Technician and Medical Terminology. These courses offer a combination of on-line and live laboratory work that allows students to prepare for national level certification tests in six to twelve months.

HiSET Testing:

The State of Maine has announced that it has contracted with Educational Testing Services to provide its High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) as a replacement for its GED Test starting in January 2014. The HiSET will essentially cover the same academic material as the GED and will be offered by pen-and-paper or electronically. Maine is one of eleven states to contract with HiSET for its high school equivalency credential program. The good news for RSU 22 is that we are now able to offer this new high school equivalency test in Hampden, whereas we had been unable to procure a GED Test Site License in the past. Please contact our office at 862-6422 if you have any questions about the HiSET or want to schedule HiSET testing.

Academic Lab:

Based on increasing demand from students, we have created, this fall, an Academic Lab class based in the library at Hampden Academy. The lab is open Tuesday nights from 5:30-8:30pm. Students can access the lab to receive individualized basic literacy tutoring and ESL instruction, to complete Accuplacer, CASAS and HiSET testing, and to work on high school level academic material. Please contact our office at 862-6422 for more information.

Distance Learning Courses:

We continue to offer our residents nearly 500 interactive online courses through our partnership with Ed2Go. A wide variety of professional development and personal enrichment courses are available to register for. All classes are lead by expert instructors, fit into convenient six week formats and are reasonably priced. Some of the more popular courses are listed below and the entire catalog can be found at: www.ed2go.com/rsu22.

Introduction to Microsoft Excel and Word 2013
QuickBooks 2014
Introduction to Windows 8
Beginner's Guide to Getting Published
Learn to Buy and Sell on eBay
A to Z Grant Writing
Jump Start your Career with LinkedIn
Test Prep: LSAT, SAT, ACT, GRE, Praxis, GMAT
Luscious, Low-Fat Lightning Quick Meals

Beginner Blogging and Podcasting
Introduction to PC Security
Math and Grammar Refresher
Stocks, Bonds & Investing
Pleasures of Poetry
Adobe Acrobat Photoshop
Genealogy Basics
Computer Skills for the Workplace
Keyboarding

Personal Enrichment Courses:

We still have room in the following personal enrichment courses this winter and spring:

Basic CPR Training
Basic First Aid
Zumba
Making Tea 101
Beekeeping for Beginners
Intermediate Beekeeping
Penny Rug Making
Baking Delicious Baklava
Intermediate iPad
Boston Flower Show Trip

Wedding Planning on a Budget
Soccer Officiating
Organic Gardening
Introduction to Fly Fishing
Basic Fly Casting
Primitive Rug Hooking
Let's Make Whoopie Pies
Baking Delicious Biscotti
How to Buy & Sell on eBay
Preventing Identity Theft

www.riversideadulthoodpartnership.com

207-862-6422

Sophomore class at HA focuses on community outreach and service

The mission of the sophomore class at Hampden Academy is community outreach and service.

With that in mind, the class has recently sponsored a movie night to benefit the Hampden Food Cupboard and held its annual Valentine Dance to raise money for Shaw House.

The class is also organizing Hampden

Academy's participation in the Hike for the Homeless and may sponsor a second movie night.

The first movie night was held January 23 in the Performing Arts Center. The feature attraction was *Guardians of the Galaxy*, a 2014 superhero film that received a 91% positive rating from Rotten Tomatoes and was nominated for an Oscar for special effects.

The price of admission was a donation of canned goods or other nonperishable food item.

The Valentine Dance, for parents and children in grades 3-5, was held on Tuesday, Feb. 10, at Hampden Academy. The dance is an annual event that has been sponsored by



Sophomore class officers (l. to r.) with food items: Hunter Spencer, Julia Sicard, Daija Misler, Paul Casavant, and Sam Walker.

the sophomore class for more than 20 years. The dance raised \$260 for the Shaw House, an emergency shelter in Bangor that is designated to provide a safe haven away from the dangers of the streets for youth age 10-18 who are homeless and at risk.

The Hike for the Homeless is an annual event that benefits the Bangor Area Homeless Shelter.

This year's hike will be held on Saturday, April 11. Individuals, families, and teams can register online at www.bangorshelter.org.

The sophomore class officers are Hunter Spencer, Julia Sicard, Daija Misler, Paul Casavant, and Sam Walker. The class advisors are Peter Wagner and Emily Albee.

Congratulations!

Eastern Maine Indoor Track League Champions



HAMPDEN ACADEMY GIRLS INDOOR TRACK—Front row (l. to r.): Kelly Martin, Bryanna Parker, Chelsea Baker, and Maria Andrew. Back row: Elizabeth Labun, Kerry Quigley, Mary Dube, Brooke Hardy, Emily Tripp, Cheyanne Stone, Krystal Grant, Lindsay Oliver, Simone Withers, and Christie Woodside.

Eastern Maine Indoor Track League Champions



HAMPDEN ACADEMY BOYS INDOOR TRACK—Front row (l. to r.): Robert Frye, and Jonathan Seymour. Back row: Marcus Theriault, Cameron Mathies, William Webb, Joshua Redmond, Tyler Moore, Paul Casavant, Tanner Dunham, Jarrett Osborne, Jacob Bailey, Keenan Soule, and Alexander Charette.

Penobscot Valley Middle League Champions



WAGNER MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL—Front row (l. to r.): Camyrn Bouchard, Libby Nute, Eliza Murphy, and Madison Humphrey. Back row: Jenna Pelletier, Alydia Brilliant, Jasmine Willett, Jordan Lockard, Zara Misler, Coach Chris Gould, Catrina El-Hajj, Kelsea Wortham, Megan Deans, and Emily Murphy.

Eastern Maine Champions



HAMPDEN ACADEMY UNIFIED SPORTS BASKETBALL—Seated (l. to r.): Isaac Miller, Zach Ewing, Isaiah Palmer, Robbie Martin, and Coach Linda McDonald. Standing: Coach Andrea Lee, Alex Ross, Michael Austin, Noah Parker, Stephanie Walker, David Manzo, Dakota Clement, Will Huston, Culley Wilson, and Drew Kelso. Not present for photo: Kenneth Brewer-Fraze and Ted Harris.



Isaiah Palmer (25) drives in for a layup, along with Dakota Clement (13) and Zach Ewing (15).

HA wins EM title game in Unified Sports Basketball

(Continued from page 1)

Noah Parker, Stephanie Walker, and Culley Wilson, seniors; Dakota Clement, Zachary Ewing, and Robert Martin, juniors; and Michael Austin, Kenneth Brewer-Fraze, Ted Harris, Isaac Miller, Isaiah Palmer, and Alex Ross, freshmen.

The MPA requires unified teams to play a minimum of four games and a maximum of eight games and have two practices per week.

The Hampden team had a four-game schedule this year, and compiled a record of 3 wins and 1 loss.

The team beat Waterville, 40-12, at Waterville; lost a thriller at home to Oceanside, 34-33; beat Messalonskee, 49-36 at Oakland; and beat Coney, 47-34, in the final regular-season home game.

All eight of the unified basketball teams in Eastern Maine were eligible for the MPA's Unified Sports Basketball Eastern Maine Tournament. The Broncos were seeded third and hosted No. 6 Oak Hill on Tuesday, March 10, at the Hampden Academy gym. The Broncos won, 34-20.

Hampden traveled to No. 2 seed Lewiston for the semifinal game on Thursday, March 12. The Broncos won, 37-36, in double overtime.

Oceanside, which handed the Broncos their only regular-season loss, defeated top-seeded Winthrop in the other semifinal game, to set up a rematch in the Eastern Maine final on Tuesday, March 17, at Hampden.

This time, the Broncos won, 44-36, to capture the Eastern Maine title.

The state championship game was scheduled for Thursday, March 19, at Lewiston High School against 8-3 Lisbon, which defeated previously undefeated Brunswick, 34-32, in the Western Maine final.

In addition to the regular season games, the Broncos played in a Special Olympics Unified Basketball tournament March 11 at the University of Maine.

Coach Lee said it's been a great season for the unified team.

"They're an awesome group of students—both the athletes and partners," she says. "It's a great combination. They've bonded together as a team, and they're very supportive of each other."

She added that the people in the stands at all four regular-season games were very supportive of the kids on both teams.

Mrs. Lee says she feels that the value of the team, for both the players and the school, goes beyond the basketball court.

"Having the unified basketball team at Hampden Academy has improved the climate of the school," she says. "It is so great to see the friendships made simply from being on this team. It has also given several of the students who have never been on a team before the chance to do so."

HA athletic director Mike Bisson says he's hoping to expand the schedule next year. He's also hoping that more high schools in the local area will start unified basketball teams to reduce the amount of travel required.

Garden Club Poster Winner

The Hampden Garden Club has announced that Sophie Kahn, a 4th grader at the George B. Weatherbee School is the Hampden winner of the 2015 Smokey the Bear/Woody Owl poster contest. Sophie's poster was selected from posters created by Weatherbee School 4th graders and has been sent on to the Garden Club Federation of Maine for the state competition. The art teacher at Weatherbee School is Angeli Perrow.





Warden Dan Scott talks to 8th graders about ice fishing safety.

8th graders enjoy day of ice fishing at Hermon Pond



Mr. Haggan and Mrs. Field at the grill.

About 120 8th graders from Reeds Brook Middle School enjoyed one of Maine's unique sporting traditions, spending most of Friday, February 27, ice fishing on Hermon Pond.

The trip was led by 8th grade social studies teacher David Haggan. He was assisted by Warden Dan Scott, Reeds Brook staff members, and about 50 parents and other adults.

Mr. Haggan said the students caught about 40 fish, mostly yellow perch and pickerel, with some brook trout. The largest fish, caught by one of the students, was a 24 inch, 5 pound brook trout.

Students were allowed to keep the fish they caught if they promised to eat them. All other fish went safely back down the hole.

The weather was almost perfect, with sunny skies and 15-degree temperatures. "It was cold, but not too cold," Mr. Haggan said.

The ice was 24 inches thick. Prior to the event, Mr. Haggan and the Warden Service visited the pond to make sure the ice was safe.

The RBMC Student Council gave Mr. Haggan



Drew Johnston with his 24" brook trout—a fish he'll remember for the rest of his life!

\$300 to purchase hot dogs, hamburgers, veggie burgers, and cases of water. In addition, parents brought casseroles, chili, and other food items.

The Wardens gave students lessons on sportsmanship, conservation, and how to handle a fish properly.

They also talked to Mr. Haggan's social studies classes about the law enforcement and legal end of what they do, which meshed well with his social studies units on Maine Studies, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights.

Mr. Haggan said Mainers have been able to enjoy a lot of different outdoor sports throughout the state's history, and ice fishing is a traditional winter activity. "It was a lot of fun," he said. "I don't think the kids will ever forget it."



APRIL 3 CAST—Front row (l. to r.): Abigail Astbury, Gracie Farrar, Augusta Flanagan, Olivia Saucier, and Moxie Flanagan. Back row: LillyAnne Keeley, Aidan Dudley, Garrett Donovan, Jay Hatch, Dylan Willett, Matthew Southard, Sara Reynolds, Josie McFarlin, and Jerdon Kiesman.



APRIL 2 CAST—Front Row (l. to r.): Conor O'Kendley, Evan Cottle, Jordan Lockard, Anjolia Gulliver, Emma Campbell, and Devin Sauer. Middle row: William Drake, Wesley Reynolds, Maxwell Webster, John Barrett, Renee Drake, Sophie Dube, and Autumn Hobbs. Back row: Madison Baker, Mayako Brown, Ethan Gulliver, Wade Brown, and Brielle Coffin.

Wagner has double cast for 'A*B*C*' (America Before Columbus) April 1, 2, 3

This year, the directors of the school play at Wagner Middle School had an interesting dilemma: what do you do when you have 38 actors and a play with only 20 roles?

The answer: double cast it!

Faculty directors Erica Farrar and Cindy Moran were very pleased to see so many students sign up to audition for this year's play, *A*B*C** (*America Before Columbus*), which will be presented April 1, 2, and 3 in the dining area at Wagner.

Following the auditions, Mrs. Farrar and Mrs. Moran were reluctant to cut any actors because they were all so good. So, with a little finagling, they came up with a solution that seems to work. There will be two casts, and each cast will perform once for the school and once for a free performance for the public. And because they know that families love to see their young people perform, there will also be an open dress rehearsal for all families

to see both versions of the show.

One of the principle goals of Wagner's drama program is to expose students to the theatre and develop an interest in and a love for the art.

"With the fifth grade having been at the building for three years now, it is nice to be able to involve younger actors in the process and then see how much they develop and improve over the four year span," said Mrs. Farrar. "We have a handful of seventh graders right now who have

been involved with the play for three years, and their skills are fantastic. We also have a large number of fifth graders involved this year who we are looking forward to directing and encouraging in the theatre arts. Who knows where they might end up someday? Maybe this will encourage them perform for our local community theatre programs like Winterport Open Stage and the local youth theatre, the Hampden Area Players."

(Please turn to page 12)

HA musicians post high ratings at All-State Jazz Festival in Scarborough

Hampden Academy sent three vocalists and three instrumental musicians to the All-State Jazz Festival, which was held on January 9 and 10 at Scarborough High School.

Instrumental music teacher Pat Michaud said the group included Alexandra Buzzini, soprano (voice); Ethan Casavant, trumpet; Noah Gardner, tenor (voice); Bailey Giles, tenor saxophone; Jacob Michaud, drums; and Megan Morin, alto (voice).

“We had the highest-scoring tenor [Noah], the second-highest scoring tenor sax [Bailey], the second-highest scoring drummer [Jacob], the second-highest scoring soprano [Alexandra], one of the three or four highest-scoring trumpet players [Ethan], and one of the highest scoring altos [Megan],” Mr. Michaud said. “They did really well at the auditions. It’s the best we’ve ever done.”

The group went down to Scarborough on Thursday after school, attended practices all day Friday and Saturday morning, and performed in the All-State Jazz Concert on Saturday afternoon.

Bailey, a sophomore tenor saxophonist, said it was a “superfun” experience.

“The director was also a saxophone player, and he gave us all so much knowledge,” Bailey said. “Just being with him for two days was incredible.”

Bailey also said he made a lot of friends over the course of three



All-State Jazz Festival participants—From left: Alexandra Buzzini (soprano-voice), Megan Morin (alto-voice), Noah Gardner (tenor-voice), Jacob Michaud (drums), Ethan Casavant (trumpet), and Bailey Giles (tenor saxophone).

days—some from Hampden Academy and some from other schools.

Noah, also a sophomore, said it was an incredible experience for him.

“I never sang in a jazz vocal ensemble before,” he said. “It was really neat going to a place where everyone is super-talented and you can learn not only from the conductor, but also from other students.”

The vocal ensemble conductor was Darmon Meader, a member of the New York Voices, one of the world’s greatest vocal ensembles.

Noah said he enjoyed connecting with the other students, and he said the concert itself was really fun.

“It was totally different experience than the regular chorus that I’m used to,” he said. “There was one song where the conductor didn’t

plan ahead of time who was going to do solos—he just passed the mic from person to person on stage”

The jazz musicians and vocalists auditioned for the All-State Festival in Augusta last October. Auditions for All-State Orchestra and Chorus were held in Skowhegan in November.

The All-State Music Festival will be held May 14-16 at the University of Southern Maine. Hampden Academy students participating are:

All-State Orchestra—Mark McLaughlin, violin; Jacob Michaud, percussion; Taemar Shearer, violin; and Max Trostel, violin.

All-State Chorus—Ethan Casavant, bass; Julia Fasse, alto; Noah Gardner, tenor; Tien Mislser, soprano; Megan Morin, alto; Erika Olver, soprano; and Ruby Ramsay, alto.

Mr. Michaud said Jacob is the first HA student who made both All-State Jazz Band and the All-State Orchestra three years in a row.



Noah Gardner, Tristan Gardner at Play It Forward III.



Isaiah Olsen and Spencer Canham at Play It Forward III.



Tien Mislser, Ruby Ramsay, Julia Fasse perform.

‘Play It Forward III’ raises \$1,000 to help people affected by mill closing

Pat Michaud’s Music Industry Class at Hampden Academy learned a lot about how the music industry operates last fall, and they raised over \$1,000 in the process to help people affected by the closing of the Bucksport mill.

The students organized “Play It Forward III,” a CD release event that was held January 15 in the Performing Arts Center.

To do that, they had to find student vocalists and musicians to perform original music, conduct auditions, and help with the recording sessions. These were held at the Maine Street Music recording studio in Bangor, which is owned by Andrew Clifford.

“It was amazing,” said Tristan Gardner, a senior. “Mr. Michaud taught us how to run an event and do something productive in the music industry. I

got to produce music, market music, and help other people—three things I love—all in one class. It’s unique for a high school class. Of all the classes I’ve taken, this was one of my favorites.”

Recording sessions at the studio usually started at 8 and sometimes went as late as 1 a.m.

After the songs were recorded, Mr. Clifford produced 100 CDs, most of which were sold at the CD release concert.

HA students who performed at Play It Forward III were Isaiah

Olson, Tristan and Noah Gardner, Dan Rice, Conrad Barberi, Maxx Meether, Nate Haiden, Ethan Casavant, Bailey Giles, Jake Michaud, Megan Morin, Sienna Probert, Yvonne Marshall, Josie Lawrence, Alexandra Buzzini, Abigail Thompson, Jared Pescarino, and Josh Redmond.

Heidi Corliss, Academic Team Leader for Fine Arts, said the students worked at every aspect of Play It Forward III.

“They conducted the auditions, helped run the recording sessions

and learned about the recording process,” she said. “Then they ran the concert, set up who was taking tickets and money at the door, and made the contacts for all the publicity. Their eyes were opened as to how much work is involved in producing a concert. As a result, they owned it.”



Dan Rice, Conrad Barberi, Nate Haiden, Maxx Meether during a recording session.



Bailey Giles (foreground) with Eiji Frey and Ethan Casavant,

Comedy cruise 'Don't Rock the Boat' coming to Reeds Brook April 9, 10

Don't Rock the Boat, a youthful comedy cruise that has laughs coming faster than torpedoes, will be presented by a cast of 27 Reeds Brook Middle School students Thursday and Friday, April 9 and 10, at 7 p.m. on the cafeteria stage.

Aiden Babbitt will play Tom Butterworth, who is determined to be the youngest cruise ship captain in history, even if it means sailing on a converted gunboat named Vengeance with a crew of outcasts from Maritime High School.

Mary Batsie will play Arlene Zane, the young, pretty cruise director, who is practically the only sane character on board.

Other cast members are:

Robert Buzzini, Colby Small, and David Kelly, playing three students from Maritime High School.

Derek Gendreau, playing Mr. Crankmeyer, their teacher.

Sophie O'Clair, playing Jogger, an exercise nut.

Emily Briggs, Teodora Blejery, and Denali Eyles, playing three students who are dreaming of stardom.

Aria Maietta and Sarah Gass, playing Honey Hotchkiss, a fabulous but dumb film star and her secretary, Miss Buford.

Jacob Archer and Ellie Prescott, playing Commodore and Mrs. Withers, retired Navy man and his wife.

Gavin Kearns and Marc Fachiol, playing Antonio, an emotional engineer, and Cody, the seasick second-in-command.

Nate Bailey, playing Victor Bey, the Hollywood producer who hates

Honey.

Emi Verhar, playing Miss Marshall, the insurance company representative.

Chloe Lawrence, playing Nurse, who has trouble giving injections.

Zoe Ellingwood and Phoebe Wagner, playing two elderly passengers.

Eliot Small and Julianne Llerena, playing Max and Trixie, a shady character and his accomplice.

Amelia Verhar and Maddie Buck, playing pirates who are on board without tickets.

Rachel Gardella, and Jordan Robichaud, playing pirate gang members.

Karyn Field and her husband Zach are the directors.

Linda Kehr, who has been the artistic director for Reeds Brook theatrical productions for many years, is designing another amazing set. Student directors are Eliza Parker and Josie Guzman. The "Behind the Scenes" video will be created by Sara Poll and Chloe Baker, and student Isaac Anderson will be assisting with the lighting and sound while Rylan Wintle will be running the curtain. There will be a troupe of student dancers as well, choreographed by Ms. Kelsey De Raps.

The set crew includes Bailey Mallory, Jax McKay, Bailey Anderson, Riley Preston, Annika Witt, Bryan Frost, Brice DeRosby, Gabby Doucette, Samantha Quesnel.

Mrs. Field said she selected *Don't Rock the Boat* because the author, Tim Kelly, writes good comedies for large casts. His comedies also have a lot of parts that have a similar number of lines, rather than two or three parts that do most of the speaking.

The publisher of *Don't Rock the Boat* describes the plot as follows;

"Tom Butterworth is determined to be the youngest cruise ship captain in history, although he is operating a converted gunboat with a crew of high school outcasts and a trio of teenage girl singers who are passing themselves off as a famous show biz act. The engineer is seasick, the cruise hostess is pulling her hair in frustration, and an excitable nurse is practicing giving shots by stabbing oranges and anything else that's handy.

"And the passengers? Well,



Zoe Ellingwood tries on her costume for her role as Old Lady Number One



Set crew prepares for a session of set construction and painting



REEDS BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL

they're a pretty unusual bunch, too. There's a fabulous Hollywood star named Honey Hotchkiss, a clumsy pair of thieves, a lady who loves pets but is allergic to fur, and a

non-stop jogger. To top it off, there's a hijacking by a misguided group of pirate lunatics. Bu the final curtain, however, it's all romance and laughter."

Gavin Kearns wins Reeds Brook Geography Bee

Gavin Kearns has won this year's National Geographic Bee at Reeds Brook Middle School and will move on to the Maine State Geography Bee on March 27 at the University of Maine at Farmington.

Brian Frost was the runner-up.

A total 14 classroom champions participated in the school-wide bee. After seven competitive rounds of questions, Gavin and Brian emerged as the two finalists.

The other classroom winners were: Jackson Elkins, Andrew Tillely, Eliot Small, Zoe Ellingwood, Aria Maietta, Lauren Beckwith, Sam Economy, Kenneth Penny, Marc Fachiol, Lucy Knight, Sara Economy, Bryan Frost, and Mary Landry

Ruey Yehle to retire Aug. 31 after 12½ years as HA Principal, 38 years in education

(Continued from page 1)

her first year, the special education director took a long-term medical leave, so she went back to the curriculum-special ed combination for the remainder of the year. She stayed in Orono as director of curriculum and worked as an adjunct professor at the University of Maine until she was hired as principal of Hampden Academy in November 2002.

Mrs. Yehle says she's seen a lot of changes over the years.

"When I started as a special education teacher in Old Town, students with disabilities were just

starting to be offered a mainstream education," she said. "Some students were told that school districts didn't have a place for them, and they were referred to programs run by other agencies. It's pretty remarkable to see how it's evolved over time—now we have public schools for all students."

She also recalls that when she started as director of special education for SAD 22, she was the only female administrator in the entire district. Now, she notes that more than 50% of the administrative team is female.

"I am so proud to be associated

with the educators, coaches, advisors, and students of Hampden Academy," Mrs. Yehle says. "They are committed to holding themselves to excellence—academically, physically, emotionally, and socially. My family has supported and sustained me through the years to be the best educator I could be; my husband, children, and parents have valued public education and the commitment that is necessary to be an administrator. My thanks to everyone who contributed to my professional and personal growth over the years."

RSU 22 Superintendent of

8th graders Eliot Milford-Layne, Bailey Donovan top spellers at Reeds Brook Spelling Bee

Catalyst.

Wherewithal.

Dim Sum.

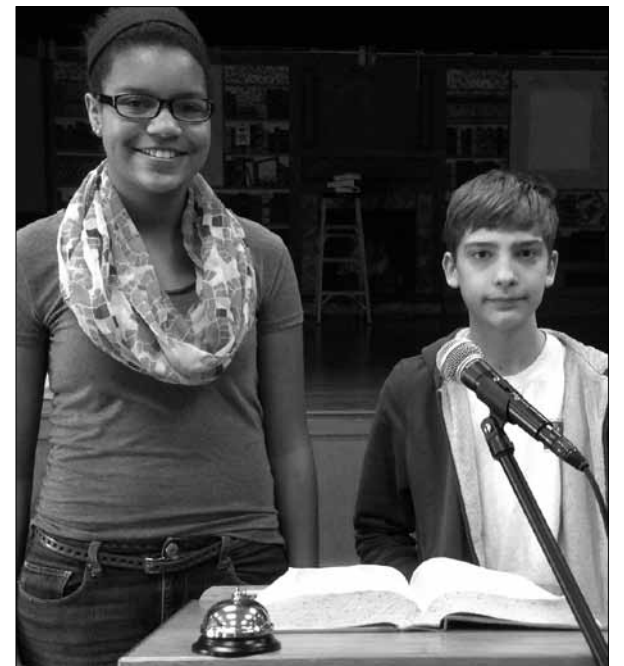
What do these words have in common? They're just a few of the words that 15 Reeds Brook students had to tackle in the school spelling bee finals, which were held on February 5.

This year's top speller was Eliot Mulford-Layne, an 8th grader who won by spelling the word "laudable." The runner-up was Bailey Donovan, also an 8th grader. Both spellers competed at the State Spelling Bee on February 28 at Husson University.

Reed Farrar, 8th grade English language arts teacher, said this year's spelling bee lasted over nine rounds, thanks to an exceptional group of spellers.

In addition to Eliot and Bailey, the finalists were:

8th grade: Nicholas Gauthier,



Eliot Mulford-Layne (right) and Bailey Donovan.

Nate Bailey, and Zoey Ellingwood.

7th grade: Bailey Anderson, Jarret Jones, Ingrid Plant, Hannah Mann, and Jake Peckham.

6th grade: Isaac Hanish, Mikaela Shayne, Caroline Pickering, Gabriel Fiske, and Colby Bennoch.

Schools Rick Lyons thanked Mrs. Yehle for her years of service to RSU 22 and Hampden Academy.

"Ruey is an extremely dedicated and committed educational leader," he said. "She is student centered, and our students have benefitted from her innovation, and focus on excellence.

"RSU 22 has been blessed to have Ruey serve this district for so many years. I have truly enjoyed working with her and she can be proud that her contributions are visible and have made a remarkable difference in the lives of students and staff."



Colby Patchell is working hard to make sure the crew on the Space Station is safe. As the Hazmat Specialist, he had to go into a very dangerous area to clean up chemicals that have spilled, so he has put on the Hazmat suit in order to complete his job.



Alexis LePage is working hard in space as the Aeronautical Engineer to build the Probe that will be launched towards the comet. Although she did have time for this picture.



As the Communications Officer in space, Eliza Murphy is waiting to see if the Probe, that the astronauts had built, made it to the comet.

6th graders rendezvous with comet at Challenger Learning Center

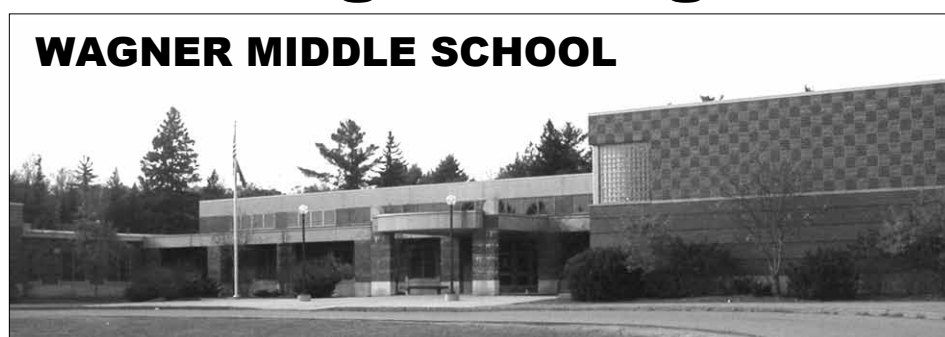
Sixth graders at Wagner Middle School completed a science unit about the solar system and comets in January, but they took their studies to another level in February.

On February 10, 11, and 12, the three 6th grade classes spent one day each at the Challenger Learning Center, where they embarked on simulated space missions and successfully rendezvoused with a comet.

Sixth grade teacher Chris Gould said the students played a variety of roles, including navigator, medi-

cal officer, robotics engineer, and aeronautical engineer, etc., on a space station, as well as their counterparts at mission control. The students were guided by script cards in playing their respective roles, but when they ran into problems, they had to solve them by themselves.

"The 6th graders were excited to take the classroom elsewhere and play the role of astronauts," Mr. Gould said. "It was a really good experience in problem-solving and working together. If there were two



WAGNER MIDDLE SCHOOL

students at one station, they had to work together to find a solution. In addition, their counterparts at

mission control were also working on the issues. Everyone had to work together and communicate clearly."

Wagner 6th graders practice positive digital citizenship with 'Edmodo,' 'Kidblog'

Sixth graders in Betsy Murphy's English language arts classes at Wagner Middle School have been practicing positive digital citizenship at a pair of safe social networking sites for schools during recent months.

The students use Edmodo (www.edmodo.com) to talk online with their classmates about the books they're reading.

They also use Kidblog (kidblog.org) to write narratives, opinion pieces, and informational pieces and post them online.

For both Edmodo and Kidblog, the students are divided into six groups, which include students from all three 6th grade classes.

"It's been positive," says Ms. Murphy. "Both sites give them a chance to practice their keyboarding skills and writing mechanics, as well as a chance to converse with students in other classes that they don't see on a regular basis. Also, both sites are accessible at home."

On Edmodo, the students' posts are usually focused on specific books that they've recently finished or that they're currently reading.

Students reading the posts can offer comment, and members of the group can have conversations based on the information that's being shared.

"They're enjoying it," Ms. Murphy says. "They're asking positive questions and practicing good digital citizen ship."

Common responses include such posts as: "Tell me more." "Why do you like this?" "Where can I find it?" "Can I have this book after you're done with it?"

On Kidblog, the posts tend to be longer and less conversational.

"Students are writing narratives, opinion pieces, and informational pieces, and posting them online on Kidblog," Ms. Murphy says. "It's the same concept—the groups include a mix of students from all three classrooms.

They can read each other's writing in narrative or essay formats and then comment on what they've read."

As with Edmodo, the responses on Kidblog have been polite and respectful: "Tell more about..., I like the way you did this..., your description of that was really...."

Ms. Murphy says Edmodo and Kidblog have worked well together for the 6th graders. "The two different formats are allowing students to focus on two different things, but at the same time practice being positive digital citizens," she says. They're getting a lot of practice in reading, writing, and demonstrating digital citizenship—all at the same time."

Asked which format they preferred, four 6th grade writers—Mat-

thew Knupp, Tom Knott, Megan Deans, and Lexie LePage—all said they preferred Edmodo.

Ms. Murphy said she thought that might be because the 6th graders had been using Edmodo longer, but also because it's a less formal style of writing. She added that the students write socially on Edmodo, and it's fun. By contrast, writing blog entries on Kidblog tends to take more time and effort.

While she enjoys Edmodo, Lexie said she also likes Kidblog because it allows her to see what other students have experienced and what they've done.

"It's like a writing journal," said Matthew. "There are starters [prompts] at the beginning, like

what's your favorite mood or dream house, and then you just write your thoughts on that topic."

Tom said posts on Kidblog tend to be a lot longer than the Edmodo posts. "You have the choice of writing small little paragraphs or big giant essays about certain topics," he said.

For example, the topic for Kidblog entries on January 29 (the day after two snow days), was "What is the best way to spend a snow day?"

Matthew said snowmobiling, Tom said sleeping in and enjoying the quiet, and Megan said spending the day with your family.

Lexie said she hadn't written her post yet, but when she did, she would write about going sledding and tubing.

Civil Rights Team sponsors 'Think Positive Week'

The Civil Rights Team at Wagner Middle School sponsored "Think Positive Week" February 9-13, the week before February vacation.

Monday was "Mirrorless Monday." CRT members covered all the bathroom mirrors to emphasize that true beauty is found on the inside.

Tuesday was "Top 10 Tuesday." CRT members decorated the school with tips on how to be happier, how to be less stressed and anxious, including 10 ways to do better in school and 10 ways to show Wagner Pride, etc. Students dressed up as

a person from a favorite decade or wore 10 of something.

Wednesday was "Wear Your Heart on Your Sleeve Wednesday," which was held in conjunction with American Heart Month. Stickers with positive sayings and hearts on them were created for students to wear on their sleeves.

Thursday was "Think Positive Thursday," when Post-It notes were placed all over the school with positive messages that students could share with teachers and friends.

Friday was "Mix It Up Lunch

and Mix Up the Pride Day: students wore purple and white for the Broncos tournament games. During lunch time, students in different grades ate together.

'A*B*C* (America Before Columbus)' set for April 1-3 at Wagner

(Please turn to page 12)

This year's cast features actors in grades 5 through 8, as well as three sets of siblings and a pair of cousins. Also unusual this year is the fact that 19 of the 38 actors are male.

"It has been a challenge to get a large number of young men in our school to audition for the play, so we are thrilled with the turn out," says Mrs. Moran.

If you would like to support theatre in your community, the open dress rehearsal will be held on April 1 (not joking!) at 6 p.m. The public performances will be held on Thursday and Friday, April 2 and 3 at 7 p.m. in the dining area at Wagner Middle School.

Hannah Gallacher, Miranda Robinson represent Wagner at 'Girls Day at the State House'

Eighth graders Hannah Gallacher and Miranda Robinson spent Thursday, March 5, in Augusta representing Wagner Middle School at Girls Day at the State House.

The event, sponsored by the Maine Women's Policy Center, provides an opportunity for 100 8th grade girls from across Maine to learn how our state government works, the impor-

tant role that women play, and how young women can have a voice on issues that they care about.

Girls are selected by their individual schools on the basis of leadership potential. Both Hannah and Miranda said it was an amazing experience and they would highly recommend it.

Alex Coup wins Geography Bee

Eighth grader Alex Knupp won the Wagner Middle School Geography Bee on January 16 and will compete in the state Geography Bee on March 27.

Fifth grader Zack Emerson was the runner-up.

The bee started in December with mini-classroom bees to select one representative of each instructional group. These classroom winners were:

- 8th grade: Alex Knupp, Zara Misler, and Conor O’Kendley.
- 7th grade: Moxie Flanagan, Jerdon Kiesman, and Madison Baker.
- 6th grade: Harry Willard, Mackenzie Patterson, and Matthew Knupp.
- 5th grade: Zack Emerson, Ryan Dudley, and Olivia Saucier.

The bee was organized by 5th grade teacher Steven Douglas, who has been responsible for the Geography Bee in Winterport schools for 20 years, going back to the time when Leroy H. Smith School was a K-8 school.

He recalls that a Smith School 8th grader, Nate Drummond, won the local Geography Bee in the spring of 1995, won the Maine State Geography Bee, and traveled to Washington, DC, for the National Geography Bee. At the national bee, he reached the semifinal round (the top 20 contestants) but did not make it into the final round (the top 10).

7th, 8th graders see ‘Wizard of Oz’ at Penobscot Theatre

Seventh and eighth graders at Wagner Middle School traveled to Bangor on December 16 for a morning performance of the *Wizard of Oz* at the Penobscot Theatre.

Funding for the trip was provided largely by donations. Winterport Open Stage, which uses the Wagner cafeteria stage for rehearsals and performances, gave \$500. Pride Pack, the school’s parent support group, provided an additional \$200.

As a result, students paid only \$2 each to attend a live theatrical performance.

English language arts teachers Erica Farrar and Julia Kearns devoted some class time prior to the show to discuss *Wizard of Oz* with their students.

After the show, the students stayed at the Penobscot Theatre for a “Talk Back,” a question-and-answer session with the cast and crew.

Questions included such topics as the education required for an acting career, how actors and actresses prepare for auditions, how much rehearsal time is required for a show, and what it’s like to perform on stage.

The students were particularly interested in Dorothy, the young girl from Kansas who finds herself in the land of Oz. She was double-cast by the Penobscot Theatre, and both of the girls who played the role were 7th graders, one from Ellsworth and one from Bangor.

Michele Campbell, 5th grade teacher at Wagner who organized the trip, said the Wagner students were an excellent audience.

“They were super well-behaved and asked great questions at the ‘Talk Back’ session,” she said.



Sledding was one of the outdoor activities at McGraw School’s Winterfest celebration.

McGraw holds Winterfest celebration in March after Feb. 13 event postponed because of extreme cold

Students at Earl C. McGraw School had to wait a month for Winterfest because of extreme cold weather in February, but the wait was worth it. Winterfest was originally scheduled for February 13, the last Friday before February vacation, but it was postponed this year because of the prospect of near-zero temperatures and 20 mph winds producing a wind-chill factor of 15 below.

On Friday, March 13, the students enjoyed a day of sledding, snowshoeing, and other outdoor activities, along with crafts, buddy reading, and a variety of indoor activities.

Winterfest has been celebrated at McGraw School for at least 15 years, maybe longer. Each classroom is paired up with another classroom, and students rotate through eight different activities—four outdoor activities and four indoor activities.

This year’s outdoor activities included: sledding (a relay race with students pulling each other in sleds); snowshoeing, with an option of playing snow soccer; a snowball



relay; and fire and ice (a game in which students “freeze” by ice and “unfreeze” by fire).

Indoor activities included crafts, an indoor snowball fight in the gym using yarn pom-poms, buddy reading in the library, and a snack room.

Each classroom was paired up with a class of a different grade level, so the buddy reading paired older students with younger ones. After the students read a book, they wrote the name of the book on a paper snowball, and the snowballs were then hung in the hallway outside the library in the form of a snowman.

This year’s Winterfest activities were planned by a committee of McGraw teachers who met weekly. They included Amy Lorenzo, kindergarten; Pat Lyons and Tricia Forsman, 1st grade; Cindy Kelley, 2nd grade; and Debbie Collins, special ed.

Mrs. Lyons said Winterfest was originally organized by Donna Dwyer, physical education teacher at McGraw for many years.

Principal Kristin Briggs said the day was made possible by the efforts of many parent volunteers—57 to be exact! It takes a lot of organizing and the PTO was a tremendous help in recruiting volunteers.



There were indoor activities as well, including an indoor “snowball” fight with yarn balls (left), and buddy reading in the library (right).

46 Weatherbee Student Leaders meeting monthly to develop leadership skills, which they use to help community, school

A group of 46 students at George B. Weatherbee School have been meeting monthly to develop their leadership skills and to learn how to use those skills to help the community and their school.

The group, called the Student Leadership Team, was formed last fall when Principal Christine Boone, School Counselor Kelly O'Brien, special education teacher Candis Penley, and Librarian Andrea Sprague invited anyone who wanted to be a student leader to sign up if they were able to participate after school.

By the time the group started meeting, it included 14 third graders, 19 fourth graders, and 13 fifth graders.

"There was no screening process," Ms. O'Brien said. "Leadership Team members weren't selected by their teachers or voted on by their classmates. The message to students was if you think you have leadership potential and want to make a difference in your school, come join us. We felt it was important that the group be inclusive, and that anyone who wanted to participate could come."

Ms. O'Brien says the team is based on three tiers of leadership, starting with individual leadership.

"We did a lot of training during first two classes—what leaders can do to contribute, and how everyone can be a leader," she said. "Everyone has leadership potential, and you don't have to be out front to take a leadership role. How you can contribute to Weatherbee School depends on your strengths and what you're confident in doing, but everyone can be a leader."

Later in the the fall, the team started using their leadership skills to do community service projects, promote school spirit, and raise funds for Weatherbee School.

During December, the team spon-



Leadership Team cheerleaders do a routine during the Leadership Team-Staffcats game.

sored a community service project to collect pet food, toys, and blankets for the Bangor Humane Society.

During January, they sponsored a Hat Day competition to encourage donations to the Hampden Food Cupboard.

On February 27, the group sponsored a Leadership Team vs. teachers and staff basketball game, which was held at 6:30 p.m. in the Hampden Academy gym. Student leaders who chose not to participate as basketball players sold tickets, worked selling concessions, were official cheerleaders, or cheered from the sidelines. Staff members brought baked goods (along with parent volunteers) or served as cheerleaders for those who elected to play basketball on the "Staffcats" team.

In the end, the student leaders

teacher at Weatherbee, who submitted a proposal entitled "Awareness and Tolerance of Special Needs at Weatherbee."

Ms. Lord, who lives in Brunswick, has an adult son with autism. She is the author of *Rules*, a novel for children age 9-12 whose main

character is a girl who has a younger brother with autism.

During her visit to Weatherbee, she will talk to students about writing and tolerance of students with disabilities. She will give presentations to all three grade levels and have lunch with a group of students.



GEORGE B. WEATHERBEE SCHOOL



The Weatherbee Leadership Team basketball team, which defeated the Staffcats, a teachers and staff team, in a Leadership team fundraiser on February 27.

beat the Staffcats by four points and had a great time doing so. The students talked it up and really got the whole school involved.

Basketball players for the Leadership Team included:

Grade 3: Emma Lowell, Ava Monyok, Jordyn Pottle, Michael Sargent, Sophie Schall, Chandler Smith, Mya Theriault, and Aiden Wicklow.

Grade 4: Ryan Adams, Olivia Airey, Sam Bellerose, Jaymo Buck, Jack Johnson, Andrew Lyons, Bella McLaughlin, Anita Oebel, Max Ross, Madison Steigert, and Lily Woodside.

Grade 5: Connor Adams, Will Airey, Kaden Beloff, Jonathan Fenders, Marion Glinski, TJ Henaghen, and Aurora Thompson.

They were coached by a parent volunteer, Tom Henaghen.

A 5th grader, Beckett O'Reilly, served as the game announcer.

The teachers were coached by physical education teacher Andrew Plaisted. Team members included Mrs. Boone, Ms. O'Brien, Mr. Lindemann, Mrs. Layman, Mrs. Schall, Mr. Flagg, Mrs. Perrow, Ms. Cole, Ms. Deshon (Mrs. Schall's student teacher), Mrs. Wellman, Mrs. Quesnel, Ms. Worster, Mrs. Downer, Ms. Leavitt, and Ms. McLaughlin of Kids Korner, along with Mr. Plaisted.

The Leadership Team cheerleaders, organized by Chrissy Patin, were: Madyson Field, Sunnie Lorom, Kendall McJunkins, Kaylee McJunkins, Ellie DeRosby, Adie Patin, Josie Smith, Katrina Ouellette, Isabella Gappa, and Montana Langille.

The staff cheerleaders, coached by Mrs. Kiesman (who also cheered), included Mrs. Sprague, Mrs. Whitehouse, Ms. Gross, Mrs. Kusnierz, and Mrs. Jones.

Several staff members and parent volunteers handled the concessions.

Mrs. Boone added that the staff and the Leadership Team knew they could count on Weatherbee parents to help make the evening a success.

"Parents advertised on Facebook and really filled the stands," she said. "They helped recruit a former Weatherbee Student, Mikayla Burridge, to sing the national anthem, and a parent lined up Christian Corniel to serve as referee, along with former McGraw PE teacher Adam Knowles."

* * *

Ms. O'Brien emphasized that all of the Leadership Team's activities during the year were selected by the Leadership Team members.

"The students brainstormed, and nothing got ruled out," she said. "All of the meeting agendas are driven by student decisions. They voted and we prioritized."

Ms. O'Brien said the level of student involvement has resulted in a group that's really quite active.

"They have buy-in because it's their mission," she said. "It's not something we're asking them to do. Rather, it's something they're asking of us. That's new and different for Weatherbee School."

MEA grant bringing children's author Cynthia Lord to Weatherbee

Children's author Cynthia Lord will visit George B. Weatherbee School on March 24, thanks to a \$1,000 grant from the Human, Civil Rights, and Cultural Affairs Committee of the Maine Education Association.

The grant was requested by Candis Penley, special education

Community Service 'for Near and Far' at Weatherbee

On Tuesday, January 20, Weatherbee School started a Community Service Project, which concluded February 13. Under the title of Winter Flurry Food Drive, which turned out to be a very appropriate name, and in conjunction with McGraw School, each classroom was given a specific item to collect for the Hampden Food Pantry – our "near" project. Items ranged from macaroni and cheese to canned peaches, toothpaste, toilet paper and items in between. Under the title of Collecting Coins for Building a School in Africa, students were encouraged to bring in coins to help reach the goal of \$5000 to help build an elementary school (K-8) in Zambia, Africa – our "far" project.

To help Weatherbee students understand the life of a child in Africa, former Peace Corp Volunteer to Zambia Brianna Harriman came to talk to the students at their assem-

bly on January 16th. Ms. Harriman is spearheading the donations to complete a current community-initiated two-room schoolhouse.

Ms. Harriman brought a whole table of African items for the students to view and handle and also showed pictures of the village and children, who will benefit from the coin collection. The Weatherbee students and staff watched a slide show and some video footage of life in Africa. Ms. Harriman told of how many chores children have, how big families are, and how children get to school, which is to walk or bike up to 10 miles. She explained how children have to fetch water as there is no running water at home, and the fact that due to the lack of electricity at home, there are no video games, which elicited many a groan from the students. There was a wonderful question and answer period.

As of February 13th, the Weatherbee community had collected: 82 cans of tuna, 23 cans of baked beans, 25 jars of peanut butter, 75 boxes of macaroni and cheese, 26 boxes of cereal, 42 cans/jars of pasta sauce, 134 rolls of toilet paper, 257 bars of soap, 58 tubes of toothpaste, 19 jars of jam/jelly, 17 cans of pears, 31 cans of peaches, 34 cans of peas, 36 rice mixes, 59 cans of soup, and 141 granola bars, as well as 65 miscellaneous items, which totaled 1124 pieces for our NEAR community project.

Our Collecting Coins for Building a School in Africa netted \$1,373.31 for the FAR community project. Each classroom was also given a postcard depicting Maine to sign, which will be sent to the school in Zambia.

A huge thank you to our very generous Weatherbee community, in helping to reach out to our neighbors near and far.

RSU 22 Public Pre-K programs:

RSU 22, Penquis, and Waldo CAP work collaboratively to provide all students an enriching and educational Pre-K program. We work to ensure that children are healthy and ready to learn! Our success is attributed to the relationship-based approach that is fostered through parents as decision-makers, in-home visiting, and the multiple supports provided to help the transition into public school.

Through good nutritional offerings and assistance with medical and dental appointments, the combination of Head Start and high educational standards promote developmentally appropriate and creative activities to encourage children to learn and explore.

The fact that we are able to generate holistic data to inform instruction, as well as make programmatic decisions as part of communication with stakeholders, ensures success for all children.

RSU 22, Penquis, and Waldo CAP are proud to share our Pre-K classrooms with your children.

Hampden/Newburgh Pre-K

At the Hampden Pre-K, we are busy learning about the solar system! The children are becoming familiar with many things including planets, how many moons different planets have, phases of the moon, constellations, and so much more!

While learning about our solar system, we've also been learning about letter and number recognition. We've been working on lower case letters. The letters seem to be showing up all over the room and the children keep finding them! It has been an extremely fun way for the children to recognize and recall some letters!

As the weather warms up, the students are excited to use snowshoes outside. It's a great way to incorporate physical activity and balancing skills—and it's fun!

Leroy Smith Pre-K

In the classroom we have been gaining a better understanding of our senses. Through musical instruments we have explored our sense of hearing.

Our math skills were enhanced when we explored our sense of smell. We smelled a variety of scents and graphed the ones that we really liked and the ones that we did not like. We discovered that most of the class really liked the smell of cinnamon.

The children also enjoyed making and using puffy paint, which is shaving cream and glue. This mixture creates a fun 3-D art activity that is very interesting to touch when it dries. "Fluffy", "smooth" and "soft" were some of the descriptive words used by the children when talking about the paint.

We have also been able to complete some educational home visits, which is when the teacher meets with the parent and the child individually. The child works on a developmental domain to help support success in the classroom. The parent is also working with the child. It is a great opportunity for the parent to ask questions and observe different ways the teacher supports the child in his or her learning. We also provide the parent with some activities that they can complete at home. These activities build on the learning that happened at the home visit. The home visits are a great way to build and support the home/school connection.

Throughout the year, the staff has implemented Conscious Discipline, which is an evidence-based self-regulation program that integrates social-emotional learning and discipline. This program helps set the stage for life-long self-regulation and helps students and staff work together to build a house of learning.

* * *

Pre K registration for the 2015-16 year is in progress. ALL children who turn 4 on or before Oct. 15, 2015 are eligible.

Hampden/Newburgh residents please contact Penquis at 973-3567.

Winterport/Frankfort residents please contact Waldo CAP at 223-2253.

First Grade Is Not For The Birds at Leroy H. Smith School

On December 22, first graders in Heather Patterson's room were able to experience the meaning of giving and receiving.

Don Campbell (great-grandfather of Hunter Eastman) came to first grade to share his love of woodworking. This idea started in September when Mr. Campbell experienced Smith School's annual Grandparents



Heather Patterson's 1st graders make bird houses.

Day. He had a wonderful time that day and asked Mrs. Patterson if he could create a woodworking project for her students to build that wouldn't require tools. Fast forward three months and Mr. Campbell was ready to present his project.

Joined by his son, Peter Campbell and great-granddaughter, Katie Bishop, Don Campbell brought 20 pre-made wooden birdhouses for first graders to put together. Each house was made with six labeled, very smooth pieces, sanded to a silk-like feel to prevent splinters.

Mr. Campbell started the project by showing the tools he used, provided explanations about them, and shared safety tips about woodworking. The students had a wonderful time putting the houses together and decorating them with a variety of markers, stickers and foam letters. Mrs. Patterson was reminded of what an important part grandparents play to our children, communities and schools.



Don Campbell (standing at back, center) with Heather Patterson's 1st graders and their bird houses at Smith School.



Weatherbee 5th graders going to Burnt Island in June

Fifth graders at George B. Weatherbee School will have the opportunity to spend a day and a night on Burnt Island in Boothbay Harbor this spring during the first week of June.

Mr. Lindemann's homeroom will visit the island on Monday, June 1, returning Tuesday afternoon, June 2.

Mrs. Downer's homeroom will arrive on Tuesday and return on Wednesday.

Ms. McKee's homeroom will arrive on Wednesday and return on Thursday.

Mrs. Kiesman's homeroom will arrive on Thursday and return on Friday.

Mrs. O'Brien's homeroom will be divided into four groups to join the other homerooms during the week.

Mrs. O'Brien and Mr. Lindemann will spend the entire week on the island. Up to 10 parents per class will assist as chaperones and help with teaching, cooking, keeping students

safe, and supervising hands-on educational activities.

Each group of students will leave Weatherbee at 9 a.m., arriving in Boothbay Harbor at 11:30. From 11:30 to 1:45, they will eat lunch and tour the Maine State Aquarium in West Boothbay. Then they will board a chartered boat for the 15-minute cruise to Burnt Island.

For the next 24 hours, the students will engage in a variety of educational and fun activities on the island, including tidal pooling, compass hikes, GPS study, a living history presentation at the Burnt Island lighthouse, fishing, and lots, lots more.

The cost of the trip is \$125 per student, but scholarship assistance is available.

"No one will have to stay home for financial reasons," says Weatherbee Principal Christine Boone.

For many years, Sue O'Brien has taken her 5th grade class on over-

night trips to Burnt Island. This year, all five 5th grade classes will be able to make the trip.

Mr. Lindemann remembers sleeping in a tent on Burnt Island when he was a 5th grader in Mrs. O'Brien's class 15 years ago. Since then, a bunkhouse has been constructed for use by student groups.

According to the Maine Department of Marine Resources website, Burnt Island is a beautiful five-acre island owned by the DMR. It is near the mainland and approximately one mile from the port of Boothbay Harbor. The historic buildings at this active lighthouse station have been carefully restored and transformed into an educational facility that focuses on Maine's maritime heritage, coastal environment, marine fisheries, and conservation. During the spring and fall, the five-acre island serves as an outdoor school for students and teachers from around the state.

'Be Yourself Week' held at Smith School February 9-13

During the week of February 9-13, the Smith School Civil Rights Team (CRT) sponsored "Be Yourself Week," which provided an opportunity for students to celebrate being themselves, while also encouraging others to be themselves.

Throughout the week, CRT members read messages and quotes during morning announcements, and classroom doors were decorated to support the theme of "Be Yourself."

Students and staff also participated in theme days throughout the week, such as Inside-Out Day, where students wore clothing inside out to symbolize that they are beautiful on the inside and outside.

Prior to Be Yourself Week, 3rd and 4th grade students had a presentation by Brandon Baldwin, head of the Civil Rights Team Project in the State Attorney General's office. Civil Rights Team members also read various books to classes throughout the school to stress the importance of respecting individual differences.

CRT hopes that this week will help students to be more aware of bias and think more closely about how their words and actions impact others.

The CRT created a pledge for Be Yourself Week for students to sign: "I pledge to demonstrate tolerance, empathy and kindness for everyone in the Smith School community and beyond and to encourage everyone to BE YOURSELF!"

Education Foundation Receives Donation

The RSU 22 Education Foundation is pleased to announce that Hampden Family Dentistry has made a donation of \$2,000 in support of efforts to encourage inspiring and innovative education. According to Hampden Family Dentistry's Dr. Em-

ily Gazitua, the donation was made in support of "a sound, yet varied education that can be the foundation for success of our children." Peter Witt, Chairman of the Education Foundation lauded the financial support from Dr. Gazitua; "We are grate-

ful for Hampden Family Dental's commitment to Education in RSU 22. Emily has been an advocate and supporter of the district in the past and we are pleased she is partnering with us again for the benefit of the children."

If you would like to support the efforts of the RSU 22 Education Foundation to provide alternative funding for innovative programs and educational opportunities, please visit our website at rsu22educationfoundation.org.

4 Teachers from Weatherbee, McGraw Receive Gold Star Awards

Four teachers received Gold Star Teacher Awards this winter as part of the RSU 22 Education Foundation's Gold Star Teacher Award Program. Mr. Matt Lindemann and Mrs. Renita Downer from George B. Weatherbee School received Gold Star Awards, along with Ms. Sharon DeBeck and Ms. Susan Ward from Earl C. McGraw School.

The Gold Star awards provides

student families with a way to honor their teachers, and support innovative projects in the coming years. In exchange for a \$20 donation, each teacher received a Gold Star Award, and the money was dedicated to the Foundation's Mini-Grant Program. Congratulations to these teachers and be sure to keep an eye out for nomination forms coming home with students this spring.



RSU #22
Education
Foundation

Community Partners for Inspired Education

'One School One Book'—Education Foundation Mini-Grants program aiding inspired education

Last fall the RSU 22 Education Foundation was able to award seven mini grants to teachers throughout the school district. These grants, which are made possible by the generous support of businesses and members of the community enable the Education Foundation to supplement classroom budgets and promote inspired educational programming to the students of RSU 22. One of the grants awarded during the fall grant cycle was to help fund the One School One Book program at the McGraw School.

We checked in with Ms. Kimberley Moran at the McGraw School to see how the initiative went.

What is the goal of One School One Book?

Ms. Moran—One School One Book is a movement designed to get an entire school community involved in the joy of reading. Each teacher gets a copy of the selected book. The idea is that when everyone shares the same text, the community becomes closer as they have something in common to talk about. We chose *Ivan: The Remarkable True Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla* by Katherine Applegate and the artist G. Brian Karas. We chose this book because children K-2 have a natural instinct to protect animals. This wonderful book presents the extraordinary real story of a special gorilla. We intentionally chose a nonfiction picture book because children have lots of questions and diverse interests. Texts that address these can increase motivation to read. For many students, this is actually the type of reading they prefer. Much of the reading students will encounter outside of school is informational, and adults who model reading read a great deal of non-fiction, including informational text. As students progress through the grades and on to college or work, they will be expected to do more informational reading, and the reading will increase in difficulty. Because informational text teaches about the natural and social world, an added benefit is that students who read this type of text will build background knowledge of the natural and social world. They will bring more prior knowledge to the page when encountering future texts. Much of this information about informational text can be found at the *Teachers First* website.

What was the reaction of students when you started this activity in your class?

Ms. Moran—Students were riveted by Ivan. They listened and asked more intuitive and inferential questions. They chose to read this book on their own for a close read.

How have you seen this activity benefit your students?

Ms. Moran—Their responses showed us



McGraw teachers display their copies of "Ivan: The Remarkable True Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla"



A student reads "Ivan."

overwhelmingly that kids can process much higher level information early on. We need to give them the right materials and time to process. Literacy teachers shared that their kids became more engaged with nonfiction,

particularly books about gorillas, right after their study of this wonderful book.

What surprises came from initiating this program with the help of the grant from the Education Foundation?

Ms. Moran—Some of the more surprising things that occurred as a result of the One School One Book project is that teachers began to talk about the books (or Mentor Texts) that worked in their classrooms. Kristin Briggs, Principal at McGraw, said it best, "It is wonderful to have a common text among our staff. It enables us to have conversations together and share ideas on how to use this book and others with our students in creative, engaging ways. The funding for this is very much appreciated!"

Please consider supporting classroom programs such as this by making a contribution to the RSU 22 Education Foundation or by purchasing a Gold Star Teacher's Award. Visit our website at rsu22educationfoundation.org to learn more.

Foundation Board seeks to expand

The RSU22 Education Foundation is actively seeking new board members and committee volunteers to join a growing non-profit organization that supports the students and teachers in the school district. Serving the towns of Frankfort, Hampden, Newburgh and Winterport, the Education Foundation funds initiatives with grants that help foster innovative educational projects. If you

have a desire to connect with others who share an interest in quality education for children please consider joining the team.

Interested citizens or those wishing to nominate candidates for the Foundation Board of Directors should email hanish@roadrunner.com To learn more about the RSU 22 Education Foundation, visit www.rsu22educationfoundation.org.